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„The relevance of secondary education to students’ capabilities in Singida, Tanzania.“

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Acronyms:

A-Level	Advanced Level Secondary Education
ADEA	Association for the Development of Education in Africa
ASCEE	Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Exam
BBC	British Broadcasting Cooperation
BEST	Basic Education Statistics Tanzania
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
cf.	See
CGT	Constructivist Grounded Theory
CSEE	Certificate of Secondary Education Exam
EFA	Education for All
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HDI	Human Development Index
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NECTA	National Examinations Council of Tanzania
NER	Net Enrollment
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
O-Level	Ordinary Level Secondary Education
p.	Page
PISA	Program for International Student Assessment
PSLE	Primary School Leaving Examination
SACMEQ	The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SES	Socio Economic Status
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

UPE

Universal Primary Education

URT

United Republic of Tanzania

– Vielen Dank, Asante sana, Many Thanks, Mille Grazie, Ευχαριστω πολλυ –

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1. Introduction

Ordinary-level¹ secondary schooling, which is the focus of this study, has been recognized as a necessary element for the economic prosperity, growth, and social development of Tanzania cf. United Republic of Tanzania (1999) and United Republic of Tanzania (1996). However, we still know little about how it is valued by students who actually undergo its course. This study seeks to follow this question by using analytical tools from economics, sociology, and comparative educational science, as well as qualitative methods of data collection and analysis.

In what follows, I carve out the specific research question by presenting my initial research interest in this topic (section 1.1.); an overview of literature on the value of secondary schooling in Tanzania (section 1.2.); the educational system in place (section 1.3.); the study's specific research focus and questions (section 1.4.); and the structure of the analysis (section 1.5.).

1.1. Research interest

Initially, my interest in the value of secondary schooling developed during the time when I was working and studying in Tanzania. In personal conversations people referred to secondary schooling as already something exceptional. In contrast to compulsory primary schooling, which was perceived as normal, students had to achieve certain grades to be admitted. This means that secondary students had already exceeded normal expectations. They had accomplished something that many others did not. However, its worth was ambiguously presented. Some had high expectations, and saw in it the opportunity to acquire modern knowledge and “the point of departure to a career” with the outlook of obtaining regular income. On the one hand, investing in this potential was considered an important effort for the young

¹ It is the adequate quantitative and qualitative provision of ordinary-level secondary schooling that marks the next step in Tanzania's political development efforts in terms of education. Advanced level still stands for a very elitist part of the educational ladder.

generation's future. On the other hand, others found it not particularly meaningful, too expensive and veering young people away from real work and what "really counts" in making a living. Many people were just more concerned with securing their daily needs.

Against the background of these private encounters I got interested in taking a closer look into what was written in the academic literature on the value of ordinary-secondary schooling regarding its relation to opportunities in Tanzania.

1.2. The value of secondary schooling in Tanzania

From a macro-economic point of view secondary schooling is given a crucial role in the country's political development aspirations.

First, public secondary schooling in sub-Saharan countries is increasingly consulted to maintain the countries' macroeconomic development efforts cf. The Guardian (2011). In the case of Tanzania, post-primary education and, in particular, ordinary-level secondary schooling provides the foundation for skilled human resources to maintain its development outlook of becoming a globally competitive - middle income - industrialized country by 2025 cf. Tikly et al. (2003), United Republic of Tanzania (2004), United Republic of Tanzania (1999). As a result, secondary schooling has experienced from 2005 onwards an enormous quantitative expansion in terms of student enrolment and school buildings. By 2012 the net enrolment of the 14 and 19 year old population rose from 13,4% in 2005 to 36% cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2012a).

Second, formal secondary schooling is also a citizens' rights issue, assigned to providing for decisive support for youth's² maturation, their personal development and the country's social outlook. The National Youth Policy (United Republic of Tanzania, 1996) outlines a set of basic rights - e.g.

² In Tanzania youth – according to the United Nations (UNESCO, 2014) definition - are officially referred to as people between the age of 15 to 24. They are representing around 19,5% of its total population of estimated 49 Million people in 2013 (CIA - The World Factbook, 2013).

the right to education for everyone under the age of 18 - to support youth who represent a 60% of Tanzania's workforce in

"a world of fast changing lifestyles, cultures, values, orientations, etc. [...] dwindling economies, loss of the once established community systems of youth upbringing, loss of the human dignity to mention a few" (p. iii).

Selvam (2008) examines this policy and echoes Tanzanian youths' tremendous transitional process. He points out that youth are considered physically maturing earlier compared to previous generations but, due "to prolonged school education [and the] lack of jobs [...students'...] social maturity, in terms of taking up [independence] and getting married, is largely being delayed" (p. 206). All this contributes to making them "more depend[ent] on adults and growingly vulnerable" (p. *ibid.*). He concludes by emphasizing the crucial role that quality secondary schooling can play to support Tanzanian youth in coping with changing life-styles and self-conception as well as preparing them for professional work; it shall be "aimed at improving the situation and well-being of youth". Fittingly, the Tanzanian government is nowadays considering making ordinary level secondary schooling also compulsory cf. Human Rights Watch (2014).

However, official national statistics cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2012a) show that public O-Level secondary schooling in Tanzania is of poor quality. Examination results at the end of the 4-year course reveal a 46,6% failure rate in completion, generally very low achievements in basic skills and knowledge as well as weak permeability to A-Level, in 2011 it was at around 10%. Nevertheless, through completion of A-Level students obtain an internationally recognized school-leaving certificate that enables university entry, to where a net 1% of the age cohort was admitted in 2011.

Research on secondary schooling's economic potential conclude that a majority of students just gain very low thresholds of skills, while secondary schooling as a whole hardly proves to have any relevance for obtaining or being useful in formal jobs or even for self-employment cf. Al-Samarrai and Reilly (2008) and Mukyanuzi (2003). A report published by the United Republic of Tanzania (2013a) uncovers that formal employment is literally

non-existent, with formal youth employment being below 1%. In this light the value of secondary schooling appears questionable.

In addition, such outcomes of formal schooling are discussed in the light of the provision of quality schooling according to international conventions on human and youth rights. Critical voices like Bhalalusesa (2005), Sumra and Rajani (2006) question if the country's political commitment to the provision of quality schooling is more than mere rhetoric. They conclude that the one-sided quantitative expansion in terms of enrolment and school building goes on the expenses of quality aspects. They find that an increasing number of students are left with too few teachers, insufficient infrastructure, barely existent teaching materials and inappropriate teaching methods. The result is that a majority of enrolled students are not provided with the fostering they would require to successfully completing their course of secondary schooling. It seems that the proclaimed value of schooling for its students is being foiled.

In taking a micro level perspective, ethnological research done by Stambach (1998) depicts secondary schooling's potential for its students as limited to marginal commoditized use within contextualized socio-economic boundaries and conventional ways of making a living that resulted in providing some security for resource deprived people. Phillips and Stambach (2008) further point out that whether they are adequately taught or employed does generally not derive from formalized structures or rights, because such are for the majority of Tanzanians who do live in precarious living conditions not claimable. Instead the entitlement to opportunities and choice derive from cultivated nepotistic socio-political schemes. Hence, formal skills or certificates are not pivotal for people making a living.

On top of that, public secondary schooling is also a costly undertaking and therefore a well-considered investment. It is by far more expensive compared to tuition-free primary schooling. In sum it costs a minimum of 300 USD a year to cover just the school related expenses for a secondary school student cf. The Citizen by Nyakeke (2013). First, there are school fees to pay, about 20 US\$ per term, which the government waives for those who can prove their illiquidity. Second, examination fees cf. The National Examinations Council of Tanzania (2009) have to be paid extra. As a result students who

cannot pay are not admitted to key examinations (2nd year examination, CSEE and ASCEE) or are not given their results. Third, the constant and growing additional expenses related to schooling are decisively more expensive compared to primary schooling. These comprise school and learning materials, such as schoolbooks, notebooks, uniforms etc., as well as school intern fees or contributions. These expenses carry most weight. And fourth, indirect costs are also part of that calculation: youth are expected to contribute to the household's income, but a student is not able to fully work and is dependent on his or her caretakers for a longer period of time. Additionally, extra tuition instruction after school is essential when one seriously considers making progress in the system. This costly undertaking is the most effective way to revise what was (not) taught in class and to foster substantial mutual relations to subject teachers who are giving these extra lessons on their own lessons-shortcomings in order to balance unreliable and low payments cf. Mshomba (2011) and Rajani (2001). Accordingly, a document published by the United Republic of Tanzania and UNESCO (2012) concludes that the direct and indirect costs make it for many prohibitive to simply attend secondary schooling. Since 33,4% Tanzanians live below the "basic needs poverty line cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2013b, p. 22) and some 87,9% lived in 2007 on less than 2 US\$ a day cf. Worldbank (2007) a majority face difficulties to save to be able to cover the expenses needed for schooling.

Phillips and Stambach (2008) state that Tanzanians are aware of the low quality of public schooling, the obstacles students face to acquire skills of quality resulting in low thresholds, its marginal potential for barely existing formal employment and its high costs. Nevertheless, those who can afford it tend to take the chance and send their children to secondary school.

In conclusion, given that picture it still remains unanswered what students do gain through their ordinary-level secondary schooling and which opportunities arise. In following students' adapted preferences I seek to address what they experience in school and consider influential or relevant in being actively engaged in shaping their lives. I therefore choose the case of

Singida town³, which follows a twofold rationale. First, marginal towns like Singida do not receive much of international and scholarly attention as Bryceson (1996) notes. And second, I still maintain close ties with some people there. This allowed me to access the field and conduct interviews not only with relevant adult stakeholders for education but also most importantly with students.

1.3. Cornerstones of formal schooling in Tanzania

Before I outline the research question I briefly outline the general structure and main features of the educational system with special reference to ordinary secondary schooling in Tanzania cf. UNESCO - International Bureau of Education (revised August 2010).

Formal schooling in Tanzania comprises 2 years of pre-schooling and 7 years (referred to as Standard 1-7) of compulsory primary school - *shule ya msingi*. The primary school leaving examination (PSLE) marks the transition point to 4 years of secondary school – *shule ya sekondari* – at ordinary level (O-Level). Students are taught in 9 subjects and in addition they receive religious instruction either in Christianity or in Islam. At the end of the second year they sit for an examination that divides high achievers to the science branch and low achievers to the arts branch, where only 7 subjects (reduced by Chemistry and Physics) are taught. After completion of the whole four years' term, students sit for the 'Certificate of Secondary Schooling Examination' (CSEE) examination. This eventually enables high achievers to continue to 2 years of A-Level (advanced level) secondary schooling. The grades in secondary schooling are referred to as Form 1-6. After those 2 years students may obtain the 'Advanced Certificate of Secondary Schooling

³ Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in the world ranking 152 out of 186 on the Human Development Index (HDI) cf. UNDP - United Nations Development Programme (2013) and Singida is one of Tanzania's poorest regions cf. Dickinson (2008).

Examination' (ACSEE), which marks the end of formal schooling⁴. Both examinations, the CSEE and ACSEE, follow thereby a combination of grades given and totaled points⁵. It is only at these occasions that further continuation in the system is officially put to the test.

Overall achievement is divided into divisions I-IV. Divisions I to III facilitate progress in the system, division IV is a simple pass, and below division IV is a fail. A simple pass at the CSEE allows for continuous training, like vocational training and job related educational courses as well as for employment in a number of state services like primary teacher, low level police and army force, etc. High passes at the CSEE allow to continue with A-Level schooling, where a simple pass at the ACSEE allows for higher level services, like teaching at secondary level as a substitute teacher and taking further training to become a full secondary teacher. A high division at the ACSEE provides for an internationally recognized university entry certificate. The medium of instruction at primary level is Kiswahili where English is taught in one course from Standard three onwards. From post-primary schooling onwards the medium of instruction is English.

1.4. Research focus & Questions

My aim is to explore what students in Singida, Tanzania perceive as experienced secondary schooling relevant for fulfilling their needs and intentions.

To do so, I consult the capability approach of Amartya Sen (1985), which offers the rationale to link actors' doings and beings to opportunities that are valued for sustaining and promoting well-being and agency. In this sense this framework can be consulted to inform assessments of self-fulfilment. Its main features - doings and beings as well as the valuation grounds of well-being and agency - remain loosely demarcated concepts,

⁴ For more information on the educational system in Tanzania see:
<http://www.sacmeq.org/sacmeq-members/tanzania-mainland/schooling-fact-sheet>

⁵ For more information see: http://www.bibl.u-szeged.hu/oseas_adsec/tanzania.htm

allowing for specification through assessing involved peoples' own estimations. Providing a subjective, situational and contextual picture, findings of this study are expected to reveal insight into experienced schooling and conduct of life in Singida. Facilitated by an inductive methodology the purpose is to reconstruct social constructions on the value of schooling through the perspective of actually involved students and admit their voices to an academic discourse.

First, I give a brief overview of the circumstances in which secondary schooling takes place in the visited schools in Singida. Having this background information I can pursue the specific research questions of this dissertation, which are:

1. *In what sense does secondary schooling depict its worth for involved students' self-fulfillment?*
 - a. *What is the value of being in school and how do students consider secondary schooling related to their development aspirations?*
 - b. *What are influential factors on and forms of students exerting agency in school?*
 - c. *What is the designated use of school induced capabilities that students mention?*

The sphere within which I seek answers to these questions embraces students' activities in terms of self-fulfillment inside school - school propaedeutic - and outside school - world propaedeutic cf. Hopmann and Künzli (1994). As a consequence, this exploratory, micro-level study contributes to scholarly knowledge in the field of comparative educational research cf. Adick (2008). Based on qualitative interviews conducted with secondary school students, this study sheds light on what involved young people disclose about secondary schoolings' relevance for their activities in well-being and agency.

1.5. The structure of this study

This introduction (Chapter 1.) framed the research problem and outlined the questions that shall be examined in the following chapters. In Chapter 2, I elaborate on the interdisciplinary theoretical framework of this study, and discuss the concepts of “capabilities”, the key element of Amartya Sen’s capability approach to welfare economics; the sociological theory of “multiple realities” by Schuetz (1945) and the educational theory of practical schooling’s value in terms of “propaedeutic” by Hopmann and Künzli (1994). In Chapter 3 I review the historical development of secondary education in Tanzania and reflect on the state of the field as well as on the linkages between the present study and existing academic literature in the field. In this regard, the main research strands concern human capital and rights’ assessments, ethnological research and capability-based studies. Chapter 4 discusses in detail the methodological path of this work (i.e. all steps undertaken to answer these questions) which draws heavily on the constructivist concept of grounded theory by Charmaz (2009) and ends with a reflection on the data analyzing process. Chapter 5 sets the scene for the empirical analysis by introducing the reader to the contextual reality of secondary schools in Singida, Tanzania from an ethnological perspective as well as from firsthand information gained by interviewing teachers and other stakeholders. This empirical narrative sheds light on the circumstances in which secondary schooling takes place in the visited schools in Singida.

Chapter 6 constitutes the main empirical chapter presenting the processed qualitative data from students’ interviews in the form of an induced theory. Secondary schooling is hereby approached firstly as *a valued form of being*, secondly as *students exerting agency, their commitment and effort* and thirdly as *two functional capabilities that stand out in students’ accounts, namely English and Mathematics*. Finally, Chapter 7 pulls the strings together and discusses the worth of experienced secondary schooling for involved students’ self-fulfillment (research question 1: In what sense does secondary schooling depict its worth for involved students’ self-fulfillment?)

More specifically, Section 7.1. discusses *Secondary schooling – the value of being in school* (research question 1.a: What is the value of being in school and how do students consider secondary schooling related to their development aspirations?).

Section 7.2. focuses on *Exerting agency in school* (research question 1.b: What are influential factors on and forms of students exerting agency in school?).

Section 7.3. elaborates on *two basic capabilities - English and Mathematics* (research question 2.c: Which is the designated use of school induced capabilities that students mention?). The study closes by discussing how the acquired knowledge could be extended and poses questions for future research.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter I discuss the conceptual implications to study secondary schooling's relevance to students' ability to act.

The capability approach provides a rational to assess education in regard to its value for receivers' agency and well-being realization. To specify, I draw on Amartya Sen's version of the capability approach, which offers a normative theory. It is constitutional to the human development paradigm cf. Ziai (2004, p. 119), it informs social policy formulation and it is a contribution to welfare economics cf. Arrow (1999), Atkinson (1999) as well as to philosophical works in Theories of Justice. The approach is originating from Sen's critique on utilities and Rawls' theory of justice.

The capability approach is ought to provide a framework applicable to assessments aiming to generate pluralistic information about actors' self-fulfillment in agency and well-being. Self-fulfillment is defined as acting on behalf of free choice of valued opportunities, which can be social, economic, judicial, normative, etc. Therefore, it provides a multi-disciplinary appropriate framework that is unrestricted to neither study fields nor social contexts. Study fields in which the capability approach is applied to are gender, poverty, famine, inequality and education. The idea is to assess peoples' voices and admit these to developmental debates on their own behalf. However, the capability approach can be combined with theories and methods. This allows disputing empirical findings from different perspectives and against various theoretical norms. Either way, it can be applied to individual or group evaluation, as well as in social evaluation with the aim to foster policy formulation.

In the following, I begin with examining the field of educational assessments (section 2.1.) and scrutinize the contributing aspects of the capability approach in detail (section 2.2.). I end this chapter with an outline of the conceptual underpinnings in operationalizing the approach to conduct the qualitative inquiry (section 2.3.) of this study.

2.1. The field of educational assessments

The capability approach adds to the two well-established rationales, namely the human rights approach and the human capital approach. These two deduce personal welfare from 'primary goods' resp. from utilizable 'commodities' cf. Sen (1985); (1993, 1995b). To illustrate the value of applying the capability framework I discuss these two approaches and outline the gap its contribution by providing a framework to address actor's well-being and agency directly cf. Tikly and Barrett (2011), Robeyns (2006), Walker (2006).

2.1.1. Primary goods and the Human rights approach to education

Sen (1995c) considers "primary goods" such as rights and entitlements like e.g. quality education as the common grounds to act on. They are of intrinsic worth to its receivers. In the case of education of good quality, the provision of this entitlement mirrors the right of everyone to enjoy a full course of basic education, regardless to one's sex, ethnicity, abilities, wealth, etc. Citizens claim such legal rights to e.g. education and to just educational chances from their governments, which represent political ends cf. Bhalalusesa (2005). The policies to provide these, for example in Tanzania, follow international conventions like the *Education for All (EFA)* by the UNESCO⁶, the *Millennium Development Goals (MDG's)* by the UN⁷ and the achievement of *Universal Primary Education (UPE)*⁸. However, even though legally granted the educational quality provided in schools is often criticized of lacking decisively behind of what is promised. In the case of Tanzania, affiliated scholars urge for the improved implementation of quality standards cf. ADEA-Report by Osman (2005, p. 31). The human rights approach is therefore providing a tool to monitor and develop quality aspects of educational provision.

⁶ For further information see: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/education-for-all/>

⁷ For further information see: <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

⁸ For further information see for example: <http://www.unicef.org/mdg/education.html>

Yet, the focus on rights or means does not fully give account of what people actually receive; how they can make use of those right which are claimable; and if equally granted entitlements foster equity in benefiting from them. The plurality of choices made by diverse actors to meet their own interests and needs exceeds those common grounds of primary goods in diversity. Hence, there is no distinct clarity of their value in different contexts and in relation to different specific factors and needs. It remains widely unsettled whether awarded entitlements are actually in reach for diverse people to meet their specific needs and how rights equate to real opportunities on these grounds to benefit cf. Sen (1995c, p. 7).

"[A] person who has a disability can have more primary goods (in the form of income, wealth, liberties, and so on) but less capability (due to the handicap). To take another example, this time from poverty studies, a person may have more income and more nutritional intake, but less freedom to live a well nourished existence because of a higher basal metabolic rate, greater [...] vulnerability to parasitic diseases, larger body size, or simply because of pregnancy." (Sen, 1995c, p. 8)

2.1.2. Commodities and the Human Capital approach to education

Education in terms of skills and knowledge is understood as being of foremost of instrumental and economic worth. Educational outcomes and certificates equate to given forms of return in terms of employment by the formal labor market and wage earning cf. Robeyns (2006). A specific living standard is deducted from achieving certain levels of educational outcomes. Education is seen as a crucial economic asset and an investment promises calculable monetary return, both for the individual and for the society or economy at large. Accordingly, the human capital perspective provides important valuation grounds for education to set a relation between the functionality of educational outcomes and the ability of a person to generate income. From a macro perspective education alters the characteristics of human resources, who are meant to sustain a society's economic endeavor. An example of a tracer study conducted by Mukyanuzi (2003) and further computed by Al-Samarrai and Reilly (2008) examines this worth. However, by assessing secondary

schooling in Tanzania they find that former students just acquire weak skills. Additionally, such skills are of no specific significance for formal employment on a literally non-existent labor market or for the social development of the students.

Hence, the focus on certain achievements is limited, because these do not possess the same economic instrumental worth for everyone everywhere. Moreover, achievements do not sufficient shed light on benefiting from education in all "cultural, social and non-material dimensions of life" Robeyns (2006, p. 72).

2.1.3. Conclusion

Education approached through the lenses of means such as rights and resources and achievements and outcomes are important measures. These allude to well-being and agency, while their valuation rests on predefined schemata proposing clear outlines of quality and for development cf. Sen (1995c, p. 8). But there is a gap in directly approaching the actual benefiting through education. To bridge this gap Sen is seeking to address agency and well-being needs and intentions directly. With the help of capabilities he puts the focus on the ability to redeem a widening range of opportunities that maintain progressive self-actualization. In providing for the merging rational, capabilities take account of the usability of enjoyed entitlements and the broadened scope of redeemable opportunities that provide for achievements cf. Hart (2012), Robeyns (2006), Saito (2003), Unterhalter (2003b), Walker (2005), Walker and Unterhalter (2007). The capabilities' evaluative space to educational assessments rests on valuation grounds that derive from actors' needs and intentions in their specific living contexts. This perspective is directed at expanding peoples' freedom to self-fulfillment, conceiving the acting individuals as ends.

In the following I begin with outlining what capabilities are and then argue for the contribution of the capability approach to educational assessments in more detail.

2.2. Sen's version of the Capability Approach

2.2.1. A definition of Capabilities

Sen (1997, p. 1960) outlines capabilities in terms of:

- "- their direct relevance to the well-being and freedom of people;*
- their indirect role through influencing social change; and*
- their indirect role through influencing economic production".*

Functionings

First, as initial point of elaboration we begin with considering valued doings and beings of a person, which are called functionings. Functionings are achieved and at one's disposal; the functionings are not predefined, they are heterogeneous and comprise all kinds of qualities. For example: being enrolled in school and knowing how to read.

Value

Well-being and agency are the central reference points of one's actions in the capabilities' logic. According to the capability approach, an actor values achieved functionings, opportunities and choices that are enhancing his or her fulfillment of well-being and agency. Well-being is defined as someone's physical and mental integrity. It represents an actor's fundamental needs to be well-nourished, healthy and resilient. Agency is more broadly conceptualized, defined as acting and deciding on one's own behalf. It comprises one's intentions, interests, ideas or aims that are put into action by purposely operating and judging within in social, political, environmental etc. contexts.

Concluding, agency and well-being are considered to comprise the multidimensional valuation grounds that actors refer to when acting in their contextual realities. Hence, well-being and agency are seen constitutional for actors' reasoning. Decisions made under this dualistic disposition can have shared aspects and aims but also cause conflict in sustaining both of them.

To clarify, let us consider an example brought forth by Walker (2010, p. 120) for a decision in the capability's sense:

"These goals might not necessarily make an individual happier or more comfortable, but they are reached through reasoned reflection. [...] A] person might choose to work for a voluntary organization offering medical care in a war zone, rather than working in a peaceful suburban medical practice. They demonstrate agency in choosing between equally valued options but may compromise their well being working in a zone of danger."

To summarize so far, functionings, doings and beings, stand for skills and dispositions. These are valuable, if they enable a person to sustain his or her well-being and agency. Hence, functionings stand for achievements in well-being and agency and they are preconditions for capabilities.

From Opportunities to Freedom

Achieved functionings alone are not seen as sufficient for comprehensively approaching actors' self-fulfillment. To do so, it is necessary to embrace the choice of opportunities one has to actually apply what one knows and can do.

Opportunities are valued in sustaining well-being and agency. In order to benefit from opportunities, two conditions have to be met. Firstly, opportunities have to be in reach. This derives from one's valued functionings and their possible combinations. These are covering one's choice. For example let us consider a student and youth of the same age in a rural setting in Tanzania. The student is enrolled in school and knows how to read, while the other one is illiterate and obliged to sustain his life by working on the fields. Accordingly, the student has a broadened range of choice and opportunities, because in addition he has the chance to study by engaging with different kinds of knowledge and instruction. Secondly, the choice of opportunities has to be realizable. This depends on 'conversion factors'. Broadly defined conversion factors encompass personal characteristics, entitlements and means, social as well as economic conditions and arrangements. Accordingly, opportunities are constituted of an actor's combinable doings and beings, while their realization is significantly influenced by 'conversion factors'. In sum, the realizable choice of

opportunities is referred to as freedom. Freedom is relevant to well-being and agency and has a central role in the capabilities perspective.

Sen outlines that the ability to freely combine functionings depends on "[t]he positive freedoms in a general sense (the freedom "to do this," or "to be that")" (1985, p. 201) and on the negative freedoms, which are subsumed under the concept of 'conversion factors' (like 'basic entitlements', 'institutionalized rights'). These two definitions stand behind the dynamic concept of freedom to choose and give evidence of the extent of freedom enjoyed. Freedom is a fundamental aspect of self-fulfillment and it is decisive for one's quality of life.

Well-being freedom is the freedom to sustain one's well-being in particular. Agency freedom is of "open conditionality" and relates to a person's freedom to judge what "to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important" Sen (1985, p. 203). These freedoms shed light on the extent to fulfill his or her potentials in the context of social arrangements, such as institutions. For example, even if the female student from above is enrolled to school and knows to read, it are the social or political conditions that further determine whether she is free to benefit from her acquired skills outside of school like a boy.

Capabilities

"It is this actual freedom that is represented by the person's 'capability' to achieve various alternative combinations of functionings. [...] person may have the same capability as another person, but nevertheless choose a different bundle of functionings in line with his or her particular goals. Furthermore, two persons with the same actual capabilities and even the same goals may end up with different outcomes because of differences in strategies or tactics that they respectively follow in using their freedoms." (Sen, 1995c, p. 8)

Capabilities address the constitutive elements of an actor's well-being and agency self-fulfillment. These encompass sets of functionings – the capacity to act – at a person's command that are applicable to a realizable choice of unspecified opportunities. The redemption of opportunities equates to outcomes, which in turn broaden one's sets of functionings and subsequently widen the choice of opportunities. Hence, the assessment of one's capabilities

allows obtaining a diversified and comprehensive view on an actor's capacity to act and on means and factors that influence one's choice and realization of opportunities.

Capabilities relation to means and achievements

Sen points out that capabilities have to be "distinguished both from the means that sustain it and from the achievements that it sustains" (1995c, p. 12). Both are relevant for one's well-being and agency fulfillment, and therefore aspects of the capability rational. On one hand, primary goods or entitlements such as legal and civil rights to quality education are important intrinsic aspects in providing for one's choice of realizable opportunities. On the other hand, commodities stand for the instrumental value of education, marking achievements and personal functionings of certain quality and applicability. Vaughan identifies capabilities'

"three main advantages over comparison of levels of access or outcomes. First, it provides a wider vision of individual rights to the human capital focus on economic productive capacities. Second, capabilities, as opposed to functionings, are able to reflect the importance of individual autonomy and choice. Last, rather than placing emphasis on resources available to an individual, the approach takes into account the ability of an individual to convert resources into functionings". (2007, p. 113)

Accordingly, the assessment of capabilities includes the consideration of available means like primary goods, resources and entitlements in relation to their intended use for people's opportunities. Rights are to be equally guaranteed to and convertible by everyone, because they are providing the preconditions to expand capabilities and to the realization of opportunities in reach. But capabilities exceed the focus on equally granted means by shedding light on how different people actually may make sufficient use of those and benefit. For example, it is not certain how two students in the same class who have access to a range of good textbooks can benefit from these. For one student the books are written in her mother tongue, leaving her with no difficulties to access content. For the other, having migration background, reading in this language is hardly mastered. Content is for the second student not easily accessible and class instruction is not experienced to be supportive

enough for her to catch up with this deficit. Therefore, those students differently benefit from having access to the same entitlements and therefore command a different level of capability. Hence, capabilities are consulted to widen the breadth and to increase the impact of the rights' approach to education quality as this perspective allows for a more comprehensive view on the impact legally and morally awarded educational rights. Capabilities "constitute basic freedoms in themselves and can be seen as ethical basis of rights in education" Tikly and Barrett (2011, p. 7).

Furthermore, assessing capabilities also addresses achievements, which are arising from the realization of opportunities. Apposite to sole assessments of ends like achievements and outcomes, this point of view is also elucidating on the choices taken as well as possibilities that were enjoyed to attain these cf. Sen (1995c, p. 8). To clarify, let us carry on the example from before. Despite differently benefiting from having access to the same books in the first place, both students achieve the same medium grade at the final tests of the academic year. The student with migration background was putting enormous effort and devoted a lot of her leisure time to catch up to understand content and finally perform well. The other student could play on her eloquent mastery of the language and simply engage in fulfilling homework. She had her leisure time at her disposal and could spend it with engaging in other activities like learning an instrument or doing sports. In terms of capabilities, the one student mastering the language has a broader range of opportunities. She commands more choices related to her activities and enjoys more freedom to act even though she is achieving the same outcome at the task in question. Accordingly, Sen perceives capabilities as an expansion to the point of view of commodities and the human capital approach cf. (1997). The capability approach provides an inclusive framework cf. Andresen, Otto, and Ziegler (2010), Saito (2003) and Walker (2006); (2008, 2010) allowing to address the value of education for activities in well-being and agency sustainment in diverse social spheres for people with different needs and intentions, exceeding the focus on comparable achievements.

Put together, the capability framework takes the available means or resources as well as a person's achievements into account. As such means

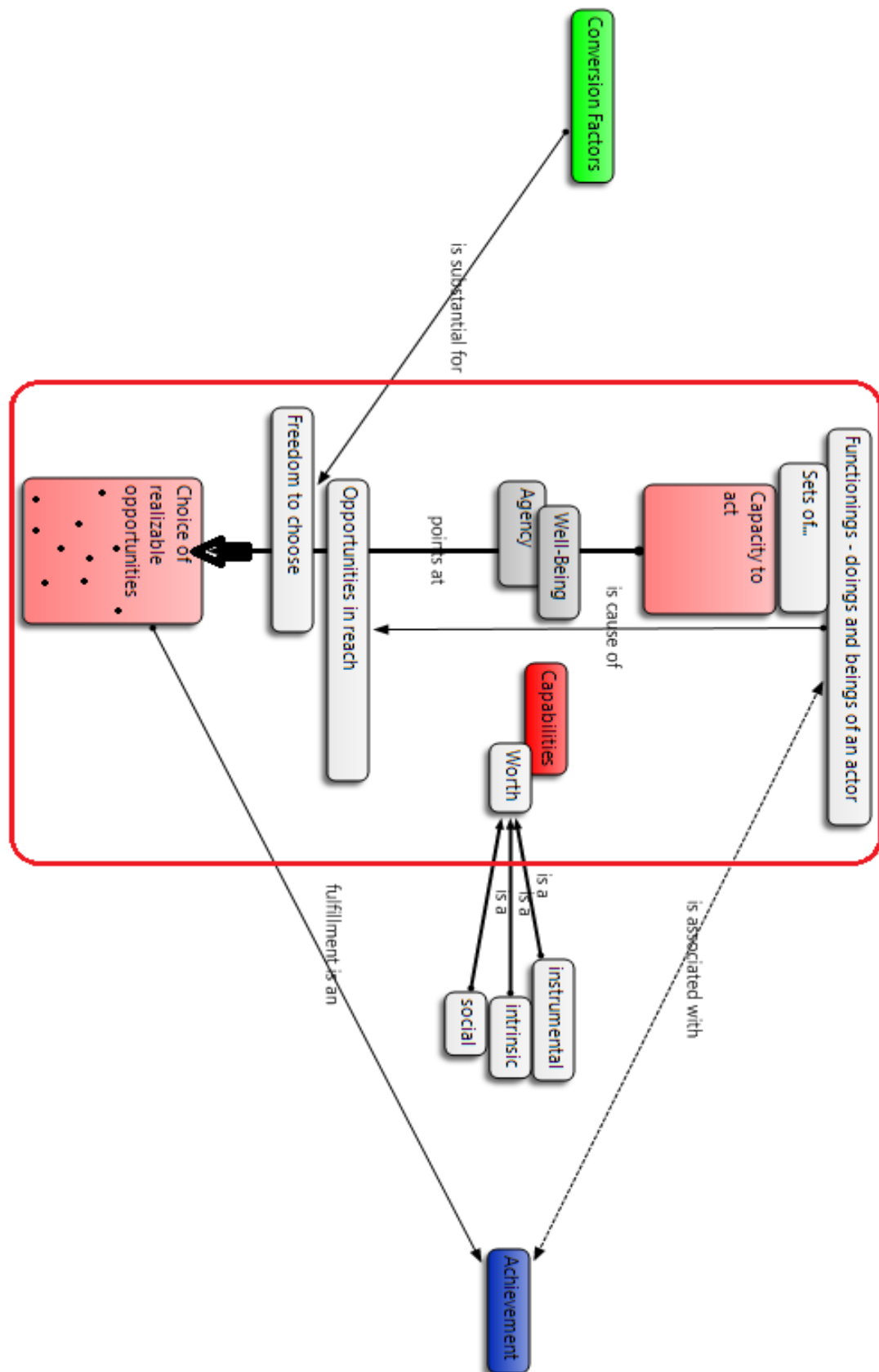
have impact on the ability to operate with an achieved set of functionings. Together, these provide an actor with a choice of realizable opportunities. The realization of such opportunities marks achievements, which are adding to the set of achieved functionings. Like that the scope of possible opportunities broaden, which allows one to alter the self-realization in terms of well-being and agency. This prescribes a dynamic, which is illustrated in the graphic below.

The worth of capabilities

As a result, capabilities are seen as acknowledging "all roles of education" (Robeyns, 2006, p. 80). These are defined being threefold. Firstly, Robeyns points out that education from a capabilities perspective is considered being of intrinsic are value. For example, schooling can promote self-confidence and enhancing self-estimation. It can nurture basic dispositions such as the capacity to make choices and to come to decisions by taking various aspects into account or to argue and balance reasoning and can promote skills and learning that are valued for their own sake. In addition, capabilities can also be of functional and social worth cf. Walker (2010, p. 121). Secondly, the instrumental worth refers to capabilities that directly serve pursuing an aim and being applicable. For example, commanding basic mathematical operations are serving the aim to learn more about complex exercises. And thirdly, capabilities of social worth sustain the "lives of others and instrumentally make social arrangements more effective" concludes Walker (2010, p. 119). Individually enjoyed freedoms are necessarily a social product, maintained by capable and cooperating actors who constitute social relations and institutionalized arrangements. Schooling is considered foundational in leading actors to being able to socially participate and for providing sustaining members of society.

Capabilities accentuate the dialectical relation between the worth of individual and social action. This prescribes Sen's philosophical grounding of capabilities, which is in the literature referred to as 'ethical individualism'. The central concern derives from the Aristotelian idea of "Eudaimonia in terms of valued activities" (Sen, 1993, p. 18). Eudaimonia is setting out from the assumption that if "one is to be able to strive for the fulfillment of personal

potentials, one must be free to choose those courses of action seen as most promising for furthering actualization" added by Waterman (1981, p. 4). And as afore mentioned the freedom to choose decisively depends on social arrangements like institutions, which are constituted by individual actors who are mutually arranging themselves. Such social arrangements in reality are not fairly or equally beneficial to all members of a society. Hence, the 'freedom of choice' should continuously be scrutinized and negotiated. The capability approach can therefore offer a frame to assess actors' extent fulfill intentions, with the aim to include those assertions in public debate and gradually evolve the freedom to do so.



Concluding remarks

Sen outlines that a "person's capability set can be defined as the set of functioning vectors within his or her reach" (1985, p. 201). "Vectors" are synonym for achieved doings and beings – the capacity to act – linked to valued and realizable opportunities in reach. The redemption of opportunities is dependent on personal characteristics, socio-economic and environmental contexts as well as entitlements. Therefore, capabilities offer a broad and adaptable multidimensional perspective to assess individuals' ability to act in regard to their experienced freedoms. Development seen from the perspective of self-actualization puts the focus one's ability to choose freely. School related capabilities in particular allude to the quality of education provided. This is assessed on the basis of functionings conveyed through formal education, entitlements and means enjoyed and the possibilities students have to benefit from these, also outside of school. As a result of this benefiting, schools progressive aim is to further nurture students' developing capacity to act and broaden their sphere – opportunity choice – to make use of these.

2.2.2. The capability approach

Assessing capabilities puts the focus of an evaluation on actors' self-actualization in well-being and agency, which is set to be the common goal of capable actors. The approach provides a framework to assess functionings in relation to valued but undefined opportunities that an actor considers beneficiary. Capabilities are conveyed by social arrangements like institutions that are built upon mutual consideration. At best, these arrangements are subjected to continuous revision and evolvement, directed at evolving towards the enabling of equitable self-actualization for everyone. They are perceived as providing for the stage of negotiable freedom cf. Ziai (2004). The freedom to choose between valued opportunities is the central capability objective, which gradual evolvement is seen paramount for everyone's ability to act equitably and intentionally. Hence, assessing school related capabilities

maintains an evaluation of schooling that sheds light on the functionings it conveys and the resources and entitlements it actually provides. Approaching schooling from this perspective directly addresses its value for students' self-fulfillment in terms of a realizable choice of opportunities.

The contested perception of education in the capability approach

Sen (1997, 2002) considers education a good in itself, see also Saito (2003, p. 22). Sen defines "schooling as being central to the expansion of human capability" (2002, p. 2). Accordingly, schooling is considered conveying valued doings and beings that maintain a range of opportunities and activities, which are essential to human self-actualization. In this sense it contributes to one's overall ability to act, enabling one to benefit and achieve various kinds of valued outcomes in one's social contexts cf. Young (2009, p. 260). Sen maintains a positive picture of schooling and conceives it a worthwhile engagement. He portrays it as an unquestioned asset, widening the range of opportunities in reach, hence one's freedom in the present as well as in the future cf. Unterhalter (2003a, p. 10).

However, Sen's perception of schooling is contested. Tao (2010, p. 2) points out: "the links between education and [the] capability approach are somewhat 'under-theorized' [...] and Sen also does not make a distinction between 'education' and 'schooling'". In his writings quality of schooling and education are simply referred to as reading and writing. Accordingly, educational scholars like Andresen et al. (2010), Saito (2003, p. 22), Unterhalter (2003a, 2003b, 2012), Walker (2006, 2010) challenge Sen's approach criticizing that it just offers a generalized and vaguely held picture of what education or schooling actually is, stands for and should aim at. They argue that after all the capability approach is a normative framework in promoting well-being and agency. However, it does not explicitly engage with the normativity that is inherent in the educational business itself. It does not identify and settle on school related processes, methods and theories of learning nor teaching which are aligned to establish certain qualities that may enhance students development and be supportive for overcoming deprivations. Hence, the provision of educational opportunities to children and youth is not automatically of their advantage – conveys valued doing and

beings – as "[s]chooling can and in some cases does contribute to capability deprivation, often through reproducing existing inequalities" (Tikly & Barrett, 2011, p. 7). Unterhalter (2003a) finds that schooling in some cases does significantly deprive a person from well-being and agency as she shows in her article on South African school girls who are at high risk of rape and HIV/Aids infection by attending school due to assault from fellow male students and teachers.

As a result scholars like Robeyns (2006), Tikly and Barrett (2011) question if using Sen's capability approach can comply with the proclaimed density by taking the complexities of social life and arrangements comprehensively into account. Furthermore, they object whether it can step out of the familiar grounds of scientific discourse. In order to face and work on certain social and educational matters the aforementioned scholars argue in favor of the application of capabilities in combination with social theories and methodologies. Unterhalter (2003a, p. 8) urges: "[t]hese theories need to be viewed not just as background context to an evaluative space, but as having profound implications for how that space is understood". As such these would allow to settle on capabilities that should be evolved and align education and what happens in schools to meet certain quality demands. Nussbaum who spearheads the philosophical dispute with Sen is criticizing that he did not finalize what he began. She induces on a list of ten normative core values, which she finds being constitutive to human development aiming for human flourishing. Those form the inherent basis of her continuing work on higher education, gender and development. It is her intention to provide a common ground for "a decent world culture capable of addressing world's most pressing problems" Nussbaum (2010, p. 7). She similarly considers education is being crucial in 'Cultivating Humanity' (1997, 2010).

In response to this critique Sen defends his perception of the capability approach in not claiming for predefined qualities an actor should value and strive for. In principle, he encourages enriching the capability approach with various theories and objectives. This yields a possible alteration of the framework, yet he defends under-theorizing the framework twofold. Firstly, the capability approach is not meant to rely on only one perspective and, secondly, it is not requiring predefined outlooks for development. It can and is

meant to be a pluralistic framework to assess development and not a development theory. Despite being normative, it is a deliberately open, purposely not predefined but 'archetype theory' and comparative approach cf. Sen (1993, p. 17). Its scope is to give unspecified aspects of human life and of social arrangements an informational space to emerge and converge into relevant discourses. Being under-theorized therefore aims at the usability of the approach. It shall be applicable to the diverse needs in human welfare according to individual's own valuation and relevant to their actual living conditions. These mark the initial points from where human self-actualization continuously progresses. The capability approach can be useful to foster successive public participation, aiming to make various assertions on valued capabilities and freedoms being heard in relevant discourses.

The decision for applying Sen's version of the capability approach

My aim is to learn about experienced secondary schooling in Singida, Tanzania. I find it promising to apply the inclusive evaluative space of capabilities, because it allows assessing valued school related aspects in regard to their perceived relevance for involved students' self-sustaining activities. Herein rests the potential of Sen's version, whose 'under-theorized' approach is not emphasizing on any predefined objectives and positions of what school should provide. Additionally, the capability approach is integrating means - enjoyed rights and entitlements within and outside of school - and their utilization within a single interpretational rational. It allows for a diversified examination of experienced schooling in a specific context where "not all individuals participate or benefit from education in the same way, nor be able to convert the resources afforded by education to generate the same or similar advantages in life" (Hart, 2012, p. 276).

Insights into valued capabilities, functionings and opportunities are socially constructed and are relevant to and within assessed actors' situational and embedded definitions. Despite that the perspective taken is affirmative towards involved actor's assertions and a-historical there are no social and philosophical contracts anticipated. The focus is on actions that serve the people involved, viewed through the lens of capabilities' aspects. In this study it are the students who are the authorities on behalf of their own

self-actualization, constituting the valuation schema of their actions and choices on behalf of their definitions of well-being and agency. Their assertions of well-being and agency fulfillment as well as obstacles and limits experienced mark the horizon of the frame of reference of assessed capabilities. The gained conceptual re-construction what student perceive in terms of schooling from a capability perspective can therefore inform further development efforts and public deliberation.

2.3. Operationalizing the Capability Approach

In the following section I outline the aspects that are considered in the analysis of the empirical data. In order to apply the capability approach I additionally consult the concept of Multiple Realities (Schuetz, 1945) and of practical school propaedeutics (Hopmann & Künzli, 1994). These serve to define notions that are central to assessment of this study.

2.3.1. The notion of 'schooling' in this study

I am interested in what students in Singida perceive as school related capabilities, hence the experienced formal education that they consider relevant for their activities. I refer to experienced formal education as 'schooling', which shall cater the inside perspective of students giving meaning to what they synchronically encounter in class.

Conceptually, I consider Schuetz (1945) being useful to prescribe shared spaces such as 'schooling'. According to his work on *Multiple Realities* reality is perceived through diverse 'finite provinces of meaning', which are constituted by previous experiences. Actors act within various provinces simultaneously; such have their particular structure, rules and cognitive patterns; and in such experiences are peculiarly valued and consistently aligned. The meaning bestowed on experiences and actions may

considerably change between such provinces. Schuetz outlines that actors "organize the different spatial perspectives [...] through working acts" (p. 537). A conscious "I" attends the unbroken continuum of reality through a dynamic of modifications and associational activities within diverse provinces. "Working" stands for the intended activity of performing and of deliberate spontaneity facilitating the integration of the "past, present and future" and the joint collaboration with others. An actors divers provinces and valued results are interrelated through working acts.

This finds equation in capabilities, which mark the various functionings of a person in regard to an undefined array of opportunities. From the capabilities point of view, the province of 'schooling' is a social arrangement where learning shall be induced and students are supposed to make educational experiences of value. The value of such inducements and experiences derives from their relevance to actors – students – in realizing their well-being and agency, within this very province and for the receiver as a whole. In talking about schooling and its value, interviewed students refer to aspects of social life that are commonly encountered. Based on such shared experiences, their aggregated explanations feature common characteristics and shed light on a socially constructed definition of schooling in Singida.

2.3.2. School related capabilities

In assessing capabilities I focus on two aspects that are related to capability expansion through schooling. "One is the expansion of a child's capacity or ability [...] and...the other is the expansion in opportunities that a child has" Saito (2003, p. 27). For an assessment these "offer different types of information, [...] which... are not mutually exclusive and can often be combined" (Tao, 2010, p. 2). Using the capabilities' currency for education, they provide pluralistic information. The capacity to act and the redemption of opportunities to achieve well-being and agency is situated in the present. Realized functionings, in terms of well-being and agency, have their immediate significance in regard to experienced living conditions. While the latter reflects

a person's choice of opportunities in well-being and agency; consequently approached as capability set. This marks a range of various forthcoming forms of acting and being, hence various forms of realizable functionings and opportunities, which stand for opportunity freedom. This alludes to the potential future worth of schooling through maintaining the progressive evolvment of capabilities; such are based on the continuous broadening of the range of beings and doings as well as opportunities to apply these.

As we have seen, opportunities - the freedom to choose which functionings to apply - are crucial aspects of educational capabilities and their expansion. Therefore, I also want to pay attention to potential future opportunities and students' anticipated development outlook through schooling. Future opportunities and expectations are not directly observable, due to the fact that they are not (yet) realized. However they stand for a range of possibilities that might be achievable in the future and give meaning to present actions and efforts. Aspirations depict "the notion of becoming" (Warrington & Kiragu, 2012, p. 304) and indicate on a time element of capabilities in relation to schooling. Accordingly, Walker (2010, p. 124) states that education "ought to make it at least possible for students to act on the future differently". In the same vein, Saito (2003, p. 25) understands formal education as aiming for "the freedom the child will have in the future" and limiting the freedom of choice that students experience in the present. Students depend on guiding adults who make decisions on their behalf; they have to follow school's content, which may manifest its relevance not before its progression or showing instrumental, intrinsic or social worth when applied (later on). Nonetheless, the "life choices [which] students will make beyond formal education" (Walker, 2010, p. 124) can not be foreseen and are depended on various school and non-school related influences, neither how valued school learned abilities eventually apply to (future) life challenges or opportunities. Realistic school-related aspirations are here considered as a range of possible opportunities at the time when students are involved in assessing their capabilities through schooling. Yet the anticipated progress towards reaching future opportunities mirrors the manifold and multipurpose personal development through education. Therefore, I consider aspirations a worthy aspect of present life in regard to capabilities. Even though they might

not be (fully) realized like "becoming a mathematician or a physicist through learning mathematics" as Saito (2003, p. 27) emphasizes. These allow anticipating the future applicability of what is learned currently in school and making the present struggle there worthwhile.

"[T]he term aspirations evokes the idea of a person's life dreams; how one could have a "good life" with the resources of health, material benefits, creativity and agency one has available. It speaks to ideals, ambitions, longings—achievements which would make life worthwhile and which would transcend the daily struggle for survival." And further, "[a]spirations could possibly be seen as [...] the range of capabilities [a person] could potentially choose from." (Conradie, 2013, p. 3 ff.)

2.3.3. Conversion factors


Another important aspect of the assessment are 'conversion factors' cf. Tikly and Barrett (2011, p. 8). Within this the all-embracing category the capability approach includes factors – such as means, entitlements, and resources – in its assessment. These shed light on specific social norms, material and cultural circumstances as well as personal characteristics and show relevance on a person's ability to redeem opportunities and one's ability to act. The "individual background context gives information on personal, social or environmental factors that interact to influence the ability of an individual learner to convert resources into a capability set for learning" (p. 30). Warrington and Kiragu (2012) describe 'conversion factors' as experienced positive and negative freedom that affects one's capabilities. Such factors allude to one's freedom to choose within school settings and may foil schooling's aim or purpose to enhance one's capabilities through (personally or shared) experienced inequalities. Experienced inequalities can be such as poverty⁹, child labor, gender or other forms of discrimination are multifaceted and declared 'un-freedoms'.

⁹ Umaskini - the Swahili expression for poverty, that implies more than only financial poverty, but also the lack of and inability to use resources. This tellingly matches Sen's multi dimensional definition of poverty cf. Anand and Sen (1997, p. 4).

2.3.4. School and lifeworld propaedeutics

In assessing school related capabilities I focus on two spheres (provinces) wherein school induced beings and doings can potentially enable opportunities, namely academic or school propaedeutics and life-world propaedeutics. Therefore, I refer to Hopmann and Künzli (1994, p. 170), who outline a topic for curricula planning. Correspondingly, I take the betwixt position on the level of school praxis. For visualization see the matrix below. The emphasis lies on experienced schooling's propaedeutic impact on acquired abilities that show their value by application inside and outside of school. Setting out from the 'province' school, I consider capabilities as the evolving manifestation of abilities and knowledge that are significant for students to deliberately act within school's contingent throughout. Hence, capabilities enable a student to keep up with the requirements in school, progressively achieve and successively build up capabilities that allow further coping and alluding to the final and successful completion of schooling's full course. School related capabilities that are worth for lifeworld propaedeutics sustain students' well-being and agency intentions and needs in their living contexts. These can enable immediate redemption of opportunities or causal preparation, like for future employment or income generation. I follow this logical distinction of capabilities' sphere of utilization when presenting and discussing the data. However, if distinctions are not clear and capabilities show comprehensive effect in both considered provinces I also consider and discuss occurring overlaps.

	Tradition	Transmission	Future
Political	cultural heritage	educational mandate	core problems
Programmatic	secondary curriculum linking	curriculum work	educational planning
Practical	disciplinary propaedeutics	academic propaedeutics	lifeworld propaedeutics



Translation of the aspects of the matrix outlined by Hopmann and Künzli (1994, p. 172).

2.4. Conclusion

In this chapter I outlined the capability approach, which is providing the evaluative framework for this study. The following are aspects that are crucial to the assessment of school related capabilities. The first aspect is functionings, the doings and beings that students gain through their secondary schooling. The second aspect assessed is the potential range of opportunities that students perceive to enjoy, which is yielded by the functionings one commands. Together, functionings at hand and the entailed range of opportunities to apply these form the notion of school related capabilities. Capabilities are valued according to their intrinsic, instrumental and social worth for students' well-being and agency sustainment in whatever contexts and for diverse purpose. By contrasting the capability approach to two other approaches, namely the human capital and the human rights approach, we have further seen that it also allows including actually enjoyed means and variously valued outcomes in an assessment. Therefore, the third assessed aspect is means that students actually enjoy. These are referred to as conversion factors and demarcate the choice of opportunities that one can possibly redeem by applying one's sets of functionings. The fourth aspects are achievements in well-being and agency. These are the various outcomes

that students attain by redeeming school related capabilities. As a result these feed back in the functionings one commands and in the range of opportunities.

These four aspects compose the perspective through which I explore students' experienced secondary schooling in the light of having relevance to their self-actualization inside school and in the lifeworld in Singida, central Tanzania. Within to these two spheres, schooling can enhance but also contribute to depriving students' from sustaining their well-being and their agency. Schooling can have influence immediately or later on in serving as a vehicle of personal aspirations. Put together, this multidimensional perspective allows grasping the pluralistic situational and adapted views from individual students on shared experiences made in school and their lifeworld.

3. State of the Field

The purpose of this chapter is twofold: the first aim is to review existing works that assess secondary schooling with regard to its relevance to human development; and the second is to show how the present study can contribute to the broader academic debate on children's capabilities through education.

To do so, I begin with outlining aspects of the globalized institutional development of schools (section 3.1.) and the historical – and specific – development of formal secondary schooling in Tanzania (section 3.2.). In the following, I discuss research on secondary schooling with a special focus on Africa and Tanzania, by drawing on the human capital approach and the human rights approach (section 3.3.). Like the capability approach, these two approaches relate schooling to human development. I give an overview of findings with a special focus on schooling in the East African region. Subsequently, I sketch the perspective of qualitative methods, by providing examples of small-scale ethnological research conducted in Tanzania (section 3.4.). These reveal rich insights into the relevance of schooling for students who are being actively involved in sustaining their lives in specific contexts and under certain circumstances.

Finally, I review works that adopt the capability approach and use qualitative methods to empirically examine the significance of schooling for peoples' development (section 3.5.). By referring to recent studies from developing countries, I argue for the value of the capabilities' evaluative space in generating additional and valuable information. It enhances our understanding by directly relating one's abilities (gained through schooling) to their sphere of applicability. To do so I focus on the research done in Tanzania and the resulting findings about school-related capabilities, with special reference to secondary education. At the end of this chapter, I briefly summarize the key points made throughout this examination (section 3.6.).

3.1. Globalized formal education and its localized specification

“[I]n the process of integration into the modern world society” Adick (1992, p. 249) countries like Tanzania follow developmental guidelines based on norms of a nation state. Multilateral organizations such as UNESCO, EFA and the WorldBank cf. Kuder (2005) define these guidelines in the form of institutionalized goods – individual and collective – like human rights and formal education of good quality which “exhibit the culture that reflects the dominant culture of a nation” Pigozzi (2006, p. 46).

From a political point of view formal education is brought into position to maintain for macro- and micro economical developmental aspects cf. Meyer and Ramirez (2005, p. 218). It shall serve its recipients to attain dignity by convertible live chances and through social participation. Participation is hereby defined in terms of recognized thoughts, ideas and views and built upon a set of rights and responsibilities, all recognized by a global value system. What is called the ‘pedagogical attention’ to the child is based on the normalized quality of education and schools. This educational quality is supposed to have positive effect on the life quality of its citizens cf. Meyer and Ramirez (2005, p. 225). From a macro perspective, formal education provides the basis for the acquisition of ‘good citizenship’ in a nation that follows the ‘world culture’ cf. Meyer (2005). It is perceived being a decisive factor promoting societal prosperity and progressive – economic and social – development.

As a result the ‘modern formalized school’, which is the key to the “project of national development in a new world context” Adick (1992, p. 248), succeeded over other forms of formalized and non-formalized forms of education. Its institutionalization is aligned to a globalized trend and involves the differentiation of education in consecutive subdivisions, the alignment of its processes and systematization, its comparable curricula and certification, the professionalization of teacher education as well as the establishment of state agencies and legal regulations such as compulsory basic education cf. Adick (2003). The proclaimed development scheme follows thereby two main strands, which are of particular interest for this study. One is the maximization

of student enrollment and the other is the maximization of students' proficiency level cf. Meyer (2005, p. 228). Firstly, participation in the course of schooling is defined to be facilitated free of discrimination. This asks for paying special attention to disadvantaged groups like students from poor or as atypical considered cultural, religious and living backgrounds, as well as female students and students with special needs. According to the UNESCO everyone shall have the entitlement to enjoy compulsory schooling quality, which is a human right cf. Pigozzi (2006, p. 43). The corresponding discourse is centered around rights, fairness and justice cf. Meyer and Ramirez (2005, p. 228). Secondly, the maximization of students' proficiency level, which is setting out from the quantitative expansion and is aimed at conveying increasing levels and qualities of certain dispositions and knowledge that can be tested. Quality in formal education is defined around associated standards, achievements, excellence and productivity. In sub-Saharan Africa the maximization of enrollment and students' proficiency level in „literacy, numeracy and facts and skills for life“ (Pigozzi 2006: 44) are consulted to tackle social disparities and weak economic development United Republic of Tanzania (2004).

As outlined in educational policies and Tanzania's development vision cf. Tikly et al. (2003), United Republic of Tanzania (1996, 1999, 2004); United Republic of Tanzania and UNESCO (2012) formal education is ought to promote the westernized model of a successful industrial state by aligning development requirements to the promise of competitiveness on the global market. The implementation of educational development schemes is monitored by national and international large-scale tests such as SACMEQ (The Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality)¹⁰, an equivalent to PISA.

An idiographic point of view reveals that the induced globalized institutional development of formal education receives specification of actual school maintenance on the local level. Aspects like schooling's structure, educational contents and (teaching, learning, organizational) processes as well as outcomes and their values are re-contextualized by local realities cf.

¹⁰ For further information see: www.sacmeq.org

Viechtbauer (2008). In the following, I retrace this specification from a historical perspective as well as through assessments of formal secondary schooling in Tanzania.

3.2. Historical overview of the main developmental shifts in secondary education in Tanzania

3.2.1. Colonial period

Buchert (1994) traces the introduction of formal western primary education by Christian Missionaries in Tanganyika back to the 1840s. In contrast, secondary education "was introduced for the first time to Africans in 1932, and the first 5 boys were sent to Budo Junior Secondary School in Uganda" (P. A. K. Mushi, 2012, p. 62). It has its roots in the British colonial regime, which succeeded the German regime and out of which grew Tanzania by attaining independence in 1961. By then it was "aimed at bringing the students up to the Cambridge Overseas School Certificate standard" as Lohrmann (2007, p. 221) describes. Following an agricultural syllabus including the particular practices of the region, instruction was orientated to the British system, held in English and comprised comparable subjects. Lohrmann (2007, p. 227) finds secondary education aimed to prepare students for "positions in government and non-government services" or as the means to gain access to several vocational, technical and teacher training schools or higher education facilities elsewhere. Out of 8.7 Million Africans living in Tanzania by 1957 a mere of 4.132 African students were enrolled in a total of 28 secondary schools by 1959. Most schools were, up to the 1970's, church-run and mainly accumulated in pleasant regions. Missionaries preferred fertile soils, e.g. around Mount Kilimanjaro cf. Samoff (1979). Singida was in terms of formal schooling already since then a neglected region. Buchert (1994, p. 76) finds that in Singida just a few "boys and only one girl" have enjoyed secondary education during the colonial period and attained a literacy rate of 5% by the

end of colonial rule in 1961. Despite those 'handfuls' sustaining the colonial administrative apparatus in Singida, people were living on subsistence agriculture, depending on barren soils and uncertain rains or on migrant work at the slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro picking coffee.

Buchert (1994, p. 58) finds secondary education ought to provide for a "constant supply of well-educated Africans" working as technicians in professionalized agriculture at "sub-professional grade, executive grades in the civil service, middle management in industry and commerce and teachers" (Buchert, 1994, p. 53). However, the public educational system was by then a segregated system based on race, gender and religion. The African population enjoyed the weakest education, in terms of quality and quantity aspects, and were the most limited in opportunities, hence subjected to the lowest potential for and smallest share in professional employment. They were educated to sustain the in-direct rule policy of the colonial regime but deprived in fulfilling their own ambitions for influence. Nevertheless, people considered secondary education being a vehicle to set one apart from agricultural chores by aiming at clerical work. It was nurturing people's anticipations of achieving a westernized lifestyle, as it was associated with mastering Europeans. Primary education on the other hand was associated with manually working, which was 'reserved' for the Africans. Accordingly, secondary education was referred to as "the promise of a better future, [...] the key to civilization [...] and to improve our own affairs in the modern world [...] which would free the individual from ignorance and the people from the colonial yoke" (Lohrmann (2007, p. 217). This was expressed through petitions send to the UNO before independence.

Herein also rests the dialectic meaning of formal education in colonialism. On one side it was criticized as a means for acculturation and modernization by the adoption of the regime's principles and values such as subordinated employment, productivity, capitalism and citizenship. It aimed at maintaining the needs in manpower as Buchert (1994, p. 69) portrays. On the other side it also proved to be supportive for the Africans in mobilizing voice against the prevailing suppressing system cf. Habte and Wagaw (1999) and to outrun the regime's intention of in-direct rule by voicing their claim for self-governance. One who raised voice was Julius Nyerere, the first Tanzanian

leading the Republic into independence as its first president, who was educated in Great Britain at Edinburgh University.

3.2.2. Socialism and Self-Reliance

Following colonial rule came the period of Socialism and Self-reliance (1962-81). By the implementation of the *Education for Self-Reliance* policy Nyerere put strong emphasis on building up a self-sustaining society. The idea was to base the country on its own resources and seek its economic independence and further development primarily by cash crop agriculture. This should be facilitated by general education through free public primary education. Accordingly, Tanzania saw a huge enrollment expansion through the *Universal Primary Education* (UPE) act, peaking 1981 with "70 per cent net enrollment of the child population" (Buchert, 1994, p. 112). Public secondary education was also expanded and saw an increase in student intake of up to 30% of all primary school leavers by 1963. This was a peak that should not be reached again until 2006. However, secondary education did by far not receive the same funding as primary education, which resulted in very low quality of instruction. According to statistical data provided by the United Republic of Tanzania (2011) this resulted in continuously decreasing transition rate from primary to secondary education with a low of 2,2 % in 1981.

By 1968 the secondary school system was in terms of structure fully formalized according to the British examination and certification system, with 4 years of secondary ordinary level (O-Level) followed by two years of advanced level (A-Level). Up to today this structure is maintained and from 1973 onwards examinations were taken by the *National Examinations Council of Tanzania*¹¹ (NECTA). To fight off regional disparities and disadvantages among well-off and less well-off students, a quota system was installed admitting students according to the number of primary school leavers per region in regard to available places in all schools in the country. This

¹¹ See: <http://www.necta.go.tz/about.html#establishment>

decisively expanded the participation of formerly neglected female students' and of students from weak socio-economic backgrounds of up to 50% of overall student numbers.

Nyerere's thoughts found expression in the ideology of *Ujamaa* cf. Lema, Mbilinyi, and Rajani (2004), through which he aligned formal education to his ideas of a socialist society. Education was awarded a decisive and philosophical role; it was ought to stipulate development efforts for individuals, the society and the country. The public secondary education curriculum was 'Africanized', incorporating both mental and manual work - with a strong impetus on various vocational orientations. Besides, each school had a field at its disposal on which students worked to grow crop. Kiswahili was re-introduced as a compulsory subject as well as the medium of instruction at all levels of schooling and students were taught in political as well as developmental indoctrination. The ideology's aim was to promote a common Tanzanian identity and stressed collective working attitudes towards building up the country. It was opposing the capitalist and elitist values of the colonial regime and propagating citizens' adjunct contribution as a social commitment, subordinating all individuals and regions to serve the overall development of the state. The objective was to even out inequalities and create a sustainable, socialist development path towards complete self-reliance of the Tanzanian state.

Despite the noteworthy increase in student enrollment, secondary education was strictly restricted to proclaimed aims and outlined needs cf. Biswalo (1985). It had the profound function to provide for restricted numbers of skilled manpower to sustain an African administration and economy, as P. A. K. Mushi (2012) portrays. This also included the obligation to serve one year in state service and obtain several years of work experience after secondary education before having the theoretical chance of being admitted to any post-secondary education. Biswalo (1985) found that this basically marked the end of formal education. However, employment opportunities for secondary school leavers were evanescent as prognosticated benefits and progress successively fell behind expectation. The labor market did not receive school leavers and the centralized and rudimentary organized vocational instruction was not applicable to generate neither jobs nor income

in the diverse living circumstances. Moreover, public secondary schools were lacking decisive qualitative and quantitative aspects, such as "trained teachers, book supplies and other equipment" (Buchert, 1994, p. 119). This caused an increasingly growing opposition spearheaded by the political-administrative and intellectual African elite, as well as Tanzanians from economically stronger regions. They objected the disproportional undermining of post primary education, the quota system, the vocationally biased curriculum and the compulsion to social service. Moreover, they felt their opportunities constrained by scarce places in schools, low quality instruction and by being bound to pull the weaker. Through the *Musoma Resolution* (1974) these entry and progress restriction were revised, consequently opening the market for private schools to take over cf. P. A. K. Mushi (2012).

3.2.3. Liberalized economy and globalization

From 1982 onwards, after the fall of the socialist system, public education was subjected to structural adjustment programs and subordinated to the credo of a liberalized market economy. P. A. K. Mushi (2012, p. 206) points at the shift in the country's development strategy from the socialist era, "focused on growth and equity [..to..] growth and efficiency [..encouraging..] private agencies to augment government efforts in the provision of education." Decisive cut-backs in public expenditure on education and cost sharing turned the wheel towards foreign aid dependency and re-introduced growing foreign influence to Tanzania's internal political affairs cf. Kuder (2005). Secondary education had once again to step back as compulsory primary education was re-introduced and bundled almost all attention and expenditure. School fees were reestablished in public schools but again abolished for primary education by 2001. However, this caused an increasing influx of private secondary schools from 1984 onwards, supplying those who could afford it with possibilities for their offspring to avoid public education's shortcomings and engage by trend in focused academic preparation for further higher education. According to statistical data cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2011)

private secondary schools hosted more students than governmental until 1994.

Self-reliance was still consulted to be a cornerstone of public education, but from then onwards with a different connotation. Formal education was consulted to prepare individuals to self-reliantly function within an ever-expanding liberalized market economy. It was set to meet the proclaimed demands on Tanzanians path to become an independent industrialized and globally competitive country, as outlined by Tikly et al. (2003). Secondary education was to satisfy national needs for skilled and further trainable human resources by "science, technology and vocational training [...] to make the best use out of the environment and the country's natural resources" (Buchert, 1994, p. 147). Beginning with the *Jomtien Conference for Education for All* (1990) this was adjusted with the help of multi-lateral aid organizations and expressed by a series of policy issues and sector development plans. Through these secondary education has been continuously aligned in accordance to standards set by international right bodies as well as cost and expense calculations. Formal education was seen as an investment, whose estimated benefit was derived from quality and quantity measures linked to the achievement of certain educational outputs that further equate to the economic utilization of educated human resources. English was reintroduced as the medium of instruction at post-primary level and secondary education solemnly focused on academic preparation, taking the transitional role between compulsory primary education and vocational training or higher education.

Statistical data (United Republic of Tanzania, 2011) reveals that transition rates from primary to secondary education slowly grew from around 5% to just above 10% in 1984 to the year 2002 respectively. But from 2003 onwards, public secondary education experienced a bonanza in student numbers, headed nowadays towards compulsory enrollment of every other succeeding primary school leaver. In 2011 nearly 60% of the students who sat the Primary 'Primary School Leaving Examination' (PSLE) passed and around 90% of them were admitted to a secondary school cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2012a). Nevertheless, infrastructure and qualitative aspects, which were already in a very poor condition, were continuously decreasing. The

alignment of important aspects could not keep pace with the expansion and raised criticism about this one sided outburst. There were increasing concerns about discrepancies between already made policy commitments regarding the triangle of curriculum relevance, appropriate teaching methods and examination procedures and their implementation; all of these areas were seen to be in need of urgent rectification to adjust public education to its acknowledged crucial role in preparing maturing generations to deal with the requirements of a modernizing society cf. Lassibille, Tan, and Sumra (2000), Sumra and Rajani (2006) and Mkumba (2012).

Recent statistics (United Republic of Tanzania, 2012a) regarding Form 4 examination results allow to look at this notable quantitative development from an outcome – qualitative – perspective. Between 2003 and 2007 students' achievement totaled at a fair 10% fail, plus a fair 50% of lowest grade achievement. This shifted towards a fair 50% fail, plus a 40% of lowest grade achievement by 2010. Students who sat at the CSEE have quadruplicated from 2006 to 2010, while at the same time reducing the proportion of students achieving the A-Level entry conditions to a third or 11,4%. Even though this reveals a decrease of the proportional success rate, it does point at a net increase in student that passed.

3.2.4. Historical outlook

What prevails after having traced back this historical evolution is that public education has been subjected to decisive ideological shifts. Nonetheless, some of the characteristics of secondary schooling, which firstly appeared pre-independence, still remained. Formal secondary education is still orientated towards the British system. It still has the aura of being the key to success as well as a vehicle to bring change to prevailing means of living, which for many still is subsistence agriculture. However, given the proclaimed relevance for professional employment public secondary schooling still lacks in qualitative and quantitative aspects. Moreover, it seems that the segregation shifted from racial to monetary matters but is nevertheless still

portraying a similar hierarchy and societal distribution, wherein students in public secondary schools (who are mostly Africans) receive the lowest quality of instruction and enjoy the least changes to benefit from it. Secondary schooling's proclaimed but limited role was to be key to paid employment in responsible positions. These prospects were never since broadly attainable and instructional quality continuously fell behind substantial quantitative shortcomings. The present situation is still depicting this development continuum and is closer looked at by confronting insights from different approaches (like means, achievements, capabilities) and perspectives (quantitative and qualitative). This leads to demark the contribution I want to make with this study by putting the focus on the usability on experienced schooling at the localized level.

3.3. Theoretical Approaches to Secondary Schooling in Tanzania

The rights-based and the human capital frameworks are two well-established approaches that constitute interpretational grounds based on which different aspects of schooling are measured and evaluated. Mostly in large-scale assessments these are base on quantitative data. The inherent logics determine the type of empirical findings that can be generated and, consequently, the conclusions that can be derived, which, feed into the academic discourse on the quality of education.

In what follows, I elaborate firstly on the rights-based (3.3.1) and secondly on the human capital approach (3.3.2). I show their findings in regard to how secondary schooling relates to individuals' actions and discuss how their perspective promotes knowledge in the field of education.

3.3.1 *The Rights-based Approach to Education*

From a developmental perspective, every citizen shall be able to evolve in and benefit from formal education on the basis of merit, which is considered a human right¹². The rights-based approach refers to a body of universally established requirements¹³, which determine a minimum framework of quality education. Based on this approach, the assessment of education focuses on whether and to which extent citizens are provided with the legal requirements to enjoy quality education. Doing so is considered a crucial step towards legally entitling every citizen to equally enjoy quality education, as cited in the ADEA Report by Osman (2005, p. 31). Quality education is understood as being a crucial means to individual development as well as a decisive cornerstone to a nation's economic progress. To give an example: an universal prerequisite is that girls and boys, irrespective of one's ethical, religious, etc. background, shall equally enjoy the right to participate in school, share equal opportunities to study and progress in regard to merit.

Scholars adopting the rights-based approach to study the state secondary schooling rely on the United Nations definition of youth¹⁴, who are persons between the ages of 15 to 24. In discussing youth rights in Tanzania Selvam (2008) directs attention to the fact that students' physical and social maturity increasingly diverges. Youths are nowadays seen to physically mature earlier as generations before. But "due to prolonged school education [..and the..] lack of jobs [..students'..] social maturity, in terms of taking up [independence] and getting married, is largely being delayed[.] [..This makes them..] more depend[ent] on adults" (p. 206) and increasingly vulnerable. When referring to young people in Africa, those below the age of 30 constitute approximately 75% of its population cf. (p. 207). Therefore, formal education is assigned a very decisive role. It is meant to contribute to youth's transition

¹² This is consistent with the United Nations' understanding of human rights, see especially Article 26, URL: <http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/>

¹³ For example by the World Bank, See URL: <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTEDUCATION/0,,contentMDK:20521328~menuPK:738179~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:282386~isCURL:Y,00.html>

¹⁴ For further information see the official documents of UNESCO, URL: <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/>

and strengthening and is "aimed at improving the situation and well-being of youth" (p. *ibid.*).

In Tanzania, it is the Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP 2004 -2009) – supervised by the Members of Parliament, United Republic of Tanzania (2004) – which outlines these requirements. It urges for higher permeability (up to 50% by 2010) throughout the system as well as qualitative and quantitative capacity building to provide quality secondary education. Being of personal as well as of societal benefit, quality education is acknowledged as being key to an ever-evolving globally fit national economy by providing for its skilled labor demands. This asks for the preparation of well-educated human resources through secondary education to "meet challenges and exploit opportunities provided by globalization and liberalization" (p. ii).

Critically adding to this view is the 'Tanzanian Vision 2025'. Tikly et al. (2003) find 'donor dependency' being accentuated as a mind-set "shared by both the leaders and the people of the country [...] which [...] is eroding the capacity to take initiative" (p. 311). The proclaimed challenge for secondary education is to administer a cultural transformation towards 'a progressive and development-oriented culture'. This culture should be associated with entrepreneurship without dissolving the 'cultural identity and social cohesion'. The call is for encouraging "self-development [and] more independent and critical thought" (p. *ibid.*), while at the same time the 'collective and community-oriented culture of the country' are to be propagated. Some stakeholders quoted in this study sense contradiction and possible tensions between the intended opportunism of critical thought and the prevailing kinship-culture. However, both policies are part of Tanzania's ambitious development outlook.

Rights in Tanzania are constitutionally guaranteed and indeed serve as a precondition for being able to benefit from them, as Bhalalusesa (2005) observes. Yet, this scholar finds little evidence that these warranties are, in fact, realized on the ground in a way that they are of common and equal benefit for all students. Furthermore, Okkolin, Lehtomäki, and Bhalalusesa (2009, p. 66) argue that secondary education faces serious improvement challenges, primarily towards its qualitative aspects. Over the years, more and

more students are being enrolled to secondary school; also, permeability is increasing and gender parity is almost achieved, as shown by the Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania (2008-2012) supervised by United Republic of Tanzania (2012a). Nevertheless, Thomas and Rugambwa (2011), who look at quality issues concerning instruction more closely, find that gender disparities are still persistent within the system. Curricula, texts, exercises as well as pictures in schoolbooks and attitudes in class are still setting boys as the role models both in education and for success in a broader sense. Leaving the impression that boys fit better to what schooling in Tanzania stands for, giving evidence of prevailing tendency that girls still face gender-related obstacles in their schooling, even though they are enrolled in nearly equal numbers. Challenging this and other obstacles, Sumra and Rajani (2006) from HakiElimu¹⁵, a local (albeit internationally funded) NGO, set out immediate key policy tasks to qualitatively keep pace with the recent quantitative expansion. At stake are the renewal of curricula, schoolbooks and tests and consequently also the revision of methodological trainings for teachers. More broadly they question if students shall be able to go "through rote learning and pass multiple choice exams or [..instead evolve..] real abilities to think, question, solve problems, take initiative, and make things happen" (p. 7). They conclude that "[t]he major education policy challenge in Tanzania is to have basic education goals focused on capabilities, and organize everything else [..] around this" (p. *ibid.*). This is an ambitious outlook; however, mills grind slowly in Tanzania. This is what Mkumba (2012), also from the HakiElimu NGO, observes; in his booklet he explains that an adaptation of the curriculum (so that it becomes competence-based) was already set as new educational approach by 2005. But up to 2012, when Mkumba's booklet was published, this curriculum objective had hardly reached classroom instruction. Despite having found its way in test and examination procedures, teachers have not been trained accordingly; neither do conditions in most classes allow applying this approach.

To conclude, maintaining the right to enjoy and benefit from quality education is seen as an intrinsic prerequisite for its receivers to enhance their

¹⁵ See official website of the NGO, URL: www.hakielimu.org.

deliberate activities. The rights-based approach allows for consideration of important aspects, e.g. values and qualities that frame and define formal education. Assessments applying this approach show whether and to what extent such values and qualities, which are constituted as the rights of every citizen, are provided and accessible. This is important in terms of trace the limitations of service provision. Measuring means sheds light on the entitlements students are awarded. But from this perspective it remains unsettled whether and to what extent receivers can actually make use in regard to their needs within their actual contextual circumstances on the ground. This is particularly important for addressing the impact of schooling in a country like Tanzania, where a majority of public school students are not entitled to quality education. Accordingly, such an assessment has to include actually enjoyed means yet in regard of their relevance for supporting students' ability to act.

3.3.2. The Human Capital Approach to Education

Under the umbrella of provided rights and legal claims, the human capital approach defines quality education according to its functionality with regard to economic progress and globalization demands. Following the same market-oriented logic as the rights-based approach, education is considered to be an investment that promises economic returns for both the state and its individual citizens.

The human capital strand infers schooling's significance from achieved outcomes, namely skills, degrees and certificates. The logic is the following: comparable and achievable outcomes provided by formal education are considered to be of functional value to its recipients. From an individual's perspective such outcomes allow her/him to participate in and benefit from a market economy, in terms of wage employment and income. Taken together, these benefits promise a certain living standard, thus implying one's well-being and agency. Aiming for the growth of the national economy, these measureable educational outcomes are incorporated by a "resource" of skilled

individual citizens (human capital) and considered to be crucial for increasing demands for progress. Hence, quality education and its outcomes are important measures to sustain efforts towards industrialization, which in Tanzania is consulted to drive societal development as well, as illustrated by Tikly et al. (2003)'s examination of "Tanzania Vision 2025".

From a private investment point of view, Kahyarara and Teal (2007, p. 18) state that an evolving academic carrier "from primary to O-level, to A-level, to professional or university" promises the highest wage returns in Tanzania. They find that lower levels of secondary schooling are of minor significance and falling behind acquired skills through vocational training, which are at least immediately applicable for self-sustaining activities. A tracer study conducted by Mukyanuzi (2003) further discusses outcomes of secondary education and its relevance for employment. These data are re-analyzed by Al-Samarrai and Reilly (2008), who attest that secondary schools in Tanzania are of minor impact on wage employment and the country's economic progress. Measures reveal the inferior quality of formal secondary education in Tanzania compared to other countries; however, Tanzania experiences a lack of regular job opportunities where one could benefit of her/his achievements. These data also show that the curriculum is recognized to be relevant only by a minority of surveyed former students. The majority of respondents understand schooling as a "queuing strategy" but as a way to broaden their options. Most employment opportunities arise through self-employment and are followed by wage employment in private businesses and companies for which grades obtained/degrees earned are not significant; this is because very basic skills are sufficient for this kind of work. Students eventually drop out as soon as such employment opportunities arise. Data shows that schooling is perceived to have an impact after the completion of O-Level secondary education, hence for those completing at least a full course of O-Level secondary schooling. By obtaining certain grades at their final O-level examinations students theoretically qualify for employment in the public sector - mainly in education, social or health sectors. Self-employment is considered more as an interim solution to stay flexible and have the chance to enroll in vocational training courses specifically directed to labor demands. According to the above studies, students' goal is to obtain wage employment,

preferably in the public sector. Earnings are there usually high and secured. Nevertheless most school leavers' find themselves in the informal sector working self-employed or on short-term agreements.

Al-Samarrai and Reilly (2008) find that students act strategically regarding how they make use of received schooling. They find that it is mostly valued in terms of networking as social relations yield the majority of wage earning opportunities. Years of schooling or a certification for completion do not demonstrate to have much relevance. Wedgwood (2007) who also computed Mukyanzi's data concludes that students admitted to secondary school may expect higher wages and income compared to those who do not. By broadening the scope of her analysis she seeks to explore students' social benefits and to link lower fertility rates as well as HIV/Aids prevalence to their secondary schooling and associated incomes. Yet, she can't deduce a clear picture for two reasons: first, because of the inconsistent results of the equation between secondary schooling and income; and second, because she finds that social aspects are strongly contextualized and left underexplored.

To summarize, educational achievements provide an important perspective to study formal schooling. These shed light on comparable knowledge as well as skills and acknowledged certification. All are relevant aspects for an individual to utilize. As manifested by the aforementioned studies, people in Tanzania associate secondary schooling with employment and income. Yet, achievements may not sufficiently reflect on how secondary schooling variously has influence on deliberate actions, as an example given by Makongo, Telli, Peter, and Riber (2005) illustrates. They find that parents in difficulties cannot afford the direct and indirect costs of secondary schooling. As a consequence, some students are being forced to give wrong answers at final examinations, so as not to be admitted to further schooling. And we have also seen that achievements, which are considered instrumental in economic terms, are mostly not in reach for Tanzanian students. Such outcomes do not correspond to most students' school and lifeworld reality. Firstly, there is a high number of 'non-achievers' who do not obtain certificates. And secondly, people do not encounter sufficient employment opportunities that specifically ask for formally acquired set of skills. It is just a

small number of citizens who are admitted to a consumerist economy. Yet a Swahili proverb goes: *"Mkosefu wa mali si maskini"*, meaning that one who lacks money must not necessarily be poor. Accordingly, it seems rewarding to widen the achievement perspective on examining what students perceive having gained by valuing schooling in regard of its relevance to their activities.

3.3.3. Summary

The prevalent picture of secondary schooling associated to development in Tanzania is framed by the rights-based approach and the human capital approach. Both rely on an universal understanding and deduce schooling's intrinsic and instrumental value for students by taking either an input or an output perspective. Correspondingly, they promote a certain developmental outlook that promotes legal entitlements as well as the need for skilled human resources.

For countries like Tanzania, meeting legal requirements and achieving competitive educational outcomes, which constitute the definition of quality education, are also an important macro-political undertaking. Kuder (2005) argues that the Tanzanian state's educational budget largely depends on foreign aid. Parts of that are bound to agreed development steps aiming at the compliance with universal rights and provision of economically utilizable educational outcomes. The receiving state is made accountable of using aid according to such agreements, in order to justify further funding. Rights-based and human capital assessments are consulted to measure anticipated progress towards aspects of quality education. From a developmental perspective an educational system that is able to provide formal quality education is considered to be of crucial importance to a state's progress towards a competitive market economy. Moreover, it is a promising investment and providing foreign political interests with influence on Tanzanian political affairs.

Nevertheless, the grounds on which a majority of students in Tanzania act do not comprise demandable rights regarding their schooling, cf. Phillips

and Stambach (2008). Furthermore, public secondary schools are in general not sufficient for the development of excellent and utilizable educational outcomes that are relevant to a formal job market, which in fact does not comprehensively exist cf. Al-Samarrai and Reilly (2008). But despite the low quality of formal education in Tanzania, secondary schooling shows impact on people's deliberate actions.

Reviewing ethnological studies provide a qualitative, microscopic focus on individuals and their experiences in the Tanzanian school system. Discussed in the next section, this perspective richly examines how secondary schooling relates to individual students' lives in Northern Tanzania and Singida. This shall allude to what the capabilities perspective can contribute to the assessment of secondary schooling by addressing actors' well-being and agency in distinct contexts and living conditions.

3.4. Ethnological Research on Schooling

Ethnological research on secondary schooling in Tanzania reveals the complexity of localized conditions. Small-scale qualitative studies give deep insights into how formal schooling may be of relevance to individual actors as well as how their related freedoms can be understood and interpreted.

3.4.1. Secondary schooling's embeddedness in Tanzania

Stambach (1998)'s study of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania argues for an interrelation between social obligations on the one hand and cultural imperatives and secondary schooling on the other. Formal secondary education is being integrated within existing contextual norms and structures of socialization and growing up. For example, she finds that girls are conventionally expected to marry early, get children and obliged to know about childbearing and housekeeping. On the contrary, boys have to take

over the family's inheritance and to be able to financially sustain a family. As formal schooling is seen to facilitate that purpose, it is seen as more corresponding to boys' social role and demands than it is for girls. Schooling aims at sustaining collective conventions and relations. That said, this is changing: becoming educated is progressively more and more valued for both sexes. It is acknowledged as a way "to go with the times"¹⁶, considered to be an enhancing strategy to face pressing economic challenges. It is this limited space, wherein secondary schooling is socially seen a valuable asset.

However, formal schooling may also be collectively seen as alienating when students' behavior and school-related 'components of social life' interfere with obligations and cultural imperatives of normality; for example, if educated youth become critical of elders' usually unquestioned authority. Another example concerns parents' concern about children not showing the expected subordinate behavior any longer; this is what Warrington and Kiragu (2012) illustrate with their case-study of educated girls in Kenya. Furthermore, Stambach (1998, p. 508) shows how studying alone at a quiet place can be the cause of social mistrust, given that one's activities are supposed to be conducted openly and together with others. Moreover, seen from the perspective of home economics, supporting one child in secondary school costs a considerable amount of money. In addition, it implies the reduction of contributing hands to household chores and income. This in turn might provoke jealousy or even raise claims by family members and neighbors for financial support, as there is obviously enough money to fund a child's schooling. Handling such claims needs a lot of diplomacy and responses must be weighed, as social relations and arising opportunities, also in terms of jobs, largely depend on an extensive system of reciprocal obligations. Individuals' opportunities with regard to schooling, and the related costs (uniform, fees, learning materials, etc.) and benefits are dependent on social relations within the local context. Stambach (1998) finds that social relations form the web on which people balance their actions and it is there where opportunities emerge.

The strong linkage between formal schooling and social relations is further explored in a study conducted by Stambach (1996, p. 546) on the

¹⁶ In Swahili: "kuenda na wakati"; this is a common phrase, which expresses a person's strive towards a modern way of living.

slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania. Secondary schooling is acknowledged to impact students' abilities to address "social and economic problems". Serpell (1993, p. 156) argues similarly by finding a positive correlation between school learning and problem solving in a study of Zambia.

Stambach (1996, p. 546) also observes that schooling serves "as a means for preserving basic social values and relationships" reflecting "a continuation of existing cultural principles and [...being...] a catalyst for change". From her point of view, school is not merely the intended place to develop utilizable skills and knowledge of deliberate value or for socioeconomic change. Schools mainly function as grounds for students to cultivate their social relations and networks, while being and acting in school is maintained through external support. Additionally, in terms of employment, social relations are vital, more significant and pivotal than performance or years of schooling. When examining how students maintain their social status and power relations, she finds them using modern consumer goods and foreign cultural commodities; these are handled according to conventional social practices to create mutual dependencies. Thus, secondary students embrace foreign cultural commodities and due to "distributing this wealth [they...] recreate and reauthorize them and, in so doing, define the terms of local political economy" (p. 562). Like that, schooling is perceived to function as a gateway to incorporate external influences and foreign commodities into the local society. Students form the link and give essence to those influences from within their cultural contextualization. To conclude, secondary education functions along socially accepted and conventional patterns while being a ground on which new forms of expression are incorporated.

The importance of social relations is also demonstrated in the study by Phillips and Stambach (2008) who examine school choice in Singida. School choice is not determined by a variety of supply with set standards from which one can freely and equally choose. Firstly, preference for a specific school is constantly revised and influenced by certain factors of importance, such as: the school's resources; the socioeconomic background of enrolled students; the degree of security for girls; students' further admission to advanced level education or even to university; the staff; the quality of teaching and routine costs (p. 148).

Secondly, however, people are not free to choose, in the sense that people exercise the right to freely pick from a range of guaranteed alternatives. Choosing in such a way is possible where there is "reasonable capacity to actualize [...] a right to education" (p. 161). Both scholars find that this is not the case in Tanzania. As exemplified by the case of Singida, educational choices rely on a cultivated nexus of reciprocal and vertical social relations. These social relations constitute the prerequisite for one to be chosen by the school of preference.

Therefore, people seek to relate with members of society who can be supportive by putting in a good word for them. Certainly, these are those who command high social status and the necessary influence, like religious and administrative personnel, elected or traditional representatives, or business people. Accordingly, building and maintaining mutual social bonds "is always relative to one's social position [...] and consists of [...] stacking up favors, calling on extended social networks, and seeking patronage" (p. 147). As a consequence, it is the poor and rural families that face the biggest challenges to do so. They need the most support and have at the same time the fewest to offer, often not more than their manpower. For this reason, having many children is a strategy to encounter poverty and ensure a sense of security in life. Hence, children are seen to broaden a family's capacities in various ways.

Consequently, children admitted to school and supported by the family face severe difficulties to live up to high expectations. By reviewing the human rights approach (section 3.3.1.) and in this section we have seen that the grounds of good educational quality are not readily claimable but actually enjoyed entitlements derive from cultivated relations. Moreover, we saw that also opportunities to economically benefit from schooling are scarce (section 3.3.2.).

3.4.2. Summary

These examples from ethnological research richly illustrate that schooling is interwoven with students' social context as well as the living conditions inside and outside of school. It is noticeable that these are crucial aspects to

consider when it comes to making sense of the meaning given to schooling as well as opportunities to benefit from it. Consequently, these 'grounds' can be accepted to be also relevant when assessing what students conceive valuable of their schooling according to their well-being and agency. What remains under-researched is students' assertion of what they learn in school and what they conceive as relevant to their ability to act; this constitutes the key concern of my inquiry, to which I turn in the following.

3.5. The Capability Approach in Educational Research

Sen's (1985, 1993, 1995a, 1995c) capability framework explicitly addresses secondary school's influence on one's capacity to act and the acquired freedom of opportunity. Skills, knowledge, grades, certificates are not of value in predefined dimensions; they are relevant only with regard to their scope of application in relevant multiple dimensions to sustain one's well-being and agency.

The emphasis of my research is on whether and how secondary schooling enables and broadens the sphere of students to act. The application of the capabilities framework allows focusing on the acting students, as "ends in themselves" and comprehensively assessing the intrinsic, instrumental and social worth they give to capabilities gained from their secondary schooling. In what follows, I elaborate on the research that has been using this framework; emphasis is put on three critical aspects of the framework's application to development countries: firstly, the need to adopt a broader definition of development; secondly, the varied aspects of individuals' well-being and agency across contexts; and thirdly, the importance of students' voice as a form of agency in the research process; and finally, how the capabilities approach helps understand secondary education's impact in Tanzania.

3.5.1. *A broader definition of development*

Scholarship has stressed the need to broaden the definition of development in relation to secondary schooling. Vavrus (2003) argues that this is possible by consulting the capabilities approach. Her study identifies people's strong confidence in seeking formal education despite the fact that many assume its role to be marginal in terms of obtaining employment. According to Vavrus' study, secondary schooling is an attempt to enhance one's ability to act and to cope with *maisha magumu*¹⁷. This is a common phrase used in Tanzania that "describes not only the absence of good health and employment but also the desire for more control over social and political-economic forces" (p. 6). Yet, as Vavrus further notices, secondary schooling and being educated in general, can also become the exact opposite of the assumed "panacea"; more specifically, it can contribute to difficulties and threats in life. In order to explore the divergent roles of secondary schooling and its relation to the multilayered and distinctive notions of *maisha magumu*, which are distinctly related to one's freedom to act, she regards Sen's framework as a significant alternative to established and mainly economic-oriented definitions of development cf. (p. *ibid.*).

3.5.2. *A myriad of well-being and agency aspects within diverse living conditions*

Ethnological research alludes to the importance of the social context and relations in considering developmental needs. Okkolin et al. (2009, p. 69), who understand "schooling as a social arrangement", observe that

"...regions and districts in Tanzania differ significantly. Not only in [...] achievements, but moreover, in [...] socio-cultural interpretations of the relevance and meaning of education".

Consequently, they suggest to qualitatively explore relevant multiple dimensions and perspectives in order to obtain a 'broader set of information'

¹⁷ This is a Swahili expression for the prevalent 'difficult life conditions' in which most of the people in Tanzania find themselves.

about secondary schooling. This shall contribute to knowledge gained by the analysis of statistical data on formal education in Tanzania and enhance dialogue among stakeholders. Going beyond mere entitlement and economically centered benefits, capabilities can compromise such a comprehensive, localized perspective on the personal ability to act and opportunities enjoyed.

Young (2009, p. 260) provides good example of an empirical research applying the capability approach. She draws on qualitative data and pays attention to "individual scenarios" and "diversity" as she applies an "open-ended capability-based evaluation [which] has less restricted content boundaries and no sample restriction". In her study of Bhutan and Sri Lanka, she inquired about "valued learning" in relation to "14-year-old children and their parents' [...] individual and subjective interpretation of the meaning of 'improvement' in the context of their own life" (p. *ibid.*). Her intention was to identify individual, situational and context-related capabilities, which contribute to well-being and agency. "Valued learning" - school and non-school related - evolves doings and beings that - in material and non-material ways - leads to choices that can improve and contribute to personal capabilities, which in turn relate to forms and levels of student's well-being. She assumes "that learning is valued by the individual to the extent that it leads to improvement in her life" (p. 260). Her findings shed light on personal life challenges and valued learning needs. Capabilities grant analytical access to situational demands of peoples' ability to act and set this in relation to schooling/formal education. This evaluative space exceeds the foci on the relevance of schooling for income generation and wage employment and on the facilitation of rights and entitlements.

3.5.3. Recognition of students' voice and involvement in selection of capabilities

As we have seen, the capability approach allows gaining insight in non-material aspects of well-being in different contexts. Additionally, Biggeri (2004,

p. 1) argues in "The Capability Approach and Well-Being" also for the consideration of children's voice, because children "may have different capabilities than adults and/or that they can give different degree of relevance to the same capability". In a subsequent article, Biggeri and Anich (2009, p. 74) further stress that recognizing students' voice enables children to be acknowledged as (self-) responsible social actors "able to express their points of views and priorities, and endowed with agency, values, and aspirations". For their study conducted in Kampala, Uganda, these scholars employed a questionnaire, which was previously piloted in Italy and Nepal. In Uganda, children were actively involved in identifying listed capabilities. Findings were weighted and quantitatively analyzed. In addition, these scholars used participatory methods to foster more extensive understanding of those capabilities that were identified. Applying the capability perspective, their research reveals "dimensions and issues", such as "agency, autonomy, love and care" that are "often not covered by other approaches" (p. 90). These "dimensions and issues" show their relevance to struggle for well-being by marginalized children, like those on the streets of Kampala, Uganda.

Tao (2010) applies the capability approach to examine primary school improvement in Tanzania. She emphasizes that qualitative data collection on the selection of capabilities through participation of the people involved is enactment of agency, because it "is their valued beings and doings that are paramount" (p. 8). Tao refers to this arrangement as "a framework of action" (2010, p. 4), whose epistemological goal is "to identify capabilities [which are] to be subsequently expanded" (p. *ibid.*). This corresponds to the capabilities perception of education, which is seen to have crucial influence on a persons' capability evolvement. Relevant aspects of capabilities and of education have to "be grounded in the relevant context through interviews and discussions with students" (p. 11). However, "in order to be cognizant of areas that may arise" (p. 9) she also draws on predefined lists of capabilities from previous research conducted by Walker (2006). Her intention was to model a "provisional, situated list of education capabilities, with specific attention to gender equity in contemporary South African schools" (p. 163). One of the steps to finalize this attempt was an examination of "what capabilities these girls value to live the lives they choose" (p. 171). The personal descriptions of

schoolgirls show how diverse they value their schooling. This valuation depends largely on personal experiences, interests and social relations as well as contexts inside and outside of school and allow for rich insights into their school reality.

Importantly, Unterhalter (2012) warns against the unquestioned generalization of children's voices about their capabilities. She reminds us that children's expressions have to be considered as context-related and limited. In the sense that some children might not enjoy the same "capacity to articulate capabilities" (p. 309); "[t]his can be associated with particular severe forms of inequality, coercion, or just limitations on their range to choose well" (p. *ibid.*). Based on research in four African countries - Kenya, Nigeria, South Africa and Tanzania - she emphasizes the relevance of context in assessing "data gathered from children in relation to adaptive preferences" (p. 321). D'Agata (2007, p. 178) supports this position; she also sees individuals in general as adaptive actors, who act based on bounded rationality and localized learning and rely on a restricted range of established choices, which are of situational significance. Going beyond this rational and adapted (accumulated) personal sphere in order to tackle pressing social problems, Unterhalter (2003a) calls for the consideration of social theories. These would allow to interpret and value insights e.g. from her study on HIV and sexual abuse in relation to girls' experiences in schools in South, which in turn may feed (policy) suggestions and educational conceptualizations.

3.5.4. Secondary education and its relevance for students' well-being and agency in Tanzania

A study applying the capability approach to secondary education in Tanzania is done by Hartwig (2012). She examines the "educational quality in Tanzanian schools" by applying a social justice framework and considering aspects of the capability approach. Connecting learning outcomes with contributions to well-being she also finds an "overwhelming failure rate of most [Tanzanian] secondary school students in their Form 4 exams [and] little

evidence to suggest that their education will enable them to have improved livelihoods or greater economic opportunities" (p. 7). Hartwig draws conclusions similar to the majority of studies conducted in Tanzania through a narrow perspective of relating Form 4 test results to students' well-being. Consequently, she calls for more qualitative research on individualized cases of secondary education influencing (professional) opportunities.

Thomas and Rugambwa (2011) apply the capabilities approach to explore gender disparities in a particular secondary school in Tanzania. This perspective reveals that deeper insights into female students' constraints regarding their equal participation in and benefits from school, as well as the degree of confidence gained from being enrolled at school. They found, that although special attention to gender sensitivity in classroom interaction and in used school materials is declared, female students still face additional hardship due to strongly hierarchical student-teacher relations as well as boys' higher status in power relations.

Both Helgesson (2006) and Dahl (2010) consider the capabilities' informational space for their qualitative case studies in Tanzania. Their focus is to reveal students' localized personal experiences of secondary education in relation to their daily lives. Secondary schooling and experiences made differently relate to individuals students' acting. In conclusion, youths are found to deliberately execute their agency, striving for more than just satisfying their needs in well-being. They have aims and aspirations that they intend to follow, while they perceive themselves variously bound to individual living contexts and conditions.

3.6. Summary of Chapter & Outlook

In this chapter I reviewed the relevant literature and examined insights from the perspectives of the rights-based and the human capital approaches. These approaches rely on assumptions about the relationship between secondary schooling and peoples' intended action based on the allocation of means and measurable outcomes (grades, achievements, etc.) respectively.

Findings reveal that the narratives of institutionalized school development do apply but experienced schooling and its relevance is re-contextualized according to local contexts and socio-economic aspects. We learned that in poor countries like Tanzania students are enrolled in public secondary schools in increasing numbers. Yet, the educational quality is precarious and because of an one-sided quantitative expansion even declining. Despite that, outcomes reveal that the education received is not enabling students to acquire even skills and knowledge of mediocre quality. Moreover, schooling does not equate to instrumental applicability in terms of formal employment, which is literally non-existent. Hence, its overall value for economic benefiting is weak. As shown by research down in Singida, ethnological research emphasized that demandable rights to institutionalized services of quality and sufficient wealth to be part of a consumer society comprise just a minority of people.

It seems therefore promising to explore experienced schooling in regard of its relevance to involved students' activities to maintain their agency and well-being. Acknowledging that activities to sustain oneself are diverse as are the grounds to do act, I apply the capability approach. It provides a comprehensive framework to assess and interrelate experienced specifications of schooling to students' contextualized developmental needs and aspects. Focusing on individual students in their local context, my focus is on capabilities that show relevance inside and outside of school because both are distinctive parts of students' world and mutually interwoven. The aim is to directly assess secondary school students', which relevance is "dependent on the needs and contexts" Tikly and Barrett (2011, p. 8).

The forthcoming findings of this study are not all-embracing or deliberately aiming at certain social problems; such findings are of interest and significance to the discourse on development and, consequently, also for the rights and human capital research strands. In the following chapters, students' voices are discussed in contrast to other stakeholders' perspectives on their capabilities. Consequently, students' statements are placed in a societal contexts and discussed in the broader picture painted by the relevant literature and policy documents. In this way, at the end of this book, students'

voices are placed in their broader social and educational context and in the wider scholarly debate.

The few existing studies on school related capabilities point to a rich and underexplored field of information that opens up when we get close to what people regard as significant for their own actions. However, students' capabilities and their 'value to live the lives they choose' in Singida have not yet been examined. Unlike other explorative studies (see section 3.5.3.) I do not deploy quantitative or mixed methods nor consult predefined lists. I use a qualitative method (including semi-structured interviews), which enables an open-ended application of the capabilities informational space. The central data source based on which I explore capabilities are students' own synchronic and descriptive narrations. Referred to as 'students' voice', insights have to be understood as situational, limited and adapted to students' contextual relatedness. The perspective taken is affirmative towards their coherent rationality and their adaptive preferences on restricted choices. My study can thus help explore new grounds and may inform the (re-)formulation of indicators on which large-scale surveys assess education and schooling in countries like Tanzania are based. In this sense it is a contribution to discussions related to the Human Development Index (HDI).

4. Research Method

"There is no claim made that these voices [..of..] students are either representative or comprehensive [..]. [...] The emphasis [..] is on the data as illustrative rather than representative, and on the capacity even of smallscale fieldwork data on lived experiences to generate rich narratives [.. done by..] grounded theorizing." (Walker, 2009, p. 238)

In this chapter I elaborate on methodological aspects of my dissertation. With this qualitative case study, I explore the experiences and assertions of secondary school students in Singida, central Tanzania, regarding their schooling. To do so, I apply a version of the grounded theory method (section 4.1.) with the aim to induce a socially constructed meaning of secondary schooling. Through aggregated individual students' accounts the study aims at the production of an accessible understanding, a theory, "of an experience of a particular group of people in a particular setting", which "is generated during the research process and from the data collected" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 4). The rationale of Sen's version of the capability approach (section 2.2.) was consulted to provide the underlying structure to this inquiry. Mentioned aspects of secondary schooling are set in relation to the sphere of real opportunities. This approach is further informing the presentation of findings (chapter 6.), the analysis as well as the discussion (chapter 7.).

In order to collect data (section 4.2.) I conducted qualitative unstructured interviews as well as informal conversations with students. Their descriptive accounts constitute the core data to build my argumentation. Besides, I refer to personal observations, which I crosschecked during the consultations with students. In order to discuss and contextualize students' accounts I additionally carried out interviews with other relevant stakeholders in Singida but also in Dar es Salaam. I visited seven secondary schools located in the municipality of Singida. Within these schools I interviewed students, head teachers as well as teachers. Moreover, I spoke to other stakeholders, such as former students, educational public employees, parents

and instructors in higher education. Finally, I retrace the main steps in processing the data to obtain the grounded *Theory* (section 4.3.). Therefore I describe the particular application of the aspects of grounded theory, followed by a discussion of aspects of interviews and finally a summary of the analysis. I end this chapter with a short summary and outlook (section 4.4.).

4.1. Research Method

4.1.1. Qualitative Research

How to study students' voice? is the question that shall be elaborated under this section. At first has to be answered which methodological paradigm I follow in doing so and then which method in particular?

Initially my research project was set around four corner stones that relate to the decision for an interpretative qualitative research in particular. Firstly, my initial aim was to learn about students' perception of secondary schooling's value in Singida according to its sphere of applicability. Secondly, because data on this topic and in this particular case is literally non-existent I had to enquire into students' experiences and the meaning they give to their experienced schooling. Thirdly, to do so I was considering taking unstructured interviews to see what students come up with on their own, which was due to my resources limited to a small but nevertheless illustrative number. And fourthly, I attempted to reproduce the findings in a meaningful way giving involved students a voice but without claiming to reach an objectivist truth.

Referring to Della Porta and Keating (2010, p. 26) these aspects allude to qualitative, interpretative research aiming for an "understanding [...] by discovering the meanings human beings attribute to their" acting and experiences in their specific contexts. Kvale (2009, p. xi) defines that "qualitative methods [...] allow the researcher to develop [...] ways of describing and explaining social [...] issues", while findings are not foreseeable, derive from exploration and are illustrative. Moreover, qualitative methods

acknowledge the responsibility of the researcher in being involved in interpretation and "must include the perspectives and voices" (p. 274) of those who are researched. This study contrasts to but also complements quantitative research that seeks "unambiguous data, concrete evidence and rules and regularities" and refers to "sophisticated data analysis [..like..] regression analysis and related techniques aiming at measuring causal inference and discovering laws about causal relationships between variables" (Della Porta & Keating, 2010, p. 26).

Furthermore, as I did not approach the field with certain hypothesis I chose the inductive method of grounded theory to address the objectives of this study.

4.1.2. Grounded Theory

Grounded theory was initially developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) and was since then subjected to further elaboration, done for example by Strauss and Corbin (1994) and Charmaz (2009). The latter considers grounded theory an analytic strategy especially rewarding to qualitative research from a micro perspective by setting out from individual cases. Moustakas (1994) finds grounded theory in company with other research methods that focus on human experience, like ethnography, hermeneutics, heuristic research and empirical phenomenological research. It shares with other qualitative methods common data sources, which are of qualitative nature (like interviews, observations and all kinds of documents) and can also include quantitative data Strauss and Corbin (1994).

The difference between grounded theory and other qualitative methods is foremost spotted in its focus on developing a substantive theory cf. Strauss and Corbin (1994) Boeije (2010). It is an inductive method to systematically generate an explanatory theory out of available empirical data itself. Studies conducted accordingly, like the present one, are not aiming for verification or falsification of any initial theoretically deduced hypothesis. The preliminary research focus is broadly set and subsequently sharpened by theorizing.

Hypothesis, theoretical assumptions and categories are developed during the process of research inquiry. Verification is attained throughout the process to approach a conceptualization that fits and systematically explains the data out of itself.

Moustakas (1994, p. 4) defines that the particular process of research inquiry is based on the

"careful analysis of the data, involving the examination of field notes, study of transcribed interviews sentence by sentence, coding of each sentence or phrase, sorting the codes, making comparisons among the categories, and ultimately constructing a theory".

This process is oscillating between collecting data, analysis and theory building. "Simultaneous involvement in data collection and analysis means that the researcher's emerging analysis shapes his or her data collection procedures" (Charmaz, 1996, p. 30). The central tools of the self-reflective analysis are three levels of abstraction of the available empirical data, initially outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The first level is *free coding* which consists of labeling concepts and ideas from individual words, several sentences or paragraphs. The objective is to organize categories out of those concepts. The second level is *axial coding* during which those categories are fleshed out by its available properties and dimensions. And the third level is *selective coding* which aim is to eventually arrive at a theory. Yet, as mentioned before, this is not a linear process. Saturation of the process, which is accompanied by memo writing, is reached when the induced and integrated theory coherently explains the empirical data. The criticized point of this modus operandi is the fragmenting of the core data in order to "define the collective analytical story at the expense of the participant's story" (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012, p. 350).

Nevertheless, it is my intention to reveal aspects of secondary schooling that students consider valuable in regard of their applicability. This means that assessed capabilities are being established through students' accounts. I do not intend to reproduce single student's narratives as entities; instead I seek to shed light on shared patterns of experience. In general I consider grounded theory therefore rewarding.

4.1.3. Constructivist Grounded Theory

I refer in particular to the 'Constructivist Grounded Theory', which I shorten in the following to CGT. This version, which was introduced by (Charmaz, 2009, p. 130) rests in the tradition of interpretive social research and is rooted in (social) constructivism. Accordingly conducted studies,

"aim to capture the worlds of people by describing their situations, thoughts, feelings and actions and by relying on portraying the research participants' lives and voices. Their concerns shape the direction and form of the research." (Charmaz, 1996, p. 30)

CGT conceals an alternative strand to a positivistic paradigm of grounded theory. It is not reaching out for any external and positivistic reality, truth or to universal concepts. Charmaz (2009, p. 130) considers approaching such being problematic. From a positivistic point of view the world exists irrespective of the observer, allowing approaching its true entity through inquiry. The accordingly induced categories claim an objective status and are sought to be scrutinized by complement quantitative analysis.

Differing, the CGT - in line with constructivism - recognizes that the data, its analysis and the eventually evolving theories are social constructions; jointly shaped by both, the researcher and the researched. This settles on the assumption that reality is not detached from constantly interpreting and valuing observers. It is the researcher who is interpreting the interviewees' perception of reality, aims to compose enriched illustrations and an explanatory theory. During this process the researcher is considered evolving his or her theoretical sensitivity of the data by working self-reflective, creating knowledge as well as reconstructing socially valued understanding and meaning. The aim of a CGT study is to approach protagonists considerations, generate a theory through interpretation and eventually feed findings into a discourse or literature that (involved) people can assess. Corresponding, Della Porta and Keating (2010) refer to that in Gidden's term of *double hermeneutics*. Finally, a induced theory can also be subject to further empirical examinations.

It is the objective of this study to induce an assembled and dense theory from students' experiences. The merged quotes and paraphrases from

the interviews are therefore the source of knowledge of this CGT study, composing the substance of its theory. In line with the CGT (Charmaz, 1996) I consider the researcher and the researched being engaged in a joint interaction as the understandings, interests and dispositions of both are influential on the explanatory story or theory. Della Porta and Keating (2010, p. 24) state that epistemologically, theories developed in the tradition of constructivism "are not descriptions to be evaluated by their literal correspondence to some discoverable reality, but partial ways of understanding the world." This is due the focus of CGT on "lived experience" (Charmaz, 1996, p. 30) aiming to reveal conceived perceptions of 'realities'.

CGT is not in need of a strict structure to follow, instead the structure of coding, memo writing and theorizing is considered more of a guideline (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007), which is seen moderating the fragmentation of the data. It promotes a creative and self-reflective research process with the aim to address socially authentic constructions by reflecting on inherent "process of production [...] in terms of time, space, culture, and situation" (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 556). Accordingly it is inclusive to "diverse local worlds and multiple realities, and addresses how people's actions affect their local and larger social worlds" (Charmaz, 2009, p. 132). This fits the study's objective to approach students' assertions of school related capabilities, which I consider socially constructed as well.

4.1.4. The value of the empirical data

The prime data used for the present research inquiry were the collected experience-centered semi-structured and unstructured interviews and conversations with individual and groups of students. In addition I noticed observations made during my field research in Tanzania, which I crosschecked in these exchanges. The transcribed interviews serve as the foundation to induce an understanding and meaning of protagonists experiences cf. Bold (2012).

Portelli (1997, p. 80) defines that "responds to an interviewer's question, [are] always about the construction and expression of one's subjectivity." As such these valuated expressions are "manifestations of social discourse, made up of socially defined and shared discursive structures" (p. 82), which are the basic way through which people communicate with each other. Apposite (Dewey, 1916, p. 4) stated:

"Society [...] may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication. [...] Men live in a community in virtue of the things which they have in common; and communication is the way in which they come to possess things in common. What they must have in common in order to form a community or society are aims, beliefs, aspirations, knowledge-a common understanding."

I consider interviews as providing insights into commonly known but individually experienced aspects of social life like 'schooling' and its relevance in a commonly shared lifeworld in a particular context. These reflect the understanding and meaning given by the interviewed protagonists upon conceiving their experienced acting. In this sense they are recognized as experts on their own behalf. Even though interviewees' remarks must not necessarily depict reality, yet given statements are considered as "plausible accounts" as Bryant and Charmaz (2007, p. 556) name them. These are expressions of self-perception through which actors communicate their actions and experiences to the world.

Students' accounts on their experiences are indicating on commonly constructed and known aspects from different actors' perspectives. In terms of an ontological value of the findings Strübing (2008, p. 83) considers 'Objectivity' not being pursued in grounded theory. He argues that inductive interpretative methods are not considered nor consulted to derive at the same conclusion, but instead seek to generate and interpret perspectivistic knowledge simultaneously. The researcher is approaching and re-interpreting the interpretations of the researched by "discovering [and exposing] the meanings that motivate their actions" (Della Porta & Keating, 2010, p. 24). Generalization is, in interpretive research, intrinsically linked to subjective accounts and "attained by assigning cases to classes and approximating them to ideal types" (Della Porta & Keating, 2010, p. 27). As such, findings and theories are first of all limited to the case study.

In order to scrutinize and subsequently contextualize the theory I additionally obtained complementary relevant data, following the concept of data triangulation cf. (Beitin, 2012, p. 248). This allows to approach the topic, hence dispute the evolving theory from different perspectives and other standpoints as Breuer, Mey, and Mruck (2011, p. 429) add. To do so I also held interviews with educational officials, head masters, teachers, former students, parents in Singida as well as with lectures and professors from two Universities, namely the University of Dar es Salaam and the University of Iringa. These a-synchronic statements were complemented with written documents like official statistical data, policy and government documents, local NGO papers and academic literature from different disciplines as well as newspaper articles.

The data generation and the theory-oriented processing yield important aspects of CGT when exploring and interpreting human experiences and conceived realities. A crucial quality criterium regarding interpretive research is the reflection on the applied methods as well as on the underlying theoretical concept cf. (Bryant & Charmaz, 2007, p. 559). In the case of the present study the schemata of the capability approach serves as the stage for actors' peculiar understandings to appear. The reflection and documentation on the process of research, on the generation of data and analysis, as well as on the conceptual underpinning, resulting in the development of hypothesis, allows for intersubjective comprehension, discussion and further examination.

Moreover, the reflection offers insights not only in *what* is said but also *why* and *how*. Merging these strings approximately adds quality to revelation of social constructions.

4.1.5. The underlying theoretical framework

The aim of this study is not to deduce from theoretical hypothesis and prove this by qualitative data. Instead the *Theoretical Framework* (chapter 2.) serves as a structural underpinning to guide the process of making meaning and analysis of the empirical data. Accordingly

"grounded theorists often begin their studies with certain research interests and a set of general concepts. I used those concepts as points of departure to look at data, to listen to interviewees and to think analytically about the data. Guiding interests and disciplinary perspectives should provide grounded theorists with such points of departure for developing, rather than limiting, their ideas." (Charmaz, 1996, p. 32)

In other words, the emerging "sensitizing concepts and theoretical codes" are put "to work in the theoretical framework" (Charmaz, 2009, p. 169). Therefore the capabilities framework is enriched and may even be challenged with concepts consisting of students' narratives in order to assess their explication of capabilities.

Moreover, I argue that students' accounts on school related capabilities mirrors "socially shared subjectivity" Portelli (1997, p. 86). Students refer to commonly-experienced social arrangements like institutionalized schooling and its relevance to self-fulfillment activities in shared social contexts. Fittingly, an analysis maintained by the constructivist grounded theory

"starts with and develops analyses from the point of view of the experiencing person ... [with the] aim to capture the worlds of people by describing their situations, thoughts, feelings and actions and by relying on portraying the research participants' lives and voices." (Charmaz, 1996, p. 30).

This qualitative study approaches single student's estimation of schooling and its application from a capabilities perspective with the aim to illustrate its socially constructed meaning. Consequently, the aggregation of their accounts sheds light on the overlapping patterns in their explanations as well as interpretations of reality cf. (Geertz, 1983, p. 18) and enables an enriched description of schooling.

4.2. Modes of Inquiry

In the following I reflect on conducting the inquiry on certain relevant issues.

4.2.1. Literature and documents search

While being in Tanzania I visited government institutions, universities, libraries and bookshops in order to search for and obtain literature, statistical data and documents. In this way I was able to collect written data that is hardly accessible and available in other places. Together with the academic literature in consideration for this study the discovered texts were stored in an EndNote library and used as needed.

4.2.2. Field observations and writing field notes

Observations occurred both unplanned and unpredicted throughout my research stay or predetermined when I visited places to meet and speak with students. For example, I went to buy food at a small grocery shop in Singida and met Student2, whom I had interviewed before. I found him applying his mathematical skills with certainty and also saw how other people at the shop related his capability to enjoying secondary schooling. This was similar to other occasions when I visited hotels, restaurants or Internet cafes where I met secondary school students applying what they acquired through their schooling. Moreover, I was paying attention to students' social behavior and awarded social role when spending time in the company of people. Through conversations that I overheard or was part of I realized how students incorporate their acquired school-knowledge.

Besides observing I was also reading relevant literature and discussing findings and thoughts with different people. On one hand this allowed me to

relativize my observations and on the other hand this also called my attention to follow up certain aspects.

To store and organize accounts I kept a research diary in AtlasTi in which I collected roundups of observations and experiences by writing down detailed field notes cf. Anderson (2006). There I also collected additional information on libraries and universities that I visited in order to find back literature or get in contact with topic related experts. Moreover, writing a diary proved being helpful to reflect on thoughts and a valuable database that allowed me to retrace seemingly insignificant aspects and observations.

Altogether, I consider observations and field notes being supportive in developing ideas and evolving the research process. This allowed me to stay self-reflective during the ongoing process of inquiry, being an observer and interpreter at the same time. Moreover, both accompanied the conduction of interviews, through which I could pin down ideas; reconsider situational aspects and the code of communication. Observations informed also interviews and conversations in order to introduce specific themes or to crosscheck aspects I wanted to get an opinion on. Accordingly, the

"sensitivity and rationality, both necessary for the capacity to read impartially into situations. Because many aspects of social life cannot be broken down into bits [...] the researcher can only 'do (her) best' [...] to be as attentive and open-minded as possible."
(Bray, 2008, p. 309)

4.2.3. Conducted interviews

I held exploratory, unstructured and topic related interviews cf. Fontana and Frey (2000, p. 651) in a non-directive manner using open-ended questions, both with individuals and groups of students and adults. The application of open-ended questions is an attempt "to understand the complex of behavior of members of society [...considering...] anyone [...] may become a valuable source of information" as Fontana and Frey (2000, p. 654) describe. In the group interviews, which I held exclusively with students, I saw my role as an interviewer-moderator. Accordingly, I would guide the conversations by introducing topics with the advantage of "bringing forth more spontaneous

expressive and emotional views than in individual [...] interviews" (Kvale, 2009, p. 73). I paid attention that all participants could freely and in full-length give their opinion, being aware that group-discussions run the risk of losing personal insights because of an evolving group culture or opinion cf. Fontana and Frey (2000). I found such rewarding as students were coming up with and discussing topics from different standpoints. They were challenging each other with thorough insight, which I did not have.

"For a grounded theory study, devise a few broad, open-ended questions. Then you can focus your interview questions to invite detailed discussion of topic. By creating open-ended, non-judgmental questions, you encourage unanticipated statements and stories to emerge." (Charmaz, 2009, p. 169)

In conclusion I experienced interviewing as an iterative learning process. By repeatedly coming across particular topics expressed by different interviewees and approached from differing perspectives through additional reading and observations, the comprehension of the theme effectively evolved. This allowed me to follow up topics with more informed and focused questions, leading to deeper insights and revealing of further insights.

The following table provides an overview of held interviews, which can be found in more detail in the Interview appendix at the end of the book.

Table1: Summary of the interviews conducted

Synchronous assertion	23 O-Level Students, one A Level Student	Qualitative Interviews, Group- discussions
Asynchronous assertion	4 Educational Functionaries	Qualitative Interviews
	4 Former students	Qualitative Interviews
	3 Ngo Staff	Qualitative Interviews
	9 Parents	Qualitative Interviews
	14 Teachers	Qualitative Interviews, Group-discussions
	7 University Staff	Qualitative Interviews
	5 Workers	Qualitative Interviews

4.2.4. Across-culture and interview transcription

Kvale (2009)'s advises to put attention to specific cultural features while "interviewing subjects across cultures". I consider myself being familiar with cultural habits of and aware of notions occurring during conversations with people in Tanzania. Throughout the time I have spent in Tanzania I was in close and substantial contact with people from different cultural and professional backgrounds. I conducted the interviews in Kiswahili and translated these with the help of a Kiswahili dictionary (Oxford University Press, 2004) and web-dictionaries like *kamusi.org*. Because interview data does derive from artificial situations "rather than representing data in natural settings" (Charmaz & Belgrave, 2012, p. 351) I consulted a linguist to review the first rough translation. He indicated on implicit meanings of expressions and explained how to understand certain prescriptions made by the students. This decisively contributed to advance the reliability of the final transcription.

Finally, I stored the transcribed and translated interviews in the same AtlasTi database in which I had also collected my field notes, which allows for elaborated data management and analysis.

4.2.5. Interviews with adults

As mentioned before, I also held interviews with different adult stakeholders of secondary schooling mainly in Singida, at Universities in Dar es Salaam and Iringa. In Singida these include educational officials, teachers, parents, former students, workers and NGO staff. The accounts of teachers, educational officials and parents serve to contextualize students' voice in terms of schooling and living conditions in Singida (chapter 5.) while those from University personal function to discuss the induced theory (chapter 7.). The accounts from former students prove to be valuable in contrasting students' assertion within the theory (chapter 6.).

Concerning adult interviewees I want to draw special attention to teachers, educational official and university personal that I was visiting in their offices and holding authority in their area of influence. I consider them as

experts "knowledgeable about the topic and masters of the technical language" (Kvale, 2009, p. 70). In these conversations I was setting out from broader and impartial accounts like on the infrastructure of their particular schools or the state of secondary schooling in Singida in general to eventually come to personal opinions on schooling's value for students. I definitely profited in this conversations from being familiar with the topic, having an educational background and inside knowledge due to research conducted for my MA thesis. This was allowing me to converse on a somehow equal level - *inter pares* - and discussing certain topics from different standpoints.

4.2.6. Interviews and group-discussion with students

I conducted two group interviews with 4 students each from Mbwa Mwit¹⁸ Secondary School in front of my house in Singida, one discussion with all students and teachers of Samaki Secondary school at the end of the academic year, one group-discussion with 5 students in Mbuzi Secondary School as well as seven one-to-one interviews and several informal conversations. Except one student (A-Level) all were enrolled in different levels of O-Level secondary schooling.

The following elements of interviews put forward by Punch (2002, p. 324), who did research with school children in Bolivia, mark a guideline worth considering. Even though I interviewed youth, those elements depict a self-reflection process on engaging with younger people in an interview situation. In the following I outline my considerations of those points regarding the inquiry I conducted.

"Researcher's own perceptions"

Interviews as well as group interviews held were initiated with open and simple questions. I asked about schooling's general value and meaning to interviewed students. More specifically, I continued with inquiring about the effect of being a secondary student in terms of how they cope with schooling

¹⁸ Names of Schools and interviewees were anonymized.

regarding progress and achievements. This unstructured but question-led guidance proved to comfort students' in gaining confidence with the interview situation and allowed me to learn about certain individually relevant topics. Moreover, questions were a necessary guideline, as interviewed students were not narrating long accounts on their own initiative. I deliberately avoided that the interview situation was conceived as a form of test, balanced the structure and depth according to their and the situations' comfort. The aim was to "refrain from conveying expectations that there is one right answer to a question" as Kvale (2009, p. 69) points out in regard to interviewing children and youth. In this sense it is necessary to ensure that young interviewees "[r]eceive affirmation and understanding" (Charmaz, 2009, p. 27).

My intention was to learn about students' expertise on the subject through acknowledging them as reasoning agents, within school and outside, illuminating me on the topic in a mutual respecting conversation. To do so, I tried to encourage them and constructed conversations in a manner that they become themselves interested in elaborating an actual and important topic. Therefore, I held the questions open and explorative nonetheless definitely steered the conversations by following up an interest. Depending on the evolving interview's elaborative potential to deeper explore issues more detailed topics and challenging questions could be followed up, aiming more precisely at schooling's distinct value to the interviewees in terms of applicability, use and aspirations. Appropriately, I also introduced themes from my own observations and other preceding conversations.

Retrospectively, I think that being a foreigner had a positive influence on the interview situation. Students were speaking freely as they felt being taken serious in knowing more than me on the matter. Nevertheless, this also showed that I was unaware of certain aspects as I had non hands-on experience myself of the secondary schooling in Tanzania.

"Validity and reliability"

I consider all of the youth, which were between 14 and 19 years old, as fully aware of what they would divulge self-confidently. It cannot be expected that all (private) concerns were brought forward, as interviewees situational and subjective "[c]hoose what to tell and how to tell" in order to "[e]xpress

thoughts and feelings" (Charmaz, 2009, p. 27). But it was obvious in which interviews students were putting the effort to elaborate their opinions in more depth or just depict answers in a superficial way. This is worth considering when thinking of the quality of grounded theory analysis, as it is the interviewees who narrate their 'truth' that forms the core data to work on.

"Building rapport" and "Research context and setting "

I put these two aspects together because they go hand in hand. It was necessary to administer the interviews in a confident manner, which means that all conversations had to be conducted openly, with students finding themselves in familiar surroundings. The place had to be public, hence possibly overseen by others, but chosen in a way that conversations could not be overheard by others or disturbed out of the sudden.

With students whom I knew from before, I prearranged all the conversations. Hence, I invited students from Mbwa Mwitw Secondary School to visit me at my house, where we would sit outside in the yard openly, having lemonade and engaging in group-interviews. They were all familiar with the place, because they pass there daily on their way to school and knew all the neighbors. Prearranging conversations with students I knew from before allowed me to figure out the most convenient way of conversing. Male students followed the invitation to the openly held group interviews at my place. They felt confident there, as it was familiar to them. We were openly sitting outside and the atmosphere was at ease. They would elaborate on topics and come forward with new ones after some initial attempts from my side. I felt that their aim was to make me understand different aspects of a common interest, while having corresponding or divergent opinions and viewpoints among themselves. These accounts were particularly rich and extensive. Confidence was also a very decisive aspect in single conversations with students whom I knew from before, especially with girls, who preferred to be in their own environment to feel free to express themselves. They would choose the familiar and open space as well as the sense of privacy they required.

With other students, whom I did not know and first talked in schools, like in Samaki Secondary School and Mbuzi Secondary School, meetings

where arranged by teachers, and exchanges usually began with an easing chat. This was crucial as students did not know me from before and had the impression that I was a teacher. In the beginning they felt uneasy, like at an oral exam and replied in a very general way because they were too much concerned about what they would say, fearing to give wrong or answers that could be useless to me. By spending time on my own with them, like in Mbuzi Secondary School, I could ask about and show interest in their personal assertions. Eventually this led them to elaborate in more depth and try to make me understand. In both cases the more confident began to speak up, giving their statements and encouraging like that others to participate in discussion too.

Single students whom I met for the first time in Singida town, such as at markets, in Internet cafes or in front of schools, generally felt safe and were talkative as they were in their familiar environment. These one-to-one conversations were held ad hoc as well as openly, with me aiming to initiate a topic. Exchanges had the connotation of discussing a topic of common interest, with students expecting me to have an opinion on which they could build their trust to further express themselves. Students considered themselves as the experts from the beginning, introducing and explaining to me what they perceived as their experienced 'reality' and prospects.

I did not tape these last one-to-one conversations but reproduced and stored them in written form afterwards in the AtlasTi diary.

"Clarity of language"

As mentioned before I held all the interviews and conversations with students in Kiswahili, which contributing to the creation of a confident interview environment. Even though I could follow them, they had to extend their explanations in order to make me understand the broader meanings and some particular vocabulary and concepts. By having the interviews and group interviews taped and transcribed, I was able to gain close insight in the collected data.

"Research methods"

The form of interview I applied was dependent on external circumstances and upon how students felt most at ease to engage in being interviewed and to express their thoughts. All interviews conducted were held in an unstructured manner, whereby I arranged conversation around my research topic.

The individual and group interviews depicted a different but nonetheless rewarding value. Group interviews were rewarding, especially those with the students from Mbwa Mwitw Secondary School, as students were elaborating topics in dialogue with each another. In this way I could obtain diverse and even controversial arguments. Teachers initiated other group interviews that I held in schools. The atmosphere of such conversations was more formal, with students' more in need of clear questions on which to answer and guidance.

Individual interviews were conducted in more informal and ad hoc manner, by just looking for a confident place or talking straight away. At these occasions students were revealing more private accounts.

4.3. Reflecting on the process of building a theory

In the following I retrace the most important steps in finally reaching at a sound theory, which is explaining the prime data source (students' accounts) with reference to theoretical frame (section 2.3.). The analytic process was oscillating between the data, the underlying theoretical framework and consultation of additional data sources. By iteratively engaging with these different aspects an understanding evolved, which eventually led to the outcome of a sound and substantive theory. Besides, this iterative circulation caused alteration and substantial reconsiderations regarding the theoretical framework, while the inductive conclusions are meant to flesh out its structural underpinning.

I began with reading all the transcribed interviews, labeled and coded quotes according to the information they featured. In doing that I searched for phrases and themes that caught my attention. Then I reproduced each single

interview as a narrative on its own by arranging and merging quotes as well as paraphrases according to compatible topics. The result was that I obtained a loose catalogue of topics each constituted by specific properties and dimensions, which students uttered in regard to each school. This catalogue made it easier for me to handle the data and allowed me to get an overview of the breadth of the data. By studying these school-related summaries I found coexisting and differently approached topics. In a next step, I assembled these topics from different students' perspectives, regardless of their schools. Like that I was reproducing a first summary of different aspects of secondary schooling in Singida uttered by students, fleshed out with properties and dimension.

In the following I organized these aspects according to emerging themes that relate to the theoretical frame and to their sphere of applicability inside and outside of school. And I classified these themes by the quality of their properties - from general to more particular accounts regarding schooling's intrinsic, functional and social worth in terms of capability. Like this I derived at an approximate outline of capabilities, setting out from a general to particular valuation and applicability of experienced schooling and its aspects.

As a result, I came up with the first category, which was *Secondary Schooling as a valued form of being* (section 6.1.). Accordingly, I allocated quotes from students' core interviews on schooling's intrinsic worth in terms of acknowledged, intended and aspired opportunities and gains, within and outside. In the next category, which I first called *Participation* and then called agency exertion (section 6.2.) I allocated quotes by which students reflect on their intended acting, the contribution they make and the obstacles they face in regard to exerting agency in school. The last category was more of an all-embracing reservoir without clear designation, hosting all quotes on clearly uttered capabilities of foremost functional worth.

In the next cycle I printed out the accumulation of quotes and filtered them according to their distribution to themes and categories. Beginning with the first two categories I generated two narratives, consisting of quotes and paraphrases of students' accounts. Regarding the third category of distinct forms of functional application (section 6.3.) I decided to compose two

particular capabilities of functional worth, namely *Numeracy and Literacy - Mathematics and English* out of quotes and paraphrases. It was at this very point when I decided to stick with this basic structure of the theory.

Subsequently, I circulated between and within those categories, contemplating about substantive subcategories - according to inside and outside of school and to thematic uses and opportunities - and building transitions and linkages between those subcategories and the main categories. In a hermeneutical process oscillating between the theoretical chapter, the categories and within, I finally came up with well-grounded and consistent (sub-) categories, with substantial dimension and properties according to available data and presented in the form of thorough, reassembled narratives. These graded categories make up the theory.

Hence, in the most general sense, this 'theory' (chapter 6.) inductively explains the data out of itself. It thereby depicts schoolings as a valued form of being (section 6.1.) depicting its intrinsic, but also its social worth. In terms of actual benefiting, aspired aims and opportunities, it refers to inside and outside of school. On the next grade the theory reproduces students' agency exertion (section 6.2.), students' self-conceived forms of acting in and contribution to their course of schooling as well as handling of influential conversion facts. And on the functional 'level' (section 6.3.) it directly emphasizes on two functional capabilities, namely literacy in English and numeracy or Mathematics, which are of direct applicable value in terms of school and lifeworld propaedeutic.

4.4. Conclusion

I developed in this chapter the methodical features of this study by taking the theoretical frame (chapter 2.) and the objective of approaching students' experiences on their schooling in Singida into account. I apply a qualitative method, more precise a version of grounded theory called Constructivist Grounded Theory (section 4.1.3.), which facilitates inducing social constructions from obtained interview data. Thereby both, the researcher and

the researched are acknowledged in being influential in the interpretative process. This process already begins with interviewing relevant stakeholders. I outlined the modes of inquiry through (4.2.) which I obtained the empirical data for this study. I conducted interviews with 23 secondary students from Singida out of 6 secondary schools, which form the analytical core data of this study. In addition, I also engaged in interviews with adult and professional stakeholders of secondary schooling in Singida and also in Tanzania, I took notice of my own observations in form of a research diary and collected written documents. As mentioned before, these additional data foremost serves to contextualize the study as well as students' accounts in particular (chapter 5.), but also informs the final discussion of the findings (chapter 7.). Finally, I reflected on the process of arriving at the presentation of the data (section 4.3.), hence the substantial theory structuring students' accounts.

5. Scenery of the research

In this chapter I discuss aspects of secondary schooling in Tanzania. I focus on contextual aspects of secondary schooling in Singida (section 5.1.). I approach these from different perspectives, namely micro political decision-making and the labor situation in Singida. Following that I give an outline of the actual conditions in visited secondary schools in Singida (section 5.2.). To this aim I consult various sources like interviews with different educational stakeholders, scholarly work, official national documents and statistical data as well as newspaper articles. Finally, and as link to students' own assessment of their secondary schooling I reproduce the meaning teachers and parents ascribe to it (section 5.3.).

5.1. Singida, secondary schools' contextual setting

5.1.1. General overview

According to the Census 2012 was Singida region populated by 1,34 million people out of Tanzania's entire population of nearly 48 million. 170.701 live in the homonymous town of Singida at an average of 4,9 persons per household cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2012b).

Available figures from 2006 show that the average income per capita in Singida region was 245\$ cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2012c, p. 87) compared to a GDP of 369\$ in whole Tanzania, which was computed by the Worldbank (2006). The literacy rate, the proficiency in reading and writing Kiswahili, is found to be at 82% in urban Singida cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2013b, p. 22). Kiswahili is the lingua franca and mainly used in business and everyday life. Besides, there are eight ethnic languages and a number of dialects spoken in Singida region cf. Ethnology - Languages of the

World (2013). The pastoralist ethnicity of Wanyaturu¹⁹ represents the largest local group in Singida town, followed by Wagogo, Walangi, Wanyamwezi and Wanilamba. Ethnic languages are spoken between family members or people from the same ethnic group.

5.1.2. Food and the embedment of socio-economic opportunities

"Agriculture is the main activity of more than 90% of Singida people" was stated by Singida's Regional Commissioner's Office (United Republic of Tanzania, 2006). This equates to 54% of urban households, which were found to rely on subsistence agriculture as their main annual cash income. Accordingly, the life rhythm in this semi-arid region is strongly aligned to two eagerly awaited yearly rainy periods and on their extent. Draughts are common, Rweyemamu (2012) covered the last one in 2012. The living conditions are in general precarious as regular "food insufficiency [...] was reported by about 67% of the households. [...] The majority of [urban] households take two meals per day and the majority households ate meat or fish once a week" (United Republic of Tanzania, 2012c, p. 12).

As money is scarce at any time of the year, food is the carefully budgeted currency of everyday life, a central aspect around which microeconomics and politics evolve. It is not only relevant to ones' well-being but also a central means of exerting agency. D. Mushi (2013) writes in a newspaper article that in terms of local economics food is a highly speculated venture, exported to neighboring countries and regions in times of harvest but re-imported in times of shortage. The buying capacity of Singida's inhabitants is closely linked to the provision of short-term job opportunities, which depend on the availability of circulating money and are directly related to the availability of crop. This becomes particularly pressing at the end of the dry season or in times of harvest loss, when food stocks are empty. Rweyemamu (2012) finds that in these periods food prices soar and at the same time

¹⁹ The Prefix Wa- in Swahili means people of. Therefore Wanyaturu are the people of the Nyaturu Tribe. The same applies to all other tribes and ethnicities. In total there 126 distinct languages in for Tanzania, which all refer to ethnic groups.

possibilities to generate money cease. In regard to schooling, people who are depending on subsistence agriculture not only face difficulties to sustain their agency, but also their well-being in lacking sufficient meals. Accordingly, people do not only struggle to afford school related expenses but also to provide their children with enough food to be able to sit in class and concentrate. However recent development shows that Singida saw between 2005 and 2009 a rise in income by 19 percent, as outlined in a newspaper article (Nkungu, 2013). The quoted Singida Regional Commissioner Dr. Kone found the reason for this positive improvement in political efforts to advance the agricultural sector. These lead to abundant harvest and surplus in trade of crops.

As shown by ethnological research, operating with food marks the core of social relations in Singida. Such constitute the fabric on which opportunities and choices within local micro politics and economics occur. Phillips (2009) introduces two concepts related to food that encompass the establishment and nourishment of social relations in terms of local micro politics.

Firstly, referred to as "food of the farm", are the supplies in small quantities that circulate between "households and to and from markets". This constitutes the "intricate system of giving and taking, of requesting and granting, of borrowing and lending that characterize village life" (Phillips, 2009, p. 29). In this way, people balance their horizontal relations as well as social coherence through reciprocal generosity and mainly secure their well-being needs in daily lives.

And secondly, "food of wealth [.is.] offered in the form of food, money, or the lending of livestock" (Phillips, 2009, p. 30) and advocacy to members of society in need. Like that people obtain opportunities, broaden their range of choices and means exceeding their own abilities. To do so they seek to establish relations to members of society who have higher social status and more influence, like religious and administrative personnel, elected or traditional representatives, or business people. These imbalanced - vertical - yet mutual power relations determine dependency and patronage. A generous person in these terms "will find himself enjoying the labor of his debtors, public authority, and opportunities to govern and give advice" (Phillips, 2009, p. 32), as long as the obligations are not cleared but renewed. Olson (1964)

reminds us of a proverb from Singida that illustrates this: "Debt is wealth...The creditor has a bank in other people's pockets".

Such vertical relations depict their impact when it comes to school choice, as elaborated in the study by Phillips and Stambach (2008). School choice in Singida is not determined by a variety of supply with set standards from which one has the right to freely and equally choose. On one hand, the preference for a specific school is constantly revised and influenced by certain factors of importance, such as: the school's resources; the socioeconomic background of enrolled students; the degree of security for girls; students' further admission to advanced level education or even to university; the staff; the quality of teaching and routine costs cf. Phillips and Stambach (2008, p. 148). On the other hand, people are not free to choose, in the sense that people cannot rely on the right to be admitted to a range of guaranteed options. Choosing in such a way is possible where there is "reasonable capacity to actualize [...] a right to education" (Phillips & Stambach, 2008, p. 161). Both scholars find that this is not the case in Tanzania. As shown by the case of Singida, educational choices rely on a cultivated nexus of foremost vertical social relations, which constitute the prerequisite for one to be chosen to a school. People do seek to get the best chances and preferred prospects always exceed one's own potentials.

Accordingly, building and maintaining mutual social bonds "is always relative to one's social position [...] and consists of...] stacking up favors, calling on extended social networks, and seeking patronage" (Phillips & Stambach, 2008, p. 147). As a consequence, it is the poor and rural families that face the biggest challenges to do so. They need the most support and have at the same time the least to offer, often not more than their manpower or their harvest. For this reason, having many children is a strategy to counter poverty and ensure a sense of secure living. A Swahili proverb runs: "*Tajiri na maliye, maskini na mwanawe*", which means that the rich and their money are like the poor and their children. Children are seen to broaden a family's capacities in various ways. They can be strategically deployed to work and do favors, which eventually permit claims to be made. Perhaps this allows sustaining another member of the family to successfully engage in schooling, eventually

ending up with employment and earning regular income. A woman quoted describes that metaphorically:

"Here in Singida Region, people plant many seeds ... maize, sorghum, millet, ... If one dries up in the sun, perhaps God will help and another will flourish". (Phillips & Stambach, 2008, p. 145)

5.1.3. Labor situation in Singida, with reference to secondary education

A BBC article written by Dickinson (2008) finds that in Singida there are not many labor opportunities available except "little agriculture". In order to look a bit closer on this issue, I discuss some figures on employment in Singida to outline which opportunities youth in general and those educated at secondary-school-level in particular enjoy. Due to lack of data on Singida, I additionally consult nationwide data.

To start with, I cite a statement on the employment of youth in Tanzania from the Ministry of Finance (United Republic of Tanzania, 2013a, p. 12):

"Youths aged 15-24 years form a small proportion of the employees in the formal sector with less than one percent in both public and private sector, perhaps because most of them are still in school."

This assertion asks for clarification, bearing in mind that half of Tanzanians are under 18 years old cf. UNICEF - Statistics (2013); an approximate of 19 percent cf. CIA - The World Factbook (2013) - about 9 Million - are 'youth'; and youth make up a 65% of Tanzania's workforce cf. United Republic of Tanzania (1996). According to governmental statistics in 2012 were 1.884.272 students, equating to 34,3% net enrollment (NER) enrolled in secondary education from Form 1-6 cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2012a), Hence, it looks as if there were masses of youth not (anymore) enrolled in secondary education. And formal employment of youth is official below 1% United Republic of Tanzania (2013a). Available data for Singida reveal a similar picture.

'The Employment and Earnings Survey 2012' (United Republic of Tanzania, 2013a, p. 73) shall therefore serve as main source. Data reveals that Singida region is a tail lamp in terms of formal (youth) employment. By 2012 there were 11,374 people in the private and 12,795 in the public sector in Singida region formally employed and 246 - adults and youth - people newly recruited. Formal employment involved 6 female youth in the private sector and an approximate of 138 youth, both sexes, in the public sector. 89 out of them were teachers cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2012a). Due to the shortage in secondary teachers, secondary school leavers after completing Form 4 or above are temporarily recruited to fill the gaps. The other sector in which youths are employed besides education are: "Public administration and defense; compulsory social security", "Human health and social work activities" and "Accommodation and food service activities" (United Republic of Tanzania, 2013a, p. 73). Given that most jobs are found in Singida town, the majority of the 40 thousand youth living there cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2012b) are not formally employed.

Kent and Mushi (1995) conclude that the economy is not able to formally employ the masses of young people. Nevertheless, nearly all youth are considered to work or at least command some ways of generating income. Consequently, poor people obtain work usually in the informal sector, predominately on a casual basis in several activities, which some also do besides being enrolled to school. According to a report written by Kent and Mushi (1995) this sector is demarked by self-reliance in terms of resources and ownership of small-scale enterprises; time and labor consuming working methods; and little earnings in an unregulated market for which mostly skills are needed that cannot be learned or are not taught in a formalized way. In drawing on my own observations of living in Singida for nearly two years, I can give a tentative list of activities that may largely represent the range of activities by which people in Singida generate income besides subsistence agriculture: domestic work, small and a number of medium sized businesses, private or public services or by foreign contractors. Businesses deal with different consumer products, wholesale and retail trade, natural resources, food processing, transportation and servicing, commercial trade, construction, accommodation, food and drink services as well as banking. The local

services compromise public authorities as well as schools and hospitals from which some are privately run. Within the services, security is quite big branch, both for self-employees and employers. And there are a considerable number of diverse religious organizations and some non-governmental aid organizations plus international development projects. Besides these, there is rising foreign activity in Singida that yield employment opportunities for locals. Big infrastructure projects, like building streets, are foremost assigned to foreign constructors and foreign investors who increasingly show interest in the highly valuable natural resources in Singida region.

5.2. Conditions met in visited Secondary schools in Singida

The prescribed conditions in Singida's secondary schools as well as the chosen structure of their presentation derive from interviewed adult stakeholders' accounts and the insight they granted me. Because thorough data on Singida's schools is literally not obtainable, the picture presented is not exhaustive, but gives a hint of the difficulties teachers and students have to handle.

5.2.1. General view from educational officials' perspective

The following description is based on interviews conducted with educational officials of the municipality, the region and the district of Singida. They primarily spoke of the infrastructural aspects of secondary schools in Singida, which shall serve as a first description of the prevailing conditions.

According to *EdFunctionary3*, Urban Singida saw from 2006 onwards a expansion from just 3 government-run secondary schools to 16 secondary schools in total - fifteen government and one private - by 2013, which can also be found on the webpage of the Ministry of Education (United Republic of Tanzania, 2014). Due to recent national political efforts also in Singida all

students that pass the PSLE are supposed to be admitted to a place in secondary schools. The same is said to become true in securing a place at A-Level for those with sufficient passes at the CSEE. This is a decisive improvement as before students were squeezed out according to a best-served policy due to lack of places. Serpell (1993) reported of the same procedures in Zambia. But *EdFunctionary*³ criticized that all students are kept throughout the whole course of O-Level, which leads to overcrowded classes and amplifying the impact of lack of resources. Due to that practice he spoke of increasingly more students sitting the CSEE who could not even learn to read and write their own names. Nevertheless, this way of acting is supported by lump sums paid to every school according to the numbers of enrolled and progressing students to cover schools' expenses.

He further pointed out that the compulsory admission also causes contradictive reactions, as people with no regular income face severe difficulties to raise the necessary sums to cover arising expenses. Even though the government allocated money to support paying school fees for those who can prove not having the means to do so, whole families still compel to sacrifices in order to sustain the investment of secondary education for a single one of its members. Vavrus (2003) also finds this being the case at Mount Kilimanjaro in Northern Tanzania. Resulting, some people urge their dependents to intentionally fail at the PSLE or CSEE in order not to be further admitted. This is not an uncommon practice in Tanzania as spotted by Makongo et al. (2005) also in other regions.

All officials pointed out that secondary schools in Singida still decisively lack infrastructure, which becomes nowadays even more pressing due to the increase in student numbers. The main points outlined were that equipped laboratories and libraries do literally not exist, the student to schoolbook as well as to teacher ratios are exceeding proclaimed standards. Especially the shortage of two thirds of the teaching staff is considered problematic. In fact, every school misses subject teachers, consistently out of Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry or Physics. This means that subjects are not taught or taught by substitute teachers who are just lecturing out of the grades subject books. To cope with the shortage former A-Level students are deployed to temporarily teach at O-Level, but they did not receive any previous training.

All these aspects contribute to a decrease of secondary school's propaedeutic potential, especially in the more demanding science subjects. As such these aspects contribute to a continuously dropping CSEE pass rate, which was 2012 at 32,54% in urban Singida, experiencing a decrease of nearly 6% from 2011 cf. National Examination Council (2012).

Nevertheless, *EdFunctionary4* finds the overall situation is being better in the municipality than in the rural areas. Students and teachers would prefer urban schools as they find ways to school shorter and safer; and these schools are general better equipped. Moreover, living conditions are in urban areas better; basic infrastructure like electricity, water and shops are available; and teachers can collect their salary more easily. They do not have to travel to town, which causes rural schools missing teachers monthly for some days.

5.2.2. Teaching conditions in the visited secondary schools in Singida

All six schools I visited are located in urban Singida and are government run. The Samaki Secondary School²⁰, Mbwa Mwitw Secondary School and Mbuzi Secondary School are located at the outskirts of town, in rural like locations, while the others are situated right in the 'center' of town. Mbega Secondary School is the only school I visited that offers also A-Level instruction, being one of the very few in Singida. All other schools visited just compromise O-Level instruction from which continuing students are transferred if sufficiently achieving at the CSEE.

Infrastructure

Every school was going short to a greater or lesser extent in electricity, access to running water, sufficient number of classrooms, teacher and student accommodation and libraries. In order to practically teach Physics and Chemistry fully equipped laboratories are needed, which were not existent in any school I visited. Moreover learning materials, like schoolbooks are for

²⁰ I used synonyms to guarantee anonymity.

students in general are not accessible. Usually schools only have a small number of books for each subject available from teachers cite to give their lectures.

In particular the English teacher and the head teacher, *Teacher8* and *Teacher11*, of Mbuzi Secondary School at the outskirts of town mentioned that student housing would be an asset in terms of students' learning environment. Especially for girls it is seen as providing a more safe and learning oriented milieu. In general, students would be positively affected by these circumstances, having more time to allocate for their studies and more attention paid to their learning needs. Both teachers found that lacking infrastructure posed one hindrance to fully provide the intended educational services of qualitative instruction.

Concluding, the head teacher of Mbogo Secondary School, *Teacher10*, said that schools in Tanzania and especially in Singida, like his own working place, are facing severe challenges and drawbacks in providing their services. Awarded funding is, if at all, just slowly dropping in. In order to make the best out of the given circumstances, practical solutions would largely depend on an institution's own efforts. He, for example, would emphasize calling on local authorities and the community, primarily parents, for taking responsibility in terms of support to improve teaching conditions from an infrastructural point of view. Furthermore, he found shared ownership playing an important role to anchor schools in the surrounding community. It is a way to get people involved in and related to school matters as well as raise awareness of the importance of secondary schooling. This is further positively influencing how students', especially girls', schooling is acknowledged and how they can make use of it afterwards. Another way of obtaining necessary funds was taken by the Mbuzi Secondary School, which found support by an international NGO and sought to implement a school partnership with a foreign school.

Teaching staff

All schools were missing subject teachers. Teachers, educational officials and parents coherently marked this as the major obstacle to deliver intended instruction. Consequently, an already high number of students would have to share an insufficient number of teachers resulting in classes being put

together, substituted, just occasionally held or entirely skipped. Some subjects are not being taught at all for a whole grade. This commonly known obstacle is also documented by Rajani (2001).

In Samaki Secondary School head teacher, *Teacher1*, pointed out that the non-availability of teachers in Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics and Physics teachers was the main cause for his school record not having any student ever admitted to A-Level. To cope with that, the school had recently realized a program regularly inviting foreign volunteer teachers. They were taking over parts of Form1 instruction in his school. Furthermore, through these contacts he could secure some future funding for infrastructural necessities, teacher advanced trainings and general donations.

Another example is from Mbega Secondary School, one of the few schools in Singida where instruction also comprises A-Level. Besides the lacking infrastructure, teachers are missing, as *Teacher14*, a Kiswahili teacher and school functionary, stated. In order to cope with the lack of provision, they sought to deploy foreign volunteer teachers.

Mbwa Mwitu Secondary School, which had an approximate number of 430 enrolled students, was just allocated 5 teachers. There were no teachers in the subjects of Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry and Biology.

Similar was the situation in Mbogo Secondary School. Its head teacher, *Teacher10*, mentioned a commonly used method to cope with their teacher shortage in Physics as well as Mathematics. They temporarily employ former Form6 students to substitute non-available subject teachers. Even though they usually have not obtained any teaching training by then, everybody benefits like that. The students are taught at least something and the substitute teachers obtain a temporary job.

Primary schooling preparation impact

Primary schooling was another issue asserted having severe influence on teaching and learning in secondary schooling. *Teacher1* found Shule ya Msingi (primary school) laying the foundation of students' school career. Yet, students and teachers alike, found instruction of very poor quality by insufficiently preparing students for secondary schooling requirements. In her study Malekela (2000) also saw students being inadequately prepared,

lacking behind right from the beginning of secondary education due to weak preparation in primary schools. Tuition is generally considered an asset all the way through formal education but is comparatively costly and exceeding most peoples' budgets. In sum, students tend to fall behind and don't experience a chance becoming able to fully participate but instead successively add up difficulties along the way.

Corresponding to Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) the Head Teacher of Mbwa Mwitw found that a major obstacle for many students meeting the demands of secondary schooling is their insufficient proficiency in English. *Teacher8*, an English teacher, saw the problem rooted in students' primary education. Students are just taught in Kiswahili, experiencing English only in the subject itself. Nevertheless, poorly prepared they have to follow from Form 1 onwards English as the medium of instruction. *Teacher8* found that secondary schooling helps students to further develop their ability to understand and write, but problems persist when they have to talk or use the language on their own. Nevertheless, secondary schooling can only partly compensate this general shortcoming and it is a common practice that teachers sidestep students' lack of proficiency by giving explanations in Kiswahili. But English is substantial; it accurately depicts the meaning of instructional content; schoolbooks are written in English and serve as teacher's instructional guidelines; and students are supposed to have comprehensive notes in English. In addition there are no lexica available. So it is hardly possible for students to independently access English terminology. The result is that many students do not dare to speak up in class and do not capture the meaning of instructional content but just learn definitions by heart. They aim at reproducing their notes at examinations and tests.

5.2.3. Conclusion

From this point of view, lack of necessary infrastructure, inadequate amounts of available teaching personal, scarcely available supportive teaching and learning materials as well as insufficient preparatory instruction go hand in

hand. In sum, these aspects cause a diminution in theoretical and even more in practical instruction quality. Together these negatively influence students' appropriation of learning content.

Teacher14 put it to the point as he asserted that secondary schools are troubled to sufficiently convey most students with what they are supposed to be taught; not able to satisfactorily foster most of their successful completion; and leaving a majority of students poorly instructed. Given the prevailing circumstances of non-available laboratories, overcrowded classes and missing subject teachers, the more challenging science subjects and Mathematics are particularly problematic for students to master. Tellingly *Teacher1* and also some of the interviewed students from Mbwa Mwitu Secondary School found that students and teachers alike avoid the demanding science subjects - Physics, Chemistry, Biology and Mathematics - and prefer other subjects from the arts strand.

In addition, Wedgwood (2007) points to the fact that many teachers emerge from the same weak system of school instruction; they received just poor teacher training at all or didn't enjoy any at all. This causes a downward trend in instructional quality. Thus, it is up to students and parents to considerably compensate the lacking of formal schooling in order to keep pace with instructional demands and get prepared for decisive exams. The substitutive remedy is tuition. It marks a strong supportive asset, if affordable.

Sumra and Rajani (2006) also accentuate these shortcomings, which they consider as the main challenges public secondary education faces. They support my own observations in finding the bottom line of instructional struggle in overcrowded classes, teaching by rote and drill, citing from books plus merely teaching to tests and maintaining discipline by caning. Caning is still widely considered a supportive educational method, as I repeatedly heard over and discussed on the spot e.g. in Mbuzi Secondary School and Samaki Secondary School. Together these deficiencies create challenging circumstances for students and leave the fostering of educational needs decisively limited.

This portrayal of conditions in schools in Singida shall serve as the contextual frame in which students, whose statements are analyzed below, act.

5.3. Adults' assertion of secondary schooling

Likewise to the last section I rely also in this one on insights that I was granted by adult stakeholders, such as teachers and parents. Accordingly, I structure the findings to retrace the uttered perception of the meaning of secondary schooling.

To do so, I set out from a private conversation I had with the head teacher of Samaki Secondary School, *Teacher1*. He appeared disappointed and presented his struggle as being somewhat hopeless: none of his school's students was ever admitted further on to A-Level, which he partly portrayed as dependent on his school's weak infrastructural conditions. But he also opined that teachers, parents, students' social context and students themselves should value secondary schooling more. He accentuated that the triangular relation of teacher, parents, and students marks the foundation for students' performance and subsequent benefiting.

In the following section, I reproduce teachers' (section 5.3.1.) and parents' views (section 5.3.4.) on the worth of secondary schooling. I outline teachers' estimations of the performance and motivation of students (section 5.3.2.) as well as the societal assertion of secondary schooling (section 5.3.3.). This shall be the link to the next chapter, wherein I reproduce students' own accounts on their understanding of secondary education according to the capability approach.

5.3.1. Teachers

Some teachers like *Teacher1*, *Teacher3* and *Teacher7* questioned secondary schooling's worth to its students, especially when seeing it from a functional perspective. From their point of view, Tanzania and especially Singida are not offering broadly attainable employment possibilities, which would allow for application of what students acquired in school. *Teacher7* ironically stated that students would anyhow just be able to use what they learned in plowing their fields. Further on he added that given the low quality of schooling students

would not be taught to know and do much. Their pressing problems would not become more feasible and living conditions could not be improved.

Teacher8 said that for those who leave school during or after O-Level without successful completion, secondary schooling would not be much of an applicable asset compared to learned manual skills for example through vocational training. Secondary school students would just return home but not find a proper job to sustain themselves. Yet, he alluded at the intrinsic worth of secondary schooling for students, which almost all teachers emphasized. Accordingly, he found it conveying academic knowledge and understanding as well as enabling students to improve the way of expressing themselves. The acquired higher ability to elaborate matters makes a difference compared to those who did not enjoy that period of schooling.

Teacher6, the head teacher of Mbwa Mwitw Secondary School, found secondary schooling broadening students' horizon and sphere of ability to challenge what life may bring. However, when asked how students may be able to apply what they learned in secondary school, he joined in that it would actually not be instrumentally applicable. It just provides theoretical knowledge, which nevertheless makes a contribution to one's knowledge. In this sense he found it helpful for them and spotted a difference to those who did not progress that far. But he also endorsed that manual skills, acquired through vocational training, would make more sense as these allow somebody to work and sustain oneself right away.

Teacher7, who was also depicting its intrinsic worth, found that students would evolve the ability to understand and comprehend the affairs that are influential on peoples' lives, in and outside of Tanzania. But he considered O-Level schooling foremost cultivating its substance by continuation to A-Level, which might eventually lead to University. This would be the designated prime aim of O-Level. Therefore the Form4 examination marks a crucial point in one's career. He phrased this with an analogy: "Hapa ndio mlango wa kutokea²¹". From there on, secondary schooling would become meaningful, because A-Level students significantly encounter more opportunities, like employment for the government as teachers.

²¹ The meaning of this Kiswahili metaphor is: "That is the passage of departure!"

The female head teacher of Mbuzi Secondary School, *Teacher11*, regarded secondary schooling to be influential in supporting students to develop their ability to thoughtfully and self-reliantly act. She said they would learn about different matters that are relevant for their lives, which is being influential on their upbringing and crucial to their maturing process. Secondary school would be making a difference to mere primary education as those students are instructed in and guided to consider a broader range of knowledge. She found students' capability to get engaged as well as work self-contained and independent enhanced. This is especially relevant in terms of working because just a minority of completing students would find employment through companies or the government.

Adding to that, the head teacher of Simba Secondary School, *Teacher13* considered secondary school students having slightly improved changes in their lives, even if steps made are small. They would broaden their understanding of how to strive for and realize ideas, which would be a clear asset in terms of making up small businesses on their own.

Teacher10, the Mbogo Secondary School head teacher, positively noticed that secondary school students are instructed in a broad range of aspects and skills. Schooling influences their view and opinion on conventional forms of living and agricultural production; nurture students' capacities to develop and sustain businesses affairs; and providing support to rely on one's own self. Depicting the social worth, *Teacher10* found secondary schooling not only substantial for people's individual evolvement and but also for the communal development in Singida; via students it marks a vehicle to implement modernized knowledge about different affairs to the community. Hence, secondary schooling is a contribution to strengthen the community's stability and to the betterment of peoples' living conditions. Such a progress has also positive influence on schooling preconditions of forthcoming students' through widening the appreciation of secondary schooling in Singida because this may also lead the community to pay more attention to educational needs.

5.3.2. *Teachers' views on students*

Teacher6 found that many students do not realize the importance of secondary schooling but have the impression of losing time. They would appreciate the chance they got only later when they have already left.

Likewise, *Teacher3* from Samaki Secondary School criticized that some of his students just obey their parents' wish to be enrolled. They would not value it themselves, which he considered necessary to raise the necessary effort. He stated that when he was asking his students about the reason to be in school, they had difficulties making up a clear picture. *Teacher1* found that most of the boys have anyway other things in mind; they would pay more attention organizing and fulfilling their own affairs as they are striving for independence; they would be absent unexcused, which he considered a lack of discipline. Both teachers considered girls in general being more motivated but also more stipulated to non-school related chores and conventions. In general, he spotted girls' schooling would be less valued by society than boys'; this reduces the support they receive and also poses obstacles against their potential benefiting afterwards. On 30.11.2012 I attended the closing session of the academic year 2012 at Samaki Secondary School. At this occasion I was introduced to almost all students and teachers at once and could question them about schooling's significance for students' actual and forthcoming activities. After three students had expressed their points - which are presented in the findings (chapter 6.) - *Teacher1* made a motivational speech. He eloquently recapitulated the manifold use and benefits of secondary education and pictured secondary schooling as the crucial step to social advancement. He further emphasized students' struggle and effort, which would be at the core of successful studying and advancing to university or training institutes. These may eventually lead to interesting jobs like becoming a teacher, a doctor or even a politician. Concluding, he encouraged them to struggle hard, which would be key to realize their aspirations.

5.3.3. *Teachers' views on parents and the wider society*

Mbogo Secondary School head teacher, *Teacher10*, found that social awareness would play a decisive role in the appreciation and the forthcoming potential of secondary schooling. He outlined that social relations and perception are central for one to actively benefit from acquired abilities and knowledge.

According to *Teacher1* secondary schooling is widely lacking the necessary acknowledgement by society, especially in his school as most of students' families are depending on subsistence agriculture. He emphasized they do not command sufficient means to even sustain their children's basic needs, finding themselves in a constant struggle from day to day. As a matter of fact they rely on their contribution to the household income. The results are that many have difficulties paying school fees; purchasing necessary learning materials; and students are regularly not attending class, as they are obliged to work and support their families. Moreover, he observed that chances to become employed after completion are scarce and students' education is not playing the decisive role. In the first place, jobs ask foremost for personal associations and less on skills that exceed simple numeracy, reading and writing; yet, having obtained secondary schooling is nonetheless an asset. *Teacher1* pointed out that parent's appreciation successively grows; still a majority would perceive secondary schooling as something abstract. They would have limited sense of supporting students' academic needs, which he attributed to the fact that most parents just enjoyed primary education. He found schooling and its requirements are not much of a concern outside of school, lacking commitment from both, students and parents alike.

Teacher13 agreed that parents increasingly acknowledge the importance of educating their children, but he also found that educating girls is still underestimated in Singida because it is perceived being a male domain. Girls' conventional attribution is constructed around knowing about housekeeping, getting married and having children. Nevertheless, he considered this common perception changing. He welcomed the fact that lately more and more girls are attending secondary schools. This is having a

positive effect on girls maturing and development and increasingly receives societal appreciation.

The female head teacher of Mbuzi Secondary, *Teacher11*, also spotted the decreasing but nonetheless still prevailing social distinction made between educating boys and girls. She said that some parents weigh educating their daughters against getting them married. Due to the conventional and strict role allocation, prevailing poverty and scarcely available jobs, 'investing' in girls' education and its propaedeutic value for a career is considered less significant and rewarding than for boys. The outlook of marriage seems more beneficial and more expectable because it is an important part of social security, which is associated with social integration and recognition. Moreover, it rewards parents with a bride wealth and is seen as a release from their responsibility as wives move to the family of their husbands.

5.3.4. Parents and Society

The parents I talked with referred positively to secondary schooling. As nicely put by *Parent6*, they find formally educating their children "an effort for their children's future".

The group of *Parent7-9* unison declared secondary schooling being relevant for personal as well as social matters. It contributes modern knowledge to manifold areas of one's life, e.g. agriculture and it is of importance for the development of the nation as a whole, because young people are learning about politics, the economy and society. Nonetheless, parents were aware of its low teaching quality and found its beneficial applicability falling behind expectations and needs. They portrayed secondary schooling as an investment, being a necessary commodity to 'go with the times' that should be sustained if promised outcomes can be expected to be realized. The main aim and value given to secondary schooling is to eventually get their children obtaining paid employment. If affordable, being educated is therefore an increasingly strong asset.

5.4. Conclusion

We learned that the majority of people who live in uncertain living conditions in Singida (section 5.1.2.) substantially rely on relations to fellow citizens. Social relations mark the foundation of attainable opportunities, also in terms of secondary education and formal as well as informal employment. Due to the fact that formal employment (section 5.1.3.) is nearly non-attainable, people maintain their lives through agriculture or informal and temporary employments as well as small scale and self-run businesses.

Additionally, obstructive circumstances in schools are posing obstacles to unfold its full instructional potential (section 5.2.) and the prevailing living conditions of most students can not be consulted to compensate what schools do not provide. The situation in schools is becoming increasingly challenging because of the one-sided rise in students' enrollment numbers and of the prevailing poor teaching conditions; broad students' (mediocre) achievement is perceived being out of reach. Nevertheless, teachers and parents acknowledged foremost the intrinsic value (section 5.3.) of schooling; some depicted it as a possibility to social advancement for the individual and the community. Teachers and parents do hold on to secondary schooling's worthiness and emphasize that besides obtaining a certificate it still maintains various significant gains. However, when asking about its functional potential teachers and parents were uncertain about the value of the investment; the promising path leading from acquired skills of quality via good marks to significant certificates that finally allow one to obtain employment even as a 'politician', as sketched by *Teacher1* in front of his students, is for a majority in Singida's public schools simply not attainable. In fact, it seems not to be the single standing panacea to a betterment of life in Singida.

These insights overview shall serve as a stepping-stone from which we turn towards students' own assertions on the meaning of schooling and its proclaimed relevance. It is the purpose of the next chapter (chapter 6.) to present and explore school related capabilities that students' mentioned being

relevant to their intentions to sustain their well-being and agency. Capabilities functional, intrinsic and social worth and significance are thereby considered inside school and outside. I set out from students' statements that depict the value of schooling from an all-embracing, foremost intrinsic but also social perspective. Following that, I merge students' quotes reflecting on their deliberate agency exertion in the course of their schooling. And finally, I reproduce two specific capabilities that are related to functional applicability, inside and outside of school.

6. Students' assertions on their secondary schooling from a capability's perspective

I consider secondary schooling and students' lifeworld being part of their various spheres of action. According to the conceptualization of multiple realities by Schuetz (1945), these define two out of many diversely interrelated provinces. As mentioned before (section 2.3.1.) each of these spheres follows their own rules and meaning structure. Yet all are interwoven within the dynamic activities of an actor. Secondary schooling in the sense of capabilities represents a value-laden system of power, thought and behavior, hence of progressive instruction and learning. It is a specific sphere wherein students, seen as actors, deliberately choose and purposely act – individually and socially; and wherein actions have peculiar consequences and meanings. However, acting in school is just part of an actor's overall complex of activities; in this sense schooling is having influence on and being influenced by other spheres of action, which I subsume under lifeworld.

In the following I provide and discuss the empirical data that I collected through personal observations and through interviewing active students in Singida as well as two former students whom I interviewed in Dar es Salaam. In order to treat all interviewees and statements confidentially, names and schools were anonymized. The structure of presenting the findings derives from students' statements referring to schooling's various worth for their well-being and agency.

I begin with students' valuing secondary schooling in very general terms as a form of worthwhile being (section 6.1.). They portrayed schooling an accumulation of various doings and beings that ought to serve their needs and intentions; they valued being in school because it marks an intrinsic contribution to their well-being and agency - inside school and in regard to their lifeworld. In terms of school propaedeutic it was considered a period of time to learn and study, which was appreciated in broadening students' forthcoming potentials. This further relates to its value in regard of lifeworld propaedeutic; being of substantial present worth with a clear future

perspective it was conceived as an active engagement to strengthen dispositions for future challenges.

Schooling as a valued form of being serves subsequently as the base to gradually sharpen the focus of this empirical inquiry. The next 'level' depicts students' agency exertion (section 6.2.). Here the focus is set on uttered self-perception and personal decisions in regard to students conceiving themselves as active agents in the course of school propaedeutic; illustrating their sense of personal struggle and effort to maintain their intentions and needs.

And finally, I will outline to two explicitly mentioned capabilities, English and Mathematics (section 6.3.), and their spheres of present and forthcoming applicability in terms of school and lifeworld propaedeutic.

6.1. Secondary Schooling - a valued form of being

6.1.1. Secondary schooling – engaging in school propaedeutic

Student24 was still waiting for her Form4 examination results to be released, which would allow her to potentially proceed with A-Level secondary schooling. She took being in school very seriously. She described it as the only possibility here in Singida to follow her interest in studying and learning. She especially referred to her knowledge in Geography, Biology and History, which she would not have gained without enjoying secondary schooling. By secondary schooling she found herself pursuing her development path, which she related to personal gains and the broadening of her range of possibilities in the future.

Similarly to *Student24*, *Student7*, a Form3 student and the daughter of a high-ranking Lutheran cleric, tied secondary schooling to the possibility to engage with her interests and the active involvement in her self-conception. She considered schooling the apparent and only chance to engage with different interesting subjects and matters, especially technical subjects. This

was for her the possibility to follow her aspirations and dreams, like becoming an engineer. To achieve that, she was highly involved in her studies and in addition took tuition instruction, which she considered a strong asset in preparing herself for her aspirations. Altogether, she emphasized the possibility to learn because she found herself gradually developing her knowledge and ability to reason.

Student6, a Form6 student, was waiting for the final examination results. She accentuated education as a highly valued venture in her life. She said that if her performance was good enough, she would have the opportunity to continue with academic studies. Otherwise she would continue with an additional certificate study. Anyway, she was eager to study more. Besides, she was applying for a credit that high performing and needy students could ask for in order to afford university studies. She considered secondary schooling a positive challenge to be engaged with. By being a student she sensed certainty in her life and found herself in school intendedly involved in fulfilling her agency. In this sense she found herself already making use and benefiting from her education in various ways. For her being in school was not a time to be quickly overcome. It was her way to make a living for the moment. She was certain that she would be able to benefit from it in her work afterwards.

In our group-discussion *Student9-12* agreed that they find themselves in the advantageous position to concentrate on studying. It would be their most important engagement to go to school and fulfill the duties there, while being under guidance. For them, secondary schooling maintains the possibility to cultivate their abilities to struggle and successfully achieve results. They portrayed schooling as a practice ground to mature and personally develop. They considered it a privilege when comparing themselves with other youth of the same age who were not enrolled in school; those were described as having to generate income and to already prove themselves in more immediate and harsh conditions.

Student14 also valued that secondary schooling bears for him the opportunity to "meet and gather with different people, therefore you can learn from others there" (7:2059-7:2162)²².

And finally, *Student23* viewed being in school and studying an important and highly valued gain in her life. She by now already knows some English and has learned about different subjects. Related to these gains, she considered proving her knowledge in school like in the recently held annual examination of Form1 the possibility to be successful in something that she highly values. Encouraged by good achievements and the corresponding opportunity to continue with her studies, she aspired to become a physician.

Concluding, students portray being in school as a possibility to study and learn; a field to practice, also in cooperation with others: the chance to attain a sense of achievement; and an active involvement in self-conception.

6.1.2. Secondary schooling – worthy for lifeworld propaedeutic

As suggested in the previous section, secondary schooling depicts its intrinsic worth also for lifeworld propaedeutic. I refer to corresponding statements under four assembling spheres of benefiting by setting out from a more general appraisal to specific profiting.

Firstly, secondary schooling is considered worthy in regard to students' lifeworld in terms of a valued form of being. Secondly, the engagement in secondary schooling carries the anticipation of overcoming the status quo and feeds a social self-determination. Thirdly, secondary schooling is considered to promote more informed decision-making. And finally, it culminates in the prospect of being worthy, hence of use, for eventually contributing to making a living.

²² These numbers represent the location of the quote in the interview transcript based on AtlasTi and accompany the cited quotations from particular students' interviews (see Appendix chapter 9).

Secondary schooling - worthy form of present being in their lifeworld

The assembly of 19-year-old *Student11*'s several informal accounts makes a good example to begin with. From a lifeworld perspective secondary schooling is for him a valued form of being. He was living on the streets until the age of ten. During this time he described himself as just roaming around town, mainly occupied with looking for something to eat and a secure place to sleep. In between he just spent his time by doing whatever he was up to and tried to earn a bit of money by collecting pet-bottles, metals and by fulfilling small tasks. Retrospectively, he considered his ability to think ahead as very limited by then. He found himself just occupied with serving his immediate needs and wants. He then decided on his own to go to an institutionalized home and asked to be taken in. He describes this act with his deliberation of taking control over his life by going to school, which he highly valued from then on as the chance to develop. He found secondary schooling allowing him to intentionally engage with systematized knowledge, with learning and nurturing his understanding; and he considered him being able to progressively broaden his horizon to reason and act. He explains that he can now think of a future and build something up for himself, layer by layer.

In the group-discussion *Student9-12* unanimously found that secondary schooling facilitates them with thinking ahead. *Student9* said that: "if you are secondary school student, you obtain orientation in your life" (1:1160-1:1213). All of them agreed that youth who are not enrolled in secondary school are deprived from some opportunities, which they have. They felt supported to gradually develop a sense of planning as well as a "method to actively engage in shaping lives" as *Student10* said (5:1672-5:1695). They valued that secondary schooling provides them with a theoretical and potential outlook of what and how to become. This was considered a manifest improvement of their personal qualities in the present, primarily allowing them to have and to progressively strive for future goals. *Student12* described this present value as he intendedly directs his current actions in the spirit of building something up for his future. In agreement all those students claimed to be able to look upon future with more self-confidence. Accordingly, they found secondary schooling being a valuable add-on to their lives because schooling is a worthy

preparation for purposes that are to be realized later on, concluded *Student12*.

To similar conclusions came the group of *Student13-16*, who discussed their conception of self and of growing up. They found this positively influenced by secondary school; they were gaining knowledge and felt encouraged in proactively administering control over their lives and feeling supported in taking decisions. It was their central statement that students engaged with secondary schooling obtain more confidence in thinking of their future by having goals to strive for. They have a direction where they want to develop to and can act accordingly in the present. They do so by studying and acting correspondingly outside of school; such as saving money or following up kinds of businesses they are interested in. To sustain that they pointed at the importance of gradually advancing their knowledge and resourcefulness in order to eventually become self-dependent - to become sustainable of their lives independently and able to take care of other family members. Nevertheless, they concurred that secondary schooling was for the time being of limited functional significance because its present applicability is only situational. Its value would not reveal its full potential until they would depend on themselves and work.

In regard of lifeworld propaedeutic secondary schooling is considered worthy because it marks an opportunity for students to actively contribute to their future expectations; a present engagement with a future outlook as *Student11* described it. Being in schooling is perceived to widen the inclusive sphere and timespan to reason; it is an active involvement in preparing oneself for future opportunities like occupations and a self-sustained life.

Secondary schooling - expectations of securing well-being needs

Student3 considered secondary schooling as rewarding because he already learned something. Thinking about the future, his declared aim was to overcome “mazingira ya kulimalima” – subsistence agriculture – “and get an easy life. It helps to get out of difficult living conditions” (2:815-2:913) on which his family depends. He felt supported in this prospect, because compared to those who were not in school he found himself being able to speak English and to know about foreign countries. Secondary schooling is

for him the de facto opportunity to engage in bringing change to his life and provides him with the outlook of "becoming a teacher" (2:1080-2:1091), a proper employment with regular income.

Speaking of people's vulnerability in serving basic needs, *Student5* found the conventional agricultural practices in use would mar the environment and were insecure as "harvest depends on rain" (3:642-3:672). Through secondary schooling she expected herself to learn more about sustainably treating nature by using modernized tools and methods to provide for assured agricultural production. She anticipated herself getting to know more about that, which she found be valuable in attaining more food security.

Correspondingly, *Student20* expected that after completion of secondary schooling, students like him can take a socially respected role; because for "those who have no education you can use yours to empower them, like to explain and teach them. The many, who have not reached secondary school, you can teach them (3:1390-3:1579) about agriculture, traditions and citizenship".

In sum, Students expect to overcome uncertainty in securing their well-being especially in terms of obtaining harvest and food. They learn about subsistence methods in use and get an idea about forms of improvement. If and how these are to be implemented is not clear but these points are closer looked at in the next section. The section "Informed decision making" comprises a critical look at conventional customs and forms of socio-economic activities.

Secondary schooling - intrinsically worthy in terms of informed decision making

Student4 expected that "secondary schooling helps us primarily to overcome ignorance" (2:1530-2:1594). She pointed out that "between a person who learnt and a person who did not learn - there must be necessarily a difference" (2:1597-2:16789). Those who studied at secondary school would become able to develop different ideas, think critically of traditional customs and avoid cultural practices that are not proper.

Student22 found himself "able to know many things" (1:568-1:590). He alluded that he already knows English, to read, to write, to calculate and he

has developed an "understanding of social and economic aspects" (1:630-1:662) of his living context. In this sense, he understood secondary schooling as strengthening his way of acting in his lifeworld.

Student12, who referred to the same gains, further explained that what he is learning in school enables him, also possibly later on after completion of school, to comprehend and deal with external input. To illustrate, he brought an example:

"even if one is talented, it is important to be educated. It is the first thing that becomes apparent. [...] you can play football and are chosen to play for the national team. There, at the national team there is a foreign coach. Therefore, they speak English. There are techniques communicated and he speaks English, so you see what happens if you are not educated. It is difficult to get to learn anything new. " (10:1818-10:2092)

Moreover, he saw himself already benefiting from secondary schooling. For instance he said he could read and understand what was written in newspapers. This allowed him to form an opinion on and reason about different matters having an impact on his life. He considered this as informed decision making which would be the basis to continually develop, grow and act beneficially.

Student22 considered secondary schooling being worthy as it fosters an understanding of social aspects in peoples' lives, because in subjects like Civics, Geography and History they would learn about politics in general and in Tanzania in particular. In addition *Student19* explained that they learn about one's own rights as a citizen and about possibilities to contribute to the community as well as to the society at large. Having gained such theoretical knowledge was considered allowing them to comprehend political aspects that have influence on their undertakings and to consider them in discussing with fellow citizens.

I observed an attitude of critical thinking that manifested in some of the conversations I held with students. For example with *Student6*, who expressed her concerns about the low state of secondary education in Tanzania, which she found being the responsibility of the government in charge. She directed her criticism towards the ruling party CCM and picked her concerns about classes of up to 200 students in public government

schools as an example. Sensing political responsibility she found that CCM had been important at the time of independence but now it would be time for a democratic change; development needs in Tanzania would not be met.

Student2 found that public school students receive the lowest quality of secondary education. These schools are mostly visited by African Tanzanian students who barely can afford to do so. They are left with the least chances to develop, surpassed by Arabian and topped by European and American students who can afford the best private schools. From his point of view this reproduces a longstanding social hierarchy descending from 'Wazungu to Wahindi or Waarabu and to Waafrica'²³ at the bottom line.

On a different note, the group of *Student13-16* found young people's growing educational level, the increasingly available information and the changing conception of life responsible for a raising opportunism against conventional political schemes. This finds expression in a rising determination for political change, which is the case primarily in urban areas where the educational and informational level of the population is higher than in rural areas; they found educated people more critical about undemocratic practices. *Student13* emphasized that young and educated people would increasingly oppose the existing nepotistic power structures and demand to be entitled to proclaimed rights. Moreover he clarified that students in general want realistic chances for a betterment of their living conditions; mere illusions just add heating up the whole political situation; students would engage in school because they want a better life, but they would face a reality in which such chances are for the majority not realizable.

In sum, we have seen that students see themselves strengthened by a widened range of information and aspects in their reasoning. They acknowledge this an asset in their development. Some of them reflect on and critically assess circumstantial aspects hampering them in realizing their goals. The statements that are presented in the next section reveal in more depth how students' assert schoolings' worth for their employment expectations.

²³ The translation for *Wazungu* is Europeans and North Americans, for *Wahindi* and *Waarabu* is Indians and Arabians and for *Waafrica* is Africans.

Secondary schooling - employment aspirations and schoolings' related forthcoming value

In the discussion held with *Student9-12* they identified the prospect of a 'good life' as the central concern in regard to their engagement in secondary schooling. This was closely and repeatedly linked to being sufficiently self-reliant. This would become possible through 'working and earning money'. In principle this was seen realizable either through self-employment or being employed by someone else. *Student10* uttered: "without schooling at all, one would have no possibilities to get a proper job" (6:540-6:588) for the state or a company. He envisioned a certain range of employment opportunities for his future and anticipated better chances in his life; this also includes outrunning the expectations of uneducated peers whose predispositions allow just for unskilled and daily manual labor tasks. In the group-discussion these students referred several times to the promising connection between schooling at O-Level and earning money and making a living. Additionally to what one could learn there, a mere completion of secondary schooling O-Level allows to continue with the manifold privately offered on-the-job-training-courses, which they considered a further valuable possibility to add applicable knowledge for work. However, the most valued knowledge and best chances on the job market were related to A-Level schooling and a University degree.

Nevertheless, *Student18* estimated that "a majority of students fail" (2:1042-2:1072) to successfully accomplish even O-Level schooling. Not more than a negligible number would be able to continue to A-Level and eventually to University. He concluded that "this leads many people ending up to stay on the streets and the damage is that people become bandits, thieves and thugs" (2:1314-2:1418).

Student19 estimated that even by "failing to successfully complete secondary school it proves to be an asset for some working tasks through acquisition of additional knowledge and skills compared to unschooled youth who spend their time just on the streets" (3:434-3:648). He sensed a difference in knowledge that circulates on the streets and in school, which he considered therefore an add-on.

Concernedly *Student20* found that employment opportunities are in general scarce in Tanzania as a whole but in Singida in particular. He stated

"at least for those who would study successfully there also should be respected jobs available. This allows actually fulfilling aspirations and goals" (3:2245-3:2362). The social challenge to cope with is that most former students, with or without completion, just linger around. He said they would not know what to do and end up in "dishonorable and illegal doings. This is a challenge because there is nothing what students learn in school " (3:1750-3:1824) to earn money with.

In order to obtain any employment like for the government, networks and public relations are considered as crucial. *Student9* explained:

"even if you have finished University - most people get work mainly through connections. They get work because they know someone. Therefore another person who does not have such connections might have studied but does not get work." (1:1627-1:1864)

A different opinion was expressed by *Student13*, who stated that secondary schooling proves to be supportive for one's personal development in terms of having the time and a ground to practice one's skills and knowledge. He found this engagement as strengthening his ability to self-engage and self-depend. Yet, he also relativized its value in terms of being employed. The chances to find a job are literally nonexistent for the broad population. Moreover, he does not have associates in the relevant sectors on which he could rely on; a more realistic possibility to earn a living would be a small business on his own. To explain his thoughts he began like *Student9* by referring to the importance of associates:

"For example the Tanzanian Government is an employer. But there you encounter the behavior of handing over jobs and opportunities just within networks of give-and-take relations. [...] Therefore my personal understanding is that for us who study we will create our own work [...] without depending on or needing anybody else [...] I will create my own work like I imagine it and I want it. [...] Therefore we learn in order to develop our abilities and knowledge that help to depend on ourselves [...] in regard to the particular economic conditions in Tanzania, which is moderately developing compared to other countries." (3:1236-3:2236)

In sum, students relate their engagement in school to benefiting from it in terms of a betterment of their lives, which is closely related to earning money and sustaining one's needs and wants. Students are found to be concerned

about their forthcoming job opportunities; they think critically about the uncertainty of chances to do so; they reflect on the circumstances and attempt to find a way to deal with that for which secondary schooling is considered an asset.

6.1.3. Summary

This perspective reveals that secondary schooling is in various ways considered being of intrinsic worth. In terms of school propaedeutic being in school provides various opportunities. Being in school is seen as intrinsically worthy; students are following their interest to study; they nurture their personal dispositions; and by applying what they learned in its progressive course they obtain a sense of beneficiary in fulfilling agency. Moreover, schooling also proves to be of social worth as students do value being guided as well as the possibility to work together in peer groups. Besides schoolings present worth, students also relate future potentials to it as some envision continuing to upper grades or university.

Accordingly, students set the school-engagement in relation to their lifeworld and aspire benefiting. Quotations reveal that secondary schooling is perceived as a worthy form of preparation for their ambitions. Students vary in estimating schooling's forthcoming impact and consider in their expectations the prevailing living conditions. Nevertheless, it is considered to be a worthy asset as it gradually prepares them to consider a widening range of influential aspects in their decision making and acting. Those seeing it like that find their current actions being steps towards something worth which shows its fruits in in the future. In this sense, those students regard their present effort as chance to engage with the future.

6.2. Secondary schooling - Students exerting agency, their commitment and effort

6.2.1. Exerting agency - handling school's requirements and dealing with conditions

We have seen that secondary school is perceived enabling students to strive for goals; and as a present engagement to prepare for later on in life. To deal with schooling's demands and faced conditions (section 5.2. and section 5.3.) students spoke of bringing up personal commitment and effort. Their endeavor echoes the way they exert agency in school and the value (section 6.2.) they award to this activity.

In the group-discussion *Student9-12* pointed at students' self-perception in being influential and having a big share of responsibility in maintaining the opportunity to finally complete O-Level successfully by achieving sufficient marks at its final examination. It is the personal commitment, which is considered sine qua non for every student to stay in touch with school's demands; eventually perform well at tests; and to personally contribute to handle the internal and external aspects that are influential on their schooling. Students were keen to accentuate reflecting on their gradually developing ability to follow instruction and their chances to perform sufficiently. Performance is thereby regarded a decisive factor to sustain secondary schooling's forthcoming impact, which constitutes the motivational grounds in the present. They said that who does not get good enough marks at the final examination of O-Level cannot successfully complete secondary schooling, hence does not tap the full potential it offers. Furthermore, those who fail appear as if they did not learn anything there and just forfeited time and money. Students who obtain the school-leaving certificate sense their achievement for years of personal endeavor; they fulfill the principal requirements to either continue with A-Level schooling, vocational training courses or to become a public employee. To clarify, it is the graduation of O-Level that facilitates the opportunity of becoming a

primary school teacher, police officer or military personal. These are jobs, which students and the society highly values. These imply influence and power.

Student19 explained that keeping pace with instructional content, dealing with circumstantial matters and sufficiently preparing oneself is a matter of personal effort. Given the condition of the learning environment in secondary schools in Singida a self-reliant attitude is necessary to cope with these; he said that for some subjects there are no teachers available. He further explained that if a student has difficulties to understand subject content and to fulfill its demands, one has to devote oneself to personally struggle to learn and catch up. "Every subject has its own difficulties and necessities, therefore it is essential to commit one's will, time and attention to overcome obstacles and challenges faced" (4:399-4:622). He would seek support from higher-grade students and ask for explanations on content that he could not grasp during class instruction.

Student9-12 said that a very central means to sustain students' ability to study are their written notes, because schoolbooks are for most students not available. Only the teachers have some, but they would use them as instructional guidelines and to copy instructional content on the blackboards. Comprehensive notes are therefore for a majority the only possibility to prepare and to be able to reproduce instructional content in class, at tests and examinations. To obtain comprehensive notes *Student9-12* worked together. After school they would meet to they jointly rework and put together what individual students were able to (partly) notice in class.

To the same conclusion came the group of *Student13-16*, who live in the same institutionalized home as *Student9-12*. Students of both groups said that reiteration of school notes in their leisure time was essential; they found it necessary to devote extra time to cover schooling's demands, like doing homework and study to comprehend content. They said that all this could not be done at school, because some tasks ask for a quiet and undisturbed environment, which they wouldn't find there. Other students who were not serious "are disturbing, that is why you cannot learn there, you have to go home and do everything," (3:2082-3:2163) lamented *Student9*.

Student11 found such students being brought by their parents who find schooling a way for their children to learn or just do something. But those students would not see it as an opportunity themselves; they would not make the necessary effort and would give the same degree of dedication as eager students would. They found that adults and parents who have not been to secondary school not being supportive in following up and helping with students' homework and learning requirements. This would be an advantage.

Accordingly, *Student9-12* and *Student13-16*, considered themselves as having aims and goals to approach, apposite to other students, who omit the demands of schooling. Those students would spend most of their leisure time on the streets where they 'are just losing their time'. It would be important to value schooling as a possibility to study and develop, even if the performance is not the best and successful completion of O-Level is not certain, declared *Student15*.

Consequently, *Student9* said, they would gather to study after school and "put what they were taught in school in their memory" (3:1765-3:1855). However, also in the afternoon they would feel distracted by adults' demands, younger siblings play and domestic work. Additionally, he found themselves in need of leisure time and meeting friends too.

Nevertheless they carried out some tasks in the afternoon, like *Student14*. For him it would by then be possible to write and round up notes or engage in certain tasks, like:

"you know there are other studies that can be learned in noise. For example Mathematics. Can you solve Mathematic exercises in a noisy place? You cannot? Yes, I can. Which means it is not a task that needs a lot of thinking like Physics. Physics needs you to understand, maybe here this, there that. Maybe you have to find something in particular. But Math, Math you can just solve. If you know the rules and formulas you can solve and understand it."
(6:1990-7:99)

In order to concentrate and memorize they would meet at night when all others would sleep to find the really quiet conditions. Doing so needs firm determination because "you can say you learn at night but just doze. There it is important to fully wake up with a heart and a goal" (10:18-10:129), said *Student11*. Only the students who are motivated and value schooling out of

their own would compel themselves to study in their leisure time, especially at night. For him this depends on "the aim each single person has in mind" (10:522-10:575).

Student15 especially valued these learning circles as the opportunity "to get time to cooperate together with your colleagues" (8:351-8:407) and as a way of benefiting from each other.

Similarly *Student24* and *Student7* considered their commitment to study after school (e.g. revising their notes at home) necessary to follow their interest in studying and fulfill related tasks. *Student24* highly valued secondary schooling, which she considered as her choice and wanted to live up to the expectations related to the demands it poses.

In sum, students do sense deliberate agency exertion an essential contribution in order to make the most out of the opportunity of schooling. From this point of view it is considered meaningful in endorsing a rewarding outlook.

6.2.2. Agency deprivation in regard to secondary schooling

Student9-12 found that students' commitment and effort in regard to schooling is decisively related to one's lifeworld needs and intentions to exert agency and sustain well-being. They consider a student's decision for and commitment to schooling a substantial attitude to maintain one's fruitful participation, progress and chances to be successful. This is enacted by following consciously instruction as well as by reiterating notes and content self-reliantly. To make their point they brought the example of *FormerStudent1*, a since years to all of us well-known Form1 student who recently dropped out. The latest news was that he left Simba Secondary School to make a living on his own. For *Student9* the situation was clear. If a student was more concerned with other affairs, like earning money and cannot or does not sufficiently pay attention to studying, one would consequently fall behind and lose ground. Correspondingly, *Student10* found that if a student

"leaves school and looks for money, which takes a lot of time, he misses the time to repeat the things that he was taught in school. The next day he takes his bag and goes to school. But at the end of the year he will fail. If he fails, he will ask himself why do I fail but not do something more promising, like to look for money at least. By falling behind he already knows that even if he puts a lot of effort he might fail at the end of Form 4 - better to leave school and look for money. But another person who likes school a lot, even with low grades in his school performance, will try to improve struggling from day to day. To better his performance. He [FormerStudent1] had not school in his mind, but to earn money."
(3:105-3:985)

Student10 went on that students constantly reflect on or read the signs of their engagement and progress in school. They understand how they get along with instructional content; they estimate how they might perform at examinations; and have an idea of the effort they could or would want to bring up on their own. He assumed that *FormerStudent1* had to take the decision intentionally.

Student11 referred to him also having been a street-child like *FormerStudent1*; yet he claimed to highly value the chance of being in secondary school and learning. He asserted that also other students live in precarious living conditions, i. R. "the Ghetto"; thus they would be able to combine earning money and contributing to their living as well as school expenses with their commitment to schooling. He estimated that *FormerStudent1* was mixing things up, as he would not have been able to follow both, his needs in money and the demands schooling poses.

By chance I met *Formerstudent1*, an 18 year old young man I have known since 2008. By then he moved to one of the institutionalized homes in Singida where I used to work. I consider him ever since as a highly self-determined personality. He had recently left secondary school during the first year. By the time we had our conversation he was working in a garage at the main bus station in Dar es Salaam, repairing buses and cars. He told me that he neither wanted to be dependent on and comply to an adult guardian, like a teacher or car-giver, any longer nor continue to follow secondary schooling's preparation for later on in life. To prove his point he self-confidently portrayed himself as "clever enough. I do not need school learning any longer!" Instead, he considered himself as knowing best what he wants and preferred to come

to decisions on his own by now. He emphasized to serve his wants and needs by earning money straightaway. As he put it, the school and the institutionalized home could not contribute to that but interfered with his perception of life; Pivotal for his decision to leave school and the home where he lived for some years was his want taking responsibility for his own live. He also mentioned that he could read and write and would even understand some English, which he appreciated being an asset compared to fellow workers. Hence, he saw himself profiting from the secondary schooling he enjoyed - even if he did not complete his schooling.

Another secondary school dropout, *FormerStudent2*, said that he did not have the possibility to continue his secondary schooling because of lacking money to sustain himself during the time of his studies. He did not have enough money to eat or to raise the necessary amounts needed to provide for schooling's necessities. He would go hungry to school, which made him too tired to concentrate. In this precarious situation he had to quit secondary schooling. He described himself as no more than struggling from meal to meal and not having access to resources such as formal education as well as money and the resulting possibilities. Looking upon his future he was certain that whilst lacking these, he would not be able to change anything out of his own power. Education was for him the possibility to gain *nafasi*²⁴, to broaden the horizon and the timespan to act and think.

Similarly, *FormerStudent4* also highly valued the opportunity to study but said that he had to drop out of school because he was too critical and complained about the quality of instruction and teachers' absence in his school. Despite him being a high achieving student, his teachers forced him out by 'losing' and not handing out his Form 2 examination results. He would have to pay for results to continue to Form 3, which he could not. Nevertheless, he found that even though he dropped out without completion his secondary schooling was worthy in terms of its functional applicability. He went to Zanzibar to work as a "beach boy" approaching tourists on the beach using his proficiency in English. It was there where he finally found a job in a hotel. In addition to his proficiency he was there also profiting from his

²⁴ A Kiswahili expression for: space, place, time, opportunity and chance.

numeracy skills. He said that he found a job that O-Level graduates would ask for.

6.2.3. Summary

Students do consider themselves as agents who act on their own behalf. They sense their share of contribution, also outside of school, in order to meet (school related) goals and aims. They reflect on their deliberate activities in school and on the chance to accomplish what they are aiming for. Students' agency fulfillment in school is also related to their needs and intentions in well-being and agency to outside of school. Former students' statements signify that agency fulfillment is closely interrelated with circumstantial influences, inside and outside of school. In conclusion, it is apparent that schooling is regarded as meaningful as long as agency fulfillment within is possible/attained against the background of circumstantial aspects of students' lives and personal dispositions.

6.3. Secondary Schooling - two functional capabilities English and Mathematics

6.3.1. Introduction

Within school two capabilities are demarked being basic for agency fulfillment in terms of its propaedeutic progression. Hence, English and Mathematics are key to opportunities that students value in regard of school propaedeutic and essential to substantially develop other capabilities. Deficiency in these two capabilities was mentioned as major obstacle that hinders students participating in the course of schooling. Outside of school these capabilities depict schooling's functional, distinct applicability and worth for lifeworld propaedeutic.

6.3.2. *The capability English*

English the medium of instruction in School Propaedeutic

Student9-12 explained that English is the official medium of instruction in secondary schools in Tanzania and used in all subjects except Kiswahili. They acknowledged sufficient command of English as having the decisive role in participating and following the course of secondary schooling. *Student10* made clear from the beginning that: "if there are 200 students in a school, maybe like 20 master good enough English" (6:1406-6:1465). Accordingly, they designated English to be the foremost obstacle and hindrance the majority of students fail to overcome in order to fully participate in class. In the subject English itself the proficiency was seen important because there one has to be able to actively apply it. "You have to be able to talk" (8:766-8:796), said *Student10*. *Student11* added, "you have to understand what have read in a book, because you have to explain that independently" (8:1387-8:1439). Students found the subject 'English' being the only chance to actually nurture and advance their proficiency; to do so it would be necessary to stay in touch with instructional progress and demands. The other subjects were considered as not particularly beneficial for weak students to advance or develop their proficiency in English. There it is the means that should be at hand to eventually learn and deal with the subject specific instructional content and demands. Apart from actually understanding and being able to handle what is taught, home-exercises, tests and examinations are held in English. In sum, English is at the core of school propaedeutic; it yields the most accurate meaning of content and it is the appropriate way of speaking up and actively participating whilst class instruction.

Yet, because a majority of students insufficiently masters English teachers give summaries in Kiswahili, bypassing the instructive inconvenience. *Student9-12* further clarified that in sum students tend to pay less attention to English instruction and put generally no effort in advancing their proficiency; they just seek to have their notes complete. To do so they copy teachers' writings on the blackboard and seek to complement their notes with the help of those few students who sufficiently get along with what is taught in class.

In this sense *Student12* characterizes class instruction as a mix of condensed Kiswahili explanations and incomprehensible English definitions. Nevertheless, having comprehensive notes at least enables them to learn definitions by heart. *Student11* gives an example: "In the course of Geography you learn and you put in your head this is research and research is this and this. Done! You already have in your head" (8:1633-8:1775). Summing up, *Student10* said that "only with English, one can fully benefit" (8:927-8:975) leaving those who are just capable of Kiswahili with reduced potential to make meaning out of what they were encountering in class.

Student12 explained that in his school, complementary to class instruction, English is also pivotal outside of class in order to conduct oneself in the very hierarchical context of secondary schools. Flashy signs like "No English! No Service"²⁵, which I saw in one way or another in any of the schools I visited, indicate on a general communication policy implemented in secondary schools all over Tanzania. The idea is to promote the use of English in schools and to help students to practice. Nonetheless, this also means that for those students not capable of speaking English it is not only inconvenient if not inappropriate to speak up in but also outside of class. *Student11* confirmed that those students who are not capable of English "cannot address teachers and school staff to ask for help" (7:1328-71381) nor raise claims.

A student who was good in English was *Student3*. He was one out of three students who dared to speak up among all his school fellows at the in English held closing session of the academic year 2012 in Samaki Secondary School. He said that he wanted to further improve his English and envisions becoming a teacher. Moreover, he had recently reached the 3rd place in a town-wide English contest. This was a huge success for him that also shed led on the whole school and made the head teacher of his school, *Teacher1*, especially proud of him. The head teacher explained that such a success would make the school more attractive for parents and prospective students as well as might help to secure some support from the community. An important step forward, as Samaki Secondary School has no record in

²⁵ This was written on a signboard outside the teachers' and administrative rooms in Mbwa Mwituu School.

admitting any student to A-Level since it was opened. He accentuated *Student3* as an example that students in this school can also achieve something.

Poor proficiency in English leads to agency deprivation in school propaedeutic
A student facing English as a decisive obstacle was *Student8*. In both occasions we were talking he told me that he was not performing well in school and failing tests. He attributed this to his poor proficiency in English. He was not able to understand much of what was taught. Beginning with primary school he found the ongoing low instructional quality responsible for his poor proficiency and could not share at all the positive views of other motivated students. Secondary schooling was for him not of any particular help. He did not sense any achievement and found himself being loosing time. Therefore he did not consider it being of any value any longer. He anticipated staying anyway poor and forced to rely on his personal "ujanja" - cleverness - in making his living on occasional opportunities found on the streets. By the time we conducted the interview he already turned his attention away from schooling and said he was more interested in making music. This would allow him to express his anger and disappointment but also what he called "street knowledge".

Comparably minded was *Student1* who was not motivated but disappointed. He was questioning the significance of secondary schooling for his life. In our first conversation on 13.11.2013, even though he was preparing for the tests at the end of the academic year of Form 1 he already expected himself not being capable of performing well. He mentioned having severe problems to follow what is taught in class, likewise resulting from his poor proficiency in English. On one side he made the quality of his secondary school responsibly for his poor performance. Compared to other schools in town it would get just a small amount of students admitted to A-Level. This was commonly considered a quality criterion for schools among Singida's citizens. On the other side he found primary education influential on his English deficiency. There he was not supported by tuition instruction, drawn as the reason of not having built up the necessary proficiency to comprehend what is taught in secondary schooling. Nevertheless, he was proud of himself

being a secondary student as well as being taught in English and having written notes. In the second conversation on 25.01.2013 he confirmed his doubts about poor achieving at the test. Nevertheless, he still sensed some motivation as he expected betterment of his performance because he was to be relocated to another school. This particular school was known for its record to get students to A-Level.

FormerStudent3 declared his bad proficiency in English was the reason for dropping out in Form 4. He did not see the chance to succeed in the final examination and took a more promising chance of an announced job offer instead. Nonetheless, he said he would profit from his secondary schooling in his job as a Daladala²⁶ driver. His literacy was decisive to get him the driver license and he would know some English, which proves to be worthy in occasional situations in his work or in being able to talk to a foreigner like me.

Proficiency in English is a matter of progression and practice

For *Student1*, *Student8* and *FormerStudent3* low proficiency in English caused difficulties in successful participation and fulfillment of their agency in school. Decisive is the progressive building-up since primary school that is influential on students' proficiency, as *Student1* suggested. I mentioned the matter of students' English proficiency in several conversations with students who elaborated their view of the problem.

The cause for students' poor proficiency in English would be rooted in the applied system of instruction in primary school argued *Student12*. English is there taught just in one subject, which would be too little for students to reach the level required from the beginning of secondary schooling onwards. Moreover, students who learn and understand subjects' content taught in primary school in Kiswahili are irritating when continuing to build upon this knowledge in English. *Student9-12* agreed that it could help if English would be the medium of instruction from the beginning of primary school onwards, because this would make it possible that students develop a sufficient proficiency.

²⁶ This is a Kiswahili expression for a local commuter bus service.

In accordance *Student17* criticized that English was in primary school only taught in one subject. The vocabulary would be announced in English but explained in Kiswahili. Like that students would not develop sufficient proficiency to face the language requirements in secondary school where English is the precondition to be able to follow and achieve in all the subjects except Kiswahili. However, he found that English is also in his secondary school not taught well; the conditions were not supportive enough to compensate what already started in primary schooling. He said that: "if until secondary school you cannot understand English, there it will be even more difficult" (1:2379-1:2444); he revealed that subject teachers have to get through with their curricula and cannot put too much effort in teaching English to their students. In the subject English teachers are overstrained with students' need to catch up and cannot foster all lacking students' needs. Hence, it depends decisively on student's own effort, leaving many of them failing examinations and just limited benefiting from their secondary schooling. Nevertheless, he found learning English as a worthwhile activity, because it is a central capability that students could gain through schooling.

Student10 estimated that the ratio of non-capable to capable students would be lower in private schools due to the availability of better-qualified teachers. *Student11* responded that it would not necessarily and decisively depend on teachers' knowledge or their skills. He saw students' proficiency related to their learning environment, inside and outside of school. In governmental schools students from different social and ethnic groups would share class, but tend to remain among themselves and speak either Kiswahili or their particular languages. The same happens outside of school and at their homes. Hence, most of the students can only cultivate their English when it comes to instruction, which causes many students to have severe difficulties in following it.

Correspondingly *Student18* added:

"at home we speak Kiswahili or even our own [tribal] languages. Therefore it is difficult to get somebody who can speak with you English in order for all to learn it. If your are just alone you cannot learn it easily. (2:641-2:874)

Similarly, *Student19* saw the need to practice English being decisive for secondary students. "You would need to have a person who challenges you in speaking in English" (4:1758-4:1816). Instead, students would rely on teachers giving explanations on English instructional content in Kiswahili, which leaves them mixed up. He found English in principle not very difficult; with practice one would be able to overcome deficiencies and mistakes. He held English being an asset that is needed nowadays in many fields of work and helpful to make one's life better. He agreed with others who also considered students' poor proficiency the biggest obstacle to overcome in order to successfully perform. And *Student20* concluded: "I mean, if you already understand English the other subjects will be controllable, because the tests are all only in English" (2:158-2:305).

Applicability of English in students' lifeworld and its propaedeutic value

Student3 was the first one I interviewed and visited in his school. He had the courage of approaching me on the streets somewhere at the outskirts of Singida town. He was an extroverted boy of about 14 years old who obviously wanted to apply what he learned in school. We were getting to know each other by exchanging some English phrases and by talking about foreign countries and where I am from. He was proud that could he talk to somebody extraneous, like me, and discuss some shared knowledge.

Student24 already valued the use and applicability of her English proficiency. Her family was renting a restaurant in town aiming particularly at tourists. She was the only one staff able of speaking English, which was considered an important aspect of their business. Also *FormerStudent4* actively used his noticeable proficiency in English in working with tourists.

Likewise, *Formerstudent3* claimed that despite having dropped out of secondary school before completion of O-Level, his knowledge in English would be useful in his work.

Correspondingly the group of *Student13-16* subsumed that English is variously worthy because it enables one to talk to foreigners, like tourists, NGO workers, business people and members of different religious denominations.

Student9 saw English being especially an asset in terms of future jobs. He said that

"you can be employed maybe in a hotel management, because in working for a hotel management you have to deal with travelers. They are coming with tours. Therefore you can make use of your English and make use of what you learned in class and apply it in your work." (2:465-2:725)

Summary

In conclusion, the proficiency in English was of great concern to all students and portrayed as a central obstacle in secondary schooling. Due to weak preparation pulling through from primary school a majority of students have severe difficulties in commanding sufficient English to fully engage in the course of secondary schooling. Those students who are not able to command English can only partly grasp instructional content through Kiswahili round-ups and by learning definitions by heart. In contrast, those students who are proficient in English can engage with instructional content in its original form. It is a prerequisite for daring to speak up in class and participate, because English is the appropriate language and way to address teachers; and for successful achievement at tests and examinations. Moreover, those students who command sufficient English are consulted by other students to help them with rounding-up and grasping what they missed out or did not understand during class instruction.

In addition, English was also shown to be variously applicable in students' lifeworld. I observed different uses of English, which I crosschecked during informal conversations with students. Students confirmed benefiting from English in terms of using their Cell-Phones and the Internet, watching movies, reading descriptions of imported goods as well as newspapers, listening to and understanding international music and video clips. Moreover, students were also incorporating English words into their Kiswahili conversations. A way of youth expressing their distinction from the rest of

society finds expression in a constant alteration of everyday-language. This is named 'Kisasa'²⁷ and is used to allude to young people's educational level.

6.3.3. *The Capability of Mathematics/Numeracy*

Mathematics forms the core of the science branch. It serves as the basic apparatus to engage with the subjects Biology, Chemistry and Physics.

School propaedeutic - the use of numeracy

Student14 explained that at the end of Form 2 there is an examination that divides high achieving students in the science branch, who are continuing with Chemistry and Physics in their curriculum. The "low achieving students are subscribed to the Arts branch. They do not study Chemistry and Physics any longer" (4:494-4:634).

Student13 added that no school in Singida has

"teachers for all science subjects. You can encounter that there are no teachers in Chemistry, or in Mathematics no. Or in the subject of Physics. It is important to have a teacher there, but you find that there is none. (4:825-4:999)

According to students these subjects especially ask for well trained teachers – and not a substitute teachers – because they are considered particularly difficult and in need for thorough explanations. Content has to be clarified and conveyed by someone who is knowledgeable of giving firm explanations, as *Student14* explained. He found science subjects being very demanding subjects. *Student14* concluded that most students would not opt for the science branch because in order to meet requirements students have to endeavor and commit a lot of their leisure time. Hence, they would not put much effort into this examination at the end of Form 2, because failing does

²⁷ Kisasa means modern language as the prefix *Ki-* stands for language and things, while *sasa* means 'now' or 'modern'; it is a commonly used term in Kiswahili especially use by youth; and conveys the ongoing change of the language by assimilation of new expression and foreign vocabulary.

not cause any other direct impact. In general, he found students preferring the Arts branch with subjects like Civics, Geography, History and Kiswahili.

Student15 said the same seems to be true for teacher: "there are more teachers for the Art subjects available. I think they prefer the subjects of Arts very much" (4:1116-4:1218). Nevertheless, he explained that Mathematics and the rest of the science subjects are especially important when considering an academic career by following school propaedeutic to the next levels. Applied Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry and Physics represent subjects that are tentatively evolving until the end of A-Level. There they constitute the foundation of what is called 'Natural Sciences and Mathematics', which is a set of compulsory subjects students cannot avoid.

Lifeworld propaedeutic - the use of numeracy

In terms of lifeworld propaedeutic Mathematics was mentioned as being variously applicable and of forthcoming worth. Both, *FormerStudent3* and *Formerstudent4*, said they could apply their numeracy skills in dealing with the demands of their jobs. The former said it proves to be useful in his work of driving a local bus. He counts money and calculates the collected fare from his passengers, the share for his companion and his own profit after subtracting the running costs. The later was working in a Hotel and benefited from his mathematical knowledge while working in the bar and restaurant, for example by calculating and writing bills.

Student2 was working after school in a small grocery shop of his family. He was independently selling a variety of goods they offered and proudly referred to him as not making mistakes in his work. Some people standing around and listening to our conversation confirmed that. They said he was doing a good job, accurately calculating their purchase and giving back the right amount of change. One young man jokingly added that it was not be possible to trick him.

The group of students *Student9-12*, who were living in an institutionalized home, told me that every year the whole group of children and youth were planting large amounts of maize in order to sustain their basic needs in food for a considerable period of time. They found Mathematic being an asset in calculating the amounts of seeds they would use according to the

acres of land they have available; and in estimating how many sacks of maize could sustain the amount of people feeding on it for which time.

Student12 said he already benefits from his Mathematical skills as he was making some small trades to earn money. This allows him to purchase school materials and save some money. He explained that in school students have the advantages to learn about and gain confidence in dealing with numbers and the concepts of earnings, expenses and profit. They could practice that through assignments and check whether and how that works through their own little businesses. His aim was to open his own business after completing school. In terms of a forthcoming worth he added that:

"you can make whatever business you like. Mathematic prevents you from mixing things up. It is also an advantage because you know more compared to those who have not learned. They can make a business but will not do it well, because they will not get profit. (5:1821-5:2130)

Summary

Mathematics is similar to English a medium or a vehicle of instruction, in this case especially within the subjects of the science branch. Being able to apply it is a prerequisite to engage with the content of these subjects. Moreover, students and also teachers tend to bypass it – like in English – but nevertheless it is a necessity when seriously considering successful participation and an academic career.

In terms of lifeworld applicability it depicts its functional worth in jobs and tasks (former-) students already exert. Accordingly, it is perceived being of forthcoming worthwhile use.

6.4. Conclusion

The synthesis of merged quotes and paraphrases depict secondary schooling from different perspectives in this chapter. Secondary schooling was outlined a valued form of being (section 6.1.) for those who referred to it as a worthwhile engagement in general terms. Accordingly, it was regarded

allowing one to fulfill agency intentions within school and also outside in students' lifeworld. Pointing at its intrinsic worth, schooling was found to support students strengthening their dispositions to actively engage in their self-conception. Schoolings social worth was revealed by students' assessment on relevant aspects in their lives. Accordingly, it was seen contributing to the 'capability to consider change', which maintains stressing one's limits of activity and aspire something new.

Regarding agency exertion (section 6.2.) students illustrated their perceived role in exerting agency and redeeming opportunities in the course of schooling. They spoke of their commitment to put effort to handle instructional requirements and to deal with faced conditions and challenges – inside and outside of school. We have seen that conversion factors (section 2.3.3.) can enhance or deprive students from exerting agency. Anyways, such have to be dealt with, which students located between will, reason and ability to do so.

Finally, we come across two distinct capabilities of functional worth. English and Mathematics (section 6.3.) are in the capability's sense capacities to act that are applicable; and they further generate a range of opportunities within and outside school.

In short, for those who sense secondary schooling's advantage it marked a period of growing, where one could engage with different topics and people, conceived meaningful and interesting. Being active in this sense was further considered a life strategy. Students saw their present agency fulfillment in the light of a preparation for later on in life, which they conceived as broadening their sphere of action. Students positively anticipated an independent life by earning money as well as by becoming a respected and bearing member of society. Even though secondary schoolings' notorious quality problems and its uncertain potential for jobs were identified, it was nevertheless perceived as an influential step to ones' advancement and a tangible chance in life. In particular students saw certain capabilities, such as English and Mathematics, as variously applicable inside and outside of school. Yet secondary schooling was also questioned and opposed. Affording and investing in schooling was weighed as it asks for allocation of a considerable amount of people's time and scarcely available money.

Critical voices mentioned that fancied benefiting out of one's education is uncertain and expectations not completely compelling. Due to the fact that schooling was seen limited in its potential, some students questioned if it was worthwhile to extend the period of not earning a living and rely on adults' supervision while postponing conventional forms of socialization.

7. Concluding discussion

"Education is in itself a basic capability that affects the development and expansion of other capabilities. Having the opportunity for education and the development of an education capability expands human freedoms (for example, to be literate and numerate). Human agency is also central to the capability approach, and central to human agency is having the capacity to make informed and reflexive choices." (Walker, 2005, p. 108)

The research questions (section 1.4.) of the present study are set to approach the value of secondary schooling for its students in Singida town, Tanzania. Taken together, these questions are consulted to explore how students experience schooling being relevant for them in terms of satisfying their intentions and needs. Accordingly, this study admits student voices to an academic educational discourse. It is concerned with aspects of quality of formal schooling in regard to its worth for youth's development.

To pursue these questions, I consult Sen's version of the capability approach (chapter 2.). This approach facilitates the comprehensive assessment of one's doings and beings and of various opportunities to make use of these as well as of factors that influence one's undertakings. It thereby enables shedding light on the impact of encountered entitlements and provided means as well as of achieved outcomes in regard of one's activities. I reviewed the literature (chapter 3.) and found that student views on the worth of experienced schooling were under represented. Then I discussed the methodology (chapter 4.), which I used to conduct my inquiry. Next I presented the empirical findings (chapter 5. and chapter 6.). In the following chapter 7 I provide the interpretation and discussion of the data and the conclusion of this study.

The empirical data is based on student accounts and provides an illustrative rather than representative picture of secondary schooling in Singida approached from a capability perspective. The statements made in

the following discussion are valid for those students who were interviewed in this study and do not allow for deducting generalized principles. There is no claim made to come to positivistic objectivity and to provide best-practice instructions cf. (Adick, 2008); the aim here is to retrace socially relevant constructions by the application of the constructive grounded theory method (section 4.1.3.). Nevertheless, the findings do shed light on certain issues that have been touched in the scholarly literature and are consulted for discussion. In discussing the findings, I interpret issues within the structure of the 'induced theory' (chapter 6.) and contemplate on the outlined aspects of the theoretical framework (section 2.3.), on the specifications derived from reviewing relevant research (section 3.5.) as well as on the circumstantial conditions (chapter 5.). Recognizing students' voice (section 3.5.3.) calls attention to their assertion of secondary schooling being variously worthy with regard to their well-being and agency.

7.1. Secondary schooling – the value of being in school

I grouped the accounts of those students who referred to secondary schooling in general terms and valued it as an entity under "schooling as a valued form of being" (section 6.1.). Their actual engagement was prescribed as a worthwhile part of their (daily) lives, which alludes to Sen's (2002, p. 2) reference to schooling as 'being a good' in itself. They associated with schooling the accumulation of doings and beings that comprise a range of (prospective) actual and forthcoming opportunities. Terzi (2007, p. 30) conceptualizes "the capability to be educated as a basic capability". Applied to schooling, the aggregated student accounts support both of her outlined characteristics.

On the one hand, schooling from students' perspective correspond to what Terzi calls "the basic need of the individual to be educated" (2007, p. 30). In the sense of school propaedeutic (section 6.2.1.) schooling was depicted as the only opportunity to learn, to engage with different subject content and to be formally taught, which was already experienced as an

advantage; it was conceived a field to practice plus nurture one's abilities and affiliate with others in a meaningful way; and the chance to attain a sense of achievement. This reflects students' self-perception of being in need to learn and their intention to actively engage in their self-conception. As such, being successful in following schooling's progressive course mirrors students' valuation of schooling in terms of its propaedeutic and in terms of gaining a sense of certainty. Schooling is also relevant for lifeworld propaedeutic (section 6.1.2.). The continuous engagement marks for the time being a central part of students' daily lives. They emphasized schooling's potential in progressively nurturing and forming their individual dispositions, which already have intrinsic and instrumental relevance; and students were keen to determine their benefiting in comparing themselves to other members of society who were not obtaining formal education at this level.

Terzi's second characteristic links schooling as a basic capability to its "substantial role in the expansion of other capabilities" (2007, p. 30), alluding to its inherent future directive by supporting students' development (section 3.5.1.) in leading a 'good life'. Fittingly, Saito (2003) stresses the future value of schooling and need for present determination, while Walker (2010, p. 124) points to its transformative potential "to act in the future differently". Students considered schooling as widening their sphere of action and horizon of deliberation. Hence, schooling marks the vivid opportunity to actively contribute to the fulfillment of their expectations on the future already in the present. Students said they appreciate the time they have to think and gradually act, which they perceived as having control over their lives. As a result of this Schuller, Preston, Hammond, Brasset-Grundy, and Bynner (2004) find students obtaining choice. Students found their dispositions, skills and abilities being challenged and progressively strengthened. Through what they learn and experience in school they anticipated adding knowledge to better secure their well-being needs. This is an important aspect for students who were experiencing well-being satisfaction continuously at stake due to the prevailing living conditions of subsistence agriculture. Additionally, their widened potentials were experienced as an asset in exerting agency already in the present and for preparing for future tasks.

When looking at the value of schooling as a basic capability it is important to consider the social arrangements within which schooling is taking place and for what it is perceived to be relevant cf. Terzi (2007). We have learned that parents and students alike have high expectations of secondary schooling. It is consulted to tackle experienced developmental deprivations and expected to be an asset in dealing with 'maisha magumu' - the difficult life (section 3.5.2). A notion that implies the prevailing and vulnerable living conditions the majority of people in Singida find themselves in (section 5.1.). Students strive for a self-sustained, self-determined and modernized life through realizable opportunities. African youth share globalized desires and expectations cf. Diouf (2003) and want to enjoy the fruits of consumerism as a Sociology Professor from the University of Dar es Salaam, *UnivStaff6*, stated.

First of all, students expect schooling to result in an economic asset and already re-conceptualize their own selves around proper employment profiles cf. Bryceson (2002). Accordingly, most students in this study spoke of aspiring to obtain certain jobs and careers. This fits to insights gained through assessments done with help of the Human Capital approach (section 3.3.2.). Girls, in particular, were keen to identify themselves with jobs that imply social approval in contrast of just being socially acknowledged as mothers and wives. Fittingly, teachers, such as *Teacher1*, did fuel student ambitions and push them to struggle hard in order to maximize benefiting (section 5.3.2.). However, most of them did not consider the schooling provided being of particular worth for obtaining jobs; one said that 'pressing problems would not become more feasible and life conditions could not be improved'. Formal employment is hardly obtainable and is marginally dependent on merit or qualifications (section 5.1.3.), instead opportunities to make a living depend on informal socio-economic relations (section 3.4.). Stambach (1998) argues that schooling merely introduces new commodities in society. Nevertheless, these are handled according to conventional forms of a contextualized socio-economic code of conduct. Thus, schooling is socially accepted as long as it is an anticipated economic asset for making a living and does not interfere with and disentangle students from conventional expectations of growing up and socializing. The education of boys finds support as long as it sustains their prospected social role of becoming reputable members of society; taking

over and maintaining their family lineage; and being able to financially sustain themselves as well as their future families. Girls, on the other hand, do face their education being less valued than boys. Commonly, they are expected to know about housekeeping, child nurturing and to get married at an early age. Given the few chances to obtain work and cash in the investment made in formal education, teachers (section 5.3.3.) pointed out that some families weigh their daughters' education against having them married and securing a bride dowry. Makongo et al. (2005) find that also in other parts of Tanzania and Warrington and Kiragu (2012) show that in parts of Kenya girls may also experience their formal education being even opposed by their parents out of similar reasons. There, schooling is considered as counteracting conventional forms of socialization and girls' devotion to the traditional norms. In sum, such inflicted traditions do reflect a sense of societal security and more likely expectable opportunities in a very poor community, but such also restrict young people's development and aspiration to certain paths. Students find they shouldering high individual responsibility to *flourish* (section 5.1. and section 5.2.) in stepping out from these uncompromising grounds and convert the investment of schooling into proper employment. The struggle to make a difference cf. Serpell (1993), Phillips and Stambach (2008) may explain occurring incidents such as scores of female students fainting before decisive examinations in central Tanzania cf. BBC-News (2008). *EdFunctionary2* confirmed my own observations that this also occurs among boys and girls in urban Singida secondary schools.

In sum, students of both sexes envision emancipating themselves from being bound to such rigid pathways of socialization and criticize the experienced uncertainty in securing their well-being needs while growing up. They tend to notionally detach themselves from the conventional paths and from "uneducated others" to whom some also count members of their own family. Students who sensed widening their capabilities through secondary schooling conceived it as playing a crucial part in 'going with the times'²⁸. This commonly used metaphor stands for a dynamic self-conception founded on a prospective and self-constitutive life-style. Hence, students wanted to uphold

²⁸ 'Kuenda na Wakati' is a widely used Swahili expression to signal awareness of the needs of modern life.

their expectations and aspirations (section 2.3.2.) they relate to schooling. The outlook of 'going back' to a timeless life on the 'streets', fields or homes and performing manual work or engaging in illicit affairs was not only discouraging but also branded as the failure of the student - a disinvestment of time and money. Related to that, Hagberg (2002) poses the question of whether students in Burkina Faso learn to 'live in or leave' their habitual backgrounds after finishing school in search for fulfillment of their expectations. This question is also applicable in Singida, as some boys in this study pointed out that the possibilities there to obtain formal employment are literally non-existent. As a result, many young Tanzanians from rural or semi-rural settings, such as *Formerstudent1*, move to urban areas like Dar es Salaam cf. Salazar (2010). In search of making a living in a new socio-economic environment they also detach themselves from rigid social boundaries. One student mentioned a rising opportunism within the Tanzanian society. He highlighted that young educated people are increasingly opposing the longstanding social and political system, which earns them being looked at as troublemakers. Diouf (2003) identifies herein a growing social distortion and an increasingly volatile political situation. He argues that young people on the African continent are frustrated from being deprived of redeeming their altering self-conception and expectations as well as from being socially uprooted, for example through moving to urban areas in search for a better life.

From an aggregated point of view, the empirical findings provide a comprehensive picture of experienced secondary schooling. Even though it alone is not the sole panacea cf. Vavrus (2003) to betterment of life, students who valued schooling did so in relation to different aspects of their ongoing agency deliberation. They approach it in terms of school propaedeutics and of its actual embedment in their lifeworld but also according to its expected worth for their future aspirations. As a result 'schooling as a basic capability' marks a quality that can be of diverse relevance for well-being and self-determined agency activities. It shows some transformative effects and is perceived being foundational to other capabilities cf. Terzi (2007). Intrinsically, students felt adding to obtainable knowledge from the 'streets'; they spoke of taking widened account of influential aspects of their lives and becoming able to

further inform themselves through different sources (section 6.1.2.). As a result they assessed and stressed the limitations of their sphere of activities, which is fostering their “capability to aspire and consider change” (Unterhalter, 2012, p. 322) and pointing to schooling's potential of acting differently upon the future cf. Walker (2010). Functionally, it is enabling progressive engagement in different subject matter; students perceived schooling as strengthening their actual and future self-employment abilities and expected further trainings after completion, which to yield the potential to realize a range of employment opportunities. It is also of social worth, as students stressed conventional codes of conduct and political schemes (section 3.4.1.) by raising voice in their contextual settings. Some students spoke of working together to handle school requirements, sharing their knowledge and insights in teaching fellow citizens. This emphasizes schooling's role of being a facilitator for social development, change and making a living. Concluding, the perspective “schooling a basic capability” alludes on Singida students' choice. The intrinsic, instrumental and also social “aspects of education relate to the enhancement of freedom, both in well-being freedom and agency freedom [...] and confirm the value of the capability to be educated” (Terzi, 2007, p. 32). In addition to the awaited economic asset of schooling the capability perspective facilitates a diversified view on its link to students' activities within their contextual settings and in regard to their needs and intentions. Supplementary research could be directed in exploring schooling's worth for students in more detail and scrutinize a list that could inform quantitative research.

7.2. Exerting agency in school

In the previous section I have argued for the ‘capability to be educated’ being based on students exerting agency in school propaedeutics and on realizing their intention to learn. Accordingly, interviewed students referred to schooling as a sphere to act and presented themselves as actors who deliberately make decisions in order to fulfill their intentions in school propaedeutics. From their point of view agency exertion in school is about handling a variety of

conversion factors, circumstantial conditions and about their effort and commitment to struggle. This fits to Vaughan's definition of 'the capability to participate' in the process of schooling. Participation "takes into account the ability of an individual to convert resources into [educational] functionings" (2007, p. 113). Some functionings mentioned by students were for example: 'being able to follow subject content', 'take an active role during instruction', 'perform well on tests', 'maintain the outlook of a successful completion of the grade and of the O-level course'. In taking the stance of the capability approach (section 2.2.) we learned that individuals are not necessarily capable of achieving the same qualities of functionings nor generate equal capabilities from comparable resources provided and conditions met cf. Sen (1985). Correspondingly, Vaughan stresses that 'conversion factors' "affect the ability to attend school, understand and participate [..which..] are present both outside the school and within the school environment" (2007, p. 116); and their impact on students activities diverges "due to individual preferences, others due to structural differences in society" (p. 113). Hence, discussing student accounts from the perspective of 'the capability to participate' facilitates insights into their motives and into the significance of various kinds of conversion factors (section 2.3.3.) in regard of school propaedeutic activities.

Students mentioned their interest in schooling was deriving from valuing as something 'good' (section 2.2. and 7.1.), which is related to the possibility to satisfy one's intention to learn and to uphold associated future expectations. This alludes to a decisive attitude for proactive participation, feeding students motivation in struggling to achieve valued outcomes. Also Glassman and Patton (2013) argue in reference to Dewey (1913, 1916) for the importance of students motivation to be successfully involved in schooling. Interviewed students spoke of their commitment and effort to proactively handle requirements as well as influential conversion factors in school. Herein also lies a decisive freedom aspect as students administer choice to deploy effort of certain degrees and actively engage in schooling. Accordingly, students said they would continuously reflect on their ongoing performance and on schooling's relevance for related expectations. They maintain an overview of schooling's performance related role; they evaluate their ability to

exert agency in school and its value for related aspirations (section 6.1.). In conclusion, valuing schooling for the possibility to learn – e.g. a field to strengthen and practice their abilities – and eventually benefit is mutually relevant to raising the necessary effort that is needed to actively participate, handle factors and conditions within ones area of influence.

In looking at ‘conversion factors’ I follow Vaughan (2007, p. 116) who draws a line between internal and external commoditized aspects and abilities that influence students’ participation. Fittingly, we have seen that students in all schools were facing constraints and decisive shortcomings in infrastructure, school materials and the number of teachers. Or they spoke of teachers who did not receive adequate training to convey instructional content. Moreover, aspects of instruction and teaching methods are often conceived as restraining (section 5.2.); students spoke of caning and other forms of underestimating their learning efforts in class. Thomas and Rugambwa (2011) found that female students are especially exposed to such practices. Such find expression in teacher attitudes and the composition of learning material. In addition, the decisive shortages in subject teachers who have to deal with overcrowded classes and lacking infrastructure are contributing to diminishing (section 5.2.2.) institutional support to foster students. As a result, individualized support for diverse students’ needs cannot be provided widely. This makes it difficult for many students who come already weakly prepared from primary school. On the other hand influential conversion factors derive from students’ lifeworld and have direct or indirect influence on students’ ability to exert agency within school. Students spoke of unsatisfied well-being needs and agency preconditions deriving from most families’ weak financial situation. Some students were sitting hungry in class; learning materials were unaffordable; and requested housework contribution (section 5.2.1. and 6.2.1.) left no time for learning and doing homework. In addition, students found that many parents’ and adults obtained just low levels of formal education, which they made responsible for low social appreciation of schooling that undermines students’ effort. *Teacher1* (section 5.3.3.) found that common awareness - from teachers, parents and students - of secondary schools requirements and appreciation of its worth would be an advantage for students’ participation and further benefiting; even if it is mostly intrinsic as

teachers conclude. In sum, students variously encounter such – internal and external – factors in differing degrees and occurrence. They variously influence individual students in converting their opportunities in reach, gradually stretching from supporting (section 6.2.1.) to depriving (section 6.2.2.) them in fulfilling their agency intentions in school.

In pulling strings together, students sense that different degrees of conversion factors enable different qualities of participation. Accordingly, some students came up with ideas and revealed some activities to self-reliantly better their command of certain skills – like English – and to deal with faced conditions. This mirrors an intention to enhance their capability to participate and to attain certain achievements and emphasizes the interest some have in schooling. Students spoke of self-initiated undertakings. One strategy mentioned to substitute widely for unaffordable schoolbooks was having comprehensive notes - written in English. These closely resemble examination matter. In order to obtain these, students are helping each other fill up what they could not catch during class on their own, enabling them to study. To do so and also to study together and jointly collaborate to prepare themselves, some determined students would meet after school. *Student9-12* and *Student13-16* would even wake up at night to study undisturbed from requests of their caretakers. They considered doing so a huge commitment deriving from an interest in and expectations in relation to schooling. In this way they also foster reciprocal relations between each other (section 5.1.2.) that can yield further opportunities - like being paid small amounts of money or handing over household tasks - depicting another form of schooling's functionality. And *Student18* pointed out that he would seek conversation partners to speak English. While students like, *Student1*, considered tuition an additional but widely unaffordable way to engage with school content, constituting a further chance – already from primary school onwards – to study and round up what was not taught in class. Additionally, this was prescribed as a way to foster mutual relations with teachers²⁹. However, the examples of unsuccessful and former students show that (combinations of) low levels of conversion factors hamper the capability to participate in class,

²⁹ For more information see also Mbelle and Katabaro (2003).

even if students are motivated. Vavrus (2009) outlines that conditions faced by teachers in class do often not allow for more than just teaching by rote; making it difficult to foster students' needs to acquire skills and knowledge. Fittingly, students mentioned to be struggling with insufficient skills to understand subject content and to contribute in class; the lack of educational support to foster individual student's development; conflicting lifeworld needs and intentions. Many students were experiencing hindrance in staying afloat and achieving educational functionings. The example of *Formerstudent1* shows that unsatisfied lifeworld needs cause insufficient participation and successive falling behind in class; this can even lead to deprivation of well-being satisfaction. Weak students are experiencing caning and other forms of harassment in class. Former students said they couldn't realize their need to learn, were deprived in participating and could not hold up expectations for a 'good life' through schooling. As a result such students' felt the realization of their agency and well-being being foiled. However, this does not necessarily inflict students' depreciation of formal education itself as some deprived students still considered it a worthy matter regarding their wish to learn and schooling's expected future virtue. Nevertheless, those students (had to) put their attention – of necessity or intention – towards more immediate needs in well-being or more promising undertakings in agency realization.

Concluding, we have seen that the capability approach offers a comprehensive evaluative frame. It allows the consideration of means and resources that one actually enjoys in relation to one's ability to exert agency, sustain well-being and eventually achieves valued outcomes. However, the all-embracing category of 'conversion factors' would benefit from further diversification. It would be helpful to put attention on how personal motives and the negotiation of freedom have an effect on handling these. Further research could focus more on an assessment of faced constraints, their relation to social conditions – such as gender, personal socio-economic background – and clarify how participation in schooling might be conflicting with students' needs and interests. In addition, as this study primarily focuses on schooling's positive connoted value for students, adjunct studies could direct attention towards voices of 'unsuccessful' students. It would also be interesting to consider school related procedures – like teaching, learning –

and students' strategies to choose to increase effort in more detail. This could help to understand more about the links between students' interest in schooling and handling its requirements as well as settings in realizing agency.

7.3. Two basic capabilities - English and Mathematics

Students referred to two school induced capabilities, namely English and Mathematics. Both stand for subject related 'basic capabilities' which Terzi defines as "beings and doings [that] are at the same time crucial to meeting basic needs [...] and foundational to other beings and doings both in education and for other capabilities" (2007, p. 35). In terms of school propaedeutics, both are mutually related to 'the capability to participate'. On one hand they are inter alia sustaining participation and on the other hand the capability to participate is foundational for expanding subject related capabilities, such as English and Mathematics. Furthermore, students underlined that commanding different levels of English and Mathematics leads to different qualities of outcomes and to potential chances; e.g. in terms of grades and degrees which can have an influence on job opportunities. In lifeworld propaedeutics these were depicted as the most evident 'acquisitions' through schooling and an apparent prerequisite to the expansion of other capabilities. Commanding these – also at low levels – endorses the identification with schooling and as something valuable; they represent the progressively ripening fruits of one's realized intentions to learn. Plus, English and Mathematics designate schooling's 'advantage' for leading a 'good life', because only the educated people – with whom secondary school students tend to identify themselves – are considered commanding such skills and knowledge.

Going more into detail, English and Mathematics are two 'media of instruction' in school propaedeutic; they are crucially important for academic participation. English is the official language of instruction in secondary schools and was of foremost concern for all students. Students criticized the

generally weak preparation through primary schooling as well as insufficient support to be fostered through subject instruction in secondary school. These were mentioned being the reasons for the vast majority of students having failing with even understanding instructional content in class; let alone with manipulating English according to their own initiative. Teachers are said to bypass students' and sometimes even their own proficiency inconvenience by giving explanatory summaries in Kiswahili of what they copied down (from schoolbooks) on blackboards in English. As a result, students may have comprehensive notes in English, but the meaning of subjects' content is not fully accessible to them. However, students said they would rely on such summaries as these at least partly convey a sense of the instructional content. Students said notes would be helpful for subjects like Geography or History. Such could be consulted to prepare for class and examinations for learning by heart and reciting by rote. Yet, a more comprehensive ability to independently use English, hence to understand and speak, is considered a prerequisite to self-reliantly practice and engage with instructional content. Students prescribed it as the basic capability to (fully) participate in class; to adequately address teachers and personal; to obtain a thorough understanding of different subjects content and specific terminology; and to be equipped with the tool to operate in decisive examinations. In short, mastering English takes a decisive role in maximizing savoring of schoolings propaedeutic progress.

The situation in Mathematics was equally precarious since Tanzanian students have severe difficulties in reaching even basic levels, which is equally rooted in weak preparation by primary schooling and finds expression in low achievements cf. SACMEQ II (2000). In secondary schools often non-available Mathematics teachers, overcrowded classes and instruction of difficult content in hardly mastered English further trigger students' weak mathematical skills. The results are a meager pass rate of 14,6% in Mathematics at the end of O-Level secondary schooling just on the level of "Basic Mathematics" cf. United Republic of Tanzania (2012a). From interviewed students' point of view, Mathematics was regarded being a basic capability even in low degrees. It was mentioned being needed for doing homework; for learning formulas and about techniques also in other subjects

like Biology, Chemistry and Biology. Hence, it fosters the opportunity to engage with other subjects of the science branch, which are based on applied Mathematics and a complex vocabulary in English to further handle content. Most students found them overstraining. They said they would elude these subjects. In addition we learned that these subjects are faced by a ubiquitous non-availability of teachers and non-existence of laboratory infrastructure (section 5.2.), which is prerequisite to the practical part of instruction. Even though science subjects are not needed to proceed and even complete O-Level, they are compulsory subjects in A-Level and are a necessity for upholding the idea of an 'academic' career. In sum, this dynamic prescribes a system of weak preparation and even neglect of basic curricular components such as English and Mathematics, which is hitting back in the shape of missing or just poorly equipped subject teachers.

Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) who are equally concerned with these dynamics call it a "language problem". They emphasize students' poor proficiency in English being the main cause for hindering them to successfully participate in and to gain from schooling. As a solution they urge for Kiswahili as medium of instruction, also in secondary schools. Student9-12 similarly detected herein a language problem, but they the opposite stance and urged instead for English as the medium of instruction already from primary school onwards. They were left confused by Kiswahili instruction in primary school and English instruction of the same subject in secondary school. For them, English is an important basic capability – also in regard of lifeworld propaedeutic – and formal schooling the only thorough possibility to learn (at least something about) it. From my point of view, I would not call students' low achievements only "a language problem". I consider students' English proficiency as well as the Mathematical skills being symptomatic for different and interrelated infrastructural, educational and social aspects of formal schooling as well as students' lifeworld as I argued under 'the capability to participate' (section 7.2.).

In focusing on the value of English and Mathematics for the expansion of other activities outside of school, students and former students proudly referred to their – even low – skills. Both of these are among other basic school related capabilities cf. Terzi (2007, p. 37), but were depicted by

students as the most tangible gains from experienced schooling. Commanding English proves to be of immediate and forthcoming use (section 6.3.2.) in of various occasions in students' lifeworld. It was depicted being an asset to communicate, to deal with recent technologies and foreign products and to get informed through international news. It helps to earn money and obtain employment by engaging with tourists and other foreigners. In this prospect it students also considered it potentially important for future jobs or ways of earning a living.

Even though the applicability of Mathematics was less elaborated in this study, it was also described having diverse lifeworld applications (section 6.3.3.). Some students felt enhanced in fulfilling certain employment or agricultural tasks, while *Student12* would apply his mathematical skills in doing small businesses and purchase some basic school materials on his own. Accordingly, English and Mathematics proof to be functionally, intrinsically and socially worthy. They are key to exerting agency in school and sustain their well-being there. And they enable students' to engage with a widened range and choice of possible activities their lifeworld.

Concluding, further research could go more into detail about specific school related 'basic capabilities', their forms of fosterage in school and of application outside.

7.4. Outlook

This explorative study is based on illustrative data, giving voice to students from Singida. It is not its aim to come up with suggestions for the betterment of schooling; the aim is to uncover and highlight some of schoolings procedures and aspects in the specific socio-economic context from students' perspective. Hence, it uncovers different aspects that relate to agency exertion in school, the value of schooling and its worth in terms of enhancing students' capabilities. In sum, it highlights interrelated arrays of contextual factors, instructional conditions and requirements as well as students' involvement in the course of schooling. It thereby takes the point of

view of actively involved students are growing up with limited educational opportunities, aspiring a future according to contextual experiences. By applying the capabilities' perspective we gained insight beneath the surface of high achievements, of legally granted entitlements and outlined developmental directions. The focus is set on experienced schooling, which carries expectations and aspirations but moreover also proves to be variously worthy in met challenges; it shows to be supportive in exerting agency into an asset for (forthcoming) activities. However, it was also experienced hindering students and young people from following their agency intentions and jeopardizing well-being needs. Further research could follow this perspective with more attention.

Using qualitative methods that draw upon Vavrus and Bartlett (2012) study on specific classroom and living context culture, further exploration can approach measures that contribute to fostering students' capability evolvment. To do so, the perspective taken here would have to be expanded to teachers, parents, other stakeholders and institutions. Such a comprehensive view would also have to include school-related aspects, like preparation, institutional support to foster students' learning needs as well as contextual aspects that relate to students' learning endeavors. Considering Brock-Utne and Holmarsdottir (2004) insights, research could unwrap students' agency exertion in school from viewpoints of being a 'language problem', 'a learning problem' and an accumulation of various stakeholders' as well as institutions' contextual aspects. Those features could be assessed in more depth and set in relation by the use of the capability approach. Eventually, this could also lead to suggestions in supporting students in their school propaedeutic efforts.

Unterhalter (2012) stresses the limitations of adapted preferences for generating ideas and considering change. Can cultural and social diversity or the Internet play an enhancing role exceeding the limitation of adapted preferences and become an asset in formal secondary schooling for its relevance in students' lifeworld? Regarding lifeworld propaedeutic it would be worthwhile to inquire about enhancing aspects for students' capability in regard of their living contexts and available means to aspire and actually implement change. Therefore it would be interesting to further follow the issue

of translating school induced knowledge and skills into lifeworld activities; and inquire about measures that could promote school induced capabilities in students lifeworld.

8. Bibliography

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Übersee-Institut.

9. Appendix

9.1. Abstracts

Abstract:

This empirical case study explores the relevance of public secondary schooling in Singida, Tanzania. Conceptually, Sen's version of the capability approach provides the framework to assess school induced doings and beings – functionings – in regard to their possible purposes of usage. For this study these purposes are assumed to be related either to students' progressive school or lifeworld engagements (propaedeutics). Thus, schooling is considered being – intrinsically, functionally and socially – worthy for students in realizing their well-being and agency intentions. The basic empirical data draws on unstructured interviews and group-discussions with actively enrolled secondary school students from 6 schools in Singida town. The data analysis is conducted using the grounded theory method and enriched by triangulation of data sources, namely evidence from government documents, scientific literature and interviews with former secondary school students as well as other involved stakeholders like teachers, officials and parents. The statements of other stakeholders also serve to contextualize students' assessments, which provide the basis to generate an understanding of students' valuation of schooling regarding: of their aspirations to a self-sustained life; of the factors and motives that influence their participation in school; and of tangible school-induced gains in form of the basic capabilities English and Mathematics.

Zusammenfassung:

Diese empirische Fallstudie widmet sich der Erforschung der Relevanz von öffentlicher Sekundarbeschulung in Singida, Tansania. Als konzeptuelle Grundlage dient hierfür der Capability Ansatz nach Sen. Dieser liefert den Rahmen um schulisch induzierte Formen des Seins und des Tuns in Hinblick auf deren etwaigen Verwendungszusammenhänge zu untersuchen. Für diese Studie wurde angenommen, dass sich Schule diesbezüglich intrinsisch, funktionell oder sozial für das sich entwickelnde schulische oder lebensweltliche Engagement der Schüler als wertvoll erweisen kann. Die grundlegenden empirischen Daten wurden mittels unstrukturierter Interviews und Gruppendiskussionen mit aktiven Sekundarschülern aus 6 Schulen in Singida Stadt gewonnen. Die Analyse wurde mittels einer Grounded Theory Methode durchgeführt und durch Datentriangulation bereichert. Hierfür wurde Evidenz von Regierungsdokumenten, wissenschaftlicher Literatur und Interviews mit ehemaligen Studenten sowie mit anderen involvierten Interessensgruppen wie Lehrern, Funktionären und Eltern herangezogen. Deren Stellungnahmen dienten obendrein der Kontextualisierung – z.B. anhand von Bedingungen in untersuchten Schulen – der Einschätzungen der Schüler. Aufgrund dieser Einschätzungen war es möglich ein Verständnis von der Bewertung von Schule in Bezug die Vorstellungen der Schüler von einem selbst-erhaltenden Leben, von auf ihr Handeln in Schule einflussnehmende Faktoren und Motiven sowie vom greifbaren Zuwachs an anwendbaren Fähigkeiten zu generieren.

9.2. Curriculum Vitae

PERSONAL DATA

Name: Herwig Viechtbauer
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EDUCATION

- 03/2009- **University of Vienna, Austria.**
PhD Candidate in **Educational Science**; Thesis' preliminary title: *"The relevance of secondary education to students' well-being and agency in Singida, Tanzania."*
Supervisor: Dr. Stefan Hopmann, Professor - Historical and comparative school and education research.
- 09/2013 - 12/2013 **University of Florence and European University Institute, Italy.**
Visiting Doctoral Researcher: **Education & Development Economics.**
Mentor: Mario Biggeri, Associate Professor - Development Economics, International Aid and Human Development, University of Florence
- 10/2003 – 04/2008 **University of Vienna, Austria.**
Graduate (MA) & Undergraduate (BA) Studies in **Educational Science**; Core fields:
 - **School Pedagogy**
 - **Theory of Education**
 - **Psychoanalytical Pedagogy**Title of MA thesis (written in German): *"Die Rekontextualisierung globaler Kategorien der Vermessung von Bildung im Tansanischen Bildungsgeschehen"*.
Supervisor: Dr. Stefan Hopmann, Professor - Historical and comparative school and education research.

- 10/2005 – 03/2006 **University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.**
Visiting student at the **Faculty of Education** within the students' mobility program "Joint Study"; teaching language: English.
- 10/1998 - 03/2003 **University of Linz, Austria.**
Diploma studies in Economic Informatics.
- 10/1989 – 06/1997 **Secondary School BRG Akademiestrasse, Salzburg, Austria.**
Completion with a general qualification for higher education (Matura).

VOCATIONAL TRAINING

- 06/2012 Schloss Hofen - Science and Advanced Training,
Seminar on **the efficiency of a leading personality by self-leading**: *"Die wirksame Führungspersönlichkeit durch Selbstführung"*.
- 12/2011 Beraterinnengruppe Naschmarkt: www.naschmarkt.co.at,
Seminar on **the understanding of processes in a group by application of Group Therapy**: *"Universum Gruppe – Gruppenprozesse verstehen"*.
- 10/2010 Alpenverein: www.alpenverein.at,
Training course in **adventure education**:
"Trekkingguide".
- 09/2009 PART-Training: www.parttraining.de,
Seminar on **professionally handling violent situations involving youth**: *"Professionell handeln in Gewaltsituationen - Professional Assault Response Training (PART)"*.
- since 03/2009 HoPP Universität Wien - Postgraduate Center:
www.postgraduatecenter.at/hopp, **Propaedeutics in Psychotherapy**.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- 05/2014 - **Academic Assistant**, Political and Social Sciences (SPS) Department at the European University Institute, Florence; Supervisor: Prof. Hanspeter Kriesi.
- 10/2012 - 09/2013 **Sabbatical** for doctoral research & part-time employee for *Projuventute* Austria as a **social pedagogue**.
- 10/2011 - 09/2012 *Projuventute* Austria, www.projuventute.at.
Director of the "Haus Österreich", a social-pedagogical residential home in Königstetten, Lower Austria.
- 01/2011 Association of Sister Cities Salzburg – Singida (SCSS), www.tanzania.at, **Project Monitoring and Evaluation**, urban/rural Singida, Tanzania.
- 09/2009 - 10/2011 *Projuventute* Austria, www.projuventute.at.
Social pedagogue and **vice-Director** of the "Haus Österreich", a social- pedagogical residential home in Königstetten, Lower Austria.
- 04/2009 - 08/2009 Society for community, integration and normalization (GIN) in Vienna, Austria: www.gin.at, **Personal assistance** to handicapped clientele.
- 04/2008 - 03/2009 Association of Sister Cities Salzburg – Singida (SCSS), www.tanzania.at, **Project coordinator** and **director** of Upendo Home, a residential home for street children in Singida, Tanzania.
- since 06/2010 - **Reviewer** for *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Taylor & Francis.
- 04/2006 – 07/2006 Association of Sister Cities Salzburg – Singida (SCSS), www.tanzania.at, **Voluntary practical work** for Educational Science studies in Singida, Tanzania.
- 03/2003 – 09/2003 **Voluntary work** in New Delhi, India: IT classes for children and youth.
- 10/2001 – 01/2002 National Park Inti Wara Yassi, Chapare Region, Bolivia: www.intiwarayassi.org, **Voluntary work as game warden**.

10/1997 - 06/1998 **Military Service**, Salzburg.

AWARDS & SCHOLARSHIPS

09/2013-12/2013 Doctoral Research supported by Scholarship for
Research Abroad (KWA), University of Vienna.

06/2009 "Wilhelm-Kaufmann-Preis for Developmental Work",
awarded by the City of Salzburg.

PUBLICATIONS – CONFERENCE PAPERS

Viechtbauer, Herwig (2014): **Capabilities Through Secondary Schooling: Tanzanian Students' Voices**, presented at the "Human Development and Capability Approach Conference", Athens, Greece 02.-05. September 2014.

Viechtbauer, Herwig (2014): **Evaluation of Tanzanian Secondary Schooling from a capabilities' perspective**, presented at the "11th EES Biennial Conference", Dublin, Ireland, 01.-03. October, 2014.

ADDITIONAL SKILLS

Languages:

- German: mother tongue
- English & Kiswahili: fluent
- Greek & Spanish: basic knowledge
- Italian: beginner

IT:

MS Office, Mac, Windows, AtlasTi, EndNote, Zotero, E-learning, Moodle, STATA.