Socio-Economic Status (SES) Origins: The case of Tanzania Secondary School Students

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Utafiti Vol viii No. 1, 1986, Journal of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Dar es Salaam

Introduction

The aim of this study is to investigate whether or not children from different SES origins have similar chances of being selected for secondary education in public schools both at O-level, where selection is based on regional merit, and at A-level where selection is governed by merit at the national levels.

It is hypothesised that, although the majority of students would come from relatively humble backgrounds, children in this category would in fact be under represented. Findings from elsewhere, in the West in Africa, as well as in Tanzania, would lead to this expectation.

Findings from samples of 1,186 Form IV students (14% of the population), representing the O-level and 1,727 Form V students (70% of the population), representing the A-level, who were attending the two levels in 1982 reveal that at both O- and A—levels, selectivity indices increase with increasing parental education and occupational status. The more schooling the parents have, the more likely it is that their children will be selected. Similarly with occupations, students whose parents are employed in the modern sector have a greater chance of being selected than those whose parents are still in the traditional sector. This shows that there is inequality in access to secondary education in Tanzania as children from different SES do not have equal chances of being selected. Though the majority of the students at both levels come from relatively humble backgrounds, they are actually underrepresented, whereas children from higher SES are overwhelmingly represented.

The data in this study is based on a survey of 1,186 Form IV students 14% of the population), and 1,727 Form V students (70%) who were attending public schools in the 1982 school year. Before this data, collected between July and October 1982, a pilot study was carried out in May 1982 to find if there were ambiguities in any of the questions, to clarify ideas relevant to the reasearch problem, and to determine the best procedures to be adopted when carrying out the actual study.This was consistent with suggestions made by notable scholars, such as Gay (1981), Leedy (1980), and Bradburn (1982), that it is always useful to pre-test questionnaires whenever a descriptive survey method like this one is used.

The Form V sample was adequately representative. It was drawn from 25 of the 31 A-level schools covering all regions except Dodoma, Mara, Shinyanga and Singida, where there are such schools. All Form V students in the 25 schools present on the day the questionnaire was administered filled out the questionaire. It was stratified sexually and by specialization (Science and Arts). The sample was picked specifically to measure the extent to which regional quotas at Form I selection four years earlier had been maintained when the regional quota system was abandoned and when selection for Form V was made.

There were however, some minor problems with the Form IV sample. Although the sample was stratified by sex and residence (boarding/day), boarders were slightly underrepresented by about 11%, while day scholars were over-

represented, again by 11%. Girls in day schools were oversampled. These undesirable proportions occured for reasons beyond the author's control. On going to some schools in order to have students fill out the questionnaire, it was discovered that all schools in the region were holding their Form IV mock examinations, or that teachers were too busy to release their students for an hour to complete the questionnaire as the teachers were trying to complete their syllabi in time for the Form IV national exams. The main interest in having this sample was to measure general background characteristics so that they could be compared with those of the Form V students. Both boarding and day schools were identified because it is known that boarding schools cater mainly for students who completd their primary education in rural areas, while the few urban day schools serve only the urban dwellers. We assumed the rural and urban populations to be different in many aspects. Data for the Form IV sample was collected from 31 public secondary schools scattered all over the country, but students in private schools were deliberately left out as they do not go to those schools through the rigorous quota selection. With the Form IV data it is possible to compare social selectivity of the two levels of secondary education within the public system where the government has instituted regional equity at Form I but has no social equity criteria when selection is made.

Why social seletivity? Scholars are concerned with whether meritocratic selection is fair or biased. They are also concerned with whether, by equalizing educational opportunity (i.e. access), children from different social origins will have equal results (i.e. achievement) when they have similar initial inputs (i.e. ability and motivation). Findings from both the Western capitalist and Eastern socialist countries have revealed a strong association between social origins, scholastic achievement, and/or status attainment (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Collins, 1971; Dobson & Swafford, 1980; Entwistle, 1978; Epstein, 1972; Fiszman, 1982; Kerckhoff, 1972; Kozakiewicz, 1980; Sewell & Shah, 1967). A higher percentage of children of high SES finish secondary and college education having higher intelligence than children of lower SES. Higher SES parents can ensure that their offspring get superior education by providing the material conditions and an environment conducive to the development of the skills, values, attitudes, and motivations that are associated with achievement in life.

The issue at stake is to find the distribution of income and services among social groups. Since the taxpayers'money is used in one way or another in maintaining educational systems, there is concern over distributive justice among the different categories of taxpayers.

What is the situation in developing countries where western educational systems are recent imports? To date, there is a continuing debate among scholars as to whether or not children from different social origins have equal chances of being selected. Heyneman (1979), for example, concludes that children from poor and humble backgrounds in Uganda have equal chances of being selected to secondary school due to the fact that the elites have not yet developed a distinct culture and that children from all backgrounds are equally motivated to take the primary seven examinations. Other scholars, such as Cooksey (1981) and Niles (1981) have disputed such findings as misleading as in their studies it was evident that children from higher SES had more chances of being selected that those from lower ones. Weis (1979) found a similar situation in Ghana where children from higher SES seemed to have cemented their advantage over others from lower SES when she compared her data to that of Foster (1965).

Tanzania is aspiring to build an egalitarian society. Consequently, regional and district quotas have been instituted for equity consideration when selection for Form I is made. Thus far, there has been no effort to extend the same SES.[1] There are complaints by some Tanzanians that most children from high SES families and their relatives gain selection to Form I (Malekela, 1977; Mbilinyi, 1976). In spite of this, merit in the final exam is not supposed to be the only criterion to be considered when selection is made. Continuous assessment, character, and nation-building variables are to be considered as well. To what extent has the inclusion of other variables besides academic excellence contributed towards greater equality, if any? Although merit has been found to be class-biased in developed countries, will this be true for Tanzania which has a very tiny elite and whose growth into a privileged group has been hijacked by the Arusha Declaration since 1967?

Before we go into the proper socio-economic status characteristics of the students, it is a good idea to have a general background to Tanzanian society. With such knowledge at hand comparisons can thus be made more meaningful.

Tanzania, like any other society, is heterogeneous. It has diverse populations with different cultures and subcultures. Economically, over 85% of the population consists of peasants who depend on subsistence agriculture. Industries are very few and are concentrated in the larger towns such as Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Tanga, Morogoro, Arusha and Moshi. There are very few people in the modern sector of the economy. By 1978 there were only 511,310 people in wage and salary employment, which is about 6% of the total labour force (United Republic of Tanzania, 1982). Most of the people in wage and salaried occupations are in the services sector.

Concerning the provision of education, the majority of the adult population was iliterate at independence in 1961. Six years later in 1967 when a census was taken, it was found that 69% of the Tanzanian population was illiterate. But literacy levels were much higher in urban areas, where 61% of the adult population was literate, as compared to 29% in rural areas (Dey & Mogil, 1973).

The male-female disparity in literacy was considered too. The level of literacy was much higher for males than females: in 1967 it was 45% for males and only 19% for females. The disparity between the two sexes is a historical phenomenon, although it tends to be exacerbated in developing countries where women are still more oppressed than in developed countries.

Following President Nyerere's declaration in his new year's address of 1969 that 1970 was to be the 'Adult Education Year' in Tanzania (Nyerere, 1973) and subsequent efforts in the 1970's to give the general masses the rubrics of reading, writing and arithmetic, the efforts paid some dividends. By 1980 it could be reported that 64.55% percent of the adult population could read and write (Wizara ya Elimu ya Taifa, 1981), an increase of 33.55% over 1967. In her 1982/83 budget estimates, the then Minister of National Education reported that 79% of the adult population was literate (Siwale, 1982). One looks at this achievement with some scepticism given the fact that there are not enough follow-up materials such as books, newspapers, and magazines to reinforce the acquired skills. One is afraid that as many as half these adults might relapse into illiteracy a year or so after being certfied that they have acquired the basic skills of reading, writing, and numeracy.

In 1980, as was the case in the 1967 census, the ratios of theilliterates and literates varied widely across the country. For example, while Dar es Salaam (unban centre and capital) was leading in 1967 with 60% of its adult population

literate, Shinyanga region was bringing up the rear with only 16% and males were ahead of females in all 18 provinces. Variation between regions was obvious in 1980. Dar es Salaam was again leading with 92.63% of its population literate, while Lindi region was at the bottom with only 44.25%. Unfortunately, the 1980 report does not break down the figures for males and females, while the report of 1982 just gives the national percentage of literate people without showing the regional variation and the sex ratios.

By 1978, 87.83% of the economically active population was in agriculture, most of whom were involved in subsistence farming. Only 1.45% of the agricultural labour force was employed in plantations such as the sisal and tea plantations where machinery is used. Most of the peasants in Tanzania depend on the hand-hoe. The distribution of other occupations and the breakdown of their labour force is shown in Table 1.

Table 1.

ECONOMICALLY ACTIVE POPULATION BY OCCUPATION IN MAINLAND TANZANIA. 1978, PERCENT

Major Occupation group	Male	Female	Total
1. Agriculture	79.81	95.34	87.83
2. Craft/machine operator	5.94	0.18	2.97
3. Sales/clerical	3.54	0.92	2.19
4. Professional/Technicians/teachers	3.49	1.11	2.26
5. Managers/administrators	0.45	0.02	0.23
6. Non-agricultural labourers	2.74	0.49	1.58
7. Other workers	4.02	1.93	2.94
Total	99.99	99.99	100.00
	3715173	3971580	7686753

Source: The figures have been computed by the author from 1978 Population Census Volume VII, p. 239 for male, p.260 for female, and p. 218 for the total.
Note: Those categorized as students, other unoccupied, and not elsewhere stated have been excluded in the computation.

Incomes among the salaried vary in the ratio 9.1 (Nyerere, 1977). In rural areas, incomes also vary depending on the nature of the soils, climate, whether or not one engages in cash-crop production, the amount of land one has and so forth. Looking into income differences, urban salaried workers had incomes four times more than a peasant (Whitaker, 1978). This does not differ much from the ILO (1978) study which showed that 40.60% of farmers enjoy a high standard of living, compared to 30 x 40% of the wage eaners. When one reads about the exodus of young people from the rural to the urban areas in developing countries, the glaring gaps in income life style and availability of amenities; most of which are concentrated in urban areas, are a driving force.

It was hypothesized that although the majority of the students would come from relatively humble backgrounds, children in this category would be underrepresented. Findings from elsewhere, in the West and in Africa, and those of Samoff (1979) and UNESCO (1981) studies on Tanzania would lead one to this expectation. In our questionnaires for both samples, we included questions to measure students' parents' educational level, occupations; and other variables such as sectors of employment, items found in the parents' homes; students' brothers, sisters and close relatives having secondary or university education, wage-employment, and reasonably good income, and the languages a student speaks with his parents on the one hand and with brothers and sisters on the other.

As to the educational level of parents of students, a question was asked of students about their father's and mother's levels of schooling. We wanted to measure the impact of the parent's education on the selection of the offspring to continue with schooling.

Using educational data for the 1978 census we have tried to estimate the age-cohort of the parents of the students in our samples. Given the fact that the mean ages for both Form IV and V students in our sample lie between 19 and 21, their parents on average should be between 40—49 years. Marriage age for men is 23 years while for women it is much lower as women do not pay dowry. By using the age-cohort of their parents, we can estimate the representation of students in each of the schooling levels of their parents. If we use the national average, the results will be deflated; hence the cohort. Table 2 looks at the level of schooling of the fathers of Form IV students.

TABLE 2

SOCIAL SELECTIVITY OF FORM IV STUDENTS BY FATHERS' EDUCATION

	1978 Population Ages 40 — 49	Students by Father's Education		Representation Indices	
	N	%	N	%	
None	335,717	54.14	285	24.48	0.45
Primary 1—4	180,464	29.10	331	28.44	0.98
Primary 5—8	88,756	14.31	346	29.72	2.08
Form 1—4	12,147	1.96	111	9.54	4.87
Above Form 4	2,981	0.48	91	7.82	16.29
All males age 40—49	620,065	99.99	1,164	100.00	
Other & N.E.S.	3,219		22	-	

Note: Data for the 1978 population have been computed by the author from 1978 Population Census Vol. VII, P. 114.

Of the fathers who had no formal schooling in Table 2, at least 209 (73%) had adult education, which means they are perhaps able to read and scribble their names. However, girls had more fathers who had had schooling. For example, while 64 (13%) of the fathers of girls had no formal education, 221 (33%) of the fathers of boys had none. On the other hand, while only 28 (4%) of the fathers of boys had above Form IV education, 63 (13%) of the fathers of girls had had that level of schooling. It would seem that girls from humble families are much less likely than their brothers to be sent to school, while the gap is not so great in higher SES families. From Table 2 it is quite clear that the higher the level of schooling the father has, the higher the selectivity. Those with fathers who have ~~a~~ education beyond Form IV are 36 times as likely to be selected to secondary school as are those whose fathers have had no formal education.

Table 3

Social Selectivity of Form IV Students by Mothers' Education

	1978 Population Ages 40—49		Students by Mother's Education		Representation Indices
	N	%	N	%	
None	564,521	87.84	563	48.33	0.55
Primary 1—4	61,694	9.60	367	30.64	3.19
Primary 5—8	15,147	2.36	174	14.94	6.33
Form 1—4	984	0.15	42	3.60	24.00
Above Form 4	328	0.05	29	2.49	49.80
All Females age 40—49	642,674	100.00	1,165	100.00	—
Others & N.E.S.	1,117		21		

Note: Data for the 1978 population computed by the author from 1978 Population Census Volume VII, p.156.

Of the 563 mothers of Form IV students grouped under 'non' in Table (3), 446 (79%) have had adult literacy classes. Looking at the mother's level of education we find similar trends, with girls having more educated parents than boys. Only 165 (34%) of the girls' mothers had no formal schooling whereas 398 (59%) of the boys' mothers had none. Seventeen (14%) of the girls' mothers had more than Form IV education, and only 12 (2%) of the boys' mothers had this level of schooling.

Comparing selectivity for the same schooling level, mothers have greater impact on selectivity than fathers. Whereas those with mothers with above Form IV education have 90 more chances of being selected than those with uneducated mothers, the comparable ration for fathers is only two-fifths as large.

A plausible explanation for this is that educated women of the parent's generation certainly come from families more privileged than the rest of the population. Hence, mother's education is a strong indication of the long standing prestige of the family and probably also of the level of family resources. It is more likely that such mothers socialize their offspring to value achievement in school to perpetuate the presitige of the family. Furhtermore, since mothers tend to be at home more often than fathers, they can probably monitor their children's schoolwork and homework and give directions and assistance, particularly if they are educated; hence the difference. However, in our two samples, nearly all mothers with schooling were married to men of similar or higher educational attainment. All the highly educated mothers were married to highly educated men and therefore these students also came from elite paternal backgrounds.

If we compare our findings of the Form IV students' selectivity by parental education with those of UNESCO (1981), the message we get is similar; the higher the parental level of schooling, th ehigher the selectivity. However, UNESCO's findings show a slightly higher selectivity by increasing level of schooling than ours. The differences could be attributable to sampling problems or differences in handling non-response answers of either the parent cohort or the sample students.

TABLE 4

SOCIAL SELECTIVITY OF FORM V STUDENTS BY FATHERS' EDUCATION

	1978 Population Ages 40 — 49		Students by Father's Education		Representation Indices
	N	%	N	%	
None	335,717	54.14	427	25.27	0.47
Primary 1—4	180,464	29.10	471	27.87	0.96
Primary 5—8	88,756	14.31	513	30.35	2.12
Form 1—4	12,147	1.96	135	7.99	4.08
Above Form 4	2,981	0.48	144	8.52	17.75
All males age 40—49	620,065	99.99	1,690	100.00	—
Other & N.E.S.	3,219		37		

TABLE 5

SOCIAL SELECTIVITY OF FORM V STUDENTS BY MOTHERS' EDUCATION

	1978 Population Ages 40—49		Students by Mothers' Education		Representation Indices
	N	%	N	%	
None	564,521	87.84	822	48.41	0.55
Primary 1—4	61,694	9.60	565	33.27	3.47
Primary 5—8	15,147	2.36	252	14.84	5.29
Form 1—4	984	0.15	31	1.83	12.20
Above Form 4	328	0.05	28	1.65	33.00
All females age 40—49	642,674	100.00	1,698	100.00	—
Other & N.E.S.	1,117		29		

As is the case with fathers of Form IV students, some fathers of the Form V students in Table 4 have received an adult literacy education. Of those grouped under the 'none' level, 309 (72 percent) have had such education. The sex patterns are similar to those of the Form IV sample. Whereas 51 (12 percent) and 376 (30 percent) of the girls' and boys' fathers respectively have had no formal schooling, 72 (17 percent) and 72 (6 percent) of the girls and boys' fathers respectively had more than Form IV education. From Table 4 we can see that selectivity increases as the fathers' level of education gets higher. The biggest gap, as in the Form IV sample, is between Form 1—4 and above Form 4. Those students who come from homes where fathers have above Form IV education have 4 more chances of being selected than the adjacent group. Given the nature of Tanzanian society, fathers with such an educational level, this being at the eve of independence, tended to assume top leadership positions in the government and civil service. During the colonial period, education for the few who managed to get it was more a vehicle of change from traditional society

to the modern sector than for social reproduction. Though it is still much the same today, there are signs of education beginning to play a reproductive role, especially among the highly educated.

Some mothers in the 'none' group in Table 5 have had adult literacy training; 640 (78 percent) of the mothers have attended such classes. Parents of the girls in the sample again seem to be more educated than those of the sampled boys. Whereas 113 (27 percent) and 709 (55 percent) of the girls' and boys' mothers respectively had no schooling, 16 (4 percent) and 12 (1 percent) of the girls' and boys' mothers respectively had above Form IV education.

If we compare these results with those of the mothers of the Form IV students (Table 3), we find minor differences in selectivity. The disparities for the Form IV students tend to be larger. This difference is probably due to biases in the sample, with an overrepresentation of the Form IV day scholars, particularly the girls' sample. Mothers of the day scholars are in urban areas, and women like men in urban settings, tend to be more educated than their counterparts in rural areas.

From Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5 it is evident that the lower the parents' educational level, the lower are the chances of being selected either into "O"—level or "A"— level secondary levels. The more schooling the parents have, the more chances their children have of being selected. Here one discerns SES bias despite regional quota in favour of those with more schooling at the outset of secondary school and persists with only minor changes at the transition from Form IV to Form V.

For ease of comparison between the two sampled forms and sexes, Table 6 summarizes what we have been discussing concerning parents' educational level and selectivity.

TABLE 6

Students Selectivity by Parents' Education, Percent

	Students Selectivity by Fathers' Education			
None	Form IV	Form V	Form IV	Form V
Primary 1—4	32.64	29.54	12.14	12.23
Primary 5—8	32.35	29.85	23.00	21.82
Form 1 — 4	24.52	28.04	36.96	37.41
Above Form 4	6.35	6.91	13.96	11.27
Total	4.14	5.66	12.94	17.27
N	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
	677	12.73	487	417

Students' Selectivity By Mothers' Education

	Boys		Girls	
	Form IV	Form V	Form IV	Form V
Non	58.53	55.43	34.02	26.97
Primary 1—4	27.21	29.87	35.46	43.67
Primary 5—8	10.74	12.12	20.82	23.15
Form 1—4	1.76	1.64	6.19	2.39
Above Form 4	1.76	0.94	3.51	3.82
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00
N	680	1279	485	419

The data in Table 6 shows that 10.5% and 12.6% of the Form IV and Form V boys came from elite paternal backgrounds (at least having secondary education), while the respective percentages for girls were 26.9 and 28.5. Looking at maternal schooling level, 3.5% and 2.6% Form IV and Form V boys had elite mothers while for girls the respective percentages were 9.7 and 6.2. The differences in selectivity between children of the elite and non-elite fathers and mothers at the Form IV and Form V levels based on the two sexes were statistically insignificant. If we combine the two sexes, although 17.4% and 16.5% of the Form IV and Form V students respectively came from elite paternal backgrounds, the difference is insignificant at the .001 level. Whereas 6.1% of the Form IV students came from an elite maternal background, only 3.5% of the Form V students came from such backgrounds. This means that differences in maternal level of schooling have a greater impact in selectivity at Form I and decline as one moves up the schooling ladder.

If we again look at the parental educational level as a whole, the differences are significant at .05 level. The representation of students from elite backgrounds falls from 11.7% in Form IV to 10.0% in Form V. If there are no sampling biases, the data suggest that there might be some favouritism when selection for Form I is made, or since most of the students pass through boarding schools while in secondary school where all students are exposed to similar learning environments, unlike in primary schools where students live with their parents, differences in home environment that are conspicuous in primary schools tend to be wiped out. Since these results include students from both private and public schools, we shall here consider those who completed form IV in public schools. Nevertheless, even after this consideration, the percentage still falls. Children from elite back grounds whose fathers are better educated are 202, accounting for (17.4 percent) of the form IV sample, while there are only 198 (15.6 percent) of the form V students who completed form IV in public schools.

Although the differences are statistically insignificant, the data suggests there might be favouritism in selection for Form I as people have often complained (Malekela, 1977; Mbilinyi, 1976; Uhuru, May 11, 1981).

Besides parents' educational level, we also asked students about their parents' occupations. In a society where occupations in the modern sector are tagged to credentials, one's level of schooling can tentatively suggest the type of possible occupations.

There are only seven occupational classifications in the 1978 census. This narrow classification makes it difficult to properly categorize some of the occupations. One is not sure whether business should be classified under "sales/clerical" or "other workers." Due to this problem miscategorization of some occupation may have arisen. This should not, however, blur the findings as we are more concerned with the major occupations available to the majority of Tanzanians.

TABLE 7

SOCIAL SELECTIVITY OF FORM IV STUDENTS BY FATHER'S OCCUPATION

	1978 Population Ages 40-49		Students by Father's Occupation		Representation Indices
	N	%	N	%	
Farmers	509,016	82.41	664	57.00	0.69
Artisans	35,517	5.75	72	6.18	1.07
Businessmen/Clerical	18,262	2.96	159	13.65	4.61
Profession	17,872	2.89	164	14.08	4.87
Manag/Admin.	3,815	0.62	90	7.72	12.45
Other workers	33,180	5.37	16	1.37	0.26
All males age 40—49	617,662	100.00	1,165	100.00	
Students, unoccupied, & N.E.S.	7,296	21			

A Includes all other categories not in the researcher's agenda.

The general picture is that the children of farmers are under represented and that the children of businessmen, professionals, and those in decision-making positions are over represented. The children of artisans are more or less fairly represented.

Mbilinyi (1976) reports that in her 1974 study of Form III students in public schools, 42.6%, 45.8%, 9.5%, and 1.6% of the students' fathers in the sample were peasants, wage-earners, traders, and self-employed respectively. Since her sample was largely drawn from students in urban day schools, the higher percentage of fathers in wage employment than in our case is to be expected. The general trend, however, remains similar: children whose fathers are employed in the modern sector are over represented.

With occupations, as with education, girls' parents tend to be more privileged than those of the sampled boys. Whereas 200 (41%) of the girls' fathers were peasants, only 464 (68*) of the boys fathers were. At the other extreme, 157 (32%) of the girls had fathers who were in professional and managerial or administrative occupations, while only 97 (14%) of the boys' fathers were in such occupations. The findings confirm that girls at the secondary level are more privileged than boys in terms of their social backgrounds.

From Table 8 it is clear that students whose mothers are farmers are underrepresented, whereas all other groups are overpresented. Only 341 (71%) of the mothers of the sampled girls were peasants. For boys, 604 (89%) of their mothers were in this category. In the top occupations were 75 (16%) and 31 (5%) of the girls' and boys' mothers respectively.

TABLE 8

SOCIAL SELECTIVITY OF FORM IV STUDENTS BY MOTHERS' OCCUPATION

	1978 Population Ages 40—49		Students by Mother's Occupation	Representation Indices	
	N	%		N	%
Farmers	603,177	97.96	947	81.43	0.83
Artisans	444	0.07	19	1.63	23.29
Businesswomen/ Clerical	2,469	0.41	64	5.50	13.41
Professional	2,245	0.36	93	8.00	22.22
Manag/Admin.	135	0.02	13	1.12	56.00
Other workers[a]	7,299	1.18	27	2.32	1.97
All females age 40—49	615,769	100.00	1,163	100.00	—
Students, unoccupied & N.E.S.	28,509		23		

[a] Includes all other categories not in the researcher's agenda.

If we compare the results in Table 9 with those of the Form IV fathers' occupations (see Table 7), the major patterns ramain more or less the same: children of farmers are under represented. The boys' fathers tend to be of lower status than those of the girls. 840 (66%) of the boys' fathers and only 174 (42%) of the girls' fathers were peasants. At the end of the scale, 226 (18%) of the boys' fathers and 144 (34%) of the girls' fathers were employed in professional and executive positions.

TABLE 9

SOCIAL SELECTIVITY OF FORM V STUDENTS BY FATHERS' OCCUPATION

	1978 Population Ages 40—49		Students by Father's Occupation		Representation Indices
	N	%	N	%	
Farmers	509.016	82.41	1,014	60.14	0.73
Artisans	35,517	5.75	88	5.22	0.91
Business/ clerical	18,262	2.96	180	10.68	3.61
Professional	17,872	2.89	270	16.01	5.54
Manag/Admin.	3,815	0.62	100	5.93	9.56
Other workers[a]	33,180	5.37	34	2.02	0.38
All males age 40—49	617,662	100.00	1,686	100.00	—
Students, unoccupied & N.E.S.	7,296		41		

[a] See note to Table 8 above.

TABLE 10

SOCIAL SELECTIVITY OF FORM V STUDENTS BY MOTHERS' OCCUPATION

	1978 Population Ages 40—49		Students by Mother's Occupation		Representation Indices
	N	%	N	%	
Farmers	603,177	97.96	1,450	85.50	0.87
Artisans	444	0.07	12	0.71	10.14
Businesswomen/ clerical	2,469	0.41	62	3.65	8.90
Professional	2,245	0.36	130	7.67	21.31
Manag/Admin.	135	0.02	7	0.41	20.50
Other workers[a]	7,299	1.18	35	2.06	1.75
All females age 40—49	615,769	100.00	1,696	100.00	—
Students, unoccupied & N.E.S.	28,509		31		

[a] See note to Table 8.

It would seem that agriculture is the major occupation for the women. Although in the sample the percentages tend to be slightly lower than in the age cohort, its strong position is nevertheless remarkable. Those who are in non-agricultural occupations are so few that when the indices are calculated they tend to rise more sharply than when dealing with the fathers of the students. In Table 10, all others groups are over represented except the children whose mothers are farmers.

Girls' preeminence in privilege is reflected here too. Only 318 (77 percent) of the mothers of girls were peasants, while 1,132 (88 percent) of the mothers of boys were peasants. With the prestigious occupations, 58 (14 percent) and 79 (6 percent) of the girls' and boys' mothers respectively were professionals and executives. Thus girls tend to come from more privileged backgrounds than boys at secondary levels in Tanzania, as elsewhere (Bowman & Anderson, 1980). The provision of equality of access has some way to go, especially looking at the education of girls from an average family, who have very limited opportunities to participate.

Some research done in the past, such as Foster's (1965), Clignet's and Foster's (1966), lumped peasants or farmers into one group without making an effort to differentiate them. Recognizing the fact that farmers are not a homogeneous group, in this study we tried to go deeper into the peasant question so that we could say something more about those students whose parents are farmers. Table 11 tries to clarify the issue.

From Table 11, it seems that only 61 percent and 67 percent of the Forms IV and V parents are real peasants as they depend on family labour only for their subsistence. Those who depend on family labour and casual labourers are relatively better-off farmers and comprise 29 percent and 28 percent of the Forms IV and V students' parents respectively. These can afford to hire casual labourers, probably their poor neighbours to work on farms which need extra hands. This could be done during harvesting seasons.

TABLE 11

The Status of The Parents of Form IV and Form V Students Categorized as Farmers

	Form IV		Form V	
	N	%	N	%
1. Dependent on family labour only	497	61	822	67
2. Dependent on family labour and casual labourers	233	29	342	28
3. Dependent on family labour and permanent labourers	61	8	55	4
4. Dependent on labourers only	14	2	13	1
5. Have a plough	151	19	298	24
6. Own or hire a tractor	95	12	213	17
7. Grow cash crops	749	93	1,050	85

NOTE: Percentages can add up to 100 only from the first to the fourth row. The answers for the rest of the rows do not necessarily depend on what one answered in the previous questions. There were 805 and 1,232 students in the Forms IV and V samples respectively who said that their parents were farmers.

The few farmers who depend on family labour and permanent labourers and those depending on labourers only are probably very rich ones. It seems they own considerable amount of land with perennial crops which require the presence of labourers throughout the year.

Those few parents owning ploughs and owning or hiring tractors are the richer farmers. Looking at Table 11, probably the majority, if not all of them

are drawn from rows two through four. In a country where the majority of the peasants are still dependent on the hand-hoe and family labour (Koley, 1973), the use of a plough or tractor signifies a higher status within the peasant community.

That 93 percent and 85 percent respectively of the parents of the Forms IV and V students who are farmers grow cash crops is not surprising. Peasants were urged and are still compelled by the colonial and post-colonial governments to engage in cash-crop production (Coulson, 1982). It is the peasants' surplus production that maintains states and the unproductive bureaucrats in agriculturally based economies. With the little they get paid, the peasants have to pay their taxes to the government and the school costs to meet the education of their children. The few who do not grow cash crops may be getting some assistance through other means to educate their children.

Of those claiming to be peasants, then, we can safely conclude that only 61% and 67% of Form IV and Form V students' parents were either small holding farmers or poor. The rest were relatively richer.

Conclusion

Judging from the student representations in the samples by parents' education and occupation, we may conclude that equality in access to secondary education has some way to go in Tanzania. Students from lowly educated parents and those engaged in occupations whose incomes are low are under-represented in the study. The higher the parents' educational level the higher is the representation. Selection at Forms I and V tends to favour those who come from higher SES.

Furthermore, is an imbalance between the two sexes. Girls form 32% of the students in public secondary schools (Siwale, 1982). But of those who get this opportunity of education, a good number of them come from relatively better-off backgrounds. Girls from poorer backgrounds are hit hardest in this inequality of access to secondary education.

Although some research in developing countries (see Heyneman, 1979; Saha, 1983) suggests that SES is not very important in scholastic achievement because there is less differentiation by home and language, parental expectations, and classes, the evidence from Tanzania indicates the contrary. Children from more educated homes have more chances of being selected at the two levels of secondary education than those from families with no more than a few years of schooling. Selection to the two levels is governed largely by examination scores. Invery selective systems like Tanzania's, the more educated parents know what is at stake and take the necessary measures, such as sending their children to 'cram' classes after school hours, or making their children repeat (even if illegally) so that the chance of their children being selected is improved. As the privileged groups grow in number, it seems they are going to take up some of the places now taken by the offspring of the less privileged groups. (Studies by Foster 1965 and Weis (1979) attest to this trend in Ghana). While the professional and semi-professional groups' children constituted 23.5% of fifth form students in 1961 in Foster's study, the same group had 35.9% in 1974 in Weis' study. (The increase in the relative sizes of the two occupational categories in the period was not substantial). Similarly Van den Berghe's and Nuttney's (1969) study showed contrasting trends between university students at the then University of EastAfrica and the University of Ibadan in Nigeria.

Nigeria, which has had a longer history of Western education than East Africa, also had a larger proportion of its students drawn from fathers employed in the modern sector than was the case with the East African students.

It may therefore be misleading to think that Africa is classless or that the Culture of the school, which is often Western in content and values, is largely alien to all social groups and therefore that schools should favour children from elite and non-elite backgrounds equally. Those groups that have been exposed to Western values seem to be more successful in passing on this acquired culture, as Cohen (1981) demonstrates in the case of the Sierra Leonean Creoles. This pattern starts with kindergartens, pre-school institutions that are a prerogative of the elites at present in most developing countries, including Tanzania (Omari, 1979).

Initially systems tend to be more fluid, given that all groups are starting more or less from the same position. But as time passes, selectivity becomes more rigid because certain groups that started participating earlier acquire values and norms of upbringing their offspring conducive to success in school. It is necessary to be careful when asserting that children from less privileged backgrounds stand equal chances of doing well academically as those from advantaged homes. This is particularly true when one looks at data from systems where primary eduction is not universal. Often children from poorer backgrounds are self-selected or if they come from poorer regions, they may come from a typical families, as not all people in poorer regions are poor.

From the foregoing it can be concluded that even in countries which are committed to building egalitarianism and have taken some conscious measures such as having a regional quota and selecting students not only on the basis of their intellectual faculties but also their character and contribution to nation-building, inequality of access seems to be following the patterns generally observable in countries pursuing capitalist development. Findings by Foster (1965), Clignet and Foster (1966), Weis (1979) and Zolberg (1976) in other African countries, and those by Asayehgn (1979), Mbilinyi (1976), Samoff (1979), and UNESCO (1981) on Tanzania are consistent with what we have found. Children from higher SES are overwhelmingly represented.

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