Volume 11, Issue 10, October– 2026 International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology
ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct1538

Role of Hostel Accommodation in Reducing Student School Dropout in Ward Secondary Schools in Mvomero District Council, Tanzania

Hassan Ngulo[1]; Dr. Eugenia Wandela[2]; Dr. Nolasko Mwinami[3]

[1;2;3]Jordan University College, A Constituency College of St. Augustine University of Tanzania, P.O. Box 1878, Morogoro, East Africa, Tanzania

Publication Date: 2026/11/06

Abstract: The present study is about the importance of hostel facilities in decreasing the dropout of students in ward secondary schools of Mvomero District Council, Tanzania. A mixed-methods approach was used in this study, with the guidance of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory and the Input, Output Model, the data was gathered from the students using structured questionnaires, and from key informants (Head of Schools, academic masters/mistresses, and patrons/matrons through direct interviews). We analysed the quantitative data using SPSS version 20 (frequencies, percentages, and means), and analysed the qualitative data thematically. The findings showed that hostel accommodation significantly reduces dropout, whereby regular attendance is improved, minimising lateness; travel-related fatigue, additional study time; peer academic support, and supervision from teachers, whereby a large number of students agreed that hostel reduces challenges of dropping out. Nevertheless, financial limitations in the form of delayed parental contributions, overcrowding, lack of water supply, and poor security were limiting the full effectiveness of hostel facilities. This study concludes that adequate and well-managed hostel accommodation is a vital educational input in supporting student retention and completion. It is recommended that there should be an increase in government investments in construction and maintenance of hostels, development of national accommodation standards, enhancement of cooperation from parents, and improvement of management practices in hostels.

Keywords: *Hostel Accommodation, Student Dropout, Completion Rate, Ward Secondary Schools.*

How to Cite: Hassan Ngulo; Dr. Eugenia Wandela; Dr. Nolasko Mwinami (2026) Role of Hostel Accommodation in Reducing Student School Dropout in Ward Secondary Schools in Mvomero District Council, Tanzania. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 11(10), 3111-3115. https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct1538

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is widely recognised as a cornerstone of individual development and economic growth of a country. In Tanzania, the government has been making great efforts in the attainment of universal secondary education through the Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDP). This has resulted in a tremendous increase in the number of schools, whereby public ward secondary schools were established for the decentralisation of secondary education and closer to the communities (MoEST,2023; Ndosi, 2024).

While the increased access is resulting in an increase in enrolment, particularly in rural areas, there is often a lag in the development of infrastructure. One of the important aspects of school infrastructure is the provision of adequate accommodation facilities, such as hostels or dormitories, sanitation, water supply, electricity, study areas and security arrangements. These facilities are not only a welfare issue, but a necessary educational input for enabling the students to be living safely and to be attending consistently to the school activities (Hassan et al., 2026; Nikhil et al., 2025).

In rural districts such as Mvomero in Morogoro Region, many students are travelling long distances on foot to attend the ward secondary schools. Long distances impose a lot of time and physical energy, exposing the students to safety risks and contributing to lateness, absence, fatigue, and, consequently, dropping out of school. Students who are travelling long distances may arrive tired or not able to attend in adverse weather conditions, which is reducing the time for classroom learning, private study and participation in school activities.

Theoretical views support the relationship between living conditions and educational outcomes. According to the theory of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, there is a need for basic physiological and safety requirements (shelter, security, food) to be satisfied in a reasonable way, whereby individuals are able to effectively pursue higher-level needs, including cognitive development and self-actualisation. The Input-Output Model in education also frames the accommodation facilities as an important input, whereby, when it is adequate, it contributes to improving outputs such as attendance, retention and completion rates (Agasisti et al., 2023).

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct1538

This study is focusing specifically on the first objective of the larger study, which is to examine the role of accommodation facilities (especially hostel accommodation) in reducing student dropout in the ward secondary schools of Mvomero District Council, Tanzania. It synthesises quantitative and qualitative evidence to demonstrate that hostel living is reducing the key drivers of dropout, and under what conditions the benefits are being limited.

➢ *Statement of the Problem*

Student completion rates in secondary schools are influenced by several factors, one of which is the quality and availability of accommodation facilities, which is significant. According to experience, day scholars in rural areas tend to travel long distances, and they have fatigue, limited time for studying at home, housework, and exposure to outside risks. On the contrary, students who are residing in school hostels may benefit from less travelling, better access to organised study settings, peer academic assistance, and closer supervision (Chiromo, 202; Kalolo, 2025).

Previous research is indicating that good hostel accommodation is creating a more favourable study environment, which is enhancing focus, giving extra time for individual study and group learning, as well as minimising the external distraction of commuting, thereby positively affecting retention (Mgeni, 2025; Duque, 2025).

Currently, some of the ward secondary schools in Mvomero District have hostel facilities, while others do not. There is limited context-specific evidence regarding the degree to which the available hostel accommodation is reducing dropout among the students who would otherwise be travelling long distances and facing other problems. This study is addressing the gap by investigating the significance of hostel accommodation in the reduction of student dropout in Mvomero Ward Secondary Schools.

➢ *Objective of the Study*

To examine the roles of hostel accommodation facilities in reducing student dropout in ward secondary schools in Mvomero District Council, Tanzania.

➢ *Research Question*

- What are the roles of hostel accommodation facilities in reducing student school dropout?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

➢ *Theoretical Framework*

This research is guided by two theories. The first one is the Maslow Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Maslow,1943), which states that human needs are organised in a hierarchy. The lower-level needs, which include physiological (food, water, shelter) and safety (security and protection) needs, need to be reasonably fulfilled, whereby the higher-level needs such as belonging, esteem and self-actualisation are able to effectively motivate behaviour. In the context of schools, students who are lacking in their basic needs (safe shelter, security and food) are unable to maintain focus and engagement in learning. Hostel accommodation that provides safe sleeping areas, water, sanitation, and supervised living conditions, therefore, addresses the basic needs, which enables academic participation and reduces the possibility of dropping out.

The second is the Input-Output model, which frames schools as a system whereby the inputs (students, teachers, facilities/building (hostel), funding, and learning environments) are transformed through a process (teaching, management, curriculum) into outputs (completion, achievement, attitudes, retention, and skills). Good hostel facilities are an important input in education. When they are available and well managed, they are supporting improved attendance, study time and engagement, whereby this is contributing to higher completion rates (Agasisti et al., 2023; Scheerens; & Creemers, 2022).

➢ *Empirical Evidence on Accommodation and Dropout*

International and regional evidence consistently shows that poor living and travel conditions are contributing to higher rates of absenteeism and dropout. In England, students who are living in poor or overcrowded housing are more likely to be missing school, whereby 19% of students who are receiving support cited housing problems as a major reason for absence (School Home Support, 2023; Prior et al., 2025). In China, rural boarding schools have become common after the consolidation of schools, whereby studies are showing that hostel can be improving retention and outcomes when there is an adequacy of facilities, although overcrowding and poor conditions are undermining the benefits (Chang et al., 2023; Liu et al., 2024).

In Uganda, long distances of walking, poverty and household responsibilities are the main reasons for dropout, and the proposal of boarding facilities is suggested by the policymakers, especially in areas such as Karamoja, whereby the success depends on having proper infrastructure (Parliament of Uganda,2024). In Kenya, boarding of secondary school often shows a higher mean completion rate as compared to day schools, because of the continuous instructional time and structured environments, whilst the students of day schools are associated with lower National examination achievement (Ngetich, 2022; Magwaga & Kitechi, 2024).

In Tanzania, many of the secondary schools in the wards are situated in rural areas, whereby students are travelling 5 to 18 Kilometres daily to and from school. The lack of accommodation facilities is contributing to absenteeism and also to dropout. The construction of hostels has been recommended to improve retention and completion (Boniphace et al., 2026). According to the research of Mtebe and Raphael (2022) and Nombo and Mhando (2023), supportive school environments, which include accommodation, are contributing to the improvement of academic outcomes. Nevertheless, there is a lack of research which is specifically investigates the effect of hostel facilities on the reduction of dropout in secondary schools in Mvomero District, whereby there is a clear geographical and thematic gap which is addressed in this study.

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct1538

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

➢ *Research Philosophy*

The study adopted a pragmatist philosophy, whereby it allows the combining of quantitative and qualitative approaches for the addressing of the research problem in a comprehensive manner. A convergent mixed methods design was used, whereby the quantitative and qualitative data were gathered at the same time, analysed separately, and integrated during interpretation, to provide a fuller understanding of the role of hostel accommodation in reducing dropout.

➢ *Target Population and Sampling Procedures*

This study was carried out in the ward secondary schools of Mvomero District Council, Morogoro, Tanzania. A predominantly rural district, where the long distance to school is a pronounced challenge. The target population is composed of teachers and students from the selected ward secondary schools with hostels (total 743). 206 respondents are selected using the Yamane formula, whereby only 194 hostel students are selected through stratified and simple random sampling, and 12 key informants (head of schools, academic masters/ mistresses and matrons) are selected through purposive sampling.

➢ *Data Collection and Analysis Procedures*

Quantitative data is collected through the use of a structured questionnaire which is administered to the hostel students. The questionnaire comprises questions regarding perception of the role of the hostel in reducing the dropout challenges, as well as questions concerning attendance, preference of living environment and other factors, which are measured by Likert scale items. The reliability is acceptable (Cronbach's alpha = 0.775).

Qualitative data were gathered through face-to-face interviews with key informants, whereby semi-structured interview guides were used. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 20, with frequencies, percentages and means. The qualitative data were analysed thematically, whereby illustrative quotations were used to enrich and triangulate the quantitative results. The ethical considerations involved informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and proper permission from the institution.

IV. STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the main results and discussion concerning the role of hostel accommodation in the reduction of students' dropout. The results are organised in terms of quantitative patterns, together with qualitative insights.

A. Study Findings

➢ *Hostel Accommodation Reduces Key Dropout Challenge*

The majority of the hostel students strongly agreed that hostel accommodation is reducing the challenges which are commonly lead to student dropout. In particular, 159 (82%) strongly agreed that hostels are reducing the challenges which are causing dropout, whereby there is a high mean score of 4.68, whereby this is indicating a strong consensus among the respondents about living in hostel is mitigating the factors which would otherwise be pushing them out of the school.

A key challenge which is reduced by hostel living is long-distance travelling, fatigue, lateness and absenteeism. The students who were walking a long distance before are no longer experiencing the physical exhaustion and loss of time in the daily commuting. Therefore, they are arriving at the school rested and on time, whereby they are available for the whole of the school day, as well as for the organised evening and morning study sessions. One academic master from one of the study schools stated that "Most of the students are living very far from our school registered in our hostel, which is helping to reduce the challenges such as students fatigue, lateness and missing of the periods in some days (being absent)".

Hostel living is also reducing the exposure to some external pressure which is contributing to the dropout, whereby there is severe peer pressure outside of the school, poor home study environment, and household responsibilities which are competing with the attendance of school. Through providing a structured residential environment under the supervision of matrons and teachers, hostel is creating a more conducive environment for regular attendance, whereby it is sustaining the engagement.

➢ *Learning Conditions and Academic Engagement*

Students and key informants consistently reported that hostels are enabling better learning. Hostel students are benefiting from structured study time, less travel fatigue, peer group learning and availability at all times at the school. An academic master stated that: "Students living in hostels are learning better as a result of their structured study time, zero travel fatigue and peer group learning, whereby their attendance is good as they are available at the school all the time, thus improving the academic performance for them depending on their discipline in learning".

Another academic master noted that "students are very happy in learning without any force, because they have time as compared to the day scholars". The additional time for self-study, group discussions and remedial sessions is supporting academic progress and is reducing the likelihood of students falling so far behind that they are considering dropping out of school. These findings are in line with the Input-Output model, whereby, with the presence of adequate accommodation as the input, the processes of teaching and learning are operating more effectively, and the outputs such as retention and completion are improving.

➢ *Preference for Hostel Living and Intention to Complete School*

The related findings of the wider study support the advantages of retention in hostels. The majority of the students, 171 (88.1%), reported that they have never thought of dropping out of school. The overwhelming majority of 185 (95.4%) preferred to be studying in the hostel, as opposed to studying at home. These preferences reflect the perceived academic and practical benefits of hostel life, additional study

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct1538

time, cooperation of peers, security, and freedom from long travelling and heavy housework.

A head of school from one of the schools states that "Hostel accommodation is helping the students to stay more at the school, which is promoting the study habit, whereby they are completing their school on time". When the basic needs of safe shelter and a supportive study environment are fulfilled, the motivation of the students is increased for remaining in the school, in accordance with the framework of Maslow.

➢ *Constraints: Financial Hardship and Limited Capacity*

Although there are clear benefits, the study also showed some limitations which can undermine the role of hostels in reducing dropout. A considerable number of students, 121 (62.4%), agreed and 35 (18%) strongly agreed that bad economic conditions are leading some students to leave the hostel and become truants or have irregular attendance (mean = 3.75). In the case of families who are no longer able to afford the hostel fees (for food, utilities and other expenses), students may be returning home and resuming long -distance commuting or dropping out of school completely.

An academic masters from a school explained that "there are some students who are registered in the hostel, whereby within a few months they are leaving because of the financial difficulties, whereby when they are no longer able to meet the cost, the students are returning to their home and continuing as a day scholar". The limited capacity of the hostel in relation to the demand is further restricting access, whereby many of the students who are benefiting from the boarding cannot get a place. These financial and capacity limitations mean that the protective effect of the hostels is not equally accessible for all the students who are in need of it, especially for the students from the most economically disadvantaged households.

B. Discussion

The findings demonstrate that hostel accommodation is playing a significant positive role in the reduction of student school dropout in the secondary schools of the study ward. Hostels are addressing one of the most immediate practical obstacles to regular attendance in rural Mvomero through the elimination or minimising of daily long-distance travelling. Students who are living on or near the school compound are experiencing less fatigue, fewer absences due to weather, and lower costs of commuting. They are also getting structured time for studying, peer support and closer supervision of adults, which supports sustained engagement and reduces the possibility of gradual disengagement, whereby dropout is likely to occur.

These results are in line with the empirical evidence from Tanzania and the surrounding region. The boarding arrangements have been associated with improved attendance, increased study time and a higher rate of completion in comparison to day schooling in similar rural areas, according to studies in Kenya and Tanzania (Ngetich, 2022; Mtebe & Raphael, 2022; Nombo & Mhando, 2023). There is also international evidence from China and Uganda, which points to the benefits of boarding for retention, whereby there are also risks of overcrowding and poor conditions (Chang et al., 2023; Parliament of Uganda, 2024).

The theoretical frameworks which are used are helping to interpret the mechanisms. According to Maslowian, hostels that offer safe shelter, basic facilities and a feeling of belonging enable the students to concentrate on learning instead of ensuring daily survival and safety during the long walks. According to Input-Output, hostel facilities are a vital input, which improves the conditions of the teaching and learning processes, thus supporting better retention and completion as outputs.

At the same time, the findings caution against the idea of considering hostels as a complete solution. Financial barriers which are forcing students to leave from hostels, insufficient number of beds, and management and infrastructure problems (water, security, overcrowding) are limiting the access and quality of the benefits. Without attention to affordability, capacity expansion, and quality standards, the potential of reducing dropouts through hostel accommodation is only partially realised, particularly for the poorest students who may be in need of it.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

➢ *Conclusion*

This study conclude that hostel accommodation is playing a significant and positive role in reducing student school dropout in the ward secondary schools of Mvomero District Council. Hostel accommodation is reducing travel-related fatigue, lateness and absenteeism. It is providing extra study time and peer academic support, whereby it is creating a supervised residential environment, which is supporting regular attendance and academic engagement. The majority of the hostel students strongly agree that the hostel is reducing dropout challenges, preferring to live in the hostel instead of at home, and having a low inclination to drop out.

However, the effectiveness of the hostels is limited by financial difficulties of some of the families (causing withdrawal from the hostels), the limited capacity in comparison to the demand, and also the infrastructure.

➢ *Recommendations*

- *Ministry of Education, Science and Technology and Local Government*

The study recommends that the government should increase the financial allocation to the ward secondary schools for the construction, expansion, repair, and maintenance of the hostel facilities in the ward secondary schools. Furthermore, there should be setting and enforcing of some national standards and guidelines for the school hostels, which cover space per student, water supply, lighting and security, whereby partial subsidies are provided to the hostel students to improve affordability for the disadvantaged students.

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct1538

- *School Administrators*

All school administrators, such as the District Education Office, Ward Education Officer, School Boards, Head of Schools and other stakeholders of different Non-Government Organisations, should ensure the proper day-to-day management and continuous maintenance of the existing hostel facilities for providing a safe and conducive living and learning environment. Also, strengthen the supervision of the evening and morning study sessions, whereby the academic benefit of the boarding arrangement is maximised, and maintain effective communication with the parents for the meeting of the hostel requirements of their children.

- *Parents and Guardians*

They should be participating effectively in the managing and supporting of the academic and personal development of their children who are staying in hostel, and they should be paying hostel fees and other contributions on time for ensuring an effective hostel running and expanding of the hostel for increasing the capacity of the hostel in a school.

REFERENCES

[1]. Agasisti, T., Antequera, G. & Delprato, M. (2023). Technological resources, ICT use and schools efficiency in Latin America: Insights from OECD PISA 2018. *Internationa Journal of Educational Development.*

[2]. Boniphace, S., Lubeja, T., & Nkuba, N. (2026). Trend analysis of factors influencing student dropout in public secondary schools in Nzega District, Tanzania. *International Journal of Research Studies in Education, 15(1), 1–15.*

[3]. Chang, F., Huo, Y., Zhang, S., Zeng, H., & Tang, B. (2023). *The impact of boarding schools on the development of cognitive and non-cognitive abilities in adolescents.* BMC Public Health, 23. https://doi.org/10.1186/s12889-023-16748-8

[4]. Chiromo, C. (2022). *Challenges faced by secondary school girls who stay far away from schools in Gokwe South District.* The Dyke, 16(3), 1–12.

[5]. Duque, R. J. (2025). *The impact of accommodation factors on students' health and perceived completion rate in Dublin (Doctoral dissertation).* National College of Ireland.

[6]. Fitzpatrick, R. (2022). *Evidence on the impact of population growth on education financing and provision in Tanzania.*

[7]. Hassan, S. M., Maina, J. J., & Sagada, M. L. (2026). *Factors influencing residential satisfaction within students housing facilities in the near campus neighbouring of Samaru Zaria*, Northwest Nigeria. Facilities, 44(1–2), 82–99.

[8]. Kalolo, D. B. (2025). *Assessment of determinants contributing to poor completion rate of students in community secondary schools in Musoma District Council, Tanzania (Doctoral dissertation).* The Open University of Tanzania.

[9]. Liu, Y., Wang, Z., & Park, A. (2024). *Boarding schools and completion rate of middle school students in China: Evidence from the China Education Panel Survey. Economics of Education Review, 98, 102521.*

[10]. Magwaga, N. K., & Kikechi, R. W. K. (2024). Physical facility availability and students' academic performance in public secondary schools in Trans Nzoia East Sub-County, Kenya. *African Journal of Empirical Research, 5(4), 780–790.*

[11]. Maslow, A. H. (1943). *A theory of human motivation*. Psychological Review, 50(4), 370–396.

[12]. Mgeni, M. (2025). The role of accommodation facility in promoting girls' education: A study of Njombe ward secondary schools in Tanzania. *International Journal of Gender Studies in Developing Societies, 5(2), 110–123.*

[13]. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST). (2023). *Educational Sector Performance Report 2022/23*. Government of Tanzania.

[14]. Mtebe, J. S., & Raphael, C. (2022). School environment and completion rate in Tanzanian secondary schools. *African Journal of Educational Studies, 10(2), 55–69.*

[15]. Ndosi, S. S. (2024). *Impact of Development Program on Education Sector to the Achievement of Secondary School Students: Lesson from Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP) (Master's thesis).* University of Dodoma.

[16]. Ngetich, D. S. K. (2022). A comparison of completion rates of learners in day secondary schools and those in boarding secondary schools in Kenya. International *Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science, 4(8), 1–7.*

[17]. Nombo, J. C., & Mhando, N. (2023). Hostel facilities and completion rate among secondary school students in Tanzania. *African Journal of Educational Research and Practice, 9(1), 88–101.*

[18]. Parliament of Uganda. (2024). *Legislators call for free compulsory boarding school education.*

[19]. Prior, L., Evans, C., Merlo, J., & Leckie, G. (2025). Housing quality and school outcomes in England: A nationally representative linked cohort study. *Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health.*

[20]. Scheerens, J., & Creemers, B. P. (2022). *Towards a more comprehensive conceptualisation of school effectiveness.* School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 265–278.

[21]. School Home Support. (2023). *Poor housing as barriers to school attendance in England.*

[22]. *So they can. (2025). Removing the barriers of secondary school education for girls in Tanzania.*