

## Maile Schalm: Stereotype Paper 2

Tanzania International Community Clinical: 5/21/2025

Our trip to Tanzania has allowed me the unique opportunity to truly challenge beliefs that I hold, and begin to understand what life is like in a completely different part of the world. Of course, 2 weeks is not enough time to fully understand the culture and people of Tanzania, but I feel like I've returned to the US with a new mindset of life in a different continent. I've also begun to understand the impact of my choices on other people. For example, my mindset on consumption has truly been altered through our travels to Tanzania. Learning about the impact that big countries have on climate change and how this impacts small countries has influenced me to try to consume less and reduce my own carbon footprint. With all this being said, I'm beyond grateful for the time we spent in Tanzania and feel so lucky I was given this opportunity to challenge my biases and change my perspective.

The first assumption I discussed in my original paper was the belief that Tanzania lacks many of the modern technologies that we have here in the US. What I learned is that it truly depends on the area. Although we did not spend much time in Dar, from what I saw it seems to be just like any other city. Speaking with the Kairuki nursing students showed me that their upbringing was not all that different from my own. In fact, our conversations showed me that we are far more alike than we are different. However, our time in Madizini showed me that many areas do lack a lot of the technologies we have here in the US, indoor plumbing being the largest one. People in these areas have no choice but to rely on wells/pumps for their water and use latrines that are often unsanitary. Something I learned is that much of this lack of infrastructure is due to the years of colonialism in Africa. When European countries were in control they stifled potential progress in Tanzania, and when they pulled out they left Tanzania unequipped to fight challenges such as sanitation in rural communities.

Another assumption I had is that people in Tanzania are more disconnected from news and politics than we are in the US. I learned that this belief is pretty much completely wrong.

The Kairuki students were more knowledgeable and up to date on current happenings than I am, and most people in the community had access to either a phone or a television on which they could receive local news. For those who did not have these things at home, they would be able to visit a local restaurant or business for news, as most of these places had TVs with news and updates playing.

The last stereotype I originally discussed turned out to be true. It was the belief that rural Tanzanians value community more than we do in the US. One thing I noticed is that the residents of Madizini were nearly always in groups. They were doing chores with neighbors, cooking with friends, and even just hanging out on the street with fellow residents of the area. They were also some of the most friendly people I've ever met. In fact, this sense of kindness, kinship, and community is one of the biggest things I learned in Tanzania, and something I hope to incorporate in my everyday life now that I'm back home.

Overall, this trip was a life changing experience that challenged many of my beliefs and encouraged me to think critically about problems that rural communities in Tanzania face. I look forward to implementing the things I've learned into my life and nursing practice here in the US, and I hope to return to Tanzania one day to continue to learn and grow from this beautiful country.