

Adjusting Inequality: Education and Structural Adjustment Policies in Tanzania

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International economic forces increasingly affect policy at multiple levels and in multiple domains. The interplay of three levels — international, national, and local — are underresearched in the social and educational policy fields, which includes educational policy studies. In this article, Frances Vavrus employs ethnography to investigate how these interactions play out in a Chagga community in the Kilimanjaro region of Tanzania. She examines how the lives of secondary students in Tanzanian schools are affected by structural adjustment policies, adopted by Tanzania at the advice of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, in three domains: access to schooling, opportunities for employment, and the risk of HIV/AIDS infection. She makes a convincing case for the importance of understanding the local setting in the development of international and national policy, and for investigating the impact policy change in noneducational sectors has on educational realities. Vavrus's research also provides a glimpse into the multiple local consequences of the policy of user fees for school access that were implemented over the last fifteen years in Tanzania and elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa. She concludes with a call for the research community to consider the benefits of ethnography in the development and evaluation of policy.

One of the most important developments in the field of education has been the growing interest in qualitative approaches to policy studies. With an emphasis on cultural analysis, most qualitative studies demonstrate that the intended outcomes of policy are only one part of a much larger picture of how policy is interpreted through local practice. To study this phenomenon, researchers have developed a particular type of qualitative approach to policy research, namely, the ethnography of policy (Levinson & Sutton, 2001; Shore

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& Wright, 1997). Stephen Ball, whose scholarship has helped strengthen this strand of qualitative policy research, writes: "Ethnography provides access to 'situated' discourse and 'specific tactics' and 'precise and tenuous' power relations operating in local settings" (1994, p. 2). What most ethnographic studies of policy share, then, is an emphasis on relations of power, on cultural practices that affect policy interpretations, and on sustained engagement with residents in a local setting (Walford, 2001, 2002).

This article explores ethnographically the effects of one type of policy — structural adjustment — in a community on Mount Kilimanjaro in northern Tanzania, where I have worked intermittently as a teacher and researcher for the past decade. The community, Old Moshi, is located in the Moshi Rural District of the Kilimanjaro Region. It has a population of approximately 20,000 people in two administrative wards, and each ward is further divided into four villages with their own primary schools, churches, and political leaders (Moshi, 1994). Old Moshi is a relatively prosperous community in rural Kilimanjaro, due to the rainfall and volcanic soil that enhance agricultural production and the proximity of several public and private secondary schools.

Structural adjustment policies, or SAPs, are macroeconomic policies designed to enable countries with large outstanding debts, like Tanzania, to repay their loans and balance their budgets. These policies, developed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), vary somewhat from one country to another, but they generally include the privatization of national industries and assets, the promotion of agricultural crops for export, the devaluation of the national currency, and the reduction of government spending on social programs, such as food subsidies, health care, and education. Although the ultimate decision to "adjust" rests with the national government, debtor nations are unlikely to receive further loans from the World Bank or the IMF unless these general macroeconomic reforms are implemented.

The impact of structural adjustment on the education sector in heavily indebted countries has been studied by researchers interested in policy implementation in Africa and Latin America (Moulton, Mundy, Walmond, & Williams, 2002; Reimers, 1994), and in the influence of international financial institutions on national education policies in these world regions (Mundy, 1998; Samoff, 1994a, 1999). However, there has been little research addressing the relationship between the macro-level changes brought about by SAPs and the local lives and livelihoods that are reshaped when a comprehensive set of policy reforms is implemented. This study takes a close look at how policies that are developed by international financial institutions and implemented at the national level affect local opportunities for 1) education, 2) employment, and 3) health, the social sectors most affected by structural adjustment. This ethnographic study of these three sectors reveals perceptions of both increased opportunity and growing inequality as a result of SAPs.

My ethnographic analysis culminates in a theoretical framework of relative deprivation that helps explain the social categories and cultural premises asso-

ciated with structural adjustment on Mount Kilimanjaro. The concept of relative deprivation has been developed by social psychologists and sociologists to explain the conditions under which the actual or perceived differential treatment of a group (or of an individual) leads to political action or violence (Crosby, 1982; Klandermans, Roefs, & Olivier, 2001). It provides a useful framework for explaining the conditions under which social cleavages based on race, class, or ethnicity become the impetus for collective mobilization against those that an aggrieved group holds responsible for an unjust situation. In this article, I develop a theory of relative deprivation to explain the perception among many people on Mount Kilimanjaro that social inequalities are increasing even though macroeconomic conditions are improving.

In the sections that follow, I engage in a cultural analysis of relative deprivation that focuses on the “‘situated’ discourse and ‘specific tactics’” of secondary school-age youth and adults in Kilimanjaro whose lives have been “adjusted” by changes in policy (Ball, 1994, p. 2). The first two sections present the methodology of the study and an overview of structural adjustment. The remaining sections provide an ethnographic account of adjustment organized around the three domains that emerged from my analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data: 1) access to secondary school; 2) opportunities for formal employment; and 3) risk of HIV infection among young women of secondary school age. These domains represent the three issues informants most often cited to explain recent social and economic changes in their community. The final section of the article considers the implications of this analysis for future educational research on structural adjustment and on the ethnography of policy.

Methodology

The negotiation of the shifting boundary between cultural outsider and insider during the course of field research is one of the central methodological challenges facing ethnographers. This study, which spans seven years, from 1996 to 2003, reflects my changing status vis-à-vis the residents of Old Moshi, where this research was conducted. Prior to beginning my doctoral fieldwork in 1996, I taught English at Njema Secondary School in Old Moshi during the 1993 school year.¹ Since I was newly married, my neighbors marked this important aspect of my identity by calling me “Mrs. Timothy,” the wife of Timothy, a fellow teacher at the school. Eventually I was able to carve out my own role, separate from that of my spouse, by becoming the school librarian and supervising a group of students who worked with me to rehabilitate the aging facility.

Three years later, in 1996, Timothy and I returned with our infant son, August, to conduct a year-long ethnographic study of schooling at Njema. Following local custom, “Mrs. Timothy” became “Mama Augustino.” This change in appellation not only signaled a different stage in my life course, according to

the residents of Old Moshi; it also reflected an important shift in my local identity as I moved from being seen primarily as a neophyte wife and teacher interested in children's education and health to a mother and researcher who needed to understand these issues for the sake of her son and her scholarship. Similar to other ethnographers whose children accompanied them during fieldwork, August's presence helped to minimize, although never eliminate, the gulf between cultural outsider and insider (Cassell, 1987). His presence also helped me negotiate my own status as a researcher, teacher, and parent, rather than giving priority to one over the others during this extended period of fieldwork.

When I returned to Old Moshi in 2000 to begin a longitudinal research project for a postdoctoral fellowship, my former neighbors warmly greeted me as "Mama Augustino." However, my research assistant corrected them, explaining that I was now "Doctor Frances" because I had received my PhD. At first I was concerned that this more impersonal moniker would distance me from the parents I wanted to interview, but my three subsequent trips to the community have demonstrated that my status as a professor has not diminished the insider status granted to me several years earlier. Moreover, this elevated status has given me access to officials who were previously reluctant to meet with a graduate student but who are now most willing to discuss educational matters with a visiting scholar.

One reason why local residents and officials have generally embraced my ongoing research is because of the historical support for education in the Kilimanjaro Region. The Chagga are the dominant ethnic group in the region and 95 percent of the population in Old Moshi (Vavrus, 2003). Although the Chagga constitute only 5 percent of Tanzania's total population, their strong identification with schooling, Christianity, and commercial coffee farming for nearly a century has resulted in a disproportionate number of the country's schools being built in Kilimanjaro by parent organizations, churches, and the state. Moreover, Chagga accomplishments in the areas of education and economic development from the colonial era to the present have earned them a reputation as one of the most "modern" of Tanzania's many ethnic groups (Setel, 1995). For these reasons, Kilimanjaro continues to be an intriguing region in which to explore questions of cultural, economic, and educational change.

To examine such questions in Old Moshi, I utilized multiple research methods, including document analysis, interviews, focus group discussions, surveys, and participant observation (see Table 1). Throughout this study, I have been engaged in an analysis of documents about the educational, employment, and financial sectors in Tanzania published by the World Bank, the IMF, and various ministries in the country to understand how changes in "inter/national" policy affect local cultural practice. This analysis led me to use the term "inter/national" to signal the blurred distinction between policies formulated by international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and

the IMF, and the national policies of heavily indebted poor countries like Tanzania.

The individual interviews and focus group discussions involved secondary school students at Njema Secondary School, the focal school in the study, and their parents. The interviews with students took place in 1996 and focused on their school achievement and their future educational and employment plans. The interviews with students' parents during the same year also touched on these topics, but added questions about the conditions of life today and in the past. The focus group discussions involved some of these students from 1996, who reconvened in 2001. A second set of discussions was held with parents and teachers at four primary schools in Old Moshi, where I am engaged in a separate longitudinal study of education and reproductive health. I met with these adults in 2001 and 2002 to discuss the results of the first phase of the longitudinal study that began in 2000.

The survey data come from two sources: 1) a follow-up study in 2000 of the young women and men who had been students at Njema in 1996; and 2) the longitudinal study of primary school students that started in 2000. Out of the 225 former students to whom the survey was mailed, 112 completed and returned it. They were asked to complete a questionnaire and write an essay about their views on the Tanzanian economy, their employment prospects, their educational aspirations, and their reproductive health awareness. The second survey, part of the longitudinal project, asked students in their final two years of primary school to answer questions about their educational and employment plans, and their knowledge of basic health and HIV/AIDS prevention. It also contained questions designed to ascertain their level of literacy and numeracy. For each of the 277 primary school students in the study, one of their adult guardians — a parent, grandparent, or another relative — was interviewed about the family's educational history, birth history, socioeconomic status, and expectations for the child in the study.

The final method employed in this ethnography is observation. In 1996, I was engaged in participant observation as a teacher at Njema Secondary School and as a parent of a young child living in Old Moshi. To capture my observations, I recorded day-to-day conversations and events in my field notes. Field notes are the principal way of collecting and analyzing observational data; indeed, as Dewalt and Dewalt argue, "*observations are not data* unless they are recorded in some fashion for further analysis" (1998, p. 271; emphasis in original). In this case, the observations were focused on classroom interactions among teachers, students, and the school administration, as well as events in the Old Moshi community, such as weddings, funerals, and holiday celebrations. I have included field note excerpts alongside verbatim quotes from interviews and focus group discussions to illustrate how a theory of relative deprivation emerged through the process of triangulation, the primary means of enhancing internal validity in an ethnographic study by obtaining multiple sources of data about the issue being explored (Handwerker & Borgatti, 1998).

TABLE 1 *Methodological Approaches, 1996–2003*

<i>Dates</i>	<i>Methods</i>	<i>Description of Participants</i>
1996	Interviewing and focus group discussions	Njema Secondary School students (13–35 years old)*
	Interviewing	Parents in Old Moshi
	Participant observation	Students at Njema and four other secondary schools in northern Tanzania
2000	Survey	Elementary school students at four schools in Old Moshi (11–16 years old) and their guardians
	Mail-in survey	Former Njema students
2001	Survey (follow-up)	Guardians of elementary school students in the 2000 study
	Focus group discussion	Guardians of elementary school students, teachers, and community leaders
	Focus group discussion	Former Njema students
2002	Presentation/discussion of results of 2000 and 2001 surveys	Guardians of elementary school students, teachers, and community leaders
2003	Observation	Njema Secondary School and four elementary schools
1996–2003	Document analysis	—

*The wide age range at Njema Secondary School reflects the presence of several older male students who returned to school after military training or training as lay ministers. The median age of students at the school was 16.5 years.

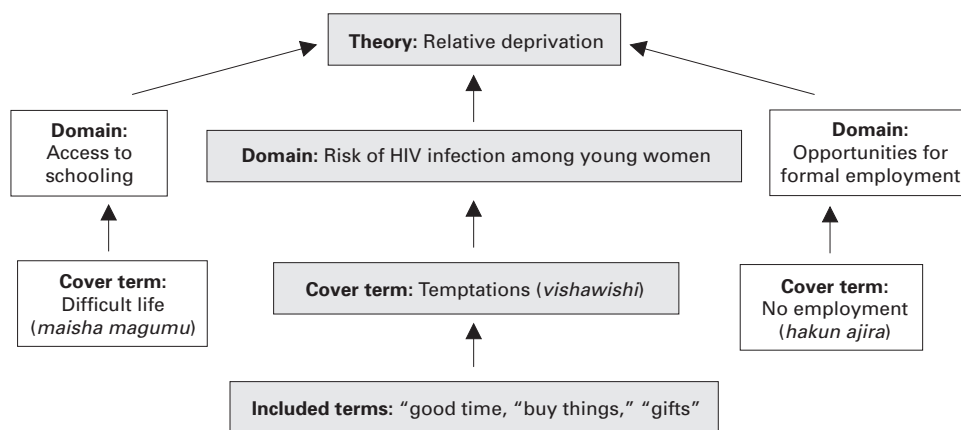
The qualitative data generated through observations and interviews were studied systematically through domain analysis. Domains, “the first and most important unit of analysis in ethnographic research,” are culturally relevant categories that consist of “cover terms” — or labels — and the more specific “included terms” that together express cultural knowledge about a concept (Spradley, 1979, p. 100). Domains are also the building blocks for theory generation; in this study, three domains emerged from my analysis of the terms and phrases used repeatedly by participants. Each domain — 1) access to schooling; 2) opportunities for formal employment; and 3) risk of HIV infection among young women — was comprised of several emic cover terms for the more numerous included terms that share a semantic relationship with one another.² For example, the included terms “good time,” “buy things,” and “gifts” were grouped under the cover term “temptations” (*vishawishi*). This cover term formed the core of the domain “risk of HIV infection among

young women” because it was these sexual and material temptations that informants believed put young women at risk. Figure 1 uses this example to illustrate the process of analysis for the other two cover terms as well, namely, “difficult life” (*maisha magumu*) and “there is no employment” (*hakuna ajira*). Each cover term forms the core of a domain, such as *maisha magumu* for access to schooling and *hakuna ajira* in the case of opportunities for formal employment. Combined with the analysis of the documents and surveys, this procedure allowed me to address the question of how inter/national structural adjustment policies affect material conditions and cultural discourses of education, employment, and HIV/AIDS at the local level.

Structural Adjustment: An Overview and an Analysis in Tanzania

Before examining the local effects of structural adjustment policies, it is important to understand the historical context in which they emerged. The policies that have been implemented in Africa, Asia, the Caribbean, and Latin America were developed during the debt crisis of the late 1970s and early 1980s. Many countries, most notably Mexico and Brazil, were poised to default on their loans to foreign banks. Commercial banks were worried that loans to debtor nations would not be repaid, and the governments of donor nations were concerned that rapidly growing debt in the Third World could destabilize their own economies as well. Beginning in Mexico, the IMF granted the government a loan on the condition that it engage in a series of macroeconomic reforms, such as reducing social spending and subsidies for certain consumer goods (Peet, 2003). The World Bank also began structural adjustment lending to a number of other countries at this time in exchange for implementing policies to restructure their economies (Woodhall, 1994). In addition to reducing government expenditures, eliminating trade barriers, and devaluing the currency, SAPs encouraged the establishment of cost-sharing programs, whereby fees are charged to users of educational and health services. By the middle of the 1980s, with economic stagnation growing in Latin America and Africa, three-quarters of Latin American countries and two-thirds of those in Africa were implementing some combination of these structural adjustment policies (Peet, 2003).

In Tanzania, the macroeconomic situation grew considerably worse in the late 1970s and early 1980s because of its war with neighboring Uganda, declining prices on the world market for its leading export crops, the increasing cost of importing oil, and shortcomings in its own domestic policies (Kerner & Cook, 1991; Ponte, 2002; Rugumisa, 1989; Wagao, 1990). However, the socialist government of then president Julius Nyerere was reluctant to negotiate with the IMF (Harrison, 2001). Six years after Tanzania’s independence from Britain in 1961, Nyerere enacted his vision of self-reliant rural development through a set of policies known as *ujamaa*, or African socialism (Nyerere, 1962, 1967b). By 1967, it was evident that the regional and class disparities

FIGURE 1 *Data Analysis and Theory Construction*

inherited from the colonial era were still largely intact, and Nyerere was concerned that gradual changes in policy were inadequate to address these fundamental inequalities (Coulson, 1982). Therefore, Nyerere put forth a “blueprint for socialist development” that was intended to build a self-reliant nation that met the needs of the rural, agricultural majority (Hyden, 1980, p. 96). In contrast to the free-market orientation of the IMF, the Nyerere government sought to improve conditions in the country by increasing state involvement in the economy, from nationalizing many commercial institutions to regulating crop prices through state agricultural marketing boards. The state also played a major role in job creation: by the mid-1970s, almost two-thirds of the wage-earning positions in Tanzania were controlled by the government (Tripp, 1997).

Nyerere was also strongly committed to active state involvement in education. As early as 1963, secondary school fees at government-supported schools were eliminated, and fees for primary schooling were abolished ten years later (Samoff, 1994b). These policy changes contributed to the dramatic rise in primary school enrollment rates from approximately 903,000 children in 1971 to 3,500,000 by 1981 (World Bank, 1999). Secondary school enrollment increased steadily as well because of the expansion of schools for African students in the decades following independence (Bureau of Statistics, 1995).

Yet the economic crisis that began in the late 1970s did not dissipate, and this led the Nyerere government to create its own economic reform policies (Lugalla, 1997). To the government’s dismay, its early national restructuring policies did not lead to the anticipated improvements in the economy, nor did they go as far as the IMF required before Tanzania would qualify for a loan (Harrison, 2001). By the mid-1980s the economic situation had reached its na-

dir, and the new president, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, “had little choice but to conclude an agreement with the IMF” (Tripp, 1997, p. 80).

Since 1986, with the support of the IMF and the World Bank, Tanzania has instituted a number of structural adjustment policies designed to improve its macroeconomic performance. These specific restructuring activities include devaluing the Tanzanian shilling, creating greater opportunity for foreign investment, eliminating consumer and agricultural subsidies, and reducing civil service employment (Ponte, 1998; Wagao, 1990). In the education and health sectors, user fees were reintroduced after years of free service, and private schools and clinics began to proliferate in a reversal of the ujamaa-era policy of government provision of social services (Samoff, 1994b; Turshen, 1999). Requirements for family contributions to schooling grew considerably, even though the value of parental income was declining (Bureau of Statistics, 1995; Kuleana, 1999; Maarifa ni Ufunguo, 2001); therefore, many low-income families had to choose between education for their children and other basic needs. As a result of these policy changes, gross primary school enrolment rates declined from around 90 percent in the early 1980s to somewhere between 66 percent and 75 percent a decade later (Global Challenge Initiative, 2000; World Bank, 1999).³

What have been the macroeconomic outcomes of these structural adjustment policies in Tanzania? After nearly two decades of SAPs, the results suggest that these changes have had their intended effect on the national economy. For example, from 1986 to 1993, Tanzania’s growth rate averaged 4 percent, compared to 2 percent between 1976 and 1985, and the economy grew annually from 2.7 percent to 5.6 percent during the period from 1996 to 2001 (International Monetary Fund [IMF] & International Development Association [IDA], 1999; Mramba, 2002).⁴ In general, IMF, World Bank, and Tanzanian government figures show that, since the mid 1990s, growth has increased, import duties have been reduced on many consumer goods, and inflation has declined from double digits to below 5 percent (Mramba, 2002). In addition, since 1993–1994, there has been a steady decline in the value of the Tanzanian shilling against the dollar, thereby improving the climate for foreign investment. For example, the exchange rate was 405 Tanzanian shillings to the dollar in 1993, but declined to 1,050 shillings to the dollar by 2003 (Financial Management Service, 2003). Opportunities for foreign investment improved further when the government privatized state-owned assets: More than 50 percent of the public sector institutions scheduled for privatization in 1993 have been sold, and the government is now working on the privatization of its major utilities (IMF & IDA, 1999; Mramba, 2002).

Economic growth and the reduction of inflation are goals that few policymakers or citizens question, but there has been considerable controversy over the reduction in civil service employment as a result of privatization. The number of public sector jobs plummeted during the second half of the 1980s because structural adjustment policies encouraged the government to sharply

reduce the size of its labor force (Wagao, 1990). Between 1990–1991 and 2000–2001, there was a 15 percent decline in public sector employment and a concomitant rise in the number of households involved in the informal sector — the nonstate sector that includes licit and illicit activities — of the economy from 25 percent to 33 percent of households (National Bureau of Statistics, 2003).

Another contentious aspect of structural adjustment is that it has not alleviated Tanzania's crippling foreign debt. The IMF determined in 1999 that the country had an "unsustainable debt burden" even though it had been carrying out SAPs for more than a decade, and recommended that debt relief be provided under the terms of the Heavily Indebted Poor Country — or HIPC — Initiative (IMF & IDA, 1999, p. 37). The HIPC Initiative is a program developed by the IMF and the World Bank in 1996 to link poverty reduction, debt reduction, and macroeconomic reform. Eligible countries prepare a Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper that describes the policies a government will implement to redirect money that would have gone to debt servicing to cover some of the costs of basic social services, such as education and health (World Bank, 2001). In 2001, the IMF and the World Bank deemed Tanzania's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper satisfactory, and they announced that three billion dollars, or roughly 54 percent of the country's external debt, would be eliminated (Mramba, 2002; World Bank, 2001). However, the country is still paying back the remainder of its outstanding debt and continuing to take on new loans.

By conventional measures, the macroeconomic situation in the country has improved during the era of structural adjustment. The economy is growing, inflation is down, and a significant portion of the country's massive debt has been eliminated. One must then ask whether the positive changes in the economy have had an equally constructive impact on the education, employment, and health sectors.

Most observers, the World Bank included, concur that inequality of educational opportunities has increased from the mid-1980s to the present, with a growing gap between those who can afford user fees and other school-related expenses and those who cannot (Lassibille et al., 2000; Maarifa ni Ufunguo, 2001; World Bank, 1999). The major Tanzanian educational policies of the 1990s, the Education and Training Policy and the Basic Education Master Plan, included user fee provisions; not unexpectedly, primary school gross enrollment rates declined. Two years ago, in a reversal of policy, school fees at the primary level were eliminated once again.⁵ Since 2002 there has been a resurgence in primary school attendance with the elimination of school fees, but also growing discontent with the low quality of education in Tanzania's already overcrowded schools (Maarifa ni Ufunguo, 2002).

A more striking and sustained effect of structural adjustment policies on the education sector is the growing inequality of opportunity at the secondary level because of the steady increase in fees and related expenses at private and

public (government-sponsored) facilities during the past decade. For instance, the proportion of secondary school students whose parents are peasant farmers has declined as the burden of cost-sharing on families has increased (Lassibille et al., 2000). Inequalities are also evident in the sharp difference between secondary school enrollment rates for students whose families are in the lowest quintile for household expenditures (2% enrollment) and for those whose families are in the highest quintile (15% enrollment) (World Bank, 1999).

The major impact of structural adjustment on the employment sector has already been noted, namely, the decline in the number of civil service jobs and the rise of the informal sector. Of particular interest to this study are the changes in opportunities for youth employment in general and for female employment in particular. The most comprehensive study of the labor market during the years of adjustment, the Tanzania Integrated Labour Market Survey, shows that age- and gender-based inequalities have increased during the past decade (National Bureau of Statistics, 2003). For example, there was an overall rise in youth unemployment throughout the 1990s such that young people between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four now make up 44 percent of the unemployed population in the country, compared to 33 percent a decade ago. In addition, the sector with the highest paying jobs — the parastatal, or public, sector linked to the government — is shrinking as a result of structural adjustment (President's Office, 2004); however, those who do hold jobs in this sector are 81 percent male and 19 percent female. As for gender disparities in income, the labor survey concludes, "For employees with paid income, females earn less than males. This is true in every sector of employment." Women, far more often than men, report that they are "economically inactive" because they do not have formal employment (National Bureau of Statistics, 2003).

The impact of structural adjustment policies on the health sector, and especially on women's health, has been mixed. Tanzania, along with many other African countries, has been engaged in a process of privatizing health services since the mid-1980s (Turshen, 1999). In Kilimanjaro, this change in policy has led to the founding of private hospitals, well-stocked pharmacies, and clinics that provide high-quality care to those who can afford it. It has also meant, however, that the quality of service at public hospitals and clinics has deteriorated, as doctors opt for the more profitable private sector. Today, even the poorest families must pay something to be treated at "public" facilities. For some people this means foregoing treatment altogether.

The relationship between structural adjustment policies and the escalation of the HIV/AIDS crisis in Tanzania is more difficult to ascertain because their co-occurrence does not necessarily mean causality. The first AIDS cases were identified in Tanzania in the early 1980s, the same period when SAPs began, and the disease has spread rapidly ever since. Today, approximately one and a half million out of the country's 35 million residents, or 8 percent of the adult population, are living with HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS, 2001). The epidemic has

had an especially serious impact on Tanzanian youth: Young women and men between the ages of fifteen and twenty-four account for 60 percent of the new HIV infections in Tanzania, and young women in this age group are six times as likely to be infected as their male counterparts (UNICEF, 2000).

For youth in Kilimanjaro, the necessity of migrating from a rural community to an urban center to find employment has undoubtedly contributed to the spread of HIV. As Setel (1999) notes in his research on AIDS in Kilimanjaro, these simultaneous changes — SAPS and AIDS — have created a feeling among many young women and men in the region that they have been hit by two crises at the same time: “For young people, this alignment of structural forces proved to be a fatal and paradoxical bit of serendipity. At the moment environmental conditions for youth had reached their worst, and many became involved in the black market (*magendo*) and informal sector activities, HIV arrived” (p. 147). The pages to follow examine these multiple factors that contribute to the sense that life is growing more difficult, and more dangerous, at a time when the national macroeconomic indicators suggest growing opportunities and a higher standard of living.

Adjusting Inequality in Old Moshi

Structural adjustment policies have had numerous demonstrable effects — both positive and negative — on the economy, education, and health in Tanzania. Yet an analysis of policy outcomes tells only one side of the story; an ethnography of policy goes beyond this to explore “the frameworks of cultural meaning people use to interpret their experience and generate social behavior” (Levinson & Sutton, 2001, p. 3). In this section, I provide background information about Old Moshi to establish the cultural framework through which to explore the meaning of *maisha magumu* (difficult life), *hakuna ajira* (there is no employment), and *vishawishi* (temptations), the cover terms central to the three domains of access to secondary schooling, opportunities for formal employment, and risk of HIV infection among young women, respectively. These emic terms inscribe local beliefs about the lives people should desire, the preferred routes toward establishing those lives, and the forces that often impede youth and adults along the way. In this case, what many people perceive as having gone awry are government policies they believed would make life less difficult, create more jobs, and improve access to education.

Old Moshi is an ideal site to explore ethnographically the effects of structural adjustment policies at the local level because of its combination of a high level of commitment to children’s schooling and a high degree of integration in the global economy through trade in coffee. This community, where people overwhelmingly identify as Chagga and as Lutherans, consists of eight villages organized vertically along the verdant slopes of Mount Kilimanjaro.⁶ Most adults in Old Moshi are farmers whose families grow the staple food, bananas, and the major cash crop, coffee. In addition to farming, adults and

youth are often engaged in other forms of labor, including teaching, carpentry, and clerical work in the town of Moshi, the capital of the Kilimanjaro region. Formal education is highly valued in this community, which boasts eleven primary schools and three secondary schools. Relative to the rest of rural Tanzania, the residents of the Kilimanjaro Region, and of Old Moshi in particular, have greater access to schooling, health services, and the commodities associated with prosperity because of their proximity to important intra- and international trading networks.

For these reasons, there is a widespread view of the Chagga as “educated persons,” a historically and culturally produced identity that bestows privilege upon those who have the positive attributes associated with schooling in a particular community (Levinson & Holland, 1996).⁷ The concept of the educated person is central to my analysis because it enables one to understand how deprivation is experienced in a relatively prosperous community like Old Moshi. As I discuss below, it is the perception of deprivation relative to others — in one’s immediate or imagined community — that makes SAPs especially difficult for those who associate being educated with being able to afford the plethora of consumer products and services now available in Tanzania. However, if the material effects of structural adjustment were uniformly negative, then this would be a far less complex story. Instead, the sense of deprivation today is produced by the very fact that more commodities are available, more schools do exist, and macroeconomic conditions are better than they have been in many years; nonetheless, these changes have not produced a sense of prosperity for the majority. It is by examining local meanings of terms like *maisha magumu*, *hakuna ajira*, and *vishawishi* that one begins to understand both the tangible hardships faced by many people in this community and the social cleavages that are exacerbated when opportunities are not available to all who identify themselves as educated persons.

Inequality of Opportunities for Secondary Education

The aspect of structural adjustment that has received the most criticism from teachers, parents, and students during the seven years of this study has been the growing inequalities in secondary schooling due to ever-increasing school fees. Parents felt the effects of this aspect of cost-sharing policies most directly while also bearing the brunt of other macroeconomic reforms. For example, the devaluation of the Tanzanian shilling was noted as a serious problem by many parents. With the value of their currency declining, costs increasing, and more goods available for the educated parent to purchase, adults in Old Moshi generally believed that life was more difficult today than in the past. The comments of one Njema student’s father are typical of remarks made by others:

In the past, you could give a child 200 shillings when going to school, and he would be satisfied with that for a term.⁸ Today, even if you give him 10,000 shillings [approximately \$20 in 1996], he’ll frown at you and think that this is very

little money. . . . Our currency has been devalued a lot, and getting money is extremely difficult now. Getting money is difficult, but once it is earned, it is easily spent. (Interview)

Parents frequently linked structural adjustment and its effects on educational inequality to the increase in the price of commodities relative to their income. Goods such as cement and iron sheets to build houses are now the standard for “educated” people, who do not want to live in homes made of earthen blocks that were the norm in the past. However, it is costly to buy such items out of a family budget that must also cover school costs, health care, and other domestic expenses. As noted earlier, the value of the Tanzanian shilling has declined steadily during the years of structural adjustment. This diminution in the value of one’s income has created a sense of frustration among parents who once had government jobs that paid them a monthly wage adequate to cover their needs and wants. One father of a student at Njema fits this description, and he had a great deal to say about how rising costs, declining incomes, and increasing desires for a certain standard of living make life difficult today:

Difficult life [maisha magumu] is perpetuated by our government not examining carefully how people with low incomes live. . . . A kilogram of meat, for example, now costs 1,200 shillings [approximately 60 U.S. cents in 1996], but a person has no means of getting that amount of money although she needs to eat meat to stay healthy. . . . Besides this, the prices of other commodities have also tripled. It is true that if one has not yet built a permanent house, it is impossible to do so now. A corrugated iron sheet costs between 4,000–5,000 shillings [approximately \$2.25], but one has no means to get that money. Even a bag of cement costs 4,000 shillings now. How can one build? Tell me, don’t you think those are problems? (Interview)

Eating meat on a daily basis and living in a house with a corrugated iron roof are two of the many examples parents provided of the standards to which educated parents hold themselves that are increasingly difficult to reach because of changes in government policy. A common complaint among Old Moshi residents was the government decision to eliminate agricultural subsidies and price supports for farmers, especially for coffee farmers like themselves. During the ujamaa period, the Nyerere government provided subsidized agricultural inputs, such as fertilizers, pesticides, and seeds, for smallholder farmers throughout the country (World Bank, 1994). Additionally, the government regulated the market for many food crops, including coffee, and it also subsidized the price of basic foodstuffs — maize flour, for example — as a sign of its commitment to covering the basic needs of the population (Ponte, 1998).

Since the beginning of structural adjustment in the mid-1980s, Tanzanian agricultural policy has changed considerably. The government, on the advice of the World Bank, “has advocated a gradual shift towards private sector ownership of commercial enterprises, and the use of market determined prices and incen-

tives in the agricultural sector” (World Bank, 1994, p. xxiii). Specifically, these changes include the elimination of subsidies for fertilizers (Cooksey, 2003) and the reduction of agricultural import restrictions so that Tanzanian farmers must now compete with products from other parts of the world, such as the North Atlantic, where farming is still heavily subsidized by the state (Kristof, 2002; World Bank, 1994). This competition has led to a precipitous drop in the price that farmers receive for their coffee: Farmers in Kilimanjaro received approximately 1,000 shillings [approximately 50 cents] for a kilogram of coffee in 1998 (Maarifa ni Ufunguo, 2001), but by 2003 the price had fallen to a mere 200 shillings per kilo, or around 20 U.S. cents (Cooksey, 2003).

As I learned more about the geographical differences in coffee farming in Old Moshi (with those living at the base of the mountain and nearer to the town of Moshi being less likely to grow coffee), I wondered whether dependence on farm income affected educational opportunity at the secondary level. The survey administered to children in four primary schools was designed to ascertain the factors associated with starting secondary school upon completion of the primary level. The four primary schools in the study are located in geographically disparate parts of Old Moshi. Sokoni, the school nearest to town, is the largest school, with some 1,200 students (as of 2002) in Standards — or grades — 1–7. Mbali Primary School (257 students), in contrast, is the smallest school and lies farthest from town and at the highest altitude of the four schools on Mount Kilimanjaro. Bonde and Miti primary schools lie between these two schools, and the size of their student populations are also somewhere between the other two — 412 students at Bonde and 535 at Miti. Both schools also enroll students whose parents grow coffee, but the families tend to have more diversified sources of income than families living near Mbali Primary School.

The 2000 survey for children and adults found that the families whose children attended Mbali had the fewest household resources. For example, only 2 percent of the Mbali students’ homes had electricity, compared to 10 percent at Bonde, 46 percent at Miti, and 77 percent at Sokoni. Similarly, nearly one-third of the families at Mbali reported that they often had inadequate food to eat, while only 12 percent of the Bonde families and virtually none of the Miti and Sokoni families reported this problem. Given the high cost of secondary schooling in Tanzania today, it is not surprising that the differences in resources paralleled the differences in matriculation rates: 83 percent of the children at Sokoni started secondary school in 2001, compared to 60 percent at Miti, 49 percent at Bonde, and 30 percent at Mbali Primary School. In contrast, the educational levels of the students’ parents were quite similar: With the exception of Mbali, where no fathers had gone to secondary school, 43 percent to 56 percent of students’ fathers at the three other schools had had some postprimary education. The educational opportunities for students’ mothers were even more similar, with around 10 percent of those at Sokoni,

Bonde, and Mbali, and 20 percent at Miti having completed some post-primary schooling (Vavrus, 2003).

Further analysis of the survey data provided additional evidence about the growing economic and educational polarization in Old Moshi. In brief, it showed that families who are most dependent on the sale of coffee for their income but are unable to hire workers to help pick the beans are less likely to have children who start secondary school. This describes the typical family whose children attend Mbali Primary School, and it lends support to the sentiments expressed during focus group discussions that dependence on coffee for family income has a negative impact on children's opportunity for secondary schooling (Vavrus, 2003).

Dependence on agricultural income in general becomes an educational problem when subsidies and price guarantees for farmers are removed *and* secondary school fees increase beyond the average yearly income of smallholder farm families. Parents, especially at Mbali Primary School, frequently lamented the current hardships for poor farm families. This was evident in a focus group discussion at Mbali, where a father presented his analysis of the local situation in relation to the more prosperous conditions at Sokoni. His comments had particular resonance on the damp day when we held the discussion and sat shivering in a classroom that had no windowpanes to keep out the cold air or flooring to keep our feet dry:

This entire building was built by the energies of the parents, the parents who began in 1978. [They made] contributions — money, money, money! And at that time we had coffee! . . . Now, it has reached the point where people are unable [to give] due to the downfall of the economy, especially due to this coffee crop, and the school is the way it is now. Here on the ground, there is no flooring; there are no windows; there are no doors. When a pupil is in a classroom like this one, she is filled with doubts. She is not hopeful. If it rains, it rains inside. There at Sokoni, the buildings are well built, and the walls are painted. When a pupil looks at the wall, she becomes hopeful. When she treads on the floor, she is hopeful. The pupils here are eaten by chiggers from this ground. Now such conditions do not allow the child to learn anything. Even when the teacher tells her to do some work, she scratches herself. Now it is not possible for the education level to rise. It will continue to fall, fall, fall because the building itself is not promising . . . and the parents themselves lack energy due to the poor economy.

The sentiments of this father and others like him suggest that inequality of opportunity for secondary schooling stems from the complex conditions that constitute *maisha magumu*, which include a sense of deprivation relative to one's more prosperous neighbors. *Maisha magumu*, as the phrase is used locally, conveys a sense of deprivation among residents of rural communities with the most limited incomes but whose parental aspirations are as great as those of more prosperous residents, whose lives they observe and use as a gauge against which to measure their own success and their children's opportunities. Life is difficult in part because changes in agricultural and educa-

tional policies have affected the poorest farming families most significantly. However, it is also difficult because poor families are judged, and judge themselves, as “educated” against the same standards that apply to more prosperous families in neighborhoods like Sokoni. These standards throughout Old Moshi now include providing an adequate supply of certain kinds of food for one’s family, living in sturdy homes with an iron roof, and sending one’s children to a school with windows on the walls and flooring below.

Limited Opportunities for Formal Employment

The changes brought about by structural adjustment policies have affected youth employment in Old Moshi in multiple ways. In this section, I consider three changes in relation to the cover term *hakuna ajira* (“there is no employment”). The first two — the growing disdain for agricultural labor among secondary school graduates and the belief that the government ought to provide jobs for its citizens — reflect important shifts since the *ujamaa* period, when agriculture was privileged in national development policy and state planning in the employment sector was the norm. The third change in employment opportunities stems from the privatization of Tanzanian industries, especially as factories are sold to the highest bidder, who may or may not be Tanzanian.

Agricultural and vocational education were touted by President Nyerere in his 1967 Education for Self-Reliance policy, arguing that schools should have farms that teach children to appreciate the collective farming and the practical skills that he believed characterized — or had once characterized — life in rural Tanzania (Nyerere, 1967a). Agriculture continues to be the backbone of the Tanzanian economy, and this sector currently employs more than 80 percent of young people in the country (National Bureau of Statistics, 2003). The problem with this employment picture for secondary school graduates in Old Moshi is that one of the local features defining educated persons is their ability to hire others to do the manual labor on their farms. As noted in the section above, it is generally the poorest families who cannot hire farm laborers and the wealthier families who can.

Secondary school youths’ aversion to agricultural labor was something I noted many times in my field notes, where I recorded observations and comments made by students about this form of work. The following excerpt, written two months into my fieldwork in 1996, describes the typical conditions under which students engaged in agricultural labor and their sentiments regarding it:

There were a lot of absences today, especially of the girls. I thought at first it was due to the rain, but then it seemed that the girls who were absent were those who had been punished last Friday. On my way home at 9:30 a.m., I saw several girls in their regular, non-school clothes hoeing the ground along the road up to school. . . . [They] told me that this was their punishment — to farm all week instead of going to class. . . . Right after tea, as I was going past the Form III room, I heard several boys spreading the word that they would be going to the *shamba* [farm] instead of to class. These boys didn’t sound pleased by this news.

It wasn't until later in the year that the pattern of agricultural labor as punishment became apparent to me as I began to analyze my field notes and to incorporate questions about my observations in interviews with parents and students. Although agriculture is one of the vocational tracks in some Tanzanian secondary schools (Stambach, 2000), Njema did not offer it. Instead it offered science and commerce tracks, which were more in line with local sentiments about the careers for which schools ought to prepare students. A few male students did report during interviews that they wanted to become farmers upon graduation, but the far more typical response was that farming was a last resort. For example, Robert, an older student at Njema, explained that if his plan to find a "good" job after graduation failed, only then he would consider agriculture or informal employment:

Actually, I haven't yet decided what to do considering the fact that the [economic] situation of our country is still bad. There is no employment [hakuna ajira]. So, I'll simply see. Whatever comes, that's what I'll do. In the event that I miss everything [all job prospects], I will have to operate my own business, whether agricultural or petty trading. (Interview)

Observational, interview, and survey data about agricultural labor formed a critical part of my understanding the term *hakuna ajira* in this community. Almost every family in Old Moshi engages in farming to some extent, and there are opportunities to sell the produce one grows at nearby markets. However, as the field note data suggested, agricultural labor is often used as punishment in secondary schools, and students are generally loath to assume a career in farming because it is not what "educated persons" do these days. *Hakuna ajira*, I began to realize, does not literally mean there is no work of any sort in Tanzania, but that there is little employment that secondary school graduates find suitable.

A second aspect of *hakuna ajira* that was revealed in interviews with parents is its use to contrast current policies with past manpower planning programs of the Nyerere government. Through its firm grip on the economy in the 1960s and 1970s, the government became the principal employer in the country, and secondary school and college graduates felt assured of finding employment. During interviews with parents in 1996, many of whom benefited from this aspect of socialist planning, they complained that the government no longer felt responsible to find employment for educated youth. Many of them were nostalgic for the more state-centered development of the past, even though most Chagga in Kilimanjaro were never strong supporters of Nyerere's socialist policies (Howard & Millard, 1997). The interviews with two fathers conveyed common sentiments:

Mr. Mauki: Ahaa, as far as I know, the parents who were lucky to educate their children to the secondary level at that time didn't have a problem because the child could secure a job. The government would allocate him a job. That is one important thing I noted: The government would find him a job.

Mr. Ringo: Another problem, I think, is that although we are giving them [children] an education, they don't have a future. That means, ehh, it's okay if we set targets for them to complete their education. But once the student completes school, given the existing situation, where does she go to next? This is because the nation has laid out no plan for placing these youth after they graduate. The government doesn't have such a program that shows what should follow when they finish their education in private or public secondary schools. . . . So, what we are saying is that we educate them, but we don't have any future for them.

These quotes illustrate the use of several “included terms” encapsulated by the broader cover term *hakuna ajira* (Spradley, 1979, p. 100). For example, “secure a job” came up repeatedly in reference to past employment opportunities for secondary school graduates, while “no plan” and “no future” were frequently used to describe the current state of affairs. Moreover, for many youth in the study, opportunities for formal employment today exist only for those with “connections” because, as one young man put it, finding a job in Tanzania relies on a system of “who knows whom, not who knows what.” Thus, even if these youth, as educated persons, have a good deal of knowledge, they believe their lack of connections deprives them of job opportunities and that their government is not going to find employment for them.

The notion that there are fewer employment opportunities today for secondary school graduates is related to a third aspect of *hakuna ajira* that came up often in focus group discussions with my former students: the privatization of Tanzanian industries. When I returned to Old Moshi in 2000, I began hearing a verb that I had not encountered when I lived there in 1993 and 1996, *kubinafsisha* — meaning “to privatize.” By this time, the government's proposals to privatize the parastatal industries had fully materialized, and people who worked in Moshi and other towns and cities in the country were feeling the effects. Discussions with my former students in 2001 were filled with tales of people losing their jobs when companies were sold and of workers' rights being violated, especially when the new owner was South African. During the apartheid era, Tanzania provided a safe haven and training facilities for African National Congress members, and the Nyerere government was consistently a vocal opponent of the White regime. Today, however, South Africa is viewed with a combination of envy and resentment as its citizens are seen as buying up land, hotels, and, most troubling to some of the Kilimanjaro elite, the national airline, which now sports a hybrid Tanzanian/South African flag and has many White South African pilots. If government policies were working as they should, according to the local cultural framework, then it would have been Tanzanians buying the breweries, exporting flowers from their farms to Europe, and flying the Air Tanzania planes. Although this has happened in some cases, the general feeling in 2001 was that privatization policies have had a negative impact on job prospects for educated Tanzanian youth and have created opportunities for foreigners to work in their place.

This sense of privatization policies gone awry was quite apparent in the focus groups with secondary school graduates. In one group, a question was asked about why employment was more of a problem today than in the 1980s. A young woman began by stating, “The number of people and the privatization of factories. They’ve been bought by private individuals, and they won’t belong to the government again.” She was then interrupted by her male colleague, who began describing a particular case of privatization that many people mentioned to me in 2001: the sale of a nearby brewery to a South African owner. He complained:

The people who bought the breweries were rich people, and they brought their own people to work there. . . . Then they started bringing the wheat, the wheat needed for the beer, from South Africa, but there wasn’t enough wheat for all the beer they wanted to produce so they even bought the farms to grow the wheat here. If the farms had not been privatized — the government land was also privatized — they would have been buying the wheat [from Tanzanians], but now they bought the farms, too. So the wheat then comes from their land because they bought the land, and they have bought the breweries. And the labor, the laborers also come from South Africa!

From the perspective of these secondary school graduates, privatization is forcing Tanzanian youth to compete on a much broader playing field that extends beyond the borders of the country to the southernmost part of the African continent. Their sense of deprivation is derived not only from comparisons to their parents’ generation, when job security through the government was almost a given for an educated person, or from comparisons with colleagues whom they perceive as having better social contacts. It also comes from assessing their situation relative to those from other countries who are now working in positions they would like for themselves.

Increased Risk of HIV Infection among Young Women

The changing nature of the labor and commodity markets as a result of structural adjustment policies has affected the lives and longings of Tanzanian secondary school-age youth, especially among young women. According to local cultural frameworks in Old Moshi, these changes have had a particularly negative impact on the reproductive health of young women from low-income families because they are prone to giving into temptations (*vishawishi*) that may result in unwanted pregnancies or in HIV infection. According to this cultural logic, the limited opportunities for young women to find employment outside the agricultural and informal sectors, coupled with the high cost of schooling and the consumer goods now available in the country, create the ideal conditions for men with wealth or influence to become “sugar daddies” for those who can afford neither school fees nor the accessories and clothing sported by their better-off female peers (Bledsoe, 1990; Komba-Malekela & Liljestrom, 1994). Thus, when young women feel deprived of the opportuni-

ties or the commodities that others enjoy, they are confronted with *vishawishi*, most often in the form of sexual relationships with men who can provide these things for them.

The problem of limited employment opportunities for secondary school graduates — male and female — was evident in both the questionnaire and the essays completed by my former students in 2000. However, it was the female respondents who linked this problem further to temptations. Similar to the results of the Integrated Labour Force Survey discussed above, there were clear gender differences in employment patterns for these students after graduation (National Bureau of Statistics, 2003). For example, approximately 50 percent of the former male students were still in school at the upper secondary or tertiary levels; 40 percent were employed; and 10 percent reported being idle at their parents' homes without any formal employment. In contrast, around 30 percent of the young women were still enrolled in school; 30 percent were employed; and 40 percent described themselves as "idle." Although these young women and men had received financial support from their families to attend lower secondary school (O-level studies), the results of the questionnaire suggest that parents often support their sons' education and employment aspirations to a greater extent than their daughters'.

This lack of support was linked in the young women's essays to employment, idleness, and sexual risk. For example, Martha wrote:

Honestly, Dr. Frances, I ask you to look for a way to help me to achieve at least a higher level of education. I think you know how tempting it is for youth to stay idle. I have tried to join various groups to run away from such temptations. For example, I have joined the choir group and also learned sewing.

Although the essays made a number of connections between idleness and temptations, it was during the focus group discussions with some of these students in 2001 that this link was expanded to include explicit references to sexual risk for young women. *Vishawishi*, my former students argued, may refer to sexual temptations when a man and a woman are strongly attracted to each other, but it is the temptation to have sex with men, especially with men who can provide school fees, desirable commodities, or simply a "good time," that places young women from poorer families at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS. These views were conveyed during the following exchange about the reasons why young women have higher rates of HIV infection than young men:

Erick: They like to have fun. They are deceived by men who give them all kinds of things, provide all kinds of fun. However, that man who her gives her a good time is also the one who infects her with the virus.

Rita: Her friends have the ability to buy things, but she can't. So when she's given these things, she's content. But every now and then they [young women] get the virus.

Question: OK, but *why* do young women have a higher rates of AIDS and . . .

Erick: Young women like to look good. A man can have one girlfriend, but if a young woman is not satisfied by the things she gets from him, she goes to another man. If she gets someone who can buy her more [things] than this one, she leaves him and goes to the next. (Focus Group Discussion)

The belief that young women are particularly motivated to exchange sexual favors for material gain was a common perspective among the female and male participants in the focus group discussions, but this gendered sense of responsibility for HIV infection was tempered by the accusations against older men who “tempt” female students from low-income families (see also Mbilinyi & Kaihula, 2000). The young men in the focus groups, in particular, suggested that the older generation poses a far greater temptation for secondary school-age women than do male students, whose pocket money barely covers their own expenses. While young women can get pregnant and infected with HIV from having sexual intercourse with their male peers, it does appear that their health risks are greater with older men: According to the Tanzania Demographic and Health Survey, men above thirty years of age are less likely to use condoms with their partners than are men between the ages of fifteen and twenty-nine (Bureau of Statistics Tanzania & Macro International, 1997). The same survey shows that more than 95 percent of women who have completed primary school know about condoms and about AIDS. However, as one former Njema student put it, “it’s like talking to people who are deaf” when one tries to convince young women to forego the immediate, tangible benefits of high-risk sex for the assurance of long-term health by insisting that their partners use condoms. Another participant spoke at length about this dilemma in response to a question about why schoolgirls become pregnant if they know about contraceptives:

Ibrahim: This is a very good question, because those men from outside the school give them gifts. When they are at school, as we said before about life being difficult [maisha magumu], if someone comes from a poor family she’s only given bus fare [by her parents]. She gets to the school canteen and others are drinking sodas. . . . If she gets somebody, maybe she just has bus fare, she finds somebody who can give her 10,000 or 20,000 shillings [approximately \$8–\$18 by 2001] or other gifts. It’s easy to be captured in this way and to be lifted from this state of poverty. That’s how they find themselves pregnant by people from outside the school, because [male] students are not given a lot so they don’t have enough money to give the girls. But the person from outside is not a student and has time to work and get money to give to the girls. And many men from outside the school think that school girls are not affected by HIV because they assume young girls in general are not infected.

Ibrahim’s views were typical of others in that he linked temptations to the lack of commodities that others have, including inexpensive ones like sodas and costly items like school fees. Most young people agreed that the material dimensions of maisha magumu, the sense of deprivation relative to others, and the presence of vishawishi in the form of men with money and influence to-

gether create the conditions of sexual risk confronting young women from low-income families.

If this is the case, what role can education play in combating the spread of AIDS in communities like Old Moshi? One view holds that the more years a woman spends in school, regardless of social class or family income, the lower her likelihood of HIV infection. The so-called “education vaccine” is thought to operate through cognitive and interpersonal channels: Women who have completed more years of school usually have greater knowledge of methods to prevent AIDS and may feel more empowered to discuss safe sexual practices with their partners (Vandemoortele, 2000). From this perspective, the best way to combat the disease is to send more girls to school and to develop prevention programs based on individual behavioral change (Green, 2003).

The young people in this study, however, questioned the role of education because, as noted above, they see it as “talking to the deaf” unless one addresses concomitantly the cultural and economic reasons why young women are at risk of HIV infection in the first place. Some anthropologists, most notably Paul Farmer (1996, 1999), similarly contend that poverty reduction efforts that target women are the active ingredient in any social vaccine against the disease. Farmer’s argument, like that of many participants in this study, is based on the belief that sexual risk cannot be understood without examining inter/national policies, such as SAPs, that affect young people’s lives (Simmons, Farmer, & Schoepf, 1996). While education and behavior-change programs can certainly play a role in promoting safer sex, these interventions cannot be the primary prophylaxis against AIDS when conditions of poverty create enormous inducements for low-income women to engage in high-risk behavior. The development of policies that run counter to SAPs, such as reducing user fees at the secondary school level and increasing state involvement in the employment sector, would appear to be the most effective inoculation against AIDS for youth in this community.

Implications for Inter/national Education

This article has attempted to illustrate how an ethnography of policy can deepen one’s understanding of the cultural practices and economic conditions that affect policy interpretation at the local level. Inter/national structural adjustment policies rarely attend to local settings unless it is to hail them as sites for cost-sharing or decentralization programs. In contrast, I have examined SAPs by looking at the meanings of terms that convey sentiments about economic restructuring in one rural community in Tanzania. The meaning of *hakuna ajira* (“no employment”), for example, must be understood within a specific historical, social, and economic context in Old Moshi that links concerns about the privatization of industries and the shrinking civil service to a rejection of agricultural and informal labor by educated youth. *Maisha magumu* and *vishawishi* express a similar sense of relative deprivation that structural ad-

justment policies have fostered on Mount Kilimanjaro, as more goods and services have become accessible for some but not for the majority. In a community that has long been privileged relative to the rest of the country, it is widely believed that government policies are supposed to make life better, not worse, and yet the devaluation of the Tanzanian shilling, the devolution of financial responsibility for education from the state to the local level, and the privatization of government farms and factories have done just that for many families. Although SAPs have created greater economic and educational opportunities for some people, they have generated a sense of frustration among others, especially among those who see more things they cannot afford at a time when educated parents and their offspring feel entitled to them.

What, then, are the implications of this ethnography for the field of education? One of the most important is the need to consider a broad range of issues beyond schools themselves that influence the inequality of educational opportunity. In this study, school fees at the secondary level have an obvious impact on class stratification through education; however, there are also factors that may seem unrelated to schooling that are in fact linked to it in crucial ways — particularly for the poor and the near poor. For people living on or near the margins, anything that makes life more difficult, such as the elimination of agricultural subsidies or the reduction of the price of coffee beans, can push schooling further out of reach. If we want to more fully understand the dynamics of educational inequality, then we must examine more comprehensively the relevance of factors outside the domain of education that bear on schooling opportunities in the United States and abroad.

A second implication of this study concerns the financing of education when government expenditures do not keep up with the growing demand for schooling. The solution to this problem in both the United States and in heavily indebted countries like Tanzania has been to place greater financial responsibility on parents and students themselves. In many countries, this responsibility has been formalized through cost-sharing policies that require students to pay fees to continue in primary or secondary school. In the United States, education at these levels remains largely a public responsibility, but the increasing stratification in the quality of public schooling reflects a *de facto* cost-sharing policy: Parents' financial contributions through "voluntary" donations and various fundraising activities offset cuts in government funding at schools serving middle- and high-income students. However, schools serving low-income students usually cannot generate the same amount of supplemental revenue, and the quality of children's education suffers. This study of structural adjustment in Tanzania serves as a harbinger of what may lie ahead if cost-sharing becomes the *de jure* education policy in other countries as well.

Finally, this article highlights the growing importance of ethnographic studies of policy for students and scholars of education the world over. An international perspective on education promotes a deeper understanding of the policies and practices that appear to be national in origin but may, in fact,

have been formulated in another country or in an international institution. The distinction between international and domestic education has grown increasingly tenuous in an age when ideas about best practices and sound policy travel across borders at astonishing speed. Ethnography allows one to maintain a focus on the specificity of local and national contexts while simultaneously exploring how international policies affect the “frameworks of cultural meaning” (Levinson & Sutton, 2001, p. 3) of the participants in our research. In this way, one can begin to understand how educational inequalities are adjusted, and ideally alleviated, both locally and globally.

Notes

1. The names of the schools and the individuals in this article are pseudonyms.
2. The term “emic” refers to the point of view of the actors involved in a situation and to their understanding of the events in their lives (Schwandt, 1998).
3. The gross enrollment rate expresses the relationship between the number of children enrolled in primary school relative to the number of children of primary school-age in a population.
4. One ought to view with some skepticism the interpretations of economic “success” based solely on national aggregated data because regional differences often tell a different story (Ponte, 2002). Moreover, data are often inconsistent from one source to the next, as Samoff has demonstrated in his analysis of the education sector in Tanzania (1994a).
5. A likely reason for this abrupt change in policy in Tanzania (and in other African countries) is that the U.S. Congress voted to oppose IMF and World Bank loans that have cost-sharing provisions (Global Challenge Initiative, 2000). Now, by law, the U.S. executive directors at the IMF and World Bank are supposed to vote against loans that require user fees for primary education and health services.
6. For details on the demography and topography of Old Moshi, see Vavrus (2003, Introduction and ch. 5).
7. In the pages that follow, I draw upon the concept of the “educated person” developed by Levinson and Holland (1996) when I discuss local notions of “educated parents” and “educated youth.” Levinson and Holland use the concept to explore how historically and culturally specific notions of education become embodied in those who have experienced particular kinds of schooling. In this study, the educated parent refers to a type of educated person with certain dispositions and attitudes regarding their children’s education.
8. The third-person singular pronoun in Swahili (*yeye*) does not distinguish between male and female referents. Therefore, in some cases it is difficult to determine whether a person is speaking of a boy or a girl. Throughout this article, I have alternated “he” and “she” as the translation for *yeye*, but it should be noted that gender was not specified in the interviews and focus group discussions.

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