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## **EDITORIAL NOTE**

In this edition of *Journal of Adult Education (JAE)*, one paper touches on integration of technology and another one on stakeholders' involvement in school activities. Other three papers focus on teaching career including students' intentions to join teaching, teachers' self-assessment and training of facilitators, while the last and rather unique presentation is on changes in indigenous community life.

The paper on integration of technology by Nihuka and Mallinson reports on research conducted at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) seeking to indicate challenges and opportunities for OUT to effectively integrate Open Educational Resources (OER) for professional development of lecturers. The paper reveals that it is feasible to integrate OER for professional development at OUT since most of the required conditions, described in the paper, are available at the University. Moreover, the paper provides suggestions for dealing with a few identified challenges and shows related work to be done for successful integration of OER. Indeed, it is a vital advice to education institutions on aspects to consider for integrating OER in institutional academic operations.

The role of parents' participation on school matters and its impact on pupils' learning is widely a matter of concern. A such, Kimaro's paper on impact of parents' involvement in school activities on pupils' academic achievements makes a significant contribution towards resolving the matter. A study conducted at six primary schools reveals that parents' involvement leads to positive schooling outcomes including improvement in academic performance. Furthermore, it reveals that parents' active

engagement in children's schooling enhances children's' interests, respect obedience and attendance.

A paper by Onditi applies Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) to examine undergraduate student teachers' intentions to pursue a teaching career after graduation. The paper also focuses on differences between pre-service and in-service as well as gender on their intentions to join the teaching career. It reveals that attitudes, significant-others and perceived behavioural control are among significant predictors of teacher trainees' intentions.

Teachers' continuous professional development is critical to raising teachers' status and quality of education. This is revealed in the paper by Lekule and Kimaro, which presents results from research on teachers' self-assessment practice with focus on teachers' awareness and extent of the practice. The study suggests that there is need to build both self-assessment awareness culture among teachers.

A rather unique paper is presented by Kimaro on changing patterns of indigenous child care and practices among Wachagga community. It reveals that there are significant changes among Wachagga community members in aspects such as breast feeding patterns, children's socialization, child care and child personality arrangement. It is suggested that changes are irresistible but adaptation methods should be sought for incorporating the good indigenous practices into the new ones.

Lastly, Sizakele, through a critical touch, focuses on divergence between training of Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) facilitators as

well as their practice at learning centres. The paper indicates teaching challenges experienced at ABET learning centres and provides useful suggestions.

Constructive criticism and comments on articles presented in this journal are welcome and appreciated.

***Placid M. Balige***

***Chief Editor***

# **TOWARDS INTEGRATION OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF LECTURERS AT THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA**

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## **Abstract**

Results from the study reported in this paper used planning evaluation research design (Guskey, 2000) to investigate the context of the Open University of Tanzania in terms of opportunities and challenges for effective integration of Open Educational Resources (OER) for professional development of lecturers. Data were gathered from a sample of 23 lecturers who participated in the institutional situational analysis workshop from seven academic units at the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) using close-ended (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.7) and open-ended questionnaires developed by OER Africa at SAIDE. Analysis from SPSS and data reduction technique have indicated that overall, it is feasible to integrate OER for professional development at OUT. This is because a number of opportunities are available within OUT, which are among necessary enabling conditions for effective integration of OER, ranging from policies related to OER, willingness

to integrate OER and commitment of the leadership and availability of relevant infrastructure. Despite opportunities as well as challenges such as lack of a standalone policy on OER and expertise on OER were identified. Amongst other recommendations, it is suggested that there is need to pioneer designing, development and implementation of OER for professional development of lecturers at OUT for improvement of knowledge and expertise related to OER.

**Keywords:** Open Educational Resources, Information and Communication Technology, Open and Distance Learning.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

UNESCO conceives *Open Educational Resources* (OER) as any digital resources that can be freely accessed and used for educational purposes (UNESCO, 2002). This broad definition includes digital learning resources, software toolkits (such as wikis or authoring systems), simulations or animations, electronic textbooks, lesson plans, articles, instructional designs and experiences.

Evidence indicates that amongst others, OERs are used in ODL as a strategy to address challenges in relation to professional development of teachers, tutors and lecturers (Brown & Hammond, 2007; World Bank, 2006; Anamuah-Mensah, Buckler, Moon, Ricketts, Sankale, Wolfenden & Pontefract, 2012; Thakrar, Zinn & Wolfenden, 2009). In the context of Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa (TESSA), OER are reported to be used for professional development as a strategy to ensure a well prepared, engaged and committed corps of primary school teachers in sufficient numbers (Thakrar *et al.*, 2009; Anamuah-Mensah *et al.*, 2012). Furthermore, TESSA has worked collaboratively with a consortium of over 18 universities to design and develop a multi-lingual OER bank, modular and flexible in format [([www.tessafrica.net](http://www.tessafrica.net)) Anamuah-Mensah *et al.*, 2012]. Such an initiative aims at extending access to new modes of school-based professional development of primary school teachers by combining innovative education models and technological tools that are available (Moon & Wolfenden, 2007).

Initiatives to integrate OERs for various purposes are also reflected in literature (for example, the famous project called *Bringing Educational Resources to Africa* [BERTA] by UNESCO in collaboration with the South

Africa Institute for Distance Education (SAIDE) ([www.saide.org.za](http://www.saide.org.za)) and the International Council for Distance Education [ICDE (<http://www.iece-icde2014.org>)], *Research on Open and Educational Resources for Development* [(ROER4D) <http://roer4d.org>] and *OpenupEd* programme by UNESCO ([www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)).

In the African context, already similar initiatives are reported in several ODL universities such as the Open University of Tanzania, National Open University of Nigeria, Zimbabwe Open University, University of South Africa and Sudan Open University ([http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communicatio-and-information/resources/new-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/unesco\\_supports\\_open\\_moocs\\_in\\_africa/](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/communicatio-and-information/resources/new-and-in-focus-articles/all-news/unesco_supports_open_moocs_in_africa/)). This indicates the critical role and potential of OERs in contributing to improvement of professional development of lecturers and improvement of the teaching and learning practices in Africa and globally (JISC CETIS, 2012; Nihuka, Mbwette & Kihwelo, 2014).

In this paper, we present and discuss findings from a study that investigated the context of The Open University of Tanzania in terms of opportunities and challenges for effective integration of OER for lecturers' professional development.

## **2. RELATED LITERATURE**

Availability of enabling conditions is a critical requirement for successful integration of OER in education (Karunanayaka, 2013; UNISA, 2014; Anamuah-Mensah *et al.*, 2012; Thakrar *et al.*, 2009). One of the critical enabling conditions is availability of institutional OER policy to guide OER practices and operations in the institution. According to UNISA

(2014), an institutional OER policy can exist in one of the following facets or both: (i) as an incorporated part of available relevant policies in the institution, for example, ICT policy, ICT master plan, study material policy and so forth and/or (ii) as a stand-alone OER policy. In whichever, facet, the policy needs to address issues of access to appropriate ICT infrastructure, advice and support intellectual property issues, promotion of quality assurance and promotion of guidelines for creation as well as use, promotion of awareness through planned initiatives and institutional support (UNISA, 2014). According to UNISA (2014), incorporation of all these is a critical enabling condition for effective integration and use of OER.

Another critical enabling condition for successful integration of OER is awareness and willingness of both institutional leaderships and lecturers 'to accommodate OER integration within the operations and practices (Karunanayaka, 2013; Thakrar *et al.*, 2009). According to Karunanayaka (2013), where the institutional leadership is aware and receptive of OER, it is most likely for lecturers to implement OER integration in the institution. Furthermore, it is a committed leadership that creates other necessary institutions' conditions such as access to ICT infrastructure, formulation of relevant policies as well as guidelines for creation together with use and support of OER-related practices in the institution (Thakrar *et al.*, 2009).

Availability of expertise amongst lecturers in relation to OER and OER integration is also critical for successful integration of OER in an education institution (Karunanayaka, 2013; UNISA, 2014). According to Karunanayaka (2013), expertise in the following areas in relation

to OER is quite necessary for successful integration of OER: (i) OER and their relationships; (ii) course design; (iii) identifying and integrating OER; and (iv) confidence in applying new knowledge as well as skills. Furthermore, lecturers' expertise in terms of ability to re-distribute, revise, re-use, re-mix and re-develop OER to fit contextual needs is another critical enabling condition for successful integration of OER (UNISA, 2014).

Availability of relevant ICT infrastructure is also essential for effective OER integration. According to Karunanayaka (2013), availability and access to ICT such as computers, Internet, relevant software(s) and relevant platforms (e.g., MOODLE) are critical for successful integration of OER in the institution. In addition, availability of experienced technical staff in relation to OER is also essential (Karunanayaka, 2013; UNISA, 2014).

Other critical enabling conditions are such as availability of institutional support (both in terms of funding and provision of incentives) and collaboration with other institutions within or outside the country or from both (Thakrar *et al.*, 2009). Furthermore, availability of quality assurance structures, general or specific to OER is another critical enabling condition. According to UNISA (2014), such structures ensure production of quality OER and ultimately, provision of quality education.

### **3. THE STUDY**

The main objective of the study reported in this paper was to understand the context of The Open University of Tanzania in terms of opportunities and challenges for effective integration of OER for lecturers' professional development. The following overall research

questions guided the study: *What is the feasibility of integrating OER for professional development of lecturers at the Open University of Tanzania?* The following sub-research questions were formulated in order to address this overall research questions:

1. What is lecturers' willingness to use OER for professional development?
2. What specific expertise do lecturers at OUT have in relation to OER?
3. What institutional policies are available at OUT to support OER?
4. In which ways is the OUT's leadership committed to OER?
5. What infrastructures are available at OUT to support use of OER?
6. What quality assurance and control mechanisms are available at OUT that can support use of OER?

## **4. METHODOLOGY**

### **4.1 Design of the Study**

The study used planning evaluation research design that was conducted during the OER Institutional Analysis Workshop held on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> November, 2014 at the Open University of Tanzania. According to Guskey (2000), planning evaluation is an appropriate design because it takes place prior to implementation of an innovation and allows for careful analysis of the context and determination of opportunities including challenges for proper planning.

This study sought to understand realities of the Open University of Tanzania from lecturers' perspective for effective integration of Open Educational Resources (OER) in lecturers' professional development at the University.

## **4.2 Participants**

A total of 23 lecturers participated in the Institutional Analysis Workshop for the study. The participants were drawn from Faculty of Science, Technology and Environmental Studies [(FSTES) 2]; Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences [(FASS) 2]; Institute of Educational Management Technologies [(IEMT) 5]; Faculty of Education [(FED) 6]; Library Services [(LS) 5]; Faculty of Law [(FLW) 2]; and Institute of Continuing Education [(ICE) 1].

## **4.3 Instruments and Analysis**

The study used the instrument that was developed by OER Africa at SAIDE Institutional Analysis Workshop.

The instrument consisted of three parts, namely, Background (Department/Faculty and names of Team members (page 1), Open-ended questions (pages 2-4), and Close-ended questions (pages 5-7).

In the Open-ended questions, participants were required to provide explanations or descriptions of specific issues related to the study. Under the close-ended questions, which had an average reliability Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.7, participants were required to tick from a 5-points Likert scale (i.e., strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree and strongly disagree) against a statement that described a specific phenomenon best.

Qualitative data from open-ended questions and quantitative data from close-ended questions were then analysed using “data reduction technique” (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and SPSS where frequencies and percentages were computed.

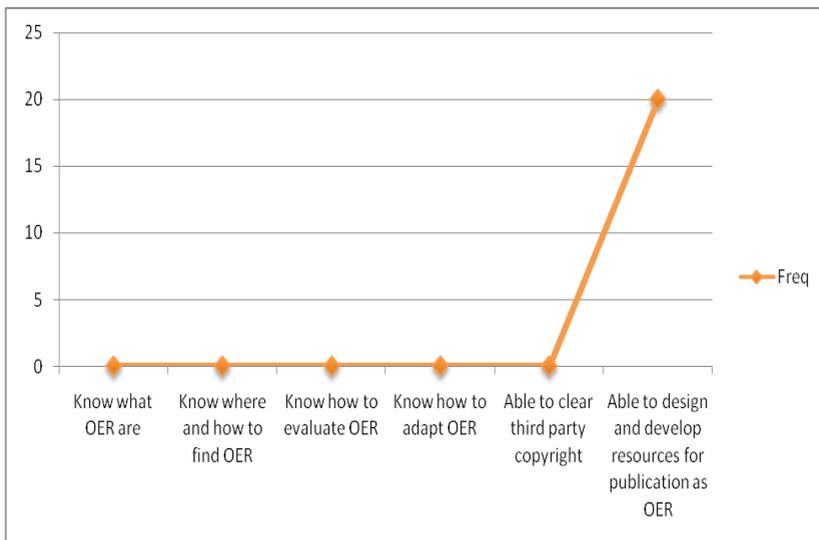
## 5. FINDINGS

### 5.1 Lecturers’ Willingness to use OER

The first sub-research question explored lecturers’ perceived willingness to use OER for their professional development. Findings from close-ended questionnaires indicate that all 23 (100%) lecturers were willing to use OER for their professional development. Furthermore, findings from open-ended questionnaires indicate that lecturers were willing to use OER because *using OER increases the resource pool and ensures availability of adequate, teaching and learning resources which improves teaching and learning practices*. Furthermore, lecturers indicated that they were willing to use OER because *currently, there are a lot of freely available online and OER materials for use in education*.

### 5.2 Lecturers’ Expertise on OER

The next sub-research question investigated lecturers’ expertise on use of OER in education. Findings for this research question are presented in Figure 1.

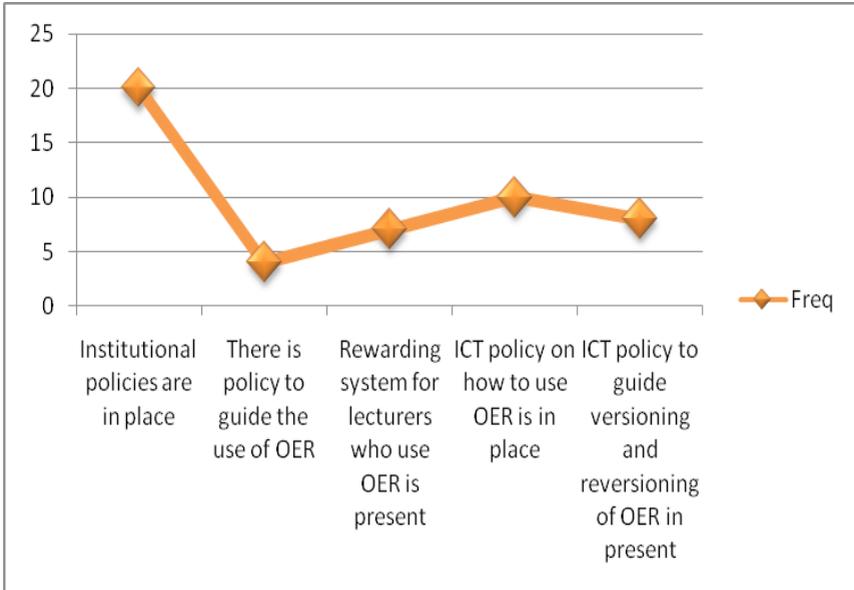


**Figure .1:** Lecturers’ expertise on OER

Findings in Figure 1 indicate that 20 (78.2%) lecturers out of 23 lecturers have expertise on how to design and develop resources for publication as OER. Furthermore, findings indicate that none of the lecturers know about OER, where and how to find OER, how to evaluate OER as well as how to adapt and copyright issues related to OER. These findings corroborate those from open-ended questionnaires, which indicate that majority of lecturers *lack know-how and skills on how to use various online resources including OER.*

### 5.3 Institutional Policy to Support OER

Sub-research question three sought to determine specific institutional policies that are available to support OER. Findings from close-ended questionnaires are presented in Figure 2.



**Figure 2:** Institutional policy to support OER

Findings in Figure 2 indicate that a bit over three quarters (78.2%) of lecturers in this study affirmed that institutional policies are in place that can support use of OER. Responses from open-ended questionnaires identified the following available specific structures to use in the institution that relate to OER: *ICT policy*

and operational procedures, ICT master plan, ICT implementation strategy and study materials' policy and operational procedures. Furthermore, findings from both instruments indicate that there is no specific policy and operational procedures as well as guidelines on OER. Frequencies ranged between 04 (17.4%) and 10 (43.5%).

### 5.4 Leadership Commitment to OER

The OUT's leadership commitment to OER mainstreaming for lecturers' professional development as perceived by respondents was also explored during the study. Findings presented in Figure 3 indicate that all 23 (100%) respondents affirmed the commitment of OUT's leadership to OER.

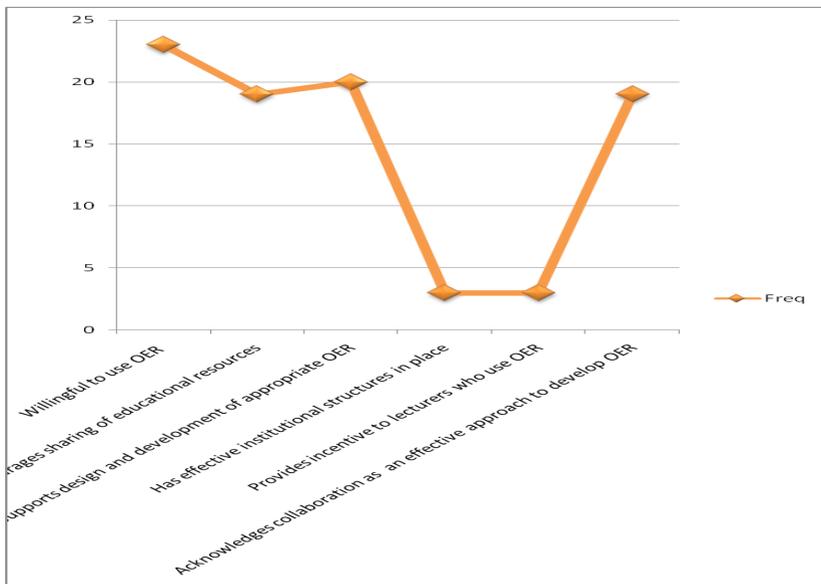


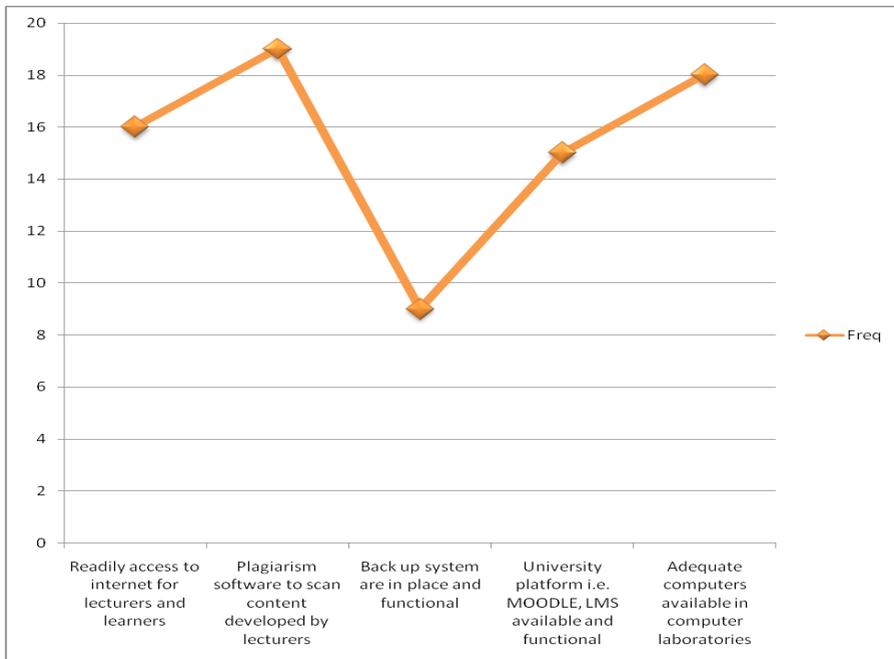
Figure 3: Leadership commitment to OER

Also findings in Figure 3 indicate that majority (79.6%) of respondents affirmed that the leadership at OUT encourages sharing of educational resources and acknowledges collaboration as effective approaches to develop OER (19 respondents equivalent to 79.6%). Findings from open-ended questionnaires indicated that *currently, the university leadership is working in partnership with external institutions to introduce and support OER-related activities.*

Furthermore, majority (86.9%) of respondents affirmed that the leadership supports design and development of appropriate OER at the university. However, findings indicate that the leadership lacks effective institutional structures (13%) and that it does not provide incentives to lecturers who use OER (13%).

### **5.5 Infrastructures to Support OER**

The other research question sought to explore available OER-related infrastructure to support OER mainstreaming in the institution.

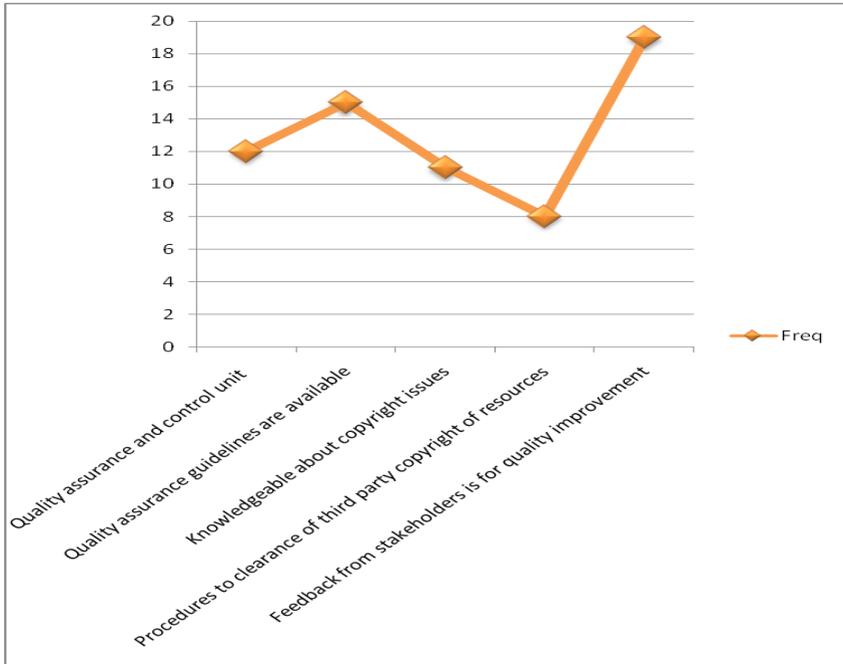


**Figure 4:** Infrastructures to support OER

Findings presented in Figure 4 indicate that there is readily access to Internet for lectures and students (69.5%). Furthermore, the university has plagiarism software (79.6%), a platform, which is functional (65.2%) and relevant technical staff to support OER development (73.9%). Also, there are adequate computers (78.2%).

**5.6 Quality Assurance and Control Mechanisms**

The kinds of quality assurance and control mechanisms that are available in the institution that can support use of OER were also investigated and findings are presented in Figure 5.



**Figure 5:** *Quality assurance and control mechanisms*

Findings in Figure 5 indicate that the university has a quality assurance and control unit reported by 12 (52.2%) and guidelines asserted by 15 (65.2%). Also, findings indicate that feedback from stakeholders is channelled into quality improvement processes, mentioned by 19 (82.6%) respondents. However, findings indicate that knowledge of staff on copyright issues as asserted by 11 (47.8) participants and availability of procedures clearance of third part copyright of learning resources reported by 08 (34.8%) respondents are major challenges.

## **6. CONCLUSIONS**

Results from the study presented in this paper investigated the feasibility of integrating OER for lecturers' professional development by considering opportunities and challenges. Overall, it is concluded that it is feasible to integrate OER for professional development of lecturers at OUT. This is because the findings indicated availability of several opportunities within OUT, which are among necessary enabling conditions for successful integration of OER.

The opportunities include availability of policies related to OER that embrace ICT policy, ICT master plan, ICT implantation strategy and study material policy. Existence of OER policy as an incorporated part of OER policy is a promising beginning towards effective OER (UNISA, 2014). To start with, OER practices at OUT can be guided by such policies until a-stand alone policy on OER is developed.

Another opportunity includes the fact that both OUT lecturers and leadership are willing to integrate OER for lecturers' professional development. According to the lectures, using OER increases the resource pool and increases availability of adequate resources, aspects that improve teaching and learning practices. Furthermore, leadership commitment to OER integration is a critical enabling condition for successful integration of OER (Karunanayaka, 2013). Finding names revealed that OUT leadership encourages sharing of educational resources, supports design as well as development of appropriate OER and acknowledges collaborations as an effective approach to develop OER.

Availability of relevant infrastructure is another opportunity for successful integration of OER and OUT. Evidence indicates that lecturers readily

access Internet and that there is plagiarism software to scan contents developed by lectures. Furthermore, OUT has a platform customized from MOODLE learning management system (LMS) and adequate computers. Availability of relevant ICT infrastructure is essential for effective integration of OER (Karunanayaka, 2013; UNISA, 2014).

Second, there is lack of policy on OER and it is also a challenge that can hamper effective integration of OER. A stand-alone policy on OER is among critical enabling conditions for successful integration of OER (Anamuah Mensah *et al*, 2012; Thakrar *et al.*, 2009). Therefore, it recommended that deliberate efforts should be made to pioneer formulation of OER policy for effective integration of OER at the university.

Furthermore, OUT has a Quality Assurance and Control Directorate that has, in place, relevant guidelines in form of Quality and Control Policy as well as Operational Procedures to guide the university on its operations. Moreover, the university has a mechanism to ensure that feedback from stakeholders is channelled into a quality improvement process. According to UNISA (2013), such structure ensures production of quality OER and ultimately, provision of quality education.

Another critical opportunity is availability of expertise on how to design and develop resources for publications like OER at OUT. However, additional expertise in terms of ability to identify and integrate OER as well as confidence in applying new knowledge and skills are needed (Karunanayaka, 2013; UNISA, 2014). Furthermore, lecturers require expertise on how to redistribute, revise, reuse, remix and redevelop OER to find contextual needs (UNISA, 2014). In this case, OER can be

used as a strategy to implement the said professional development, which will aim at enhancing lecturers' academic digital fluency.

Despite the opportunities, the study identified two major challenges that need to be addressed for successful integration of OER. First, there is lack of expertise on OER particularly in terms of aspects about OER, where and how to find OER, how to evaluate OER, how to adopt OER and copyright issuing. The second challenges is lack of a stand-alone policy on OER in the institution to guide practices and operations in relation to OER at OUT.

The following recommendations are suggested based on findings from the study reported in this paper:

There is need to design, develop and implement a professional development programme preferably in form of OER in order to promote lecturers' expertise and knowledge of OER, know where and how to find OER, know how to evaluate OER, know how to adapt OER and be able to determine an appropriate creative common (cc) license to use in the context of OUT. In addition, OERs can also be used to orient students on relevant 21<sup>st</sup> Century skills in relation to effective use of digital resources for learning in ODL.

Next is that there is need for OUT management to consider formulating an institutional OER policy to guide practices and operations in relation to OER at the university. Concurrently, the other policies such as ICT Policy, ICT Master plan, Study Materials policy, Incentive Scheme Policy and the like should be reviewed accordingly to accommodate OER issues.

Lastly, there is a need to strengthen the Quality Assurance and Control Directorate at OUT so that they have the required capacity and relevant tools to assure quality of OER products produced at OUT. This will ensure that OERs enhance quality of learning and teaching in the university rather than the other way around.

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# **THE IMPACT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOL ACTIVITIES ON PRIMARY SCHOOL CHILDREN'S ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT IN ARUSHA MUNICIPALITY, TANZANIA**

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## **Abstract**

This study explored the impact of parents' involvement in school activities on primary school children's academic achievement in Arusha municipal, Tanzania. Objectives of the study included the following: to examine the pattern and extent of parental involvement in school activities and how that may influence children's academic achievement; and to assess teachers' conception of nature and desirability of parent to teacher communication that may help children's schooling. Structured questionnaires were administered to 288 children and 125 teachers from six primary schools. Children's academic achievement was obtained from school records and six school heads were interviewed to ensure that interview guide supplemented results of scores.

The study revealed a significant and positive relationship between parental involvement in school matters and children's academic standing ( $r = .766, p < .01$ ) and provision of key school items related to schooling outcomes ( $r = .733, p < .01$ ), respectively. Moreover, parents and teachers' conferences as well as parent to teacher face-to-face contacts were perceived to be desirable modes of communication that

improve children's school outcomes. It is concluded that when parents get involved in their children's education, there is improvement in pupils' academic achievement.

**Key words:** Parent, parental involvement, academic performance and school activities

## **1. Introduction**

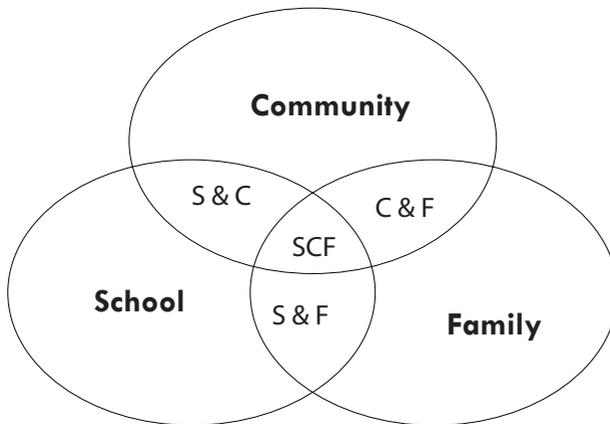
Parents' involvement has been defined as representing different behaviours and practices at home and at school, which include parental aspirations, expectations, attitudes, and beliefs regarding their child's education (Fan & Fen, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Moreover, Epstein, Simon, and Salinas (1997, 2002) as well as Singh and colleagues (1995) added that it embraces learning activities at home, effective communication between teachers and parents' participation in school activities and school conferences. Grolnick and co-authors (1997) recapitulated these roles and included dedication of a reasonable amount of resources by parents to children's schooling.

Regardless of difficulties in operationally defining parental involvement, Epstein and colleagues (1997), under the theory of overlapping spheres of influence between the school and home, argued that parental involvement has six dimensions, namely, parenting, communicating with the school, volunteering at school, learning at home, participating in school decision-making and collaborating with community. These dimensions are embedded within several activities and behaviours such as establishing daily family routines, monitoring out-of-school activities, establishing supportive home environments for children, encouraging parents to play meaningful roles in school governance, expressing high expectations for achievement, awareness of the children's progress in school and valuing of learning and encouraging self-discipline as well as hard working.

Furthermore, Epstein co-workers (1997) pointed out that home and school involvements are the major two loci of parental involvement. The

home to school partnership model is characterized by practices within homes such that parents and children can be involved in such aspects as engaging in educational activities at home, school support by parents, and involvement in school and community agencies (Shumow & Miller, 2001). The home to school partnership manifests children's interests for their work, confidence, respect and obedience towards schooling.

Figure 1 represents Epstein's Overlapping Spheres of Influence. Epstein (1995) identified three major contexts in which students learn and grow - the family, the school, and the community. In this model, there are some practices that schools, families, and communities conduct separately and in some, they conduct them jointly in order to influence children's learning as well as development.



Key: S&C = School and Community  
C&F = Community and Family  
S&F = School and Family  
SCF = School, Community, and Family.

The child has multiple possibilities of sources of influence on forces. At one point, the child can be in the community, at other times at school and at other times it is with the family. Then there are times when the child is influenced by twin forces such as the school and community in civil activities or in school and family such as when the school writes to the parents, and then could be under the influence of community and family such as in village assemblies. Also one could also visualize a situation when the child is under influences of the three forces such as during school calling conferences where the community and parents are involved.

The focus on parents' involvement has its roots in research by pointing out the possible positive relationship it may have on children's schooling outcomes (Epstein, 1986, 2001; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Indeed, Epstein (2001) states that parents who are informed and involved in their children's school affairs can positively influence on their children's attitudes, aspirations and achievements. Parental awareness and interest in their children's learning as well as school activities tend to nod and cue their children about the importance of schooling, and may lead to more positive behaviours and enhance the teachers' morale (Henderson and Berla, 1994). Education practitioners and policy makers intuitively accept the importance of parental involvement in schools. However, knowing how to meaningfully engage them for the benefit of children is less understood (Singh *et al.*, 1995). School administrators and teachers face challenges related to reaching out to parents in positive ways, using strategies that will result in improved student achievement, and balancing needs of parents and professional autonomy (Bempechat, 1992).

Today, society expects everyone to be a high achiever. The key criterion to judge one's true potentialities and capabilities is perhaps academic achievement. This puts great pressures on children's minds and their parents. Parents are often eager to support their children's learning though not all of them know how to help or why their involvement is important. Moreover, many parents do not have out-of-school programs for their children. Not only because they are unaware about it, but also they lack resources and knowledge on how they should be prepared as well as implemented. Parents with less formal education and low-income tend to be preoccupied with survival strategies and thus, they either focus inward on the family or time does not permit them to pursue home-school involvement strategies that may improve children's schooling. The current study explored parameters of parental involvement on school activities and its possible impact on primary school children's academic achievement, specifically based on parental involvement in school matters, parent to teacher communication, and parental participation in school activities. This becomes pertinent due to the fact that much has not been really achieved in this area in Tanzania.

## **2. Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to explore the manner and extent of parents' involvement in school activities together with possible effects on schooling outcomes of primary school children in Tanzania. Specifically, the study sought to achieve three objectives: (i) to examine the pattern as well as extent of parental involvement in school activities and how they may influence on children's academic achievements; (ii) to assess teachers' conception on nature and desirability of parent to teacher communication that may help children's schooling; and (iii) to assess teachers' conception on nature as well as desirability of parental participation in school activities that may help children's schooling.

### **3. Methodology**

#### **3.1. Research design**

A research design is an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to optimize relevance of research purpose with economy in procedures (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). Due to nature of the study, survey was considered to be the most appropriate design. The researchers opted for survey design since it can gather large data sets from a wide population for generalization. It gathers standardized information by using the same instruments and questions for all participants (Creswell, 2005) Thus, it was highly appropriate for ascertaining the relationship between levels of parents' involvement on school activities and children's academic achievement.

#### **3.2. Participants**

The study involved two hundred and eighty eight (288) students, six (6) school heads and one hundred twenty five (125) teachers in filling the questionnaires for the study. The researchers employed purposive sampling procedure for selecting six representative public schools from thirty four schools. Grade seven pupils were sampled purposively due to the reason that they were more socially and cognitively mature enough than the lower grades for giving learning experiences, both at home and at school. Furthermore, in order to obtain one stream from each school, the total number of streams were identified from each school, assigned numbers, and sampled randomly. Hence, all two hundred and eighty eight (288) pupils from the six selected streams were

involved in the study, with gender taken into consideration. All one hundred twenty five (125) teachers found in the schools were involved in the study. Lastly, all 6 school heads were involved in the study sample.

### **3.3. Instrument**

Data for the study were gathered using close-ended questionnaires and interviews guides. The structured questionnaires had two forms, two scales for pupils and the other two for teachers that comprised basic patterns of family-school-community partnership as articulated by Epstein (1986, 2001). The close-ended questionnaire was rated on the four-point Likert type scale ranging from “Strongly Agree (4) to Strongly Disagree (1).” Structured interview was administered to all school heads. Interview was used to supplement data collected from questionnaire. The measures helped to check consistency of information gathered from rating scales. The academic achievement data were collected from the schools’ record of pupils’ scores in five core subjects, namely, Mathematics, English, Science, Kiswahili and Social Studies. They were end of the year examinations preceding administration of the rating scales. Then, the pupils’ academic achievements Grade Point Average (GPA) based on the five core subjects were computed.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

Data obtained through close-ended questionnaire from teachers and pupils were coded as well as analyzed in order to address objectives of the study. Descriptive statistics, t-test for independent samples and Pearson’s Product Moment Coefficient Correlations

were computed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient Correlation ( $r$ ) was used to determine relationship between parental involvement in school activities and children's academic achievements.

#### 4. Results

Statistical analyses gave a general picture of the impact of parental involvement in school activities on primary school children's academic achievements.

### Parental Involvement in Overseeing Students' School Work

Table 1: Parental Involvement in overseeing their children's school work

Statement	Rating				Total 288	%	Ranks
	SA 1	A 2	D 3	SD 4			
My parents ask me about homework regularly.	628	345	26	3	1002	86.98	6
My parents help me with homework.	492	309	76	24	901	78.21	8
My parents discuss with me about my school day.	400	390	82	17	889	77.17	9
My parents talk to me about my future schooling.	864	168	26	3	1061	92.10	4
I talk with my parents about my teachers often.	464	303	86	28	881	76.48	10

My parents provide time to study at home.	932	120	16	7	1075	93.32	3
My parents regularly check my exercise books.	360	495	48	9	912	79.16	7
My parents encourage me to work harder in school.	924	144	14	2	1084	94.09	2
My parents provide me with learning materials such as exercise books, pen, pencils, and text books.	752	276	14	1	1043	90.54	5
My parents think that I will join secondary education.	1020	84	4	3	1111	96.44	1
Weighting factor	4	3	2	1	—	—	—

Table 1 shows that most (94.44%) parents aspired and expected their children to join secondary education. Moreover, results indicated that 94.09 percent parents encouraged their children to work harder in school. Also, 93.32 percent parents revealed that they provided their children with study time at homes. On top of that, it was disclosed by 86.98 percent parents that they asked their children about homework regularly.

According to pupils' responses, it was revealed that most parents agreed with the statement that parents were involved in their education by asking about homework regularly, checking their exercise books, and helping them with homework. The findings revealed further that parental involvement at home, especially parents asking their children about homework regularly, and helping them with homework had some significant relationship with children's academic achievements. These findings are in line with Ho Sui-Chu and Willims (1996) who found out that involvement at home, especially parents discussing schoolwork and helping children plan their programs had the strongest impact on schooling outcomes.

#### 4.2. Frequency of Parents Provision of the Key School Items

Table 2 presents study findings on frequency of parents' provision of key school items.

Table 2: Parental Provision of Key School Items

Statement	Number of Times Provided (N=288)						Total	%	Ranks
	0	1	2	3	4	5			
Bought you exercise books.	0	2	20	36	84	1210	1352	93.89	1
Bought you a pen.	0	8	40	81	112	1015	1256	87.22	3
Checked your school assignments.	0	13	52	180	376	330	951	66.04	6
Provided you time for studying at home.	0	10	16	75	192	970	1263	87.70	2

Discussed with you about your school teachers.	0	34	88	168	252	305	847	58.82	9
Checked your school attending progress.	0	32	76	96	168	520	892	61.94	8
Provided you money for lunch.	0	15	38	60	180	835	1128	78.33	4
Provided you money for transport	0	12	26	123	120	620	901	62.56	7
Gave you letter to school.	0	31	50	63	44	50	238	16.53	10
Provided you a place for studying at home	0	16	52	108	132	710	1018	70.69	5
Average Score	0.0	17.30	45.80	99.00	166.00	656.50	—	—	—

According to Table 2, most parents provided their children with key school items. Children were provided with exercise books as it was ranked first, with 1352 (93.89%) total scores. Moreover, pupils reported that their parents provided them time for studying at home that ranked second with 1263 (87.70%) total scores. This was followed by pupils who reported that their parents bought them pens, an aspect that ranked third with 1256 (87.22%) total scores. It was further disclosed that parents less frequently gave their children letters to school because it was ranked tenth with 238 (16.53%) total scores. The overall picture is that children believed that their parents were greatly involved in their schooling matters because they provided them with key school items. This was consistent with Epstein's (1995) findings that the most basic involvement of parents in their children's schooling is provision of basic needs, monitoring of school activities, and providing home environments that were learner-friendly.

### 4.3. Desirability of Parent to Teacher Communication

Table 3 presents study findings on desirability of parent to teacher communication from teachers' questionnaire.

**Table 3: Parent-Teacher Communication about Schooling (N=125)**

Statement	SA	A	D	SD	Total	%	Ranks
	1	2	3	4			
The parent-teacher face-to-face conversation about children's learning will improve parent's attitudes towards teachers.	380	72	10	1	463	92.60	2
Phone call to both parents and teachers will help to improve children's discipline.	72	93	62	45	272	54.40	10
Sending parents written letters about their children's materials needs help completion of school assignments.	188	150	36	10	384	76.80	8
Sending home school progress reports on children's academic achievement will help to improve children's performance.	336	111	2	3	452	90.40	4
School parent-teacher conference helps to improve children's attendance rates.	368	93	4	0	465	93.00	1
Parents contacts with teachers rise awareness on the importance of their children's education.	368	87	6	1	462	92.40	3

Parental involvement in school functions such as academic exhibition, sports, and graduations improves children's school performance.	268	156	12	1	437	87.40	<b>5</b>
School parent-day helps parents and teachers for collaboration to improve academic achievement.	252	156	10	0	418	83.60	<b>6</b>
Teachers who visit children's homes can teach the children better.	228	132	32	8	400	80.00	<b>7</b>
Parent-teacher casual contacts outside the school can help the child's progress.	52	117	80	33	282	56.4	<b>9</b>
<b>Weighting factor</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	—	—	—

The results in Table 3 show that parent to teacher conferences were ranked first, with 465 (93%) total scores. Parent to teacher face-to-face conversation about children's learning was ranked second, with 463 (92.60%) total scores. Parents' regular contacts with teachers were ranked third, with 462 (92.40%) total scores. Sending home school progress reports on children's academic achievements was ranked fourth, with 452 (90.40%) total scores. However, phone calls to teachers and parents was ranked last (10<sup>th</sup>), with 272 (54.40%) total scores and so it was not deemed highly desirable. The overall picture here is that most teachers thought that home-school and school-home communication systems may improve children's schooling outcomes.

#### 4.4. The Relationship between Parents' Involvement in School Matters and Children's Academic Achievement

The relationship was explored by using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation and the results are as shown in the Table 4.

**Table 4: The Relationship between Parents' Involvement and Academic Achievement (N=288)**

Variables	1	2	3
1. Parents involvement in school activities	-		
2. Parents provision of the key school items	.662**	-	
3. Academic achievement	.766**	.733**	-

Note. \*\* $p < .01$

The findings revealed that there was an existence of a positive and significant relationship between parents' involvement in schooling matters of their children and academic achievement ( $r = .766$ ,  $p < .01$ ). In addition, parents provision of key school items and academic achievement were related ( $r = .733$ ,  $p < .01$ ). This confirmed the hypothesis that there was a significant relationship between level of parental involvement in school activities and their children's academic achievement. Similarly, findings reported a positive relationship ( $r = .662$ ,  $p < .01$ ) between parental involvement and parental provision of key school items. Henderson and Berla (1994) reported before that children who interact with their parents on schooling matters had high completion rates of their homework, better grades and test scores, and more self-directed behaviour. It seems that when parents monitor

homework, encourage participation in extracurricular activities, are active in parents to teacher associations, and help children develop plans for their future; children are more likely to respond as well as do well in school (Cotton & Wikelund, 2005).

## **5. Discussion and conclusion**

The overall findings revealed that there was a strong and positive relationship between parents' involvement in school affairs and children's academic achievements. It means that for children, whose parents were more involved in their education had better chance of improving their academic achievement than who were less involved. The findings revealed that parental involvement at home, especially parents asking their children about homework regularly, and helping them with homework had some significant relationship with children's academic achievement. These findings are in line with Ho Sui-Chu and Willims (1996) who found out that involvement at home, especially parents discussing schoolwork and helping children plan their programs had the strongest impact on schooling outcomes. The findings were also congruent with Henderson and Mapp (2002) who found that academically, engaging parents improved children's academic achievement, and had a substantial impact on other key outcomes, such as learning behaviour. Perhaps, it may imply that children make greater progress with less efforts in their daily lessons at school because their parents sustain learning beyond school hours. Parents' efforts may manifest interest, respect and obedience towards children's schooling. However, parents' education level and available resources such as time and learning materials may affect the quality of parents' efforts.

The findings also revealed that all modes of parent to teacher communication listed on the teachers' rating scales were deemed desirable for improving children's schooling outcomes. Teachers suggested that parent-teacher conferences, parent-teacher face-to-face conversation, and sending home school progress reports on children's schooling were the most desirable aspects of home to school communication that may improve not only children's academic achievement, but also children's discipline and attitude towards schooling. The findings were related to those by Epstein (1986) who asserted that parents who maintain frequent contacts with the school have higher achieving children than parents with infrequent contacts. The findings were comparable to Stone (2006) who concluded that better communication between home and school, for instance, which includes phone calls, newsletters, more parent-teacher conferences and face-to-face visits were important to children's education success. In fact, effective communication takes time, it is honest and it is open because good communicators listen, rephrase and check out as well as avoid criticizing and acting superior. It was concluded that parental involvement in school activities is not only a predictor of children's school outcomes but also a predictor for children's discipline attitude and attendance rates.

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## **PREDICTION OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT TEACHERS' INTENTION TO JOIN TEACHING CAREER POST - GRADUATION**

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to apply the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) in examining undergraduate student teachers' intention to pursue a teaching career post-graduation. The difference between pre-service and in-service as well as gender on student teachers' intention to pursue a career in teaching was also examined. Questionnaire and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were employed in data collection from 236 (51% females,  $M = 27$  years,  $SD = 4$ ) final year undergraduate student teachers from Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE).

The study revealed that among the three TPB variables, attitude emerged the strongest predictor of student teachers' intention to pursue a career in teaching post-graduation, followed by the influence of significant-others and perceived behavioural control, respectively. No significant difference was found between pre-service and in-service student teachers, except in terms of gender. Overall, findings suggest that a substantial number of undergraduate student teachers both in-service and pre-service, especially males, are less likely motivated and fully committed to pursue a career in teaching post-graduation. Implications for policy, practice and research are discussed.

**Keywords:** in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, perceived behavioural control, attitude, significant-others, intention and career.

## **1. Introduction**

Quality education has been a topic of discussion among education stakeholders around the world. Since the country's independence in 1961, Tanzania has been making efforts to produce quality education for its citizens through different programs. From 2002, the country instituted Primary and Secondary Education Development Programs (PEDP I, II & SEDP I, II) with the main objective of improving the quality of education (Komba, 2007). Major achievements in PEDP I and SEDP I, however, include provisions for pre-service and in-service teacher training, teacher recruitment and deployment, construction of classrooms including sanitary facilities, teaching and learning resources, as well as enrolment expansion [United Republic of Tanzania (URT), 2010; 2011; Komba, 2007]. Moreover, the number of secondary schools increased from 4,266 in 2010 to 4,367 in 2011, leading to a secondary school enrolment increase of 1, 638,699 in 2010 to 1,789,547 in 2011 (URT,2010; URT, 2011) and thus, created a high demand for qualified teachers.

Although quality education relies on several variables, globally, teachers encompass a critical variable if one aims at improving the quality of education and the Tanzanian government has been responsive in recruiting teachers. For example, in the 2010/2011 fiscal year, the government planned to recruit and deploy 4920 degree as well as 4306 diploma teachers in secondary schools, and to provide pre-service training to 14,501 primary school teachers and 7,084 secondary school teachers (URT, 2011). The qualified teacher to pupils ratio for primary education improved from 1:60 in 2009 to 1:54 in 2010. While 1 to 20 is an ideal teacher to student ratio per subject in

secondary schools, the number improved from 1:57 in 2009, 1 to 51 in 2010 and to 1 to 40 in 2011 (URT, 2010; 2011). Though improvements have been made, a deficit of 32,332 teachers in secondary schools for the 2010/2011 fiscal year still remained (URT, 2011) and a significant disparity still exists in the qualified teacher to pupils ratio among schools and regions in Tanzania.

In response to this, the government of Tanzania has been taking various initiatives to reduce teacher to student ratio. For example, during the year 2010/2011, the government enrolled a total of 37,698 teacher trainees in Teacher Colleges (URT, 2011). Nevertheless, undergraduate student teachers are given first priority to government education loans as opposed to students in other degree programs who are not fully afforded such opportunities (URT, 2011). This indicates an enormous effort on part of the government in their commitments to allocate resources towards building and developing the teaching profession.

Moreover, according to the current practice in Tanzania, all qualified graduate teachers are directly posted to schools by the government and they are given initial financial support commonly known as *settlement or subsistence* allowance before receiving their actual wages. Yet, for each year, a significant number of graduate teachers fail to report to their new work stations and for teachers who do report, they leave schools soon after collection of the said allowances. This has concerned the Tanzanian government (Chogongwe, 2012) to such an extent that the minister responsible for education publicly stated that actions should be taken and against such teachers and be demanded to return the government money paid to them as settlement as well as subsistence allowances and take legal measures against them. A

total of 4,920 degree holders and diploma teachers were employed and posted to 132 Councils in 2010 (URT, 2010). However, according to Arusha Regional Education Officer, 17 percent of teachers did not report by January, 2011 (Mhala, 2011). Similarly, data from Kibondo district education office showed that 44 percent graduate teachers failed to report to their posts in 2010/2011. Moreover, a total of 13,242 teachers (7,239 graduates and 6,003 diploma) were posted in 2011/2012. However, 1,892 (26%) such graduate and 866 (14%) diploma teachers did not report (Chogongwe, 2012). The number is likely to be higher since there are those who report and leave after collecting the settlement and subsistence allowances. The termination constitutes 70.9 percent of teachers leaving the profession in Tanzania (URT, 2011). This parallels Mulkeen colleagues' (2007) findings that on average, between five and 30 percent of teachers in Sub-Saharan Africa leave the profession. This corroborates Towse and co-workers' (2002) results that nearly 30 percent of the Tanzanian non-graduate student teachers intended not to join teaching.

## **2. Purpose of study**

Apart from government efforts in expanding enrolment and giving loan to graduate student teachers, and since universities and teacher training colleges that have a responsibility to the teacher trainee by providing basic knowledge and skills, and instilling healthy attitudes towards the teaching profession during the pre-service training, little is known about undergraduate student teachers' readiness including intention to pursue the teaching profession post-graduation. Choosing not to join or continue with the teaching career after training can have a detrimental impact on government efforts to provide quality

education and to meet objectives of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Tanzania Development Vision (2025), and National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) or commonly known in Kiswahili as *Mkakati wa Kukuza Uchumi na Kuondoa Umaskini Tanzania* (MKUKUTA). It is from this point that this study was designed to apply the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) in examining undergraduate student teachers' intention to pursue teaching career post-graduation and the role of employment status as well as gender on intention to join a career in teaching.

### **3. Theoretical framework**

The TPB postulates three determinants of individual's behavioural intention – perceived behavioural control, pressure from the significant-others, and attitude (Ajzen, 1988, 1991). In the context of this study, the concept 'perceived behavioural control' refers to the way an individual anticipates the ease or difficulty in joining or continuing the teaching career. The terms 'significant-others' refer to any person in an individual's life (e.g., parents, teachers, siblings, and peers), whose opinion has the ability to affect their decisions. Ajzen (1988) and Franzoi (2000) define 'attitude' as a positive or negative evaluation of an object, other people, things, events and issues. Similarly, Conner and Norman (1996) defined 'intention' as a conscious plan or decision made by an individual when thinking to perform a certain action. For this study, intention refers to an undergraduate student teacher's conscious plan or readiness to join or continue with the teaching career as a classroom teacher post-graduation. The model postulates a linear relationship between independent variables (attitude, perceived behavioural control, and influence of significant-others) and the dependent variable (intention).

From this backdrop, it was proposed that undergraduate student teachers who hold a favourable attitude towards teaching, who experience strong pressure from significant-others such as parents, relatives and colleagues as well as expect to have successful performance due to strong perceived behavioural control will likely have a greater intention in joining or continuing with the teaching profession. On the other hand, less pressure from significant-others and lower expectations for successful performance due to lack of perceived behavioural control will likely result in lower levels of intention. Isaacson (1985) defines a *career* as one's advancement in pursuing a specific occupation or profession successfully through life. For this study, career refers to joining or continuing of one's profession as a classroom teacher in schools. Biswalo (1996) as well as Ndambuki and Mutie (1999) described career choice as the process of choosing, preparing for and entering as well as progressing in a vocation. The question remains, 'are undergraduate student teachers ready to join or continue with the teaching career as classroom teachers post-graduation?' In particular, this study sought to answer the following specific research questions: (1) Is there a relationship between perceived behavioural control and undergraduate student teachers' intention to join or continue with their teaching career? (2) Is there a relationship between pressure from significant-others and undergraduate student teachers' intention to join or continue with their teaching career? (3) Is there a relationship between attitude and undergraduate student teachers' intention to join or continue with teaching career? (4) Is there a significant difference between in-service and pre-service as well as gender in undergraduate student teachers' intention to join or continue with their teaching career?

## **4. Method**

### **4.1 Design**

The present study employed concurrent mixed method research design by blending Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) within a dominant quantitative research approach. Information from the FGDs intended to enrich findings from quantitative data. This is consistent with Creswell (2009) and Punch's (2009) argument that a mixed method research approach enhances a comprehensive and a highly deep understanding of the study variables.

### **4.2 Participants and procedures**

A total of 236 participants (49% males, 51% females,  $M = 27$  years,  $SD = 4$ ) were randomly selected based on gender and employment status (75% pre-service teachers and 25% in-service teachers). They voluntarily accepted to participate in the study were asked to fill the paper-pencil survey in normal class hours. Dominance of pre-service student teachers in the sample is not surprising and may be attributed to low number of their counterparts enrolling into the program. In addition, a subset of 16 students who responded to the paper-pencil were involved in the FGDs.

Moreover, purposive sampling technique was employed in getting in-service teachers for the FGDs based on their level of experience (more experienced and low experienced teachers) and gender. Simple random sampling procedure was employed in getting pre-service students for the FGDs. As a result, a total of three FGDs with an average of eight students per group were conducted. The first FGD consisted of pre-service student

teachers, the second consisted of in-service student teachers and the third FGD consisted of both pre-service and in-service student teachers. In this study, the **pre-service student teachers refer to** students not yet employed as teachers (prospective teachers) but pursuing their degree in the teaching profession, while **in-service student teachers** refer to student teachers who are employed in the teaching profession and joined the college for continuing education.

After receiving approval from the responsible authority, final year undergraduate student teachers across the three faculties – education, science and humanities from DUCE, which is a public University College were invited to participate in the study. It is when the students reach final year especially the last semester that their intention to joining the teaching career can be properly predicted. In their final year of study, education students have already gone through all pedagogical and content courses together with teaching field practicum. This makes them to be more familiar with the teaching environment than continuing students.

### **4.3 Measurements**

A total of 30 items adapted from TPB (Ajzen, 2006) were used to assess both independent and dependent variables. Participants responded on a four-point Likert scale that ranged from 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree). In particular, perceived behavioural control had eight items, influence of significant-others had six items, intention had four items and attitude had twelve items. Similar to previous studies, scales had a recommendable

inter-item correlation between 0.2 and 0.4 (Pallant, 2010), and a Cronbach alpha above 0.74. Scores for negatively worded statements were reversed accordingly. On average, 35 to 45 minutes were required to complete the questionnaire during regular class hours. In addition, five open-ended questions developed by the researcher based on literature review (e.g., Ajzen, 2006) and reviewed by peers in teacher education were used to obtain respondents' views, perceptions and intention to join or continue with their teaching career post-graduation. The FGDs were carried by the researcher and on average, each FGD had a one hour duration.

#### **4.4 Data analysis technique**

Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 15.0 was employed in quantitative data analysis. Frequencies, descriptive statistics, Pearson's product moment coefficient correlation, partial correlation, independent sample *t*-test and standard multiple regression analyses were employed in quantitative data analyses (Coolican, 2009; Pallant, 2010). Pearson and partial correlations were employed to establish the relationship between independent and dependent variables, while standard multiple regression analysis was performed to evaluate the power of each independent variable on intention to join the teaching career. An independent sample *t*-test was employed in establishing mean differences between gender and between pre-service and in-service student teachers' intention to join the teaching career post-graduation. Moreover, a content analysis was employed in analyzing qualitative information. First, data from the three FGDs were transcribed by the researcher and

analyzed in collaboration with a research assistant. Themes were deductively developed based on the research questions reflecting TPB variables. Analysis was done separately for the three FGDs. Occasionally, the researcher and research assistant met to check for consistency. Later on, the summary of responses from the three groups were merged and reported under the respective research questions by using some quotations of salient voices from participants.

## 5. Results

Preliminary analyses included descriptive statistics, bivariate correlations and testing for the basic assumptions. With the basic assumptions such as multicollinearity tested and met, the three independent variables of TPB (perceived behavioural control, influence of significant others and attitude) had a moderate correlation with students' intention to join teaching career post-graduation (see Table 1). Significant relationships and lack of multicollinearity among the TPB variables encompassed an essential step for conducting multiple regression analysis.

**Table 1**

*Pearson's Correlation between Independent and Dependent Variables*

		1	2	3	4
1	Perceived behavioural control (Pbc)	1			
2	Influence of significant others (Iso)	0.23**	1		
3	Attitude (Attd)	0.43**	0.48**	1	
4	Intention (Intent)	0.40**	0.49**	0.65**	1

Note. \*\* =  $p < .01$  (2-tailed).

For research question one, results from multiple linear regression indicated that perceived behavioural control was the least significant predictor of student teachers' intention to join teaching career after graduation ( $\beta = .15, p < .001$ ), accounted for 1.8 percent of the variance on intention. Results from FGDs highlighted on the revealed the least predictive power of perceived behavioural control on students' intention to join teaching career post-graduation. As pointed by in-service student teachers, "It is true that we have covered and mastered a lot in content and pedagogy unlike to what we had covered in Diploma," said a female student teacher. Apart from competence achievement, both male and female in-service student teachers identified some challenges as described below:

The contents in teaching subjects are too detailed and cover some topics irrelevant to teachers since they do not appear in the secondary or primary schools' syllabi. Moreover, we are about to graduate but we are unclear about competency-based curriculum and the acceptable lesson plans since they vary from one university to another and from what we have in schools.

On the other hand, pre-service student teachers pointed out that the teaching practicum, which is necessary for competence building during the pre-service training by exposing student teachers on the ideal teaching work environment seemed to be less effective than expected. Both male and female student teachers described that, "Student teachers are overcrowded in schools at one point in time, a pattern, which makes some students to lack adequate number of periods and the ideal practical experiences." Another female student teacher said

that, “Some schools are in difficult environments and we only go there for the sake of fulfilling teaching practice requirements and not for permanent employment.”

Findings for research question two disclosed the influence from significant others as the second significant predictor of student teachers’ intention to join teaching career post-graduation ( $\beta = .23, p < .001$ ), explaining 4 percent of the variance on intention. Though positive and significant, the low levels of beta value and the low level of variance accounted for in intention to pursue career in teaching post-graduation may be exemplified with findings from FGDs. From FGDs, in-service student teachers, both males and females, described that, “Tanzanian society perceives someone who joins teaching course at whatever level as a failure... you have even failed to get an admission in a teaching course?” The influence of significant others is also exemplified by the following description from one of the in-service male student teacher,

“My relatives and parents did not want me to join the profession such that they refused to give me support. They said it would have been better to join mechanics certificate than teaching since the economic support of my brother who has a certificate in mechanics seemed to be more significant than mine.”

Another female student teacher emphasized that, “even some officers in the government view teaching as a low esteemed profession due to the way they treat and handle teachers’ concerns.” One of the male student teacher insisted that, “practices of our government in coming up with crash programs in training teachers for one month (nicknamed as Voda faster) contributes in distorting the image and reputation of the profession.”

The same pattern of significant others' influence was also identified among pre-service student teachers. One of the male student teacher said that, "My friends who are not pursuing teaching tell me that I am wasting time." Similarly, another male student teacher reported that, "when joining advanced level secondary education, my parents and close relatives told me that I should not take subjects, which will lead me into teaching career." For some students, their relatives strived to connect them to other careers as reported by one of the female student teacher that, "My uncle who works at ... advised me not to join the teaching profession and I had to send him my curriculum vita." It was also revealed that even some of the college staffs undermine the profession as described by one of the male student teacher that

"Although we all have divisions I and II at Advanced secondary education level, the community knows that we are failures. Even an administrator during admission asked one of our colleagues who had division I (point 4) as to reasons he decided to join teaching and not other degree programs like law."

Moreover, one of the pre-service female student teachers narrated that, "my grandfather, parents, uncles, sisters, brothers and aunts have been in this profession but I seriously did not want to be in this profession. However, my brother who is also a teacher influenced me to the extent of filling and submitting my application by himself." This indicates that some students joined the profession due to pressure from significant others.

For the research question three, attitude had the strongest predictive power on student teachers' intention to join teaching career post-graduation ( $\beta = .47, p < .001$ ), accounted for 14.6 percent of the variance compared to the other two variables reported before. Though quantitative findings are significant and positive, mixed expressions were noted in the FGD sessions. From FGDs, it appears that even the experienced teachers are struggling to leave the profession as described by one of the in-service student teachers that,

“I have been in this profession for over 12 years and I have been struggling to find means to exit from this profession. I joined as a Grade IIIA teacher and went for Diploma so as to exit but failed. I hope for this time, with my degree I will be able to find another job better than teaching.”

One of the male student teachers had this to say, “I will not dare to go back since I have already made my mind to open up a business.” Another in-service male student teacher insisted that, “in short, unless we miss other opportunities, joining this profession is easy for someone who is not optimistic in life.” This indicates a diminished sense of pursuing the profession post-graduation. Another female in-service student teacher reported that, “Some in-service teachers describe feelings that ‘it is better I look for another job or else I will temporarily join the profession when still looking for another job’”

Similarly, after practicum in their first year and second year, some of the pre-service teachers felt that, “Life at the university is even quite better than life after being employed as a teacher” (said one of the male student teachers). Both male and female pre-service teachers

frequently emphasized that, “If the government will not improve the salary and working conditions, majority of us will not join the profession or will decide to join private schools.” One of the pre-service male student teacher associated the profession with a route to poverty by asserting that, “It is a way towards poverty and I even heard students saying these teachers have no money but they really disturb us!”

Similar to the in-service student teachers, pre-service student teachers also had a feeling that teaching is a stepping stone for other better career opportunities. Both male and female student teachers generally described that, “to me teaching seems to be like a bridge to other opportunities.” This may indicate a low level of attachment to the profession as described by one of the male student teachers that, “during field work, I experienced my colleagues shying away from being called teacher by students outside school environment. That really hurt me!” Another pre-service male student teacher insisted that, “I will not regret by missing employment in the teaching profession. In fact, it does not motivate and I regret for joining this profession.” It was also common to hear respondents saying that, “I have started to send applications to other non-teaching related jobs.”

Though still in dilemma, it was encouraging to note that some pre-service student teachers had a feeling and a likelihood of joining the profession post-graduation. One of the female student teachers disclosed that, “I am ready to join the profession but not one hundred percent since it seems to be like an abandoned profession.” Other male student teachers also described that, “Academically, I am prepared but the environment will determine. Personally, I like teaching but I hate the teaching environment and how the community views the profession.” To the contrary, one of the pre-service male student teachers demonstrated

a strong feeling and passion to join the profession by asserting that, “I want to be a teacher and I will stand for my decision.”

Moreover, it was also revealed that some of the pre-service student teachers had made their minds to join the profession due to circumstantial reasons. For example, one of the pre-service male student teachers reported that, “some of us come from poor families and have no other alternative employment compared to teaching.” Another pre-service female student teacher said that; “I struggled for an employment for four years after completing my certificate in electrical installation at Vocational Education Training Authority (VETA) and decided to go back to school so as to pursue a career, which has no interview and can grant me direct employment.”

Overall, the three TPB variables accounted for 47.6 percent of variance in student teachers’ intention to join teaching career post-graduation. In particular, attitude emerged as the strongest of all predictors on students’ intention followed by influence of significant others and perceived behavioural control, respectively.

For the research question four, an independent sample *t*-test was conducted and results showed no statistically, there was a significant difference in the mean intention scores for pre-service teachers ( $M = 8.49$ ,  $SD = 2.63$ ) and in-service teachers ( $M = 8.98$ ,  $SD = 3.42$ );  $t(76) = .99$ ,  $p = .33$ . To the contrary, there was a statistically significant gender difference on intention scores for females ( $M = 9.13$ ,  $SD = 2.78$ ) and males ( $M = 8.03$ ,  $SD = 2.80$ );  $t(231) = 3.03$ ,  $p = .003$ , eta squared 3.8 percent. These findings imply that more females than males are likely to join the teaching profession post-graduation.

## 6. Discussion

This study contributes to literature on teachers' attrition by employing the TPB in exploring the intention of undergraduate student teachers to pursue their teaching profession post-graduation. Discussion is based on quantitative and qualitative findings under the TPB frame work.

### **Perceived behavioural control and the intention to join a teaching career**

Findings that perceived behavioural control played a weak positive significant role on student teachers' intention to join a teaching career post-graduation and concurred with other findings on career choice intention (e.g., Arnold *et al.*, 2005; Borchert, 2002; Brinkley & Joshi, 2005; Jie-Tsuen, 2011). In particular, the low predictive power of behavioural control on intention signifies that student teachers may anticipate some obstacles and challenges in their preparations including plans to join the teaching career. Findings appear to indicate that a significant number of student teachers are hesitant and perhaps not intrinsically or voluntarily motivated to take up a career in teaching post-graduation due to anticipated perceived difficulties and challenges.

Ajzen (1988) argued that an individual who is confident in mastering and performing activities is more likely to persevere than those who doubt their abilities, and without adequate resources. Although student teachers acknowledged having necessary competencies in content and methodology during FGDs, it appears that some contents are less relevant to topics covered in secondary and primary schools. This may likely have an impact on students' perceived competency. Anangisye (2011) maintained that universities and other teacher education

colleges seem to produce graduates who are incompetent due to the mismatch between the university and college curricula and the reality in the world of work. However, some students, for example, those who viewed teaching as a pathway to other opportunities may not be willing to join the career post-graduation even if they are confident in their ability to teach (Jie-Tsuen, 2011). This may also be associated with unrealistic expectations from student teachers since a career in teaching can last for many years.

The nature of working environment and salary level were frequently mentioned as threats to students' perceived ability in joining the profession. Students repeatedly claimed that life at the university is quite better than life after being employed as a teacher. This implies that some students are ready to remain at the university rather than to take up the teaching career due to the perceived hardships once employed as a teacher. This denotes a psychological attrition from the career before employment. This parallels Macdonald in Mulkeen and colleagues' (2007) argument that attrition rate is probably higher in the early years of teaching career and the highest in harsh geographical locations where living conditions are extremely poor as well as expensive. Hence, deliberate measures are needed to make the profession highly lucrative and attractive so as to support voluntary employment among student teachers post-graduation unlike the current trend where student teachers are in the profession but they are not ready for the profession.

### **Significant-others and the intention to join a teaching career**

Schroder, Schi-Rodermund and Arnaud (2011) argue that the stronger parents' preferences, the more likely young people report a greater

intention to join a career. However, for this study, significant others appeared to play a moderate positive role on student teachers' intention to join the teaching career. This finding parallels results from previous studies (e.g., Borchert, 2002; Brinkley & Joshi, 2005; Tsado, 1985). Conversely, the researcher's findings differ from other studies that revealed influence from the significant-others to have a major influence on career choice intention (for example, Jie-Akmaliah & Hisyamuddin, 2009; Kolv Reid & Isaksen, 2005; Loan-Clarke *et al.*, 2005; Onditi; 2012; Tsuen, 2011; Van Hooft *et al.*, 2006). This suggests that influence of significant-others on career choice may vary across contexts as postulated in the TPB. In line with the TPB, these findings provide empirical evidence to support that pressure from the significant-others plays a moderate role in shaping undergraduate student teachers' intention to join or continue with the teaching career.

Quantitative findings received a strong support from the FGDs where significant-others were revealed to undermine the teaching profession as opposed to other professions in the world of work. For example, findings from FGDs suggested that community members, including students in schools, and government officers perceived teaching as an alternative profession for those who did not perform well. Anangisye (2011) argues that there are complaints in society over qualities of people who join the teaching profession in Tanzania. This is contrary to the past where teachers enjoyed a high status in community (Towse *et al.*, 2002; Zombwe, 2009). Currently, the prestige of the teaching profession in the Tanzanian community seems to have changed dramatically. In fact, this study revealed that some pre-service teachers shied away from being called teachers by students outside the school context during teaching practice. This indicates lack of commitment, attachment and

professional identity, which may, in turn, affect performance. Moshia (2011) maintained that students and parents' attitude towards teachers and the learning process can determine performance. In this sense, it is safe to argue that for community where teachers feel not valued, it can be increasingly difficult to attain effective learning by students, good performing and intrinsically motivated teachers.

### **Attitude and the intention to join the teaching career**

Findings that attitude has the strongest predictive power on students' intention to join teaching career corroborate previous studies (e.g., Ajzen, 1991, 1988; Arnold & Loan-Clarke *et al.*, 2005; Brinkley & Joshi, 2005; Kolvereid & Isaksen, 2005; Onditi, 2012; Van Hooft *et al.*, 2006), which revealed attitude having a profound influence on career choice intention among the three independent variables of the TPB. Consistency between findings from this study and those from others suggest a positive association between attitude and career choice intention in widely varying contexts. In contrast, studies such as those by Akmaliah and Hisyamuddin (2009) and Jie-Tsuen (2011) found attitude to have low influence on career choice intention compared to influence of significant-others. Variations in findings and predictive power of the three variables of the TPB may be attributed to methodological and contextual factors (Ajzen, 1988, 1991).

Although some students held more positive views and showed vocational commitment of joining the teaching profession so as to impart knowledge to young people of Tanzania, qualitative findings revealed that majority would prefer to join private schools due to better salary and working conditions. Mulkeen and colleagues (2007) emphasize that those who are new to teaching are more willingly to leave the profession or to

move to private schools. This suggests a sustained likelihood of public schools to lack enough and qualified teachers. It was also revealed that student teachers who plan to join the profession, whether in private or public schools, see it as a stepping stone to other opportunities or as an alternative employment opportunity. This corroborates Anangisye's (2011) argument that the fear from unemployment has pushed many individuals into teaching profession. Similarly, other studies revealed that for many students, however, teaching was chosen on the basis of possible benefits it offers (Towse *et al.*, 2002), including salary, job security and opportunities for advancement (Mulkeen *et al.*, 2007). It is used as a bridge to other careers or taken as a last resort for those who could not excel in other careers. This supports a conclusion that a significant number of student teachers are not intrinsically motivated to enter teaching and are more likely to quit the profession once they get across opportunities they perceive better.

Moreover, the revelation that some graduate teachers would not feel regret by missing employment in the teaching profession and regret on why they joined teaching indicates a low level of attachment with the profession. This corresponds to Anangisye's (2011) findings that even individuals who have shown no interest and whose moral values are questionable are in the profession. This suggests that by the time students graduate, a large majority of student teachers do not graduate as motivated teachers but as job seekers for any other field in the job market. This will have an effect on Tanzanian government efforts to reduce shortage of teachers.

### **In-service, pre-service, gender and the intention to join a teaching career**

Conventionally, a teacher trainee begins his or her professional development from the point of entry to the teacher education and training programme (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 1996). Lack of significant difference between in-service and pre-service undergraduate student teachers on intention to join or continue with the teaching career post-graduation resonate qualitative findings that a substantial number of both pre-service and in-service student teachers are not psychologically as well as socially ready to take up a career in teaching, especially in public schools. This was repeatedly associated with low salary, bad working conditions and low status of the profession. This parallels Towse and co-workers' (2002) results that salary, welfare and employment status are the main reasons that prompted non-graduate students to leave teaching. Majority of undergraduate teachers perceived teaching as a path to further education or an exit strategy. In other words, while some of the in-service teachers are struggling to get out of the profession, findings suggest that some of those in colleges and universities – pre-service teachers - are simultaneously struggling to change their career post-graduation. Although the intention for further training seems to be good for teachers' professional development, the system may be unintentionally promoting attrition of teachers in many countries (Hedges as cited in Mulkeen *et al.*, 2007). Thus, deliberate mechanisms for realization of teacher profession development without drop-out from the profession are vital.

With regard to gender, more female student teachers are likely to join the teaching profession post-graduation than their male counterparts. This is not surprising because historically, teaching has been a female

dominant career. For example, studies such as those by Brinkley and Joshi (2005) as well as Kibera (1997) maintained that although females appreciate careers such as law, medicine and engineering, they often prefer to choose social and people related occupations like nursing, clerical jobs and teaching compared to males. Similarly, a study by Topkaya and Uztosun (2012) revealed that females demonstrated intrinsic motivation in choosing teaching career more so than their male counterparts who are driven by social status and economic survival. In addition, although females demonstrated higher intentions in joining the teaching profession, the effective size was very small. Findings from FGDs suggest that female teachers are also reluctant to join the career, especially in rural areas. Thus, a holistic intervention may be needed to recruit as well as retain both female and male teachers in the profession.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The three variables of the TPB significantly predicted student teachers' intention to join teaching career post-graduation with attitude emerging as the strongest predictor followed by pressure from significant others and perceived behavioural control respectively. However, overall, findings suggest that a substantial number of student teachers, especially males are less likely to be intrinsically motivated and fully committed to take up a career in teaching post-graduation. With this in mind, new deployment and conditions of service for teachers are not only important but necessary if the current problems are to be resolved (see also Mulkeen *et al.*, 2007).

Apart from its simplicity and effective use in predicting behaviour across contexts as well as disciplines, the TPB has some limitations. One of its limitations is that it does not reflect on a broad constellation of factors

from wider social contexts impacting a particular behaviour. Also, like other social cognitive theories, the theory is clear about targets for intervention to produce a desired change on a behaviour, but it is not explicit on the best approaches to change the cognitions. Together with the identified limitations, this is a classic theory open to empirical extension (Ajzen, 1991) and findings from this study echoed previous result.

Findings from this study have important implications for practice, policy and research. High enrolment and costs incurred in training teachers should go hand-in-hand with improvement of working environment and teachers' social welfare. Such aspects may increase the likelihood of retaining both males and females – in-service and pre-service graduates in teaching. Although the issue of commitment and efficiency may be of concern, there is a deliberate need for having a policy on a minimum mandatory service in the teaching profession among all undergraduate student teachers – specially beneficiaries of higher education students' loan. Having such policy may also be an antidote for the problem of teachers' shortage in schools. Radical awareness education programs are needed for restoring the public image of the teaching profession. For teacher trainees, courses in professionalism and ethics are critical for changes in behaviour together with attitude. Sampling from one college may limit generalization of findings and future research should expand by including more colleges that offer teacher education degree program. Other research designs such as randomized control treatment and longitudinal studies that are highly robust in establishing cause and effect relationships overtime are recommended. In sum, these results should be viewed as an eye opener – providing a platform for a large scale study for wider generalization. Together with other initiatives to

increase teachers' retention identified in previous studies (e.g., Mulkeen *et al.*, 2007), findings suggest for early intervention programs that take TPB constructs on board.

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## **EVALUATION OF TEACHERS' SELF-ASSESSMENT PRACTICE IN SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KINONDONI MUNICIPALITY, DAR ES SALAAM**

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### **Abstract**

Teacher self-assessment is an essential aspect though it seems to be a neglected part of teachers' daily teaching and learning process. This study was concerned with teachers' self-assessment practice. Specifically, the study sought to: assess teachers' awareness on self-assessment, to determine the extent to which self-assessment is practiced by teachers and to examine the impact of self-assessment on teacher professional growth. The study was carried out in three primary schools in Kinondoni municipality, Dar es Salaam region. A total of 60 teachers formed the study sample. Data were collected using questionnaires. The questionnaire comprised both close-ended and open-ended questions. For many questions in the questionnaires, the sub-program "frequencies" from the SPSS was used in the process. Content analysis was employed to identify, analyse, and interpret open-ended questions from questionnaire. They were analyzed in relation to research questions.

The study revealed that majority of teachers had little theoretical understanding about self-assessment. As a result, teacher self-assessment

was not adequately practiced and teachers only relied on school head's assessment forms, school inspector reports and students' test as well as examination result as indicators of their work performance. However, this is done so naturally that most teachers do not consider it as self-assessment. Despite that teacher self-assessment was not a comprehensive practice, most teachers perceived it essential for their professional growth. It was concluded that teachers' self-assessment seemed to be a new concept to most teachers who participated in this study. However, some teachers were even practicing it without being aware of what they were doing.

**Key words:** self-assessment, awareness, practice and self-efficacy

## **1. Introduction**

Teaching is a very noble profession such that “it is the mother of all other professions” (Njabili, 1998, p. 9). Teaching is a special career because it gives rise to other professions. All other professions originate from the teaching profession because one cannot acquire knowledge and skills in a specific field without a teacher. The role of the teaching profession to society is what makes the teaching profession essential. Teachers prepare society for many development perspectives and challenges. In order for society to develop, it must invest in education. A teacher is capable of interpreting education philosophy and policy into real life. If the teacher wrongly interprets the national educational philosophy and policy, the expected output would not be realized (HakiElimu, 2009). In Tanzania, teaching in the past was respected and one had to have a special calling to be a teacher. However, nowadays, the quality of teacher education has become a problem of major concern because of its falling standards in different areas and aspects. As a result, it has become one of the most important agendas in many academic, political and other social forums (Temu, 2007).

It is not surprising that teacher education is widely accused for low learning and not performing appropriately in enhancing quality teaching as well as learning (Moshia, 2012). It seems plausible to use student learning outcomes as a measure of ‘good teaching’ and a basis for measuring teacher quality, for good teaching and learning outcomes certainly are related (Ingvarson & Rowe, 2008). Researchers (for example, Moshia, 2011; Temu, 2007) conclude that there is widespread concern about the low quality of teacher education because teachers lack necessary competencies needed for effective performance of their work. One

of the reasons connected to the low quality of teacher education is inadequate programs that prepare and develop teachers (Kitta & Tilya, 2010). Teachers are ill-prepared and ill-developed (Mmari, 2001). Consequently, teaching and learning in the school system are claimed to be of low quality and dominated by rote learning strategies (Moshia, 2012). There is an over focus on examinations, which drives the curriculum and teaching such that it distorts educational objectives. In the absence of other reliable measures, examination results can be used for measuring learning achievements.

One scholar used to say that, 'we do not need just education but quality education' (Moshia, 2006). When aiming for quality education, it is important to consider the quality of staff involved in the teaching and learning process. Quality has to be built into the way a school works as well as how and the actual teaching and learning take place. Literatures have indicated that one way in which quality can be improved is by colleagues being encouraged to build monitoring and evaluation into their work. In a school that carries out evaluation, teachers can best benefit and grow professionally (Hoy, Bayne-Jardine, Wood, 2000 p.54).

Teachers learning about teaching and learning strategies do not stop once they have graduated from teacher training colleges. They are expected to continue learning regarded in light of educational functions they intend to perform. Several functions of assessment have been discussed in measurement and assessment books. For instance, Njabili (1999) summed up the functions by saying that assessment is for Diagnosis, Guidance and Counselling, Grading, Selection, Prediction, Placement, Certification, Evaluation, Research and Accountability.

Different forms of evaluation or assessment are for different functions. For example, an assessment to help a teacher understand his/her performance requires a form of assessment different from one designed to describe students' outcomes (Eisner, 2002). What was of most concern in this study was assessment of the teacher by the teacher him/herself, that is, self-assessment.

Teachers need accurate information to help them answer the following questions: How am I doing? Where do I need improvement? These questions are rarely answered to most teachers' satisfaction. Freiberg and Driscoll (1996: 409) stated that, "It may not be an understatement to say that the entire school reform movement hinges in the ability of the profession to provide meaningful data about what is occurring in the classroom and to create opportunities for all teachers to reflect on their teaching."

Arguably, source of information available to a teacher about the teaching are students' performance in test, students' feedback (verbal, nonverbal and written), systematic observation by supervisors or administrative feedback, peer observation and self-assessment (Driscoll, 1996). All aforementioned sources of information are rarely collectively provided in most schools in Tanzania. The most common source includes observation by an administrator, where the administrator is committed enough to give his/her time. Accuracy of such brief observations can be questioned. Also being able to judge what is on-going in class by checklists is a difficult task (Freiberg & Driscoll, 1996). This information signifies how much more effective self-assessment could be if practiced as a daily procedure rather than depending on assessment carried out by inspectors.

In Tanzania, the academic school year lasts for 195 days in primary schools (MoEC, 1996). Schools are supposed to be inspected once in two years, but if the districts have a small number of schools, then they have to be inspected yearly (Mulkeen, 2005). Therefore, if a teacher is observed once a year for 40 minutes, 0.7 hours a year, this represents 0.06 percent sampling of instruction in primary schools. However, these figures may not exactly reflect the actual situation because not all teachers are inspected when inspectors visit schools, and not all schools are inspected especially in rural areas (Mulkeen, 2005). The data reveal how much effective self-assessment could be if practiced as a daily procedure rather than depend on assessment carried out by inspectors.

Self-assessment requires reflection and it is an important aspect for a teacher's development. It requires thoughtful and careful reporting together with analysis of practices in teaching, philosophy and experience. Understanding why a certain activity in class was productive or not enables a teacher to progress from a novice to a master teacher.

Circumstances are constantly changing in teaching, for students change, content changes and teachers change. For this reason, teachers have to be learners so as to be able to respond appropriately to changing circumstances of their work and therefore, teachers must learn from their changing experience in schools (Leiberman & Miller, 1991). Teachers rarely have little time to think about what are the most effective teaching methods, what are the weaknesses in their teaching, about whom they are and what they believe or what they aim to accomplish in their students and the school as a whole. Schools are not organized to allow teachers to work and think together (Little, 1987).

According to Tanzania procedures and practice, use of inspectors for monitoring and evaluation is common and in most schools in Tanzania, they constitute probably the only methods whereby teacher performance is evaluated other than through examination results. The inspection system encourages adaptation to meet requirements rather than empower teachers to reflect upon teaching and learning improvement strategies.

However, an analysis of Teaching Practice Lesson Plan Forms and Assessment Forms from the teacher training colleges in Tanzania indicated that there is a self-assessment component that teacher trainees are required to complete. One wonders whether or not the habit of self-assessment is continued after graduation during actual classroom setting.

## **2. Purpose of the study**

This study sought to assess teachers' self-assessment practice in selected primary schools in Kinondoni Municipality. Specifically, the study intended:

1. To examine teachers' awareness of teacher self-assessment;
2. To examine the extent to which teacher self-assessment is practiced by teachers; and
3. To examine the impact of self-assessment on teacher professional growth

Research questions

1. What is the teacher's level of knowledge on teacher self-assessment?
2. To what extent is teacher's self-assessment practiced by teachers?
3. What is the impact of self-assessment on teacher professional growth?

### **3. Research Methodology**

The study was conducted in Kinondoni municipality, which is one among three municipalities of Dar es Salaam city. The choice of the municipality as a study area was based on large number of primary schools compared to other two municipalities in Dar es Salaam city, namely, Ilala and Temeke.

The population for study comprised all primary school teachers in Kinondoni municipality. For practical reasons, a segment of the population had to be sampled to get the necessary information for the study. The sample included in the study depended on time and available resources. The information was specifically generated from (3) primary schools. The sample was made up of 60 primary school teachers i.e. 20 teachers from each school. These informants were selected using simple random sampling procedure.

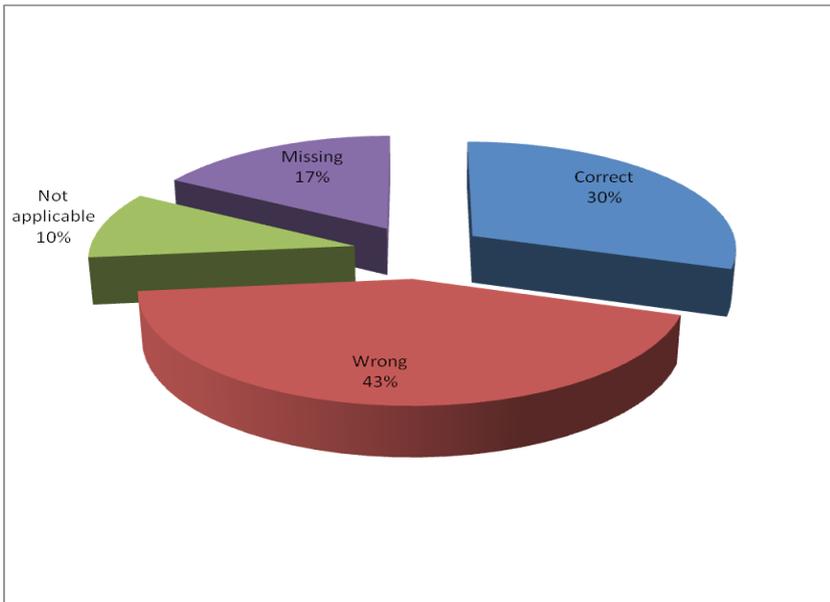
Two methods of data collection were used in this study. These are documentary review, which primarily focused on the teacher's awareness and practices towards self assessment. In this endeavour, both primary and secondary documents were consulted. Consulted documents included teachers' self-assessment instruments. Questionnaires were administered to teachers for determining the extent to which teacher-self-assessment was practiced in their respective primary school. The questionnaires comprised both close-ended and open-ended questions. For many questions in the questionnaires, the sub-program "frequencies" from the SPSS was used in the process. Content analysis was employed to identify, analyze and interpret open-ended questions from questionnaire. They were analyzed in relation to the research questions of the study.

#### **4. Research findings**

This study sought to assess respondents' knowledge on teacher self-assessment in Tanzania. So, the respondents were asked whether or not they knew the concept "teacher self-assessment". Responses from questionnaires revealed that a bit over three quarters (78.3%) teachers claimed to be aware with the concept teacher self-assessment and only 13(21.7%) said they were unfamiliar with it.

To ascertain provided responses, a probing question was asked demanding participants to define the concept "teacher self-assessment." It should be recalled that in the sample, a good number (78.3%) of primary school teachers claimed to know the concept "teacher self-assessment." Out of 60 teachers who responded to the question, two-thirds (63.3%) teachers showed general lack of understanding about self-assessment is and were unable to provide a comprehensive definition of teacher self-assessment. In this category, most of teachers said that, "Teacher self-assessment is when a teacher is being assessed by a school head or school inspector." Other (15%) teachers defined teacher self-assessment as the process of making self-evaluation during or after teaching. Three (5%) other teachers viewed it as the way a teacher examines himself/herself on his/her effectiveness in teaching. Lastly, 10(16.6%) defined as evaluating how well the teacher expresses her/himself to students, how well he/she leads students to various concepts, how much he/she makes a lesson enjoyable to students and enables them to apply knowledge and skills. From the various explanations, it can be assumed that the concept of "teacher self-assessment" is not well understood by most teachers. Self-assessment can be carried out based on different criteria. Only 22(36.6%) teachers out of 60 managed to mention correct different criteria to be observed.

The researcher asked teachers to describe the concept “teacher self-assessment” and then grouped the responses in four categories. The first category was for those who described the concept correctly. The response was marked ‘correct.’ Another category was that with the wrong answer such that it was marked ‘wrong.’ For those whom failed to provide an answer to the question it was labelled ‘missing.’ Chart 4.1 illustrates study findings.



**Figure 1:** Teachers knowledge on term teacher self assessment

Comparatively as it can be learned from Chart 4.1, around half (43%) of teachers described teacher self-assessment wrongly. This implies that teachers had narrow understanding of teacher self-assessment

concept. For instance, they defined self-assessment as the process by which teachers “rate their effectiveness on a scale form or provide a brief written evaluation of their teaching performance.” In addition, Keller and Duffy (2005: 7) defined self-assessment as “the process of self-examination for the purpose of instructional self-improvement.”

From the findings, it is appalling that teachers who are supposed to carry out self-assessment were unable to describe the concept teacher self-assessment. Hence, a probing question demanded respondents to indicate whether they practiced it or not. Table 1 provides summary of study findings.

**Table 1 The practice of self-assessment in schools (n=60)**

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	37	61.6
NO	16	26.6
No response	7	11.7
Total	60	100

From Table 1, it can be said that teacher’s self-assessment was practiced in sampled primary schools. However, reviewed lesson plans revealed that teacher’s self-assessment was not part of the daily teaching activities. Most observed teachers’ lesson plans missed teachers’ comments with regard to their teaching performance.

The next question sought respondents to describe how teacher’s self-assessment was practiced in their respective schools. Responses are as summarized in Table 2.

**Table 2. The manner teacher's self-assessment was practiced in the sampled schools**

	Frequency	Percent
Teacher request fellow teachers to asses teaching	8	13.3
School head fills teacher assessment forms	32	53.3
Teachers individually fill in self-assessment form	17	28.3
Others (i.e. individual response given)	3	5.1
Total	60	100

Table 2 shows that teacher self-assessment was mostly carried out by school heads by filling in teachers' assessment forms. Hence, teachers mainly used school heads' assessment forms to judge their teaching performance. Since school heads did not give teachers assessment report on a daily basis, it means that teacher's self-assessment in primary school was not practiced daily. According to Mulkeen (2005), the teacher's self-assessment is effective if it could be practiced as a daily procedure rather than depend on assessment carried out by school heads or inspectors. In the same view, Hoy, Bayne-Jardine, and Wood (2000) insist that teachers' self-assessment requires daily reflection and it is an important aspect for a teacher's development. It requires thoughtful and careful reporting including analysis of practice in teaching, philosophy and experience. Understanding why a certain activity in class was productive or not enables a teacher to progress from a novice to a master teacher.

In an effort to assess ‘the extent to which self-assessment is practiced,’ teachers were asked how often they assessed themselves. Their responses can be observed in Table 3.

Table 3 Frequency of self-assessment by the teachers (n=60)

	Frequency	Percent
Very often (for each lesson)	2	05
Often (once a week)	24	40
When an inspector comes to the centre	2	05
after observing students test and examination results	27	45
	60	100

From Table 3, it seems that close to half (45%) of teachers carried out self-assessment by observing students’ test and examination results. Such results showed that teachers mainly used student test and examination results for self-assessment. In such a situation, it is unlikely that self-assessment is carried out for each lesson unless tests are given in each lesson. Obviously, it is evident that tests cannot be given in each lesson.

Furthermore, the researcher sought to identify criteria used for self-assessment. Table 4 shows a set of criteria for self-assessment, which were presented to teachers. The study revealed that criteria mostly employed for assessing themselves involved students’ learning (i.e., test and examination scores). Thus, it implies that teachers’ self-assessment was carried out after students’ test or examination scores.

**Table 5 Criteria for self-assessment**

	Frequency	Percent
Comments and critique from coordinators, or fellow teachers	14	23.3
Students learning (i.e. test and examination scores)	21	35
How much content covered	6	10
Students behaviours (i.e., participation, discussion, feelings etc)	19	31.7
Total	60	100.0

Table 5 shows that students test and examination scores were the mostly used criteria by teachers for their self-assessment. Next was students' behaviour (i.e., participation, discussion, feelings and so forth). It implies that teachers mostly used test and examination scores. In addition, they used such assessment by examining the manner students responded to questions in the class. As discussed elsewhere, majority of teachers had narrow understanding on teachers' self-assessment concept. Hence, there was a tendency of teachers using only students' behaviours, while learning could be attributed to lack of enough knowledge toward self-assessment. This also raises a question on ability of teachers' training programmes in equipping them with necessary self-assessment skills. For example, Davidson (2005) and Komba (2010) argue that there is widespread concern about the low quality of teacher education because teachers lack the necessary competencies needed for effective self-assessment practice in their work.

Teachers were asked to indicate how important they considered teachers' self-assessment for realizing teachers' professional growth.

**Table 5 Importance of teacher self-assessment for professional growth (n=60)**

	Frequency	Percent
Very important	39	65
Important	17	28.3
Somewhat important	4	6.7
Of little importance	0	0
Of no importance	0	0
Total	60	100.0

From the data in Table 5, it can be observed that most teachers considered teachers' self-assessment very important for professional growth. It implies that although teachers did not carry out self-assessment often as it was expected. They acknowledged its contribution on their professional growth. Harnett (2012) asserts that when teachers engage in reflective opportunities, they are "pulled out" of the "automatic pilot" mode to become grounded in deep understanding of their own teaching and learning.

### 5. Conclusion

This study assessed teachers' self-assessment practice in primary schools. The study revealed that most teachers not only lacked theoretical component of self-assessment but also they did not practice it adequately. Succinctly, teachers' self-assessment seemed to be a new concept to most teachers who participated in this study. Some teachers even practiced it without being aware of whether or not what they were doing made part of teachers' self-assessment. Hence,

it is recommended that Teacher Training Colleges in Tanzania should inculcate self-assessment culture among student teachers. The Ministry of Education should also introduce teachers' self-assessment tools to teachers in Tanzanian schools.

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## **CHANGING PATTERNS OF INDIGENOUS CHILD CARE AND UPBRINGING PRACTICES AMONG CHAGGA COMMUNITIES IN HAI DISTRICT, KILIMANJARO REGION**

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### **Abstract**

This study focused on the changing patterns of indigenous child care and upbringing practices in Chagga community in Hai District, Kilimanjaro Region, Tanzania. The study specifically sought to achieve two objectives: 1) to describe and identify changes that have occurred in traditions as well as customs that governed childhood care and upbringing practices in Chagga community over time including their effect on child rearing practices today; and (2) to identify personality characteristics most inculcated to young Children in Chagga community.

The study employed a case study strategy. A total of 78 respondents were purposively sampled and reached. Data on breastfeeding and feeding practices; child's work socialisation; discipline practices; adult child interactions; family care arrangements; and traits most desired in children were collected using semi-structured interviews. Qualitative responses were coded, categorised and analysed into themes. Quantitative data were analysed using frequencies and percentages. The study revealed that currently, there are significant changes among Chagga community on child care and upbringing practices compared to previous years. It was found out that breastfeeding period was

reduced from four years to less than one year, with supplement food starting earlier than in previous years. Child work socialization is no longer based on gender stereotyping and the apprenticeship approach has been abandoned. Furthermore, modern parents put less emphasis on discipline matters such as obedience and respect because they highly focused on academic issues. Family settings have also changed significantly whereby grandparents' huts where children gathered during night and were taught social norms, aspects that are no longer there. Parenting role is declining, and shifting from communal threshold to individualistic chores. As a result, currently, mothers seem to lack extended family support. This circumstance forces them to leave young ones to house maids or taking their children with them to farms or even to market places.

**Key words:** child care practice, child upbringing practice, patterns, indigenous

## **1. Introduction**

The Chagga people in Hai district have been living in community life styles for a long time. Child care and upbringing practices revolved around Chagga general codes and norms. According to Moore (1986), for example, when a woman (a future mother) was pregnant, much attention was given to her by the immediate community. Rituals were performed during the first month of the mother's pregnancy and a bull was slaughtered. During the last month of pregnancy came the Sara ceremony where the woman was taught how she was to live and what she was to eat. For three months after birth, the woman remained inactive in the hut. The woman was well taken care of and was provided for by her husband as well as her own family everything that was deemed as nourishing to her such as meat, milk, fat, and cow's blood. These nourishing foods aimed at sustaining mother's health and increasing breast-milking for the infant.

According to Marealle (2002) traditionally during the first years of life a child remained largely in the care of his/her family. The child played and enjoyed by all the family members like father, mother, aunts, uncles and grandparents, hence it was common to see mother/nurse carrying about two to three years old child in her back. Raum (1940) contended that a decisive fact in the early life of the Chagga child was closeness to the mother nursing her child and the child stayed close to her day and night, in walking, working and resting. Dundas (1968) argues that traditionally, Chagga mothers breastfed their children for three to four years after birth. Weaning was considered as first occasions for disciplinary action. To achieve this purpose mothers could handle the child to the grandmother or they smear red pepper or some other

substances with a nasty taste on mother's nipples. On the other hand a mother could employ a stronger inducement to accomplish her purpose like using a small stroke to scare the child.

According to Moore (1986), traditionally from the age of 5 or six years there was a different pattern enforced for girls and for boys. The girls stayed at home and got drawn into domestic chores more early age than boys. At a very young age it was the chief duty of the girls to fetch water and firewood, to accompany their mother to the market, to milk cows, to grind the corn and clean out the cattle-stall and deposit the cow's dung around the banana roots as manure. Their play groups remained small, restricted to close neighbourhood. They began to learn the grace of adulthood that they must treat relatives like uncles, aunts and other adults with respect. Contrary to girls, boys led a rather freer and more indolent life. Their dominant activities were to graze and water livestock.

According to Raum (1940), at the age of 12 childhoods come to an end. This marked the beginning of "Jando" and "Unyago" ceremony. Within Jando and Unyago were in-built taboos that made young people adhere to the cultural norms and values. Apart from differences in the types of training offered between girls and boys, there were some common things they were trained. For example all children were trained in good behaviour in terms of respect for themselves, the elders and other people. They were also expected to be obedient and to care for the general good of community.

However, the chagga traditional child upbringing practices have undergone some changes due to factors such as poverty, social and

economic changes, formal education, and modernization (Diallo, (2000) and Mosha (2000). Diallo and Mosha emphasized that these new invasions have led to family disintegration. Thus, there is no strong bond among the family and community members. The collective responsibilities in child upbringing are lacking. Parents are also engaged in full time economic activities. They lack ample time to sit with their children. Therefore, chagga people life style is shifting away from traditional child rearing practices as people are exposed to new cultures that threaten traditional child rearing practices, forcing them to make changes. The changes have brought up changes in the whole system of community practices that have transformed children upbringing and social life among the Chagga.

Evidence of changing child care and upbringing patterns is associated with transitional problems in the families and communities (Mbise, et al. 2004). A clear understanding of the indigenous child care and upbringing patterns can provide useful lessons to facilitate children's smooth transition to modern life patterns. This justifies the need to investigate the changing patterns of indigenous child care and upbringing practices. Hence, this study which is reported in this paper.

## **2. Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to assess the effect of changing patterns of child care and upbringing practices in Chagga community in Hai district. More specifically, the study attempted: (1) to describe and identify changes that have occurred in traditions and customs that governed childhood care and upbringing practices in Chagga community over time and their effect on child rearing practices today and (2) personality characteristics most inculcated to young Children in Chagga community.

### 3. Methodology

The study on changing patterns of child care and upbringing practices in Chagga community in Hai District targeted old age parents, middle age parents and young parents.

**Table 1. Study sample**

Parents profile	Targeted	Reached	Analysed
Old age chagga parents (born between 1960 to 1979)	18	18	18
Middle aged Chagga parents (born between 1980 to 1989)	18	18	18
Young aged Chagga parents (born in 1990s)	18	18	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>54</b>

The total sample consisted of 54 respondents, who were purposive selected from Hai District. Interviews were conducted among parents falling under the three profiles. The aim here was to generate rich information on the changing patterns of child care and upbringing practices across families under three parental profiles. The interviews were also crucial in establishing the differences in child care and upbringing practice across the three parent's age cohorts. Understanding the differences between three parental profiles was important in establishing the extent to which child care and upbringing practices have undergone changes among and within the various generations.

The data collected from interviews was analyzed by using qualitative techniques. The raw data was organized and broken into manageable units. Through content analysis of data the researcher synthesized and searched for general patterns by grouping the data into meaningful

categories. Some of the respondents' views and opinions were presented as actual quotations. The data from semi-structured interview was manually computed in terms of frequencies and percentages and at the end tables were used to summarize them.

#### **4. The findings**

Findings are presented in line with study objectives and their related major themes developed during the data analysis.

##### **4.1. Changes that have occurred in traditions and customs that governed childhood care and upbringing practices in Chagga community over time and their effect on child rearing practices today**

Presentation of findings will give a general picture of changes that have occurred in traditions and customs that governed childhood care and upbringing practices in Chagga community over time and their effect on child rearing practices today.

##### **i). Customs and traditions during prenatal period**

Table 2 summarizes the information on support provided to pregnant woman and lactating mother across the three categories of parents.

**Table 2. Support Provided During Pregnancy and Birth**

Kind of Support	Older parents (N=18)				Middle Age Parents (N=18)				Young Parents (N=18)			
	F	M	Total	%	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%
Fetching firewood and water	6	5	11	61.1	3	4	7	38	1	2	3	16
Milking cow	7	8	14	77.7	4	5	8	44	0	1	1	0.5
Cleaning cowshed	9	5	14	77.7	3	3	8	44	0	0	0	0
Farming	8	7	15	83.3	5	7	12	66.7	4	2	5	27
Cooking	7	5	12	66.7	4	5	9	50	1	2	5	27
Massaging the mother	9	9	18	100	5	7	12	66.7	1	2	3	16
Clean and warm the infant	9	9	18	100	6	6	12	66.7	-	3	3	16

Table 2 shows that all 18 (100%) of the older parents and 12(66.650 middle age parents respondents admitted that in the past pregnant women were supported in various activities like cooking and cleaning and warming of the infants. However, only 3(16%) young parents said pregnant mothers were supported. One young woman during the focused group discussion said:

When you are pregnant nowadays, you have to be fully prepared...because no one is there to help you with your responsibilities. You continue attending your normal duties until your last effort...even our husband are not around...they themselves are trying to earn

from elsewhere...sometimes you fail even to abide by doctor prescription...because you do not have anyone to take over your duties.

The statement above reflects the situation faced by majority of young parent mothers interviewed today. They are overwhelmed and over loaded with domestic chores and other responsibilities during their pregnancy as the society provides limited support to them. The finding concurs with Mbise, (2002) views that with weakening of the extended family structure and the changing socio-economic conditions, pregnant women and breastfeeding mothers are no longer supported by relatives.

#### **ii). Breastfeeding and feeding practices**

The research finding revealed a decline in breastfeeding period from 1960s to the present. For example, old parents admitted that traditionally, some children could be breast-fed for two to three years and mothers were prohibited from engaging in sexual activity for the whole period. For example, one old woman said: *“when a woman breeds more rapidly, people say, she gives birth like a chicken”*. Another old woman added:

....in old days we protected youngest against competition for the infant’s most important source of food, a mother breast, by attempting to postpone pregnancy until the infant is capable of managing a standard diet...this is because we considered breast milk as the nutrient for children; when child was sick, the lactating mother could postpone weaning to extend the period of breastfeeding....

They also believed that weaning to early let to kwashiorkor, an often fatal disorder due to protein-calorie malnutrition. In comparison, 14 (77.7%) out of 18 younger parents interviewed said they breastfed their children for a period of one to two years. They were also no longer prohibited from engaging in sexual activities.

Additionally, 12 (66.7%) out of total 18 middle and young aged parents said that they breastfed their babies for less than two months, whereas the other 8 (44.4%) used a combination of mother's milk and cow's milk. Only 8 (22.2%) fed their babies solely on cow milk. A 25 year old woman explained what could be the causing factor for early introduction of supplement food:

A breastfeeding mother has to eat well balance food, particularly taking in soft food like soup or finger millet porridge...but many of us today do not get those types of food. Hence, the health of a mother becomes weak... and for that reason they fail to produce enough breast-milk for her infant...that is why they decide to introduce supplement food at early stage of child development....

Assertion above shows that today lactating mothers fail to produce enough quality breast-milk for their children due to lack of nourishing food. The family capacity to meet all the requirements for breast feeding has significantly declined. This finding is in line with UNICEF (2003) reports, which claimed that, although breastfeeding is the norm in sub-Saharan Africa, this culture is changing. Additionally, World Health Organization (WHO) global data bank in 2008 on infant feeding report indicates that most of infants today are not exclusively breastfed like it was before globalization. Mbise (2010) report also

found custom of child care most practiced by Tanzanian community members-intensive and prolonged breast-feeding and exclusive maternal attention during a long birth interval, often lengthened by a period of mandatory sexual abstinence has change.

It was important for the researcher to explore weaning strategies used by the three categories of parents studied. The study revealed that all eighteen (100%) old age parents admitted that traditionally weaning took place when the child was at least three years. They said that traditionally several methods were used as weaning strategies. These strategies included: taking the child to live with mother in-law or grandmother or putting an adhesive top or sour things on a child nipple. However, most of the middle and young parents interviewed revealed that today weaning took place at the age of one or two year. They mentioned weaning strategies they used today to include: combining breastfeeding with feeding on cow milk, other women are using the technique of keeping herself away from the child and scaring a child by using words or by the use of adhesive tops like pepper on the child nipple. Probably, this implies that weaning occurs in a gradual form in most cases, the practice of abrupt weaning was also found.

The study also sought to explore supplementary food served to young children of one to 24 months the responses are as summarizes in Table

3

**Table 3 Supplementary Food Served to Children (one month to 24 months)**

Supplementary Food	(N=54)											
	Older parents (N=18)				Middle Age Parents (N=18)				Young Parents (N=18)			
	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%
Milk	6	7	13	72	5	6	11	61	7	8	15	83
Porridge	5	7	12	66	6	8	14	77	8	9	17	94
Mashed banana	6	8	14	77	7	8	15	83	6	9	15	83
Rice	0	0	0	0	4	6	10	55	7	9	16	88
Kimamtine	8	9	17	94	4	5	9	50	0	0	0	0
Kishimba	7	9	16	88	3	2	5	27	0	0	0	0
Mashed potatoes	0	0	0	0	3	5	8	44	7	8	15	83
Soup	2	3	5	27	6	7	13	27	9	9	18	100

Table 3 shows that the majority of young parents 15(83%) used cow milk and mashed banana as supplementary food. On the contrary, majority 16(88%) of old parents said in the past they mostly used Kishimba whereas 17(94%) used Kimamtine as a supplementary food. The finding suggests that traditional food like kimamtine and kishimba were no longer used by young parents as supplementary food to young children today as these prefer soup, porridge, rice and mashed banana. Most of the old women interviewed were concerned with the early introduction of supplement foods; the frequency of feeding, the poor quality of the foods with low energy density and low nutrient value experiencing today young parents compared to their old age time. This finding is in line with Malik and Kolawole's (2004) reports

that complementary feeding practices still remain a challenge for most of the developing world including the African region and Tanzania in particular. These concerns include the early or late introduction of foods; the frequency of feeding, the poor quality of the foods with low energy density and low nutrient value, the high microbiological content of the foods due to poor environmental sanitation and unhygienic practices of the caregiver. Furthermore the poor nutritional value of complementary foods in terms of low dietary iron combined with low bioavailability may be a major contributing factor to high anaemia prevalence rates among weaning age children.

### **iii). Child's Work Socialization**

The study findings showed that, child work socialization among Chagga has changed as years go by as presented in Table 4.

**Table 4: Child's Work Socialization (from 5 years on wards)**

Type of work	(N=54)											
	Old Age Parents (N=18) (from 1960s)				Middle Age Parents (N=18)				Young Parents (N=18)			
	Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls		Boys		Girls	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Farming	18	100	15	83	16	88	14	77	12	66	11	61
Rearing cattle	17	94	-	-	14	77	-	-	-	-	-	-
Planting bananas	18	100	-	-	18	100	8	44	12	66	13	72
Building houses	18	100	-	-	18	100	-	-	7	38	-	-
Slaughtering	18	100	-	-	18	100	-	-	5	27	-	-
Cooking	-	-	18	100	-	-	18	100	13	72	15	83
Milking cow	-	-	18	100	-	-	18	100	12	66	16	88
Cutting grass	14	77	15	83	16	88	17	94	15	83	17	94
Childcare	-	-	16	88	7	38	16	88	17	94	17	94
Fetching firewood	12	66	18	100	12	66	18	100	18	100	18	100
Cleaning cowshed	-	-	18	100	4	22	18	100	14	77	15	83
Grinding corns	16	88	13	72	17	94	12	66	17	94	14	77
Peeling bananas	-	-	18	100	-	-	18	100	-	-	15	83
Cleaning house	-	-	18	100	-	-	17	94	15	83	16	88
Fertilizing bananas tress	-	-	18	100	12	66	18	100	12	66	13	72

Table 4 data shows that most old and middle age parents informed

that boys were mostly socialized in activities like farming, building houses, slaughtering animals and planting banana trees. Most activities reported for girls included cooking, peeling bananas, grinding corns, fertilizing banana plantation with cow dung and cleaning cowshed. They said that children took part in ongoing activities as well as observing and learning from adults. Male children learn from their fathers while female children learn from their mothers. However, interviews with young parents revealed that, some of the socialization activities reported by old and middle age parents were either less practiced or not practiced at all today. For example, only 7(38%) of young parents out of 18 said that boys were taught how to build the houses and none of 18 young parents said the children today engage in cattle rearing. It was also found that, young parents engaged their female children in planting bananas trees 13(72%) as well as allowing male children to cook. This implies that, today young parents ignore gender stereotyping in child work socialization. This finding is in line with Malik and Kolawole's (2004) argument that in traditional society children take part in ongoing activities as well as observing and learning from adults. The aim of the traditional education was to socialize children through responsible intelligence based on children active participation in acceptable and valued social and economic activities. Through such activities, children were apprenticed not only to learn useful economic values but also to acquire pro-social and altruistic attitudes and values from the environment.

#### **iv). Discipline practices**

Table 5 summarizes the kind of behaviours all three categories of parents found to emphasize into their children.

**Table 5: Behaviour Emphasized by the Three Categories of the Parents**

Type of behavior	Old parents (N=18)				Middle Age Parents (N=18)				Young Parents (N=18)			
	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%
Hardworking	8	7	15	100	6	5	11	61	3	6	9	50
Obedient to adults	9	9	18	100	6	7	13	72	2	7	9	50
Respect for adults	9	9	18	100	5	8	13	72	4	5	9	50
Trust worthiness	8	7	15	83	6	7	13	72	4	5	9	50
Cooperation	9	9	18	100	8	5	13	72	2	1	3	16
Keeping Family Secrets	9	9	18	100	5	8	13	72	4	5	9	50
Greetings Adults	9		9	100	7	6	13	72	3	3	6	50

Table 5 shows that all eighteen (100%) old parents said that in the past they put much emphasis on obedience and respect for adults and cooperation, greeting adults and keeping family secrets whereas for the middle age parents only thirteen (72%) reported the same. Decline is further noticed when only nine (50%) young parents report the same. This shows that traditionally moral and ethical values, norms, obligations, rules of etiquette and standard of correct conduct were almost as a by-product of the normal social relations between growing child and other people in his environment. As the child developed, proper behavior like obedience, hardworking, tolerance, trustworthiness and respect

was expected of him. Community members and particularly family members were chief socializing agents. They provided child upbringing prescriptions by imparting to the children various aspects of attitudes, beliefs, taboos and myths, norms and values which were important for personality development. Example, discipline of the child was a social phenomenon and punishment was immediate after child mistake. Writing from the experience in Acholi ethnic group, Ocitti (1973: 38) unveiled that,

“...bad habits and undesirable or disruptive behavior were not condoned in any child. To inculcate good habits and character in their young children, many parents normally used incentive methods which included encouragement, rewards, approval, praise and the like and deterrent methods which included all forms of punishment...”

#### **v) Adult-child interactions**

Table 6 summarizes information on adult-child interaction as practiced by all three parents categories.

**Table 6: Adult-child interaction (Child of age 3 to 8 years old)**

Adult-child interaction	Older parents (N=18)				Middle Age Parent (N=18)				Young Parents (N=18)			
	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%
Sing the song	8	9	17	94	2	8	10	55	2	5	7	38
Storytelling and Proverbs	8	9	17	94	3	7	10	55	4	3	7	38
Reading to Children	-	-	-		3	5	8	44	4	7	11	61
Books and Pictures	-	-	-		3	9	12	66	5	7	12	66
Making playing materials	5	6	11	61	1	4	5	27	-	4	4	22
Direct teaching	8	9	17	94	3	7	10	55	2	5	7	38
Eating together	6	9	15	83	2	7	9	50	3	7	10	55
Talking to children	8	9	17	94	4	6	10	55	2	5	7	38

Table 6 shows that majority of old parents 17(94%) expressed that they directly taught their children, engaged in telling stories or proverbs and singing songs to their children. However, only 10 (55%) of middle age parents reported the same. The decline in number is further seen when only 7(38%) younger parents reported the same. Most parents spend less than two hours talking, eating, playing or singing with their children in a day. Parents have been preoccupied with economic

demands for survival. Hence, most of norms, values, taboos and myths taught to children in the past are now not passed to children by many parents. This is because young parents today have less interaction with their children compared with old age parents. This finding is supported by Myers (2000) who characterized modern parents as younger and busier, meeting their financial needs and less available for some of the traditional care giving roles. Swadener and colleagues (2000) elaborate:

Another aspect of the isolation of children from their parents had to do with the loss of counselling and 'preparation for life' role that parents, particularly grandmothers, had played in previous generations. In other words, the passing down of traditional stories, metaphors and advice for living was now cut short by time, distance and rapid social economic changes (p.269).

#### **4.5. Personality characteristics most inculcated to young Children in Chagga community**

According to the Freudian view (1940) as cited in Papalia et al., (2003) and Erickson (1968) the manner in which parents raised their children in the early years was thought to be a crucial determinant in later development. This study revealed that the most traits desired in children were courage, cooperative spirit, self-reliance and industriousness, in the past while for today they desire generosity and perseverance (see Table 7 bellow). The perceived role employed by the parents to promote desired personality traits for their children were mostly child monitoring, enforcement of discipline, training children in social values

and training the child in the cultural beliefs; which was done through direct teaching, co-participants, storytelling, songs, Jando and Unyago, proverbs and punishment; use more time of parent-child together, clear structure and rule setting and encouragement of independency to children.

**Table 7:** Personality characteristics inculcated to young children

Personality characteristics desired	Old Parents (N=18)				Middle Age Parents (N=18)				Young Parents (N=18)			
	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%	M	F	Total	%
Self-reliant	7	8	15	83.3	4	6	10	55.6	5	3	8	44.4
Courage	9	9	18	100	7	6	13	72.2	4	3	7	38
Cooperative	9	9	18	100	4	3	7	38	3	2	5	27.8
Industriousness	8	6	15	83.3	6	6	12	66.7	6	7	13	72
Generosity	3	9	12	66.7	3	9	12	66.7	3	8	7	38
Perseverance	6	7	13	72.2	7	5	12	66.7	6	7	13	72
Trustworthiness	5	6	11	61	4	6	10	55.6	3	5	7	38

Responses as per table 7 indicate some commonalities in the personality characteristics desired in children across all three categories of parents, though they differ in frequency. As the findings indicate, the traits most desired by the all parents regardless of age group were cooperative, generosity and trustworthiness. In Salakana (2004), childrearing practices in sub-saharan Africa, found that in Nigiria, there was a clear expectation that the child should be borne “good”. A good child is one who follows cultural traditions and care for the parents.

## **5. Conclusion**

In this paper, I have highlighted major changes that have been experienced in child care and upbringing practice among Chagga community in Hai district. These changes have brought significant alteration in many child care and upbringing aspects such as breastfeeding patterns, child work socialization, child care arrangement and even the child personality development. Much of old age child care and upbringing practices have disappeared. As these changes in the family and society are certain to continue, alternative methods of childrearing that incorporate the good indigenous care practices into the new emerging ones have to be created. Families and communities cannot retire to the past but only adapt to the future, knowing well that modernity, technology and globalization are inescapable realities in child rearing.

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**THE EFFECT OF TEACHING PRACTICES IN TRAINING ADULT  
EDUCATION FACILITATORS TOWARDS THE SUCCESS OF ADULT  
BASIC EDUCATION AND TRAINING (ABET) CENTRES IN THE  
NORTH WEST PROVINCE (NWP) IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Abstract**

This study investigated the effect of teaching practise in training adult education facilitators towards success of teaching and learning in the Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) centres in North West Province (NWP), South Africa. The study was conducted at two ABET learning centres using qualitative research approach. The ABET centres were chosen based on diverse geographic locations and socio-economic characteristics. Data were collected using focus group discussions with learners, while individual and open-ended interviews were held with facilitators; and class observations were carried out to collect data on class activities.

Findings revealed that lack of professional development and poor teaching practices when preparing ABET facilitators lead to undesired consequences in professionalization of adult education in South Africa. As a result, it caused a disjuncture in training and preparation of ABET facilitators as well as their actual facilitation job, which they execute in the ABET centres. In addition, the study found divergences in the ABET implementation policies and reality of ABET facilitators

practices in the teaching centres. ABET centres were battling with an inadequate curriculum; underpayment and lack of medical, pension as well as other benefits to facilitators; and absence of professional development programmes necessary for increasing the knowledge base, skill including expertise of the facilitators. The paper concludes by recommending that adult education programmes that are offered in higher learning institutions need to be aligned with learners' needs. Also, the ABET program needs to be revamped for it to be functional, effective and be able to address inequalities as well as shortages of skills at ground level.

**Key words:** *teaching practice, curriculum, learning environment, resources, and pedagogy.*

## **Introduction**

This article challenges the current approach that has been adopted in the ABET centres resulting in constraining ABET learners to formal education and learning. Formal education in this paper refers to a hierarchically structured, chronologically graded educational system (Goel and Goel, 2007: 35; Merriam, Caffarella and Baumgarther, 2007: 60). ABET classes start from primary school (ABET level one) through Grade 9 (ABET level four) in terms of ABET Act 52 of 2000. The ABET curriculum is divided into contents with a variety of specialised programmes for full time learning. Classes are run from Monday to Thursday. However, it should be noted that the specialised programmes here refer to school subjects. The National Qualification Framework (NQF) has created opportunities for development for ABET learners. The ABET system in South Africa is a duplication of formal public and private school education system. ABET learners are taught school-based subjects such as life orientation, literacy, numeracy, travelling as well as tourism, human and social sciences (HSS), Mathematics and English. ABET is failing to provide individual adult learners with skills that are required for socio-economic and political participation including transformations as promised in the DoE policy of 1997. South Africa is faced with the challenge of scarcity of work employment and shortages of skills amongst the adult population (Statistics, 2012: xvi; Department of Labour, 2013-2014:2). Statistics in South Africa (Quarter 1, 2014: v) reveal that between Quarter 4 of 2013 and Quarter 1 of 2014, employment decreased by 12 200 and that was caused by decrease in 110 000 jobs in the informal sector. The private sector and the agriculture industries scaled down 14,000 and 5,000, jobs respectively.

Adult learners are given an opportunity to choose their career paths and also to move from one band of the education system to another without forfeiting credits (White Paper, 1995). However, such formalisation of ABET is a theory. In reality, ABET learners need to meet the NQF set requirements and standards before they can progress to another learning level. The aim of this article is to create space for voices of ABET learners in as far as the ABET curriculum is concerned in order to challenge the agency and reproduction of inequitable practices in the adult education system. According to McArthur (2013) as well as Giroux and Giroux (2004), “critical pedagogy asserts that the relationship between pedagogy and politics is two way; not only is pedagogy political, but pedagogy provides the knowledge and abilities through which individuals can see themselves as political agents and act accordingly.” Pedagogy in this paper refers to issues related to goals, objectives and design approach: instructional strategies and [teaching] tactics (Watkins 2014:48). It is argued that preparation of facilitators is key during the teaching practice phase. Teaching practice, on the other hand, in this paper, refers to preparation of facilitators for their facilitation jobs by their institute of higher learning such as universities. For Thomas (2004:125), facilitator’s education implies a broader focus on skills, processes, knowledge and understanding. Therefore, facilitators are expected to be professionals and specialists in their teaching fields. Morais (2002:559-560) explains that, “pedagogic discourses as a set of rules that regulate the transmission/acquisition of scientific knowledge.” She (*ibid.*) further argues that, “pedagogic discourses refers not only to the scientific contents and competences to be transmitted, but also to their transmission and evaluation that refers to what is transmitted, how it is transmitted, and also which student realisations are considered legitimate.” Accordingly, it can be noted

that ABET facilitators require certain skills in order to engage with pedagogic discourses that are offered in ABET centres.

Training of facilitators has resulted in numerous challenges such as under-qualification and under-preparedness of facilitators to teach. It is argued in this paper that facilitators lack critical skills to challenge the teaching of school subjects to adult learners. It is also argued that learning for individual adult learners in the ABET centres should be focused in solving day-to-day practical problems that are related to learners' needs as opposed to learning structured school subjects. Juuko (2011:77) noted that effective adult learning is largely dependent upon appropriateness of the content and context to learners' realities. The challenge with offering formal education in ABET centres is that "formal education, whether it be in a public school or post-secondary institutions has its primary mission; that is, to serve youth" (Merriam *et. al.*, 2007:30). Knowles (1980: 43-44) tried to distinguish differences between adult learning and child learning whereby it argued that adult learners are concerned about developing increased competence to achieve their full potential in life and about the immediate application of knowledge and skills. In contrast, children learn for future use (*ibid.*).

According to the South African Technical Reports for 2009, adults are failing more than one subject per academic year. Very few have completed the Grade 12 certificate on time. Therefore, it implies that in most cases, adult learners are repeating grades and that there is a high failure rate among ABET learners. Vivian (2010:23) argues that time constraints in the ABET centres result in an examination focused programme that is irrelevant and inflexible to learners' needs. Time constrain in this case means the two hours that ABET facilitators are

expected to utilise in teaching from Mondays to Thursdays. The author argues that adult education by nature has the mandate of empowering adult learners from their disadvantageous current situation. Empowerment here refers to personal change whereby those affected whether or not by the politics of the past, their background, gender and socio-economic factors determine about aspects important to them and about skills they need to acquire to make their visions possible. Adult learners come to be taught in the ABET centres because of different needs and interests. Most learners found in the adult learning centres are forced by push factors and different responsibilities that come with being an adult. It should be noted that in the past, adult education was mainly associated with elderly people who did not benefit from formal education. However, this has changed now because the age of adult learners in the ABET centres and their learning needs are diverse. Some adults participate in learning because of specific purposes such that others participate because they want to acquire new qualifications or improve their existing qualifications (Fasokun, Katohoire and Oduran, 2005: 39).

The author argues that people in the higher political echelons and department of education in South Africa decide on what ABET learners should learn, and how they should learn it. Frere (1988:83 and 84) referred to such kind of behaviour as “the banking line of planning programme content from the top down.” The author argues that the current adult education curriculum approach does not correspond to adult learners’ needs nor of their communities.

According to Lengrad (1976:79), experience proved that adult education cannot follow paths laid out by traditional teaching methods

intended for children. The formal learning system that was developed for the younger generation, mostly of the age group between 17 and 24 is for various technical, professional and vocational stream activities. Knowles (1980) acknowledged that adult learners bring a vast knowledge and a large reservoir of experiences to the classroom. Therefore, it is unfair to confine them to a structured formal school curriculum. The author further argues that ABET is failing to reach its fundamental goal defined in the Department of Education (DoE) Policy document as follows:

“Adult basic education and training is the general conceptual foundation towards Lifelong learning and development, comprising knowledge, skills attitudes required for Social, economic and political participation and transformations applicable to a range of contexts. ABET is flexible, developmental and targeted at the specific needs of particular audiences and, ideally provides access to nationally recognized certificates.

The acronyms ABET and ABE and the concept of adult education, as they are used in this article to mean one thing in this article – the learning programmes that are designed for adult learners who attend school in ABET learning centres. According to chapter 2, Bill of Rights, Constitution of the Republic of South Africa: Education 29, (1), everyone has the right to a basic education, including adult basic education, as well as further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible (Education for all country Report, 2010:10).The White Paper of 1995

clarifies that “the right to basic education applies to all persons that includes all children, youth and adults.”

### **Statement of the problem**

ABET facilitators are not adequately trained for their jobs. They lack knowledge and in-depth understanding of the 21<sup>st</sup> century issues faced by Adult Basic Education and Training as a profession. Lack of Professional development programmes for ABET facilitators intensifies challenges in lack of teaching and knowledge base of school subjects that they are tasked to teach. Therefore, the study intended to find out Consequences of Poor Teaching Practices in Training Adult Education Facilitators.

### **Theoretical framework**

The role of critical theory in this paper is embedded in the critical social re-constructivism paradigm in adult basic education and training. The critical social reconstructivism paradigm enables ABET learners to be constantly aware of structures of power that shape a societal fabric, that conscientise social reconstructionists to stress the need for learners to critically question human rights violations, and challenge the *status quo* of the dominant society that has been transmitted to them via the educational system (Kanpol, 1999; McLaren, 1999). Critical theory perspectives are concerned with empowering human beings to transcend constraints placed on them by race, class and gender (Creswell, 2013:30). Brookfield (2005: 2) explains that critical theory draws on Marxist scholarship to illuminate ways in which people accept as normal a world characterised by massive inequalities and the systematic exploitation of many by few.

The education system in South Africa views learning in the ABET centres in a reductionist manner whereby achievement is equated with standardised test scores and results. Staying on the path provided for them by SAQA, White Paper of 1995; ABET Act 52 of 2000; and the General and further Education and training Qualifications framework of 2011. Mills (2000: 286) characterises those who effect such hegemony as “the ones who determine their duty, as well as the duties of those beneath them. They are not merely following orders; they give the orders.” Within such models, focus on self-reliance and empowerment can be subdued, even discouraged, and can subconsciously render subjects victims of poverty and subsequently, become perennial basket cases. However, it should be noted that this is against the notion of adult education. Adult education by its nature has to emancipate learners to be able to do what they were unable to do before they come into contact with their learning (Horkheimer, 1982: 244; Brookfield, 2005: 2).

### **What curriculum is being taught in ABET centres?**

Grundy (1987:5) defined curriculum as a “cultural construction and not a concept.” She (*ibid.*) further argued that a curriculum is a way of organising a set of human educational practices. Therefore, the curriculum is concerned with learners and facilitators’ experiences as a sequence of their existence. Ladson-Billings and Brown (2008:168) argue that a “curriculum is related to the content or subject matter rather than to pedagogical practice or school wide and/or institutional practices or to the larger social context of inequality and injustice based on racial, ethnic and cultural differences.”

In the South African context, inequalities were inherited from the apartheid era. For example, the practices of teaching in the ABET centres

observed in South Africa renders ABET centres a source of inequalities. The under-prepared and unprepared facilitators are tasked to teach black learners from poor socio-economic backgrounds. This confirms that methods used to deliver curriculum that was previously based on racial inequality has not been changed in the ABET centres. During the apartheid era, under-qualified teachers taught black learners. ABET attracts individuals mainly from the black and poor communities. Nieto, Bode, Kang and Raible (2008:176) explain that the curriculum can be regarded as “including not only texts, but also other instructional materials, programmes, projects, physical environments for learning, interactions among teachers and students, and all the intended and unintended messages about expectations, hopes and dreams that students, their communities, and schools have about student learning and the very purpose of schools.”

Levin (2008:8) holds that, “curriculum is defined as an official statement of what students are expected to know and be able to do.” In this context, the ABET curriculum refers to official activities that are included in policy documents that frame activities of ABET practitioners. They are articulated in the ABET Act 52 of 2000. It is the official description of what learners are supposed to do in ABET centres. It includes issues related to teaching, assessment and examinations. According to Apple (2008:25), curriculum as part of the educational process is “the major mechanism through which power is maintained and challenged.” This is true in the unequal society of ABET centres investigated in this study. Given the presented explanation about challenges faced by ABET centres, the author views the teaching approach taken by adult education and the curriculum in particular as “a site of conflict about the kind of knowledge that is and should be taught, about whose

knowledge is official, and about who has the right to decide what is to be taught, how it is organised as well as how teaching and learning are to be evaluated (Apple 2008: 25).

### **Research methodology**

This study was conducted in two ABET learning centres in North West Province, South Africa using a qualitative research approach. Two different cases were used as the research methodology. Purposive sampling was used to select the two ABET centres and research respondents. The ABET centres were chosen because of their diverse geographic locations and socio-economic characteristics. One is in a rural area and the other in an urban area. Thus, 15 ABET learners were purposively selected from ABET level 1 and from level 4. Then 8 facilitators involved in teaching level 1 formed part of the sample. Data were collected using focus groups discussions with learners; individual and open-ended interviews were held with facilitators. Also the researcher used class observations to collect data on class activities. Ethical procedures were followed in the study. Ethical clearance was received from the Department of Adult Education of the North West Province and the College of Education at the University of South Africa. Rigour of data was ensured by triangulating the responses from research participants, learners and facilitators.

### **Research questions**

The main research question that guided the study was formulated as, “How is teaching practise of adult education facilitators contributing towards success of teaching and learning in the ABET centres in the North West Province (NWP) in South Africa?”

## **Findings**

### **ABET facilitators' Profile**

This study revealed four main characteristics of the ABET facilitators including the following: 1) all facilitators who participated in this study were trained by an institute of higher learning in education; (ii) Most of the ABET facilitators who were interviewed lacked pedagogic skills and expertise; (iii) All facilitators who participated in the study had Diploma in Adult Education and they did not have any other qualifications to enhance their knowledge-base as well as excellence in facilitation skills; and (iv) Facilitators were not trained and grounded in pedagogies of school subjects that they were offering in the classrooms.

### **Qualifications of facilitators**

All 8 ABET facilitators had a Diploma in ABET and they did not have any other qualifications to enhance their excellence in facilitation. The facilitators were not trained to teach school subjects that they were offering in the ABET centres. ABET facilitators are unable to pay for extra professional development because they are earning very little amount of money, which is paid out depending on the number of hours that they have spent teaching.

One of them reported that, "I only have a diploma in ABET."

The facilitators were not trained and grounded in the pedagogies of the school subjects that they were offering in the classroom. Instead, their matric/Grade 12 results were used as a deciding factor.

One had this to say, "I am teaching maths and science. I think they used my Matric results to decide on what I can teach in this centre."

Another facilitator said this about her specialisation in ABET and the school subject she was offering,

“I studied ABET. I was majoring in Environmental education, but in this centre I am offering life-orientation and English. I think they used my Grade 12 results to decide on the subjects that I should teach.”

Another facilitator expressed her frustration in teaching ABET level 4 learners. The challenge was due to the fact that high school drop-outs share the same learning space with the ‘illiterate learners; learners who have never been to any formal school setting.’

“It is a serious challenge for me to teach these learners because the high school drop-outs understand the content better and faster than the other group. They get delayed in their learning when I am busy with the slower group of learners.”

“I am unhappy with my job because I am being under-paid. When I compare my salary with my counterparts in other provinces such as the Free State and Gauteng there is a huge difference and yet we are doing the same job. The salaries from the NWP are very low. My salary is causing conflicts at home and I can’t have medical aid. I’m working on one year contract, and I have to renew it every year. I’m stressed as a centre manager.”

“I am working as a contract worker.”

“I work as a temporary staff and my job does not have a guarantee. Also I can’t even apply for a loan.”

“I am working with a contract, the information that is in the contracts is not the same. The first contract that I have signed the salaries were adjusted and increased, after that we were called and told that we have signed the wrong forms. In the second form the salaries were reduced, the information was not the same with the first form. Every time when we renew a contract we have to get an increment but instead the opposite is happening.”

The researcher looked through the curriculum that facilitators studied in their higher institute of learning and compared it with school books as well as work schedules they used in the classrooms and realised that the ABET curriculum is organised and packaged in form of school subjects. The curriculum offered in ABET centres follows the same pattern like in public and private schools. The curriculum is organised and packaged by the Department of Education (DoE), and the facilitator’s job is to implement it. Summative assessment is used in ABET centres. ABET learners are expected to complete activities that contribute towards their final year pass mark. They also write final examinations at the end of the year and in June.

The researcher also observed that ABET facilitators were using mainly facilitator/teacher-centred methods of facilitating/teaching. That may be was largely due to the way the desk and chairs/furnishings inside the classrooms were arranged. It made it impossible for the facilitators to use other teaching methods.

## **Discussions**

ABET centres are battling with an inadequate curriculum. The curriculum in ABET centres is compartmentalised into subjects/learning areas that students refer to as skills. As such, the curriculum in ABET centres reflects what is happening in wider society and reproduces the inequalities inherited from the apartheid era during Bantu education. In the South African economy, provision of ABET has focused on the development of school knowledge instead of technical and vocational skills. Although no learners were seen with textbooks in the centres, reviewed literature revealed that textbooks are a dominant device in which knowledge is passed on to learners apart from the teachers (Apple, 2005). In the centres, facilitators are producing very little knowledge. Accordingly, Adult Education and Training have a vital role to play in providing quality learning opportunities for out-of-school youth and adults, whose learning was affected negatively and who have been as well as may still be disadvantaged as a result of past and existing social inequalities related to class, race, gender, age and disability (ABET Gazzatte.2015: 5). Therefore, the curriculum is not about aspects, which make it up. As noted by Grundy (1987:6), what constitute the curriculum from a “cultural perspective” are educational experiences that will take into consideration people’s past experiences, and promote transformative human development. Such a view of the curriculum is in line with the study’s purpose in that education and training in ABET centres is to provide learners with educational experiences that are transformative, emancipatory and enable them to develop a critical consciousness about themselves as well as their surroundings. However, if facilitators lack pedagogical experiences of the subjects they are tasked to teach in the ABET centres, it will be difficult for them to draw

from their educational and pedagogical experiences to influence as well as drive individual ABET learners “to take control of their lives in an autonomous and responsible way” (Grundy 1987: 19).

The researcher did not find many textbooks either in the classrooms or with learners and teachers. Interactions among learners and between learners as well as facilitators were almost non-existent. This shows that in terms of pedagogy, ABET centres leave a lot to be desired. It was also observed that there were very few teaching and learning materials that compromised effective teaching and learning in ABET centres. Knowledge is what education is all about (Slavin 2008: 7). Facilitator’s content knowledge is necessary but it is not a sufficient condition for learners’ education. Facilitators cannot teach what they do not know ( Paul 2013: 24).

“We have few charts to use but, we don’t have for literacy and numeracy classes. We have books only in the higher level, L3 and L4. There is shortage of Maths, Setswana, and Life Orientation books.”

“The department of education provides us with books but these books are not enough for all learners. Last year, only level 4 were provided with books, but still books were not enough for all the learners. As a result, learners were forced to share.”

Under-preparedness of ABET facilitators results in negative consequences such as high drop-out rates during winter and social grants pay-out dates. In rural areas, learners prefer to work as seasonal workers rather than to attend classes.

“There is a high drop-out in this centre during winter. This is because of grape harvests in Kakamas.”

“During winter the attendance drops because of the cold weather.”

“They don’t come to school during grants pay-outs.”

Facilitators were not properly equipped to meet classroom their learners’ needs. Facilitators need to be continuously developed or rather, be engaged in practice development in order to be effective in their job. It was also revealed that education that facilitators are receiving is incomplete such that it is lacking and it does not prepare facilitators effectively for their “real world of work.” As noted in the document of ILO/UNESCO (2008:3), “[the] quality of [facilitators] and teaching is essential to good learning outcomes.” The researcher noted with concern that facilitators who received mediocre training in their higher learning found it difficult to excel in their work. Facilitators exposed to poor training have poor understanding of the content. Their understanding of the content is weak and limited.

Thomas, (2004: 124) argues that training received by facilitators defines the facilitation as “a process used to help facilitators develop their skills, competences, judgement and theoretical grounding.” However, in this study, the researcher notes with concern that facilitators who received mediocre training in their higher learning find it difficult to excel in their work and their teaching will be mediocre simply because they do not have enough skills to teach the content. Their understanding of the content will be weak and limited and instead, the curriculum that is given to ABET learners “will serve to silence them” (Apple *et.*

*al.*, 2009:68). Facilitators are unable to engage and criticise the ABET curriculum that is prepared by the DoE. Hence, the quality of teaching and learning in ABET centres is compromised.

Sargeant, Hill and Breau (2010: 126) explain that learning through the facilitation process is “constructivist in nature, [it] occurs through interactions with each other and learners construct and make their own meaning.” They (*ibid.*) further explain that facilitating requires the facilitator to shift from a didactic to a more interactive approach and such shift requires certain skills like creating supportive learning environments, promoting team formation and conflict resolution. Given the current state of ABET centres in the NWP where facilitators are unprepared to teach, it is highly unlikely that critical thinking, reflecting on learning and reflexive learning can take place.

Most ABET facilitators who were interviewed in this study do not have any other qualifications to enhance their excellence in facilitating. Facilitators need to be continuously developed or rather, be engaged in practice development in order to be effective in their job. “Practice development is a continuous process of developing person-centred cultures. Facilitators who authentically engage with individuals and teams to blend personal qualities and creative imagination with practice skills and practice wisdom enable it. The learning that occurs brings about transformations of individual and team practices. This is sustained by embedding both processes and outcomes in cooperate strategy” (Maney, McCormark and Wilson, 2008:9 cited in Hardy, Bolster, Teresa and Yalden, 2011:38). “Facilitation is a key factor in ensuring the success of class discussions” (Wang and Chen, 2010:247). What transpired during the structured interviews with the facilitators

was that ABET facilitators were trained and grounded in teaching of adults and they were introduced to andragogy but not to the packaged, school subjects that they were now offering in their field of work.

## **Conclusion**

This article reveals challenges that ABET as an education system is battling with are inadequate, and irrelevant curriculum, teaching content, and methodologies provided to ABET facilitators by their training institutions of higher learning. ABET facilitators are untrained and underprepared and they are also lacking in their training including pedagogies of teaching the school subjects that they were responsible for in the two ABET centres that participated in this study. The facilitators who were working in ABET centres were not well-equipped to teach the diverse learners found in ABET classrooms. The other concern was that the ABET curriculum offered in ABET centres does not address ABET learners' needs.

## **Recommendations**

- i) Adult education facilitators should be provided with permanent jobs just like any other teaching professions.
- ii) Adult education programmes that are offered in higher learning institutions need to be aligned with learners' needs.
- iii) The whole ABET system needs to be overhauled for it to be functional, effective and be able to address inequalities including shortages of skills at ground level, and also to close the huge gap that exists between the rich and the poor.
- iv) Establishment of physical learning facilities/structures that will belong to only adult learners is urgently needed. This will enable ABET centres to have their own resources.

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