

Evaluating mwedo and tembo intervention projects to mitigate girls' dropout in secondary schools within pastoralist communities: a case study of arusha region, tanzania

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study evaluated the MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects aimed at reducing girls' dropout rates in pastoralist communities within Arusha and Longido District Councils, Tanzania. Using a cross-sectional research design with a qualitative focus and some quantitative elements, the study sampled 56 respondents through purposive and random techniques. Data collection involved questionnaires, teacher interviews, and reviews of student enrolment records, analysed qualitatively through descriptive patterns and quantitatively using SPSS version 20.0. Findings revealed that marriage and pregnancies are significant barriers to girls' secondary education worsened by harmful traditions and customs. The study recommended strict government actions to protect the rights of female students, eradicate harmful practices, prioritize pastoralist communities in poverty alleviation and education strategies, and take legal measures against individuals continuing early marriages and sexual exploitation. These interventions are critical for ensuring equitable access to education for girls in pastoralist areas.

**Keywords:** Evaluating, Pastoralist communities, Intervention projects, Dropout.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Education is universally recognized as a fundamental human right and a critical driver of social and economic development (UNESCO, 2019). However, significant disparities in access and completion rates persist globally, particularly among marginalized groups such as pastoralist communities (World Bank, 2021). Girls in these communities face extensive barriers to education including early marriage, gender-based violence and socio-economic challenges which contribute to high dropout rates (UNICEF, 2020). In Tanzania, despite policy reforms aimed at enhancing educational access, less than 50% of girls from pastoralist backgrounds complete secondary education (URT, 2022). This trend not only invades on their rights but also undermines national development by wasting human potential (NBS, 2020).

The Maasai Women Development Organization (MWEDO) and Tanzania Education and Micro-Business Opportunity (TEMBO) projects have been at the forefront of efforts to mitigate these challenges. Their interventions focus on scholarships, mentorship and community engagement to improve girls' enrolment and retention in secondary schools (Mwita, 2021). While initial reports indicate positive impacts, comprehensive evaluations are necessary to assess their effectiveness fully (TEMBO, 2019). Globally, intervention programs like SoFEA in Bangladesh (2015) and the World Food Programme in Africa (2014) have demonstrated the potential to transform girls' education though challenges such as early marriage, financial barriers and gender-based violence persist, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa (UNESCO, 2017). For example, 60% of girls in Niger, 47% in Chad, and 32% in Nigeria are married by age 18, further limiting educational opportunities (UNESCO, 2017).

In Tanzania, pastoralist communities constituting a significant portion of the population, face unique educational challenges. A study by TAMWA (2016) revealed that 1,150 girls dropped out of secondary schools between 2006 and 2009 due to pregnancies and financial constraints. Despite government efforts to address these issues through policy adjustments, school construction, and gender parity initiatives, progress remains limited (Mlekwa, 2014; Oxfam, 2015). The involvement of economically better-off individuals, including government officials and teachers, in exploiting girls further exacerbates the problem (TAMWA, 2016).

Since 2000, Tanzania has experienced a significant rise in enrollment rates for both primary and secondary education, with some districts making notable steps in increasing enrollment, reducing gender gaps and offering opportunities for disadvantaged groups (Msoka, 2024). However, providing formal education to pastoralist communities particularly for girls, remains a persistent challenge. Ngonyani (2020) highlighted that pastoral communities are among the most disadvantaged, as many still live in conditions reminiscent of the colonial era. The awareness regarding the importance of formal education is low, particularly for girls, as traditional beliefs prioritize

marriage for girls and studying for boys who are seen as contributors to the family's livelihood. Additionally, parents in these communities often have limited educational backgrounds, resulting in a low understanding of the value of educating girls (Okantey, 2008). Table 1 shows the number of students enrolled in government and non-government schools by sex from 2021 to 2023 in Ngorongoro District. Data from the 2022/2023 enrollment period indicates notable progress for girls compared to 2020/2021. According to the Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania (BEST) 2023, 1,608,202 girls and 1,469,153 boys were enrolled, compared to 1,389,613 girls and 1,282,314 boys in 2021 (MoEST, 2021, 2023). However, this improvement in girls' enrollment is not reflected in pastoralist communities with strong cultural traditions. Table 1 below presents the enrollment situation in the study area.

**Table 1: Trend in Gross Enrolment in Government and Non-Government in secondary School from Form I-VI by sex at Ngorongoro District**

<b>Sex</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
<b>Boys</b>	4,839	5,047	5,476
<b>Girls</b>	4,095	4,472	4,890

**Source: Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania (BEST), 2021, 2022 & 2023**

## **2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Overview of Girls' Education in Pastoralist Communities**

Girls' education in pastoralist communities has been a subject of increasing attention due to the unique challenges faced by these communities. Studies have consistently shown that pastoralist girls are among the most marginalized groups in terms of educational attainment (Dyer, 2017). These challenges include early marriage, gender-based violence and socio-economic hardships (Kratli, 2016; UNESCO, 2019). The barriers are often exacerbated by the nomadic lifestyle of pastoralist communities, which makes consistent school attendance difficult (PENHA, 2016).

## **2.2 Early Marriage and Gender-Based Violence**

Early marriage remains a critical barrier to girls' education in pastoralist communities. According to UNICEF (2020), early marriage rates are particularly high in these communities, with many girls being married off before they reach the age of 18. This practice not only truncates their education but also exposes them to early pregnancies and gender-based violence. A study by Walker (2018) highlights that gender-based violence, including sexual exploitation and harassment, is prevalent in schools, further discouraging girls from continuing their education.

## **2.3 Socio-Economic Challenges**

Socio-economic challenges also play a significant role in the dropout rates of girls from pastoralist communities. The economic activities of pastoralist communities often require children to participate in labor, which conflicts with school attendance (Mlekwa, 2014). Furthermore, poverty exacerbates the inability of families to afford educational expenses, even when schools are available (World Bank, 2021).

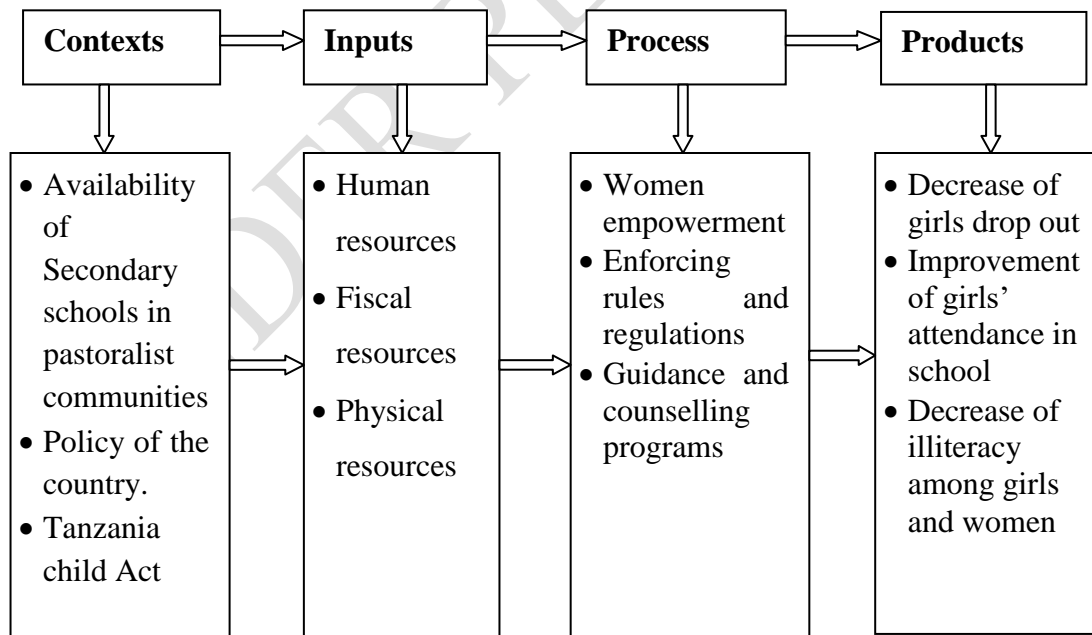
## **2.4 Intervention Projects and Their Impact**

Various intervention projects have been implemented to address the educational challenges faced by girls in pastoralist communities. The MWEDO (Maasai Women Development Organization) and TEMBO (Tanzania Education and Micro-Business Opportunity) projects are notable examples. These projects have focused on providing scholarships, mentorship programs, and community engagement initiatives aimed at reducing dropout rates (Mwita, 2021). Initial reports indicate positive impacts on girls' enrollment and retention in secondary schools (TEMBO, 2019). A comprehensive review by Johansson and Shantz (2020) on the effectiveness of intervention projects in pastoralist communities found that while these initiatives have had significant successes, challenges remain. These include the sustainability of funding, cultural resistance, and the need for more community involvement in the design and implementation of these projects.

## 2.5 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by Stufflebeam's (1971) context, input, process and product (CIPP) evaluation model, which uses four key concepts context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation and product evaluation to guide assessments. The CIPP model was particularly useful for evaluating intervention projects aimed at supporting girls' secondary education in pastoralist communities, helping assess the goals, implementation, efficiency, effectiveness and weaknesses of these projects and also aims to determine the merit or significance of a product or service. Evaluation models share the goal of conducting rigorous evaluations backed by reliable and systematic evidence (Robinson, 2006). Stufflebeam and Shinkfield (2007) view evaluation as a process of quality improvement, and Suchman (1967) stresses the importance of understanding the process that leads to outcomes, rather than just evaluating goal attainment. Thus, using the CIPP model to assess the effectiveness of MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects was crucial in understanding both the successes and challenges in reducing dropout rates among pastoralist girls in secondary schools in Tanzania.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for the Study**



Source: Adopted and Modified from Stufflebeam, (1971).

This study adopted a modified version of Stufflebeam's (1971) CIPP evaluation model, which consists of four stages: context, input, process, and product. In the **context stage**, the study evaluated the MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects in relation to the availability of secondary schools in pastoralist communities and relevant policies, such as the Tanzania Child Act, aimed at improving girls' access to education. The **input stage** focused on examining the human, fiscal and physical resources essential for the successful implementation of these projects. In the **process stage**, the study assessed key operations such as women empowerment, enforcement of rules and regulations and guidance and counselling services which are crucial for reducing pastoralist girls' dropout rates. Finally, in the **product stage**, the study evaluated the outcomes of the intervention projects including a decrease in girls' dropout rates, improved school attendance and a reduction in illiteracy among girls and women.

## **2.6 Policy Implications and Recommendations**

The findings from various studies and intervention project evaluations suggest that a multi-faceted approach is necessary to effectively address the dropout rates of girls in pastoralist communities. Legal measures against early marriage and gender-based violence are crucial (UNESCO, 2019). Additionally, policies aimed at socio-economic empowerment of pastoralist families can help reduce the economic barriers to girls' education (World Bank, 2021). Generally, the education of girls in pastoralist communities is impeded by a combination of early marriage, gender-based violence, and socio-economic challenges. While intervention projects like MWEDO and TEMBO have shown promising results, there is a need for comprehensive evaluations to fully understand their impact and to develop sustainable strategies. The government and stakeholders must collaborate to implement legal, socio-economic, and educational reforms to ensure that girls from pastoralist communities have equal access to education.

### **3.0 METHODS**

The study employed a mixed-methods approach to provide a comprehensive understanding of the intervention projects.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

In order to achieve the research objective, this study employed a cross-sectional research design to evaluate the MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects aimed at mitigating girls' dropout rates in secondary schools within pastoralist communities in the Arusha Region, Tanzania. A cross-sectional design allows for the collection of data at a single point in time, providing a picture of the current situation and enabling the identification of correlations between variables (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The study applied a cross-sectional research design because it was a one-time survey research and because of the nature of the population in the study.

#### **3.2 Research Approach**

The study employed a mixed research approach. This approach ensures a complete understanding of the intervention projects' impact and the factors influencing girls' dropout rates. The qualitative approach involves semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders, including teachers, project coordinators and community leaders. These interviews aim to gather in-depth information on the perceived effectiveness of the intervention projects, challenges encountered and recommendations for improvement. Focus group discussions (FGDs) are held with groups of students and parents to capture a range of perspectives and experiences related to the intervention projects and educational challenges in pastoralist communities. Additionally, a documentary review of relevant documents, such as project reports, school records, and policy documents, is conducted to supplement the primary data and provide additional context.

The quantitative approach involves structured questionnaires administered to a sample of 56 respondents, including students, teachers and project staff. The questionnaires are designed to collect data on enrollment rates, dropout rates and other measurable indicators of the projects' impact. Furthermore, statistical analysis of secondary data, such as student enrollment records and demographic information, is performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. This analysis helps

quantify the extent of the dropout problem and assess the intervention projects' effectiveness.

### **3.3 Target Population**

This study targeted a diverse population including heads of schools (HOSs), teachers, District Education Officers (DEOs), female students from pastoralist communities, parents or guardians of these girls, and Intervention Project Coordinators (IPCs). HOSs, teachers, and DEOs were engaged to provide educational data such as attendance and dropout rates among pastoralist girls. Female students were included as beneficiaries of intervention projects, offering insights into challenges they face in continuing their education. IPCs' perspectives were crucial for understanding the implementation and effectiveness of intervention projects. The study involved a total of 56 respondents, employing sampling methods designed to capture comprehensive views on reasons for dropout despite interventions, challenges in project implementation, and recommendations for improvement.

#### ***Selection of School Samples***

Two secondary schools were selected for this study based on their association with intervention projects operating in their respective areas. The first school selected was the secondary school established by the MWEDO intervention project, specifically designed to support pastoralist female students. This school was chosen due to its direct involvement with MWEDO's educational initiatives. The second school chosen was the nearest secondary school supported by the TEMBO intervention project, where pastoralist female students also received support. This selection criterion ensured that both schools represented contexts where intervention projects were actively engaged in supporting pastoralist girls' education, providing relevant data for the study's objectives.

#### ***Selection of Heads of Schools***

Two heads of secondary schools were automatically included in the study sample based on their schools' location within areas where intervention projects were active.

These heads of schools were selected due to their professional expertise and their pivotal roles, which were deemed essential for the successful execution of the study.

### **Selection of Teachers**

Twenty teachers participated in this study, with 10 teachers selected from each intervention project. A random selection process was employed using folded papers, where 20 pieces labelled either YES or NO were placed in a box. Ten papers were marked YES and the remaining ten NO. Teachers selected a folded paper one by one, revealing its contents immediately upon opening. Those who picked YES papers were included in the study. Gender balance among teachers was not a consideration. Teachers were chosen randomly for their significant interaction with students, ensuring their perspectives contributed effectively to the study's success.

### **Selection of Pastoralist Female Students**

Twenty pastoralist female students were randomly selected to participate in this study, with 10 students chosen from each intervention project school. The selection process ensured a representative sample from among those supported by the intervention projects in their secondary education. Their inclusion was based on the potential contribution of their perspectives to the study's overall success.

### **Selection of District Education Officers**

Two District Education Officers (DEOs) were purposively selected from areas where the intervention projects were operating. Their selection was based on their roles in overseeing secondary schools within their districts, ensuring they had comprehensive knowledge of school operations. Their professional expertise and positions were considered crucial for the successful execution of this study.

### ***Selection of Intervention Project Coordinators***

The two intervention project coordinators from both MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects were selected as participants in this study. They were chosen because of their roles as officials within the intervention projects that support secondary education for pastoralist girls. Their perspectives and insights were deemed essential for enhancing the success of this study.

### ***Selection of Parents and Guardians***

Parents and guardians of pastoralist female students from both intervention projects were selected as participants in this study. They were contacted and visited at their homes using mobile phones, with preference given to those residing near the schools involved in the study. The heads of schools, in coordination with the students, assisted in providing contact phone numbers of parents and guardians who lived nearby. These individuals were chosen to participate because their input was crucial for enriching the study with valuable information.

**Table 2: The Sample Composition of Respondents (N=56)**

<b>Categories of respondents</b>	<b>of MWD project</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>TMB project</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Total</b>
Head of schools (HOSs)	01		01		02
Teachers	10		10		20
District education officers (DEOs)	01		01		02
Female students	10		10		20
Intervention Project Coordinators (IPC)	01		01		02
Parents/Guardians	05		05		10
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>		<b>28</b>		<b>56</b>

**Key:** MWD= MWEDO

TMB= TEMBO

**Source:** Field Data, (2024).

### **3.4 Sampling Techniques**

The heads of schools (HOSs) were selected using purposive sampling, chosen specifically for their roles within secondary schools where the intervention projects operated. Their selection was based on their authority and knowledge regarding school operations, which included providing data on pastoralist female student enrollment, attendance, and dropout rates. This ensured that the study captured insights from key educational stakeholders who could offer detailed perspectives on the impact of intervention projects on student outcomes.

For the teachers involved in the study, a random sampling technique was employed. Twenty teachers, ten from each intervention project, were selected by drawing folded papers marked "YES" or "NO" from a box. This method guaranteed that each teacher had an equal opportunity to participate, contributing diverse viewpoints from educators who interact closely with pastoralist students. Their inclusion provided valuable perspectives on the day-to-day challenges and successes of implementing educational interventions.

District Education Officers (DEOs) were purposively selected based on their roles as district-level education administrators overseeing schools within the project areas. Their selection was grounded in their comprehensive knowledge of educational policies, school operations, and regional challenges. This ensured that the study gained insights from authoritative figures capable of providing detailed information on educational practices and policies affecting pastoralist female students.

The pastoralist female students were chosen through simple random sampling, where ten students from each intervention project school were randomly selected. This method involved assigning numbers to eligible students and using a random selection process to ensure fair representation. By including these students, the study captured firsthand accounts of beneficiaries regarding their educational experiences, challenges, and the impact of intervention projects on their academic journeys.

Parents and guardians of pastoralist female students were selected through convenience sampling. Those living near the schools involved in the study were contacted via mobile phones, facilitated by the heads of schools who provided contact details. This practical approach allowed for the inclusion of parents and guardians who could provide insights into familial support, challenges faced by students, and the broader community dynamics influencing educational outcomes.

Lastly, intervention project coordinators (IPCs) from MWEDO and TEMBO were purposively chosen for their roles in managing and implementing the projects. Their selection was based on their direct involvement in supporting pastoralist girls' secondary education, offering critical perspectives on project goals, implementation challenges, and achievements. Their insights provided a comprehensive understanding of the operational dynamics and effectiveness of the intervention projects.

**Table 3: Sampling Techniques for each Category of Respondents**

Category of Respondents	Sampling Technique
Heads of Secondary Schools (HSSs)	Purposive Sampling
Secondary School Teachers (SSTs)	Random Sampling
District Education Officers (DEOs)	Purposive Sampling
Pastoralist Female Students (PFSs)	Simple Random Sampling
Parents and Guardians	Convenience Sampling
Intervention Project Coordinators (IPCs)	Purposive Sampling

**Source:** Field Data, (2024)

### 3.5 Data Collection Instruments

For qualitative data, Semi-structured interviews were conducted with key stakeholders, including teachers, project coordinators and community leaders. These interviews aim to gather in-depth information on the perceived effectiveness of the intervention projects, challenges encountered and recommendations for improvement. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were held with groups of students and parents to capture a range of perspectives and experiences related to the intervention projects and educational challenges in pastoralist communities. A review of relevant documents such as project

reports, school records and policy documents, is conducted to supplement the primary data and provide additional context.

For Quantitative data structured questionnaires were administered to a sample of 56 respondents, including students, teachers and project staff. The questionnaires were designed to collect data on enrolment rates, dropout rates and other measurable indicators of the projects' impact. Statistical analysis of secondary data such as student enrolment records and demographic information was performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. This analysis helped quantify the extent of the dropout problem and assess the intervention projects' effectiveness.

### 3.6 Demographic Information of Respondents

**Table 4: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents for MWEDO and TEMBO Intervention Projects (N=56)**

<b>Respondents</b>	<b>MWD</b>	<b>TMB</b>	<b>Total</b>
Heads of Secondary Schools (HSSs)	01	01	02
Secondary School Teachers (SSTs)	10	10	20
District Education Officers (DEOs)	01	01	02
Pastoralist Female students (PFSs)	10	10	20
Intervention Project Coordinators (IPCs)	01	01	02
Parents and Guardians	05	05	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>56</b>

**Key:** MWD= MWEDO

TMB=TEMBO

**Source:** Field Data, (2024).

The demographic information presented in table 4 provides a detailed breakdown of the respondents involved in or affected by the MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects aimed at reducing girls' dropout rates in pastoralist communities within the Arusha Region, Tanzania. This distribution encompasses various key stakeholders crucial to the study's evaluation and understanding of the projects' impact.

Among the respondents are head of schools and district education officers who play pivotal roles in overseeing educational policies and the implementation of interventions within school settings. Their perspectives are instrumental in assessing the institutional support, resource allocation and administrative challenges that influence girls' educational outcomes.

Teachers, another significant group represented, offer direct insights into the daily educational experiences of students. Their viewpoints on the effectiveness of the MWEDO and TEMBO projects, as well as their observations of girls' enrollment and retention rates, provide critical data for evaluating the projects' educational impact and identifying persistent challenges.

Female students themselves are integral participants, offering firsthand experiences and perspectives on the barriers they face in continuing their education. Their input helps illuminate personal challenges, the influence of cultural norms and the direct benefits of intervention programs aimed at supporting their educational journey.

Intervention project coordinators are included to provide strategic oversight and operational insights into the MWEDO and TEMBO projects. Their perspectives on project implementation strategies, community engagement efforts and the logistical challenges encountered during execution are vital for understanding the projects' operational effectiveness and scalability.

Parents and guardians, as stakeholders, contribute essential insights into community attitudes towards girls' education, familial support mechanisms, and cultural influences on educational decisions. Their perspectives highlight broader community dynamics and the social contexts that shape educational opportunities for girls in pastoralist communities. Generally, the varied representation of stakeholders in table 2 ensures a comprehensive evaluation of the MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects. By incorporating perspectives from various educational, administrative and community roles, the study aimed to provide nuanced insights into the projects' impact on reducing

girls' dropout rates and to offer informed recommendations for policy improvements and educational practices within pastoralist communities.

#### 4.0 RESULTS

**Table 5: Responses of Respondents on Educational Benefits from MWEDO and TEMBO Intervention Projects to Pastoralist Female Students (N=56)**

S/N	Benefits	Frequency				Percentage			
		MWD		TMB		MWD		TMB	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1	School contributions	27*	01	28*	00	96.4	3.6	100	00
2	School fees	28*	00	28*	00	100	0.0	100	00
3	School and dormitories	28*	00	00	28	100	0.0	00	100
4	School uniform	10*	18	28*	00	35.7	64.3	100	00
5	Stationeries	02*	26	28*	00	7.1	92.9	100	00
6	Volunteer teachers	18*	10	00	28	64.3	35.7	00	100
7	Subsistence allowance	18*	10	00	28	64.3	35.7	00	100
8	Money for remedial classes	18*	10	00	28	64.3	35.7	00	100
<b>Total Respondents</b>		<b>56</b>							

*\*Multiple responses for each benefit to pastoralist female students*

**Key:** MWD= MWEDO

TMB= TEMBO

**Source:** Field Data, (2024).

Table 5 summarizes responses from MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects highlights their significant impact on addressing educational barriers for pastoralist female students in the Arusha Region, Tanzania. Both projects supported crucial aspects of secondary education, including school contributions, fees and dormitory expenses with nearly all respondents affirming their effectiveness. MWEDO particularly excelled in providing comprehensive support, including school uniforms, volunteer

teachers, subsistence allowances and funds for remedial classes, reflecting a broad approach to enhancing educational access and retention. In contrast, TEMBO focused primarily on supplying stationeries, indicating a targeted effort to meet specific educational needs within pastoralist communities.

These findings underline the pivotal role of financial assistance and tailored support in enabling pastoralist female students to access and thrive in secondary education. By addressing economic barriers and providing essential resources, MWEDO and TEMBO interventions contribute significantly to reducing dropout rates and promoting educational equity. However, opportunities for collaboration between the projects are evident to optimize resource allocation and further enhance their collective impact. This comprehensive support approach not only enhances educational outcomes but also lays the groundwork for continued efforts to empower marginalized communities through sustained educational initiatives.

## **5.0 DISCUSSION**

### **5.1 MWEDO Intervention Project**

As evident from table 4, responses from respondents regarding educational benefits from the MWEDO intervention project for pastoralist female students included covering all school contributions, supported by 27 respondents (96.4%). The project also covered school fees and provided access to secondary school facilities, including dormitories. During school holidays, pastoralist female students received education and accommodation support in school dormitories from their teachers.

The responsibility for providing school uniforms, subsistence allowances, and stationeries fell on parents and guardians. During field interviews, one respondent shared the following:

"...The MWEDO intervention project covering school fees and other school contributions has helped reduce costs that

would otherwise burden my parents, who are economically disadvantaged." (One of the Respondents)

This statement underscores the significant financial relief provided by the MWEDO project, enabling pastoralist families to overcome economic barriers and support their daughters' education effectively. It highlights the project's role in enhancing educational access and reducing financial constraints for marginalized communities

During field interviews, a member of the pastoralist communities expressed the following sentiment:

"...The MWEDO Intervention Project has helped me sponsor my two daughters, and I hope that soon after completing their studies, my daughters can develop their lives independently." (One member of the pastoralist communities).

This statement highlights the transformative impact of education in empowering girls from pastoralist backgrounds to pursue self-reliance and personal development, breaking away from dependency on their parents and traditional roles within the community. It underscores the positive role of intervention projects like MWEDO in promoting gender equality and enhancing opportunities for girls' education and future prospects.

During informal conversations with respondents, the study observed that few parents actively monitored their children's academic progress in school. A majority of parents and guardians did not respond to invitations for school meetings to discuss educational matters concerning their children. Additionally, some parents contributed nothing towards their children's education, placing the entire burden on the intervention projects aimed at supporting girls' education. Furthermore, during school holidays, some pastoralist communities pressured their girls into early marriages. During field interviews, a member of the pastoralist communities shared the following insight:

"... Women have no power in decision-making about the marriage of a girl child in pastoralist communities. Therefore, students who

fear forced marriage by their fathers at home during the holidays are retained in school dormitories with the assistance of the MWEDO intervention project." (One Member of the pastoralist Communities)

This testimony highlights the challenging realities faced by pastoralist girls, where cultural practices and traditional norms often infringe upon their right to education and autonomy in marital decisions. It underscores the critical role of intervention projects like MWEDO in providing a safe haven and educational support for girls vulnerable to early marriage pressures in their communities.

## **5.2 TEMBO Intervention Project**

The TEMBO intervention project provides various educational benefits to pastoralist female students, including covering school contributions, fees, uniforms, and stationeries, as reported by all 28 respondents (100%). Additionally, the project arranges for volunteer teachers to educate students during school holidays in camps. A participant expressed gratitude during a field interview:

"...I thank the TEMBO intervention project for paying my school fees because my parents cannot afford it. I have been progressing well with my studies at Longido Secondary School." (One of the Interviewee)

However, the study found low annual enrollment of pastoralist female students due to the project's lack of its own secondary school facility. An interviewee from the TEMBO project elaborated:

"However, there are plans to build one to increase enrollment from pastoralist communities, moreover, some of the supported pastoralist female students were dispersed among various secondary schools in Arusha and Kilimanjaro regions, as well as vocational technical colleges like Mariele Vocational Training Centre and Ruaha Community Development". (One of the Interviewee)

In addition to the educational benefits outlined in table 4, both the MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects have achieved successes for pastoralist female students. Table 3 summarizes these achievements since the projects' beginning up to the present time.

**Table 6: Success of MWEDO and TEMBO Intervention Projects (N=56)**

S/N	Success of MWD intervention project	Frequency				Percentage			
		MWD		TMB		MWD		TMB	
		Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
1	It has own secondary school	28*	00	00	28	100	00	00	100
2	It has supported many people to get education	28*	00	28*	00	100	00	100	00
3	Some students are at university level and others have completed university level	19*	09	26*	02	67.9	32.1	92.9	7.1
4	Many people have got employment	16*	12	26*	02	57.1	42.9	92.9	7.1
5	Provision of sponsorship	20*	08	26*	02	71.4	28.6	92.9	7.1
<b>Total respondents 56</b>									

*\*Multiple responses for each success of the intervention project*

**Key:** MWD= MWEDO

TMB= TEMBO

**Source:** Field Data, (2024).

The MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects have significantly impacted pastoralist communities, particularly in facilitating education for girls and empowering women. MWEDO's establishment of its own girls' secondary school has been pivotal, supported totally by respondents as a crucial step in providing education up to university level for many. This initiative has not only reduced economic burdens on families but also created employment opportunities, as noted by former beneficiaries now employed within the project (Juma & Kelly, 2019; Mwangi & Ochieng, 2021). Additionally, MWEDO's outreach includes economic empowerment through small loans and entrepreneurial training, benefiting pastoralist women economically and socially (Mwangi & Ochieng, 2021).

Similarly, TEMBO has played a vital role in supporting secondary education for pastoralist girls, although without its own secondary school. It has provided educational opportunities, including holiday education camps and university sponsorships, although facing challenges such as student dropout rates due to parental educational limitations (Nyambura, 2020). Like MWEDO, TEMBO offers economic support through loans and livestock projects, enhancing livelihoods among pastoralist women (Kioko & Mwenda, 2023). Both projects conduct empowerment seminars on human rights, gender equality, and property ownership, aiming to combat oppressive cultural practices, though implementation challenges persist within some pastoralist communities (Kioko & Mwenda, 2023).

Despite these successes, both projects face ongoing challenges in ensuring full community participation and overcoming entrenched cultural barriers. Some pastoralist parents remain reluctant to embrace educational opportunities for girls, highlighting the continued need for advocacy and community engagement (Kioko & Mwenda, 2023). Nevertheless, MWEDO and TEMBO have made substantial strides in reducing illiteracy, empowering women economically, and fostering gender equality within pastoralist communities, demonstrating the transformative potential of targeted interventions in education and empowerment (Nyambura, 2020; Kioko & Mwenda, 2023).

MWEDO's initiative to establish its own secondary school has likely continued to benefit pastoralist girls by providing them with access to secondary education. This step is crucial in addressing educational disparities and promoting gender equality within these communities (UNESCO, 2020).

Similarly, TEMBO's efforts in covering school fees, providing educational resources, and arranging holiday education camps have been essential in supporting pastoralist female students' educational journeys. Such interventions are critical in mitigating dropout rates and ensuring sustained educational participation among pastoralist girls (Tanzania Ministry of Education, 2021).

Both projects have also focused on economic empowerment initiatives, including providing small loans and promoting entrepreneurship among pastoralist women. These efforts contribute not only to economic self-sufficiency but also to social empowerment and community development (UN Women, 2019).

Challenges persist, including cultural barriers that limit girls' access to education and parental reluctance to prioritize girls' schooling. Efforts to overcome these challenges often involve community sensitization, advocacy for girls' rights, and collaboration with local leaders to change perceptions about gender roles and education (World Bank, 2021). Generally, the MWEDO and TEMBO intervention projects represent significant steps towards achieving educational equity and empowering pastoralist women in Tanzania.

### **5.3 Validity of the Research Instruments**

The instruments, including structured interviews and questionnaires were carefully designed to accurately capture the perspectives of the target population (pastoralist communities and intervention project stakeholders). The content validity was ensured by consulting with experts in education, gender studies and community development, who reviewed the instruments to verify that they comprehensively covered the relevant aspects of the research objectives. Furthermore, pilot testing was conducted with a small sample to assess the clarity and relevance of the questions, making necessary adjustments before the main data collection process.

### **5.4 Reliability of the Research Instruments**

The reliability of the instruments was guaranteed by ensuring consistency in the way data was collected across different respondents and locations. Structured interviews and questionnaires were standardized. To assess the internal consistency of the questionnaires, the feedback from initial data collection was used to refine the instruments and address any discrepancies or ambiguities.

## **5.5 Implications for Educational Policy and Practice**

The findings highlight the essential role of intervention projects such as MWEDO and TEMBO in enhancing educational access for pastoralist girls, emphasizing the need for comprehensive policy action. Key implications include the necessity for targeted investments in girls' education including scholarships and other support mechanisms to address financial barriers. Additionally, improving secondary school infrastructure such as building more schools closer to pastoralist communities, is crucial to reducing dropout rates. Community engagement initiatives are also essential to challenge and transform cultural practices that hinder girls' education. These combined efforts can foster an inclusive educational environment, ensuring equitable opportunities for pastoralist girl

## **6.0 Conclusion**

In conclusion, the study demonstrates that targeted intervention projects like MWEDO and TEMBO play a crucial role in improving educational outcomes and empowering marginalized pastoralist communities. By addressing key challenges such as cultural norms, early marriages and economic barriers, these initiatives have shown the potential to reduce dropout rates and promote equitable access to education for pastoralist girls in Tanzania. The findings highlight the importance of integrating such projects into broader education policies and strategies to foster long-term development and empowerment within these communities.

## **7.0 Limitations of the Study**

The study faced several limitations including reliance on self-reported data which may introduce response bias due to participants' subjective perceptions or social desirability. Additionally, the findings are contextually specific to pastoralist communities in Tanzania, limiting their generalizability to other settings. External factors, such as economic fluctuations and changes in government policies could also affect the long-

term sustainability and scalability of the intervention projects' impacts. Despite these limitations, the study successfully highlighted the effectiveness of targeted interventions like MWEDO and TEMBO in addressing educational challenges faced by pastoralist girls. It provided a comprehensive understanding of the barriers to education within marginalized communities and offered actionable recommendations to policymakers and stakeholders for promoting equitable access to education. These achievements highlight the study's contribution to advancing educational equity in underserved regions.

### **8.0 Suggestions for Further Study**

Future research could focus on examining the long-term educational and economic outcomes of intervention projects to assess their sustainability and broader impact beyond immediate results. Comparative studies across different regions or using varied intervention models could provide valuable insights into replicable and scalable strategies for improving educational access for marginalized groups. Furthermore, investigating the potential of digital education tools and community partnerships to complement traditional interventions could offer innovative ways to enhance program effectiveness and address persistent barriers to education in pastoralist and other underserved communities.

### **9.0 Recommendations**

Based on the findings, it is recommended to scale up intervention projects like MWEDO and TEMBO to expand their reach to more pastoralist communities. Strengthening monitoring and evaluation frameworks is crucial to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of these initiatives. Collaborative partnerships with government bodies, NGOs and community stakeholders should be fostered to enhance resource mobilization and implementation efforts. Advocacy for policy reforms that prioritize girls' education and address socio-cultural barriers such as early marriages and harmful traditions, is essential to achieving sustained impact. These recommendations provide a

holistic approach to tackling the challenges faced by pastoralist girls and advancing equitable education in Tanzania.

### **Ethical Approval:**

As per international standards or university standards written ethical approval has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

### **Disclaimer (Artificial intelligence)**

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Author(s) hereby declare that NO generative AI technologies such as Large Language Models (ChatGPT, COPILOT, etc.) and text-to-image generators have been used during the writing or editing of this manuscript.

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Details of the AI usage are given below:

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- 2.
- 3.

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