

Reflexivity Statement

This study had a dual purpose: to lay a foundation for doing social scientific research on cancer and to create a collaborative research platform that rests on the principle of decolonization. Aligning with Tanzania's national cancer strategy paper that calls for health research that actively involves Tanzanians and aligns with and respects Tanzania's cultural, historical, and institutional legacies, we utilize innovative and cutting-edge research organizational methods to both create knowledge and advance the careers of all in our research group. The core structure of this group is attempting to change the status quo in global health. Research priorities were set by Tanzanians both working outside of Tanzania and in-country in collaboration with ZE, an American researcher. Other scholars from the Global North in connection to these researchers were then invited to join the project. Collaboration with the Alliance for Women, Children and Youth Survivors (AWCYS) began with the topic of the research, to data collection, analysis, and publication. Almost all the team members in the early conversations about the project scope are co-authors in this paper. A local Tanzanian employed by AWCYS collected and analyzed the data with their Northern colleagues during the study period.

Language matters, particularly the taken-for-granted dominance of English in Global Health practice and theorization. Instead of English, we encouraged using Swahili in our meetings and trainings to foster greater ownership of the research agenda. For example, researchers from AWCYS were in human subject training, ethnographic methods, and theory in material translated into Swahili. In addition, we contextualized the training materials with cases and examples from Tanzania and the African continent. The training material has been converted into media files that are now available online to other Tanzanians and Swahili-speaking researchers. Using the Swahili language and translating the materials in a locally relevant context is a basis for building a research platform that will enhance the skills of young researchers, create access to scientific knowledge, and address the inequality of knowledge production in global south contexts like Tanzania. All young scholars, these trainings and the citation they gain from this paper will aid their career advancement in Global Health.

Committed to local dissemination, a version of this paper without the theoretical sections concerned with informing the wider field of Global Health will be used by AWCYS to advocate for improvements to Tanzania's oncological education. Further, this project will be continued guided by the interests of Tanzanians.