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SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR ENGAGING BOARDING SCHOOL GIRLS IN DOMESTIC ACTIVITIES IN MOROGORO MUNICIPALITY, TANZANIA

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Abstract: **This study investigated school management practices in involving boarding school girls in domestic activities in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania. The organization and scheduling of domestic activities, allocation of responsibilities, supervision and monitoring, the use of school rules and routines, and the role of school personnel such as teachers, matrons, prefects were examined. The study adopted a qualitative approach based on a phenomenological research design. Thirty-six participants, consisting of two heads of schools, ten teachers, and twenty-four boarding female students from two purposefully selected public secondary schools, were the main sources of the data. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. The data were thematically analyzed through Social Learning Theory.It was found out that the domestic activities were organized through timetables, duty rosters, group assignment, and rotations. The collaboration of school management, teachers, matrons, and prefects in supervision and monitoring, and provision of guidance helped the completion of assigned tasks. The use of school rules and routines facilitated the explanation of behavioral expectations and coordination of domestic activities with academic activities. The study concludes that organized, fair, continuous supervision, and school routines may help girls to participate in domestic activities and thus develop responsibility, cooperation, discipline, and self-regulation. It is recommended to enhance these practices by school management without infringing upon the academic learning, individual studying, and enough rest of girls.**

Keywords: **school management practices, boarding schools, domestic activities, girls' participation, Social Learning Theory.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Boarding secondary schools should provide the conditions for academic, personal, and residential development of the students. Cleaning of dormitories, maintenance of dining areas and other shared facilities, and keeping these facilities clean may promote life skills, cooperation, and responsibility. However, the process of organization and control of the performance of domestic activities requires the management practices to prevent the interference of such activities with learning, rest, and wellbeing of students. According to the UNICEF's (2025) report on 'Girl Goals', there are about 160 million more hours of domestic and care work done by girls aged 10-14 compared with boys of the same age all over the world. Such difference illustrates the need of organizing the responsibilities fairly and preventing the practices that lead to perpetuation of gender stereotypes.

In sub-Saharan Africa, gender norms and social expectations define the distribution of domestic and care responsibilities between girls and boys. As UNICEF (2025) notes, 18% of girls aged 10-14 perform at least 21 hours of unpaid household chores, compared with 12% of boys. Even though these figures relate to household work rather than domestic activities performed in boarding schools, they illustrate the gender-related situation within which girls participate in domestic activities. School management needs to provide the transparent schedules of duties, fair distribution of responsibilities, supervision of task completion, and organization of domestic activities to facilitate students' development without overloading girls with domestic duties.

In East Africa, the educational experience of girls depends on the social expectations, household responsibilities and institutional environment. Booth (2022), in the regional review covering the educational experiences of girls in Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and other countries, identified gender norms, poverty, geographical location and disability as some of the constraints of the access to and continuity of education of girls. The issues emphasize the need for school-level management practices protecting the education of girls and encouraging their responsibility and participation. However, the regional literature on girl education does not provide the direct evidence regarding how duties are allocated in girls' boarding schools requiring the investigation of country- and school-specific cases.

In Tanzania, the organization of domestic duties in schools requires consideration in the view of academic achievements, wellbeing, and gender equity. Mugizi (2025), using the data of the Tanzania Labour Force Survey on children aged 5-17, found that girls perform household chores more often than boys and spent more time on these duties. The study also revealed that the children performing household duties and spending more time on these chores reported negative effects of these activities on their school grades. Even though the study covered the household work rather than domestic duties in boarding schools, it emphasizes the need to manage students' responsibilities without damaging their educational success.

School management plays an important role in organizing domestic activities through the schedules, distribution of responsibilities, supervision and communication. Such practices should facilitate the orderly routines in the boarding houses and protection of the study time, rest and wellbeing of the students. The efficiency of such practices depends on how school managers coordinate the responsibilities of school personnel and communicate the expectations of the students.

Morogoro Municipality represents the relevant context for the investigation of school management practices in involving boarding school girls in domestic activities. Aron and Amos (2024) studied the practices of instructional leadership and collective decision-making in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality, emphasizing the importance of school management and stakeholder involvement in the administrative decisions. Similarly, Lujuo and Wandela (2024) investigated the challenges affecting the extracurricular activities and practical skills development in secondary schools in the municipality. The challenges include attitudes of the students, gender-based perceptions, and lack of teacher guidance. Although these studies do not cover the topic of domestic duties in girls' boarding schools, they provide the context regarding school management and student participation.

However, additional investigation is required to understand how the heads of schools, teachers, matrons and prefects organize domestic activities, encourage girls' participation and address the implementation challenges in boarding secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. In particular, it is necessary to know how duty rosters, task rotations, supervision and school rules are applied while providing the fair workload and protecting the study time and wellbeing of girls.

Accordingly, this study investigates school management practices in involving boarding school girls in domestic activities in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania. The study will focus on the practices used to involve girls in domestic activities, the management approaches encouraging their participation, and the challenges encountered by school management. The findings will provide the context-specific insights on the organization of domestic duties in the selected boarding schools.

Research Question:

What school management practices encourage boarding school girls' participation in domestic activities in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania?

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Learning Theory

This study is based on Social Learning Theory created by Albert Bandura (1977). The theory explains that behaviors are acquired by the observation, imitation, modeling, and interaction of people with each other. The individuals may learn new skills and behavior patterns through the observation of the actions of people around them, evaluation of the consequences of certain behaviors, and reinforcement of their own actions.

Social Learning Theory is relevant to the problem of engagement of boarding school girls in domestic activities as students interact with teachers, matrons, boarding house personnel, prefects and other students. These individuals demonstrate how to perform certain domestic duties, set the behavioral expectations and give guidance during practical activities. For example, when teachers and matrons demonstrate the proper techniques of cleaning, organize students in working groups and give feedback, girls may learn practical skills and clarify their responsibilities.

The theory helps to explain how the practices of school management may encourage participation. The heads of schools and boarding house personnel may promote cooperation and responsibility through modeling, instructions, supervision, encouragement, and recognition of the efforts of students. In addition, the student leaders and experienced students may encourage the participation of their peers through modeling and adherence to the agreed practices. However, students may also imitate inappropriate practices if they observe the unfair distribution of responsibilities, the inconsistent application of rules, or the overloading of particular students.

In this study, Social Learning Theory provides a framework for investigating the practices of school management in organizing domestic activities and how the interactions of school personnel and students affect the participation. The theory directs to investigation of modeling, observation, supervision, reinforcement, and peer influence. The theory also facilitates the examination of whether school management practices promote the development of responsibility and practical life skills of girls through fair and constructive participation.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

School Management Practices Used to Engage Girls in Domestic Activities

Globally, the activities such as cleaning, cooking, and maintenance of the shared facilities may help boarding school students to develop practical skills, cooperation, and responsibility. However, the activities require proper management to make sure that participation of the students does not interfere with their education and wellbeing. According to the UNICEF's (2025) report on 'Girl Goals', girls aged 10-14 perform about 160 million more hours of unpaid domestic and care work compared with boys, which highlights the need for the equal distribution of responsibilities. In sub-Saharan Africa, 18% of girls aged 10-14 spend at least 21 hours of week on household chores, compared with 12% of boys (UNICEF, 2025). The patterns demonstrate the need of school management practices promoting fairness and avoiding the perpetuation of gender stereotypes.

In East Africa, domestic responsibilities may compete with the academic commitments of the students in case of the excessiveness and poor organization. Mugizi (2025), using the data on children aged 5-17 from the Tanzania Labour Force Survey, found that girls perform household chores more often than boys and their participation in such activities is associated with the perceived negative effect on school grades. Even though this research is focused on the household chores rather than domestic duties in boarding schools, it highlights the need of proper task allocation and scheduling. Such practices as duty rosters, rotational allocation, supervision and the school rules may promote orderly participation when used properly and consistently.

In Tanzania, the research on participation of the students in practical work provides additional context. Seni (2022) investigated the attitudes to manual work among primary and secondary school students in Mbeya and Rukwa, while the research on domestic responsibilities of children highlights the importance of balancing work and education. Locally, Felician and Amos (2024) investigated the practices of micromanagement in public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality and identified the administrative challenges related to the resources and communication. Lujuo and Wandela (2024) also investigated the challenges affecting extracurricular activities and practical skills of students in the municipality. The researches provide the relevant context regarding school management and participation, but do not investigate the organization of domestic duties in girls' boarding secondary schools.

The research gap is contextual and practice-oriented. There is the lack of evidence explaining how heads of schools, teachers, matrons and student leaders organize domestic activities, encourage girls' participation, and overcome the implementation challenges in boarding secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. The current study addresses the research gap investigating management practices, approaches encouraging participation, and challenges encountered, with the focus on the fair allocation of tasks, supervision, academic time and students' wellbeing.

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4. METHODOLOGY

The interpretivist research philosophy and qualitative approach were adopted for gaining an in-depth understanding of school management practices in involving boarding school girls in domestic activities in Morogoro Municipality, Tanzania. The phenomenological research design was used to investigate the experiences, perceptions and interpretations of the participants regarding the practices of school management used to organize domestic activities, encourage girls' participation, and overcome implementation challenges. The study involved 36 participants from two purposely selected public boarding secondary schools, including two heads of schools, ten teachers, and 24 female students. The data were collected using the semi-structured interviews with heads of schools and teachers, focus group discussions with female students, and the analysis of relevant documents of schools. The qualitative data were analyzed using the thematic approach and Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework. The trustworthiness was increased by the triangulation of data sources, systematic documentation of research procedures and proper interpretation of the participants' accounts. Ethical principles were followed by obtaining the required research permissions, informed consent and assent, confidentiality and restriction of the use of information only for research purposes.

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The General Practices Used by School Management to Involve Boarding School Girls in Domestic Activities

There are several management practices used by school management to involve boarding school girls in domestic activities, including organization and scheduling, allocation of responsibilities, supervision and monitoring, application of the rules and routines, and collaboration with the teachers, matrons and prefects. The practices help to maintain cleanliness, order and discipline as well as promote participation of the students and their responsibility in maintaining the school environment.

Table: Practices used by school management to involve boarding school girls in domestic activities

Main Theme	Major Sub-themes	Key Codes/Meaning Units	Data Sources
1) Organization and Scheduling	Timetabling; duty rosters; routine activities; designated periods	Scheduled duties; daily programme; duty roster; repeated routine	HoS, Teachers, FGD
2) Allocation of Responsibilities	Group allocation; rotation; area allocation; communication	Groups; rotation; assigned areas; shared responsibilities	HoS, Teachers, FGD
3) Supervision and Monitoring	Collaborative supervision; checking; feedback; correction; communication	Follow-up; monitoring; feedback; reporting; correction	HoS, Teachers, FGD
4) Rules, Regulations and Routines	Behavioural expectations; timetable compliance; consequences	School rules; designated time; compliance; corrective measures	HoS, Teachers, FGD
5) Roles of School Personnel	Teachers; matrons; boarding staff; prefects; peer leadership	Guidance; modelling; communication; supervision; reinforcement	HoS, Teachers, FGD

Source: Field Data (2026)

1. Organization and Scheduling of Domestic Activities

The findings based on the interviews with heads of schools and teachers, as well as focus group discussions with boarding school girls, showed that domestic activities in the two selected schools were incorporated into the daily and weekly routines. The activities included cleaning of dormitories, classrooms, dining rooms, and other facilities, as well as maintenance of cleanliness and orderliness. The organization of the activities was done through timetables, duty rosters, group allocation, and designated periods. The Head of School from School A stated

:"We incorporate domestic activities into the daily programme, ensuring that the students perform their duties during designated periods without interfering with their academic activities" (HoS A, May 2026)

.Similarly, teachers reported that duty rosters and timetables helped the students understand their responsibilities and the time allocated for completing them. The girls confirmed that domestic activities were included in their regular boarding-school routines, making them aware of their duties and schedules.

These findings indicated that planning, allocation, and scheduling were the major management practices used to organize the participation of girls in domestic activities. From the perspective of Social Learning Theory, the repeated participation, observation, and guidance of teachers, matrons and peers may help the students to become responsible, punctual, cooperative and disciplined. Therefore, these findings suggest that organized domestic routines may contribute to the development of responsible behaviors without any imbalance between domestic responsibilities and academic activities.

2. Allocation of Domestic Responsibilities Among Boarding School Girls

The findings showed that domestic responsibilities were allocated through the duty rosters, group allocation, assignment of dormitories, and rotation system. Heads of schools organized the duties, while teachers communicated the allocation of responsibilities, guided the students and monitored task completion. The Head of School from School B said

:"We use duty rosters to assign responsibilities to the students. We organize the students in groups and responsibilities are rotated in such a way that different students have the chance to perform different duties" (HoS B, May 2026)

Similarly, Teacher 7 noted that duty rosters assign the students to certain areas, while the teachers check how responsibilities are shared (Teacher 7, May 2026). These findings indicate that duty allocation was a planned management practice that promoted fairness, accountability, and exposure of students to different domestic responsibilities. Temu and Mpiza (2025) similarly emphasized the importance of collaboration between school staff and student leaders in the participation of the students in school management.

From the perspective of Social Learning Theory, the group allocation and rotation of responsibilities provide the opportunity for girls to learn through observation, modeling, and repeated practice, developing their responsibility, cooperation, discipline, and self-regulation.

3. Supervision and Monitoring of Girls' Participation

The findings indicated that the supervision and monitoring of the participation of the girls in domestic activities were undertaken by heads of schools, teachers on duty, matrons, boarding staff and student prefects. These activities included checking task completion, giving instructions, guiding, making corrections, and ensuring that the activities were done according to the school timetable. The Head of School from School A said:

"Students' activities are supervised and monitored through a coordinated effort by teachers on duty, boarding mistresses, matrons, and student prefects. All the activities are done according to the daily timetable, which comprises of academic lessons, cleaning, mealtime, and personal study time" (HoS A, May 2026).

Likewise, Teacher 2 pointed out the importance of communication and feedback amongst staff and student leaders in coordinating domestic and academic activities. From the students' perspective, teachers and prefects supervised their work and guided them when there were mistakes. Overall, supervision involved coordination, observation, feedback and correction. This process assisted in ensuring that domestic activities did not compromise academic activities.

The above findings agree with Fazli, Nirwana and Neviyarni (2025). The scholars noted the importance of modelling, reinforcement and enforcement of rules for developing the discipline and responsibility of the learners. According to Social Learning Theory, supervision offered the opportunity for the learners to observe models, get feedback, and practice proper conduct. This could promote responsibility, cooperation, cleanliness, punctuality, and self-regulation during domestic activities.

4. Influence of School Rules, Routines and Timetables

The results have shown that rules, regulations, routines and timetables of the schools were guiding girls in their participation in domestic activities. The expectations regarding cleanliness, punctuality, individual responsibility and task completion were set by them. Heads of schools pointed out the importance of rules for guiding the behaviour of the girls. Teachers noted that rules helped in organizing the activities and in communicating the expectations. The Head of School from School B explained:

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"In accordance with the rules and daily routine of the school, students are responsible for the maintenance of the environment. The timetable shows when girls should perform the domestic duties and when they should study" (HoS B, May 2026).

In the same way, Teacher 9 stated that girls had to perform the assigned duties before moving to another activity. The girls stated that the existing routines and reminders of teachers and prefects guided their participation in domestic activities. This shows that rules defined the expectations from the girls and the timetables helped girls to coordinate domestic responsibilities with academic activities.

These results are consistent with the findings of studies that emphasize the importance of clearly defined behavioural expectations, role-modelling and consistent discipline in fostering students' responsibility and self-management (Masath et al., 2023; Welsh, 2024; Letuma, 2024). In terms of Social Learning Theory, regular routines, behavioural modelling, feedback and correction could give the girls the opportunity to practice the expected behaviour and to develop self-regulation. Therefore, rules and timetables were used for both administrative and educational purposes. They organized the domestic activities and promoted punctuality, cleanliness, cooperation and accountability.

5. Role of Teachers, Matrons, Prefects and Other School Personnel

It has been found out that teachers, matrons, boarding staff and prefects played a complementary role in engaging girls in domestic activities. The roles of these people included communication of instructions, showing the appropriate procedure, monitoring of the activities, making corrections and encouragement of participation. The Head of School from School A explained:

"Teachers, matrons and prefects assist the management in guiding students, monitoring their duties and reporting any problems. Student leaders have a special role because they work closely with their fellow students" (HoS B, May 2026).

In the same way, Teacher 4 explained that teachers and matrons guided and monitored the girls, while prefects gave instructions and helped in monitoring in dormitories and other areas where duties were assigned to girls. This shows that school management, staff and student leaders cooperated in implementing domestic activities.

This shows that school management, staff and student leaders cooperated in implementing domestic activities.

It is clear that these people were guiding girls in the participation in domestic activities through their guidance, monitoring and leadership of peers. In terms of Social Learning Theory, teachers, matrons and prefects were behavioural models for girls who could learn through observation, imitation, feedback and reinforcement. This could help in developing the responsibility, cooperation and self-regulation in girls. Thus, the involvement of school personnel was useful for both administrative and educational purposes. It guaranteed the task completion and gave the opportunity for girls to practice responsible behaviour.

6. CONCLUSION

The study has concluded that the practices of school management played an important role in organizing and promoting the participation of boarding school girls in domestic activities in the selected two public secondary schools in Morogoro Municipality. The domestic activities were integrated in the daily routine by means of timetables, duty-rosters, group assignments and rotation system which made clear responsibilities and facilitated coordination of domestic activities with academic activities. The supervision of heads of schools, teachers, matrons, boarding staff and prefects helped in monitoring of the task completion, giving guidance and making corrections. Besides, school rules and routines communicated the expectations about the behaviour and cooperation among school personnel and student leaders contributed in implementation of assigned responsibilities. When interpreted in the context of Social Learning Theory, these practices could give girls the opportunity to learn through observation, modelling, feedback and practice. Therefore, the study has concluded that the effective organization, fair allocation, consistent supervision, clear rules and involvement of collaborative efforts of school personnel could contribute in the participation of girls in domestic activities and foster responsibility, cooperation, discipline, punctuality and self-regulation provided that the domestic duties would be balanced with academic responsibilities.

7. RECOMMENDATION

School management should improve the organization and supervision of the domestic activities by keeping clear timetables, fair duty-rotation systems, consistent rules and involvement of teachers, matrons and prefects. These practices should give girls the opportunity to develop the responsibility, cooperation and self-discipline while making sure that the domestic duties do not interfere with classroom learning, private study and rest.

Area for Further Study

Further research should be conducted in order to investigate the connection between participation of boarding school girls in domestic activities and their academic performance, especially the effect of spending time on domestic duties on private study, classroom engagement and learning outcomes. A mixed-methods study based on a larger sample of boarding secondary schools in different regions of Tanzania could provide broader evidence of how domestic responsibilities could be balanced with the needs of students regarding academics.

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