

# Teacher Education by Open and Distance Learning: Experiences and Lessons of the 1970s and Prospects of MOEC'S Current Teacher Education and Professional Development Initiatives

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**Abstract:** *The Open and Distance Learning (ODL) approach to Grade C Teacher Education, which was adopted in the 1970s in Tanzania produced teachers who, research studies have shown to be as "good" as those trained in the residential Teachers Colleges three years after graduation. The ODL strategy was used to meet at least initially, the quantitative UIPE demands, their quality notwithstanding. Concerns were raised in due course regarding the quality of the teaching force being prepared and in 1978 a special committee was appointed to look into it. Measures were taken to improve the training including lengthening the period of the residential training from 2 to 4 years and an improvement of the Open and Distance Approach program. The current drive towards UIPE by 2006 is more demanding than the 1974 one; not only quantitatively but also in regard to their academic and professional quality. MOEC's holistic approach to the supply of the urgently needed teachers is commendable and is moving in the right direction but must pay heed not only to lessons learnt during the 1970s as a guide to appropriate planning and implementation but also to the recommendations made in this paper if the new initiative is to succeed.*

## INTRODUCTION

The policy of the Government of Tanzania regarding teacher education and training is to produce well-qualified and professionally trained primary school teachers. Despite such policy the authorities concerned have at specific periods found themselves ambivalent in respect of quality of teachers. The first few years of independence did not witness any changes in teacher education except for the abolition of all forms of discrimination.

The First Five Year Development Plan 1964/65 to 1968/669 witnessed Government intention to train Grade A teachers with the purpose of making all schools operate fully from standard I to VII (URT, 1972). This decision was a recognition of the fact that the Grade "C" and "B" teachers were not able to teach pupils in the upper classes of primary education. Ultimately, the objective was to provide Universal Primary Education by 1989.

Before the end of the First Five Year Development Plan some political decisions were taken, which influenced the nature and trend of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Five Year Development Plan. The enunciation of the Arusha Declaration with its socialist ideology was a major change in the minds of Tanzanians as it aimed at

changing their attitudes from capitalism to socialism. The new ideology triggered off a chain of reforms especially in the education sector. The recruitment of teacher trainees with varied qualifications to meet the large number of required teachers was a clear sign that "quality", which was previously emphasized was no longer central to the preparation of teachers. The demand for a large number of teachers seemed to override the issue of quality. Quality deterioration became a serious concern in the late seventies. A six - member committee was appointed to look into the quality issue, which among other things culminated into the Presidential Commission on Education, the recommendations of which were adopted in 1984. The shift in policies was due to political decisions in regard to what was considered expedient.

As from 1985 education was no longer free as beneficiaries including teacher trainees were required to meet at least part of the cost of their education and training. The cost sharing policy had negative effects on the development, quality and quantity of education.

The Education and Training Policy (ETP) 1995 constitutes an attempt to improve among other things the quality of teacher education provision in the nation. Too many school age children were out of school and teachers were in short supply, worsened by the growing number of their deaths due to the killer disease; Aids. The Ministry of Education and Culture plans are such that Universal Primary Education is achieved by 2006 (Mungai, 2001). To this effect, a large number of teachers (48,000) are required to be trained through a crash program akin to the one of the 1970s but modified in such a way that trainees spend one year in college and another year under in-service condition (Basic Education Development Committee, 2001 P.7). The question then is whether the strategy can produce quality teachers, who are capable, effective and professionally competent! Are there any lessons from the experiences of the seventies, which can lead us to believe that an improvement in the trainees' effectiveness is realized when they are effectively addressed?

#### **THE OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The overall objective of this study is to review the Grade "C" Teacher Training by the Distance Learning during the 1970s and on the basis of the lessons learned to assess the current MOEC initiative for teacher education and professional development. More specifically, the study aims to do the following:

- (a) Outline Tanzania's Grade C teacher training experiences by Distance learning during the seventies;
- (b) evaluate the open and distance learning approach as experienced in the 1970s;
- (c) outline MOEC's current initiative for the preparation of primary school teachers including their professional development;
- (d) evaluate MOEC's current initiative for primary school teachers education and their professional development; and
- (e) Draw up recommendations for the improvement of MOEC's current initiative for primary school teachers education and professional development.

## METHODS OF STUDY

Evaluating programmes necessarily involves review of documents pertaining to the area/subject of study. The first category of documents to be reviewed were those related to the training of Grade C teachers through the residential and school based distance programmes. In this evaluation of documents one can find three types of evaluation reports. There are those which have been written by the Ministry of Education and Culture, which highlight the implementation of the programme, including the problems encountered and the successes scored. They could be described as self-evaluation reports. Unless self-evaluations are well designed with built-in check mechanisms they can be biased towards showing only the good things and playing down the shortfalls. Such biases are safeguards to officials who might otherwise be held accountable for not attaining the set targets. They are reports, which must be read with some caution. These include among others, descriptive texts such as yearly reports, the implementation reports and monitoring reports. Documents reviewed on this study included the 1971 – 75 combined annual report, the 1976 - 1980 combined annual report and the 1989 MOEC report on the implementation of the Universal Primary Education.

For purposes of validity, self-evaluated reports must be checked against other well designed and objectively evaluated ones. In this context the MOEC reports were checked against evaluation reports done by independent researchers or for academic purposes in which case the supervising lecturers and professors ensured adequate objectivity. The second set of evaluation reports are those which were done by students for their further degrees, mostly masters and doctorates. Two of these studies were done by Galabawa (1979) and Chale (1983).

The third category of evaluative and research reports reviewed in this study comprise those, which were found to be well designed and scientifically carried out. These comprise studies carried out individually or collaboratively with academic institutions and sponsored by either the same academic institutions or by other organizations. Such study reports include Omari et al. (1983) Mahlick and Temu (1989), Ishumi (1993), Mbunda and Mbise (1993) and Wort (1998). These studies were reviewed to provide the necessary information and data for the study in question. The main findings from the evaluation and implementation reports mentioned above highly support each other regarding the distance learning experiences of the late seventies, which enhance consistency, validity and reliability.

Policy documents were also reviewed because they are relevant to the study. They include the 1967 Arusha Declaration (AD), the 1967 Education for Self-Reliance (ESR), the 1970 Adult-Education Year, 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Five-Year Development Plans, the 15<sup>th</sup> National Executive Committee (NEC) of Tanganyika African National Union (TANU), the Presidential Commission on Education (PCE) report, whose recommendations were adopted in 1984, the Education and Training Policy (1995), Basic Education Master Plan (BEMP), the Basic Education Development Plan (2002-2006) and the Pre-Service and In-Service teacher education and professional development initiative documents in their draft form. They include the pre-service and in-service plans, the curriculum and

monitoring, examinations, testing and assessment. The evaluation of the MOEC recent initiative towards teacher education and professional development is gauged against the declared policy of quality teacher education and professional development as stipulated in the Education Sector Development Programme against the background of the lessons learned during the experiences of the seventies.

## **POLICY CONTEXT**

The enunciation of the Arusha Declaration (AD) in 1967 with its ideology of socialism and Self-Reliance triggered off a chain of reforms and policies, which influenced teacher education and training. The Education for Self-Reliance (1967), the Adult Education Year (1970), the Decentralization Policy (1972), the Party's Musoma resolutions (1974) on Democratization of Primary Education by 1977, the Villagelization Policy and the abolition of the selective standard IV examinations all together had far reaching implications for education, training and supply of teachers.

The ESR policy required teachers to be re-oriented towards the demands of the new educational philosophy and national ideology and that new trainees had to be sensitized to the demands of Education for Self-Reliance. The Adult Education Year (1970) and the Tanganyika African national Union (TANU) 15<sup>th</sup> Biennial Conference Resolutions of 1971, which demanded among other things, the stepping up of functional literacy campaigns so as to make adult literacy an important component of basic Education.

All these policies banked on the primary school teachers for their implementation and success. Consequently, primary school teachers had extra duties to perform not only in the eradication of illiteracy among adults but also providing continuing education to the new literates in addition to their normal duties. The Decentralization Policy drew a lot of teachers from the system, a practice which aggravated the problem of shortage of teachers. The villagisation policy, which aimed at settling people in villages had by 1977 completed 75% of the work; a measure which put a tremendous pressure on the Party and the Government to provide facilities for services they had promised including education, health, water and electricity to the people already settled in villages. The thorniest problem was the need for education, a promise which the Government had to honour and, which the Party and Government believe to be a basic human right.

The Musoma Resolutions required the Government to ensure that Universal Primary Education was achieved by 1977, implying the need to supply a lot of teachers for achieving that objective. The abolition of the selective standard IV examinations in 1974 allowed all children to go through from standard I to standard VII. As a result, enrolment grew steadily, which in turn called for an increased number of teachers (Wort 1998). As a result of all these policies and practices enrolment increased from 1,228,886 in 1974 to 2,194,213 in 1977, to 3,553,144 in 1981. This picture portrays the gravity of the demand for teachers. How this demand could be met was a policy question that had to be answered.

Many suggestions were made by the Ruling Party concerning how teachers could be obtained to achieve the set policy objectives; Universal Primary Education and a literate nation. According to TANU National Executive Committee:

*“One way of increasing the number of teachers without necessarily increasing the number of teacher-training colleges is to use some of the students in the higher classes, particularly secondary school students to teach pupils, who are in lower classes. Such an approach is not new in the education field, for it was actually tried in this country several years ago and it is in fact being practiced today in some other countries, such as Cuba” (TANU in PED No. 3 1976 (p.6).*

One thing to bear in mind is that measures aimed at making UPE a success had the full backing of the Party and the Government. The Ministry of Education and Culture responded to the mounting pressures and challenges in various ways including using form four and form six leavers to teach on temporary basis though short lived, deploying retired teachers on short contracts, shortening the training duration, lowering the entry qualifications to get more candidates for pre-service training and the more radical was the adoption of the strategy of training primary school teachers through the Open and Distance Learning method in addition to the regular College-Based training (Mahlick and Temu, 1989).

### **Organization**

Part one of this paper describes and evaluates the Teacher Education Programme by Open and Distance Teacher Education Programme as implemented in the 1970s.

Part two describes the recent initiative of the Ministry of Education and Culture to provide Teacher Education and Professional Development through the Open and Distance Learning strategy.

Part three discusses the current initiative based on lessons learned in the experiences of the 1970s and draws some Precommendations for the improvement of MOEC's initiatives.

### **The Open and Distance Learning by Teacher Trainees in Part One: the 1970s**

The inability of the 31 Teacher Training Colleges to train the large number of primary school teachers to meet the objectives of the Universal Primary Education policy forced the Ministry of Education and Culture to adopt the distance mode of training teachers, which was believed to have the following assumed advantages:

- The trainees would stay at home a measure, which would reduce accommodation costs (boarding);
- The Primary School teachers would assist the Grade C teacher trainees without extra remuneration, a measure, which would reduce training and tuition costs further, and

- Water, electricity, and other facilities would not have to be paid for as trainees would live in their village home environments, where such services are in most cases “free”.

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

- (a) The programme was designed to:
- Be non-residential except for the 6 weeks in the final year;
  - Take three years duration; and
  - Involve the following processes;
    - Face to face instruction; (ii) correspondence lessons;
    - Practical teaching as part of the training;
    - Radio broadcast on the same topics to reinforce learning;
    - The use of audio cassette programme; generally recorded in advance; and
    - 6 weeks College based residential training at the end of the final year.
- (b) The following factors were perceived to facilitate the Open and Distance Approach to teacher education and supply as a feasible and viable alternative.
- Exposure of teacher trainees to real situations, which enabled trainees to face real and concrete problems needing contextual solutions, which they were expected to provide;
  - The theories and methods of teaching were directly complemented by field practice and vice versa; a practice, which was expected to reinforce learning;
  - The capacity of the Distance strategy to train a large number of primary school teachers over a short period of time; which served as an important motivating factor to the achievement of the UPE objectives;
  - A large number of teachers who could be produced cost-effectively and efficiently compared to the residentially trained ones; as they also provided teaching services in the process of getting trained;
  - Full political and Government support to the programme; and;
  - External financial and moral support especially from Sida, United Nation’s Organs and other organizations.

### *Involvement of Stake-holders*

- (a) The Ministry of Education and Culture involved the following organs in implementing the Open and Distance Teacher Education strategy.
  - (i) The Tanzania Institute of Education for its role in preparing the curriculum, syllabuses, monitoring and their evaluation;
  - (ii) The Department of Correspondence Studies of the Adult Education Department for its experience and expertise in mounting campaigns for adult education and preparing correspondence courses and materials;
  - (iii) The Prime Minister's office, Regional Administration and Local Government for the actual selection of candidates and training them in their areas of jurisdiction; while offering their co-operation, commitment and support, which were essential for the success of the programme.
- (b) As implementers, these organs had the important role of cooperating with the Ministry of Education and Culture from which they received guidelines regarding:
  - (i) Selection procedures of the trainees;
  - (ii) Choice of training centres for the program;
  - (iii) The number of trainees as per training centre;
  - (iv) Accessibility to trainees, trainers and acquisition of training materials;
  - (v) Facilitation of arrangements for workshops/seminars by MOEC in collaboration with the Tanzania Institute of Education regarding training of trainers who would then take charge of trainees,
  - (vi) The Ruling Party's cooperation and support at the grassroots level for its very important and critical role concerning the success of the program;
  - (vii) The conduct of zonal seminars for training trainers;
  - (viii) The creation of Task Force Committee for the monitoring of the programme's progress and to take timely corrective measures where and when necessary.

### *Training Programme Procedures*

A cascade Model was adopted for executing the training processes. As

observed by Mahlck and Temu (1989) the programme had the following features:

- (i) The selection of trainers;
- (ii) Seminar for the training of trainers,
- (iii) The zonal residential seminars for the training of these who were to train to the grade C teacher trainees;
- (iv) The selection of the trainees;
- (v) The preparation of the curriculum and the correspondence materials;
- (vi) The training process;
- (vii) The monitoring and evaluation of the programme.

### *Selection and Training of National Trainers*

A one-week seminar was held at Chang'ombe College of Education in Dar es Salaam to train trainers. Participants were drawn from colleges of Education, Ministry of Education and Culture, Institute of Adult Education and Education offices at regional and district levels. The criteria for their selection were:

- Academic and professional competence;
- Teaching experience; and
- Tommitment to the success of the national cause for Universalization of Primary Education (UPE)

The course was meant to capacity improve trainers ability to write good course materials; and to train the would be trainers of the distance trainees.

### *The Training of Trainers of Trainees*

Ward and Divisional Adults Education Coordinators, School Inspectors and Head Teachers were earmarked trainers of the programme's trainees on the basis of the following:

- (i) Their long experience as primary school teachers;
- (ii) Grade A teachers with not less than 5 years of teaching experience and;
- (iii) Had certificate course in Adult Education. The quality of the training rested on teachers with the above-mentioned qualifications and experience.

The training was organized at the zonal level and aimed at:

- (i) Equipping the trainers with knowledge, skills and strategies essential for producing professionally competent teachers;
- (ii) Creating an environment of awareness of the importance of programmed; and



- (iii) Promoting enthusiasm; and commitment to the success of the UPE programme.

The 2,400 trainers of trainees were to be prepared for two months in 11 grade A TTCs. The contents of the course was to involve Curriculum Analysis, maths, Kiswahili, how to teach adults, evaluation skills and strategies, and teaching through correspondence.

### *The Selection of Trainees*

Trainees were selected by a village or Ward Committee on the basis of:

- (i) Having completed full primary education;
- (ii) Have age limit of between 17 and 28 years;
- (iii) Must have participated in Adult Literacy or other national contributions like full National Service Training;
- (iv) Have an aptitude for and interest in becoming a teacher;
- (v) Have self discipline;
- (vi) Is industrious and; is a resident in the village in which the school is located.

The selection Committee had the following advantages over MOEC in selecting candidates for the Distance Teachers Training Programmed;

- (i) More knowledgeable about the potentialities of the would be trainees as they come from the same village;
- (ii) The committee would continue to interact with them and understand them even better after completion of their training. The Committee was also responsible for the discipline of the trainees.

### *Screening*

The initial selected number of trainees, 45,454 was deliberately larger than what the regions required (40,000) for reasons of guarding against attrition. The screening process included indepth interviews, examinations; scrutiny by the Ministry Education and Culture before they were finally and formally accepted for training with the objective of getting candidates, who are intellectually sound; and have great interest in the teaching profession.

### **THE TRAINING PROCESS**

The strategies which were used for training the teacher trainees were face-to-face sessions by Ward Education Officers, 3 hours air time of radio programmes per week, recorded audio cassettes in regions with poor radio

reception, films and correspondence materials through the post. The correspondence materials were jointly developed by:

- (a) Institute of Education (Tanzania Institute of Education) as it is known today;
- (b) Institute of Correspondence Education;
- (c) Tutors from the Teacher Training Colleges; and
- (d) MOEC officials. The compulsory subjects included primary education syllabus analysis, the teaching of Kiswahili; the teaching of Mathematics; and if time allowed the teaching of other subjects, resources permitting.

The training components included the following:

(i) *Face to face tuition*

The Ward Education Coordinator was required to spend 2 hours, three times per week on the basis of alternate days starting on Monday to Friday. Emphasis was placed on the theoretical knowledge and skills on how to teach a subject in the classroom as the practical part of it constitute their prescribed 15 teaching periods per week. Knowledge and skills imparted were expected to include: Preparation of teaching notes, making schemes of work, lesson preparation, setting of objectives, planning and evaluation of lessons.

(ii) *Radio broadcast and recorded audio cassettes*

The radio programmes were aired on the same days as trainees had face-to-face sessions with their tutors. They were meant to supplement and strengthen the correspondence units. Tutors were to guide trainees in the written assignments during and after the broadcast. The use of the same materials and content as found in the correspondence units was expected to reinforce trainees understanding.

(iii) *The correspondence*

Correspondence materials aimed at instilling among trainees the habit of searching for knowledge by reading at home; enhance the habit of building a home library; constitute an essential reading materials in the subjects mentioned above; as well as optional ones – English, Geography and Political Education.

Tutors were required to mark the worked out units, record their marks and hand them over to the District Authorities for record keeping and custody.

(iv) *Practical teaching*

Practical teaching throughout the training period was part and parcel of the programme; which aimed at enabling trainees to learn through practice - by doing, and in a realistic environment- facing real problems for which they could find solutions. Practical teaching involved 15 periods for the first year; 15 – 24 periods during the 2<sup>nd</sup> year; and up to 30 periods during the 3<sup>rd</sup> year. The head teacher, the tutor and the subject teachers were required to observe and assist trainees whenever it was deemed appropriate.

(v) *Using the environment and library*

Tutors were expected to motivate trainees such that they cultivate and develop positive and creative attitudes in using the environment as a resource for preparing teaching aids and for other ways of imparting knowledge and skills. The tutor maintained a mini-library, which trainees could use for independent reading.

(vi) *Residential courses*

At a later period during implementation of the programme the residential component was revisited and two weeks residential courses were added to year 1 and 2 over and above the 6 weeks residential course in Grade A TTCs during the 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

(vii) *Monitoring Progress*

The following in-built devices were meant to monitor the progress of the program:

- Visiting the training centre and inspecting teacher trainees by – school inspectors; tutors (WEC) Divisional, District and Regional Education officers and Itinerant Teacher Educators (ITE) from the Grade A TTCs in which the school was located;
- filling in special forms aimed at monitoring trainees' progress; yearly examinations;
- discipline reports from the Village Education Committee;
- special meetings at the district office, where MOEC officials, staff from the Department of Correspondence Studies in the Institute of Adult Education and Regional Education Officers were expected to attend and encourage trainees to work very hard on their studies.
- national examinations set, marked and graded by the national Examination Council of Tanzania to all finalists.

- The results of the 1976 evaluation show that some regions had poor radio reception, transport difficulties to WES of teaching/learning materials. The 1977 evaluation show that trainees were teaching 20 periods instead of the recommended 15 implying that trainees had little time left for their studies. It was also found that WES were doing a good job.

*(viii) Certification*

As there were no differences in the entry qualifications between Residential and Distance Teacher Trainees, so was the case for certification. Trainees in the both programmes had to get a pass in teaching practice; written examination as well as demonstrate commendable character and positive attitudes towards work.

*Assessment*

**(a) Strengths**

- (i) From 1976 to 1981 the program managed to produce 35,028 qualified teachers from a total enrolment of 45,534; wastage being about 10,000. Up to 1984 the programme produced 38,000 teachers with the "requisite" knowledge and professional skills to teach grades III and IV pupils as well as positive attitudes and values towards national ideals and norms.
- (ii) These 38,000 primary school teachers were trained cost – effectively because the cost of producing them was far cheaper than it would have been in Residential Colleges.
- (iii) Although procedures for the selection of candidates regarding age limits were not strictly adhered to on the average the newly qualified teachers had between 25 and 30 years, which was the compulsory retirement age before it was raised to 60 years about three years ago.
- (iv) More teachers were prepared for the rural than for urban schools. This is not surprising given the fact that urban areas are generally favoured when it comes to allocation of teachers from the TTCs because teachers are reluctant to work in the rural areas; largely due to their remoteness from the centres of social interaction and activities. So, it was the rural areas which were deficit of teachers.
- (v) The program enjoyed cooperation and support from local and the international community. Donation included 23 vehicles, 2057 bicycles 335 motor cycles, 2,400 tape recorders 24,000 tapes, 2,400 radios and tons of paper for the printing of copy books, primary school books and other instructional materials (MOEC, 1979).

- (vi) Training teachers through the TTCs would have taken about fourteen years to meet the demand as the 31 TTCs could enroll only 4,000 trainees per year.
  - (vii) The face-to-face tuition was rated high as 80% of the WECs found the strategy very effective.
  - (viii) The 6 weeks Residential course at the end of the third year was rated to be quite effective (79%).
  - (ix) Discussions of the correspondence materials with trainees was rated effective especially by Kilimanjaro region (68%); less so in Dodoma region (45%).
  - (x) The response given by teacher trainees show that:
    - Face to face tuition was found to be useful (90%)
    - Individual counseling by teachers, expert teachers and the six weeks residential training were ranked high.
- (b) Weaknesses**
- (i) The selection mechanism was not seal proof as 11 per cent for the sample had just completed primary education. These were young and lacked the experience stipulated in the requisite qualifications.
  - (ii) Two-thirds of the sample trainees were selected through an examination. This procedure is more effective, probably just, capable of weeding out weak candidates, a lot easier to administer than interviews and relatively cheaper cost-wise but can hardly assess attitudes and commitment to the teaching profession.
  - (iii) Twenty percent of the sample was selected through a combination of procedures and 66% by interviews only. Carefully carried out interviews can assess attitude and commitment to the teaching profession. Since MOEC had given instructions on how the selection of trainees was to be conducted it is important to know that the instructions were not fully complied by. 15% of the WECs reported that the MOEC instructions of using Village Education Committee to select trainees was not observed. The results also show that DEOs and REOs were marginally involved in the selection process while the WECs were more frequently involved. In Mtwara region 20% of the WECs reported that they did not receive selection instructions from MOEC; a point that can be explained by the remoteness of the region and transport difficulties. About half of head teachers, who were not directly involved in the MOEC instruction pointed out that the instructions were inadequate to get high quality trainees.

(iv) In 1980 MOEC decided to use another procedure. The committee, which selects candidates for secondary education was also mandated to select those for teacher training; a decision implicating some weaknesses in the previous selection procedures. This observation is supported by the Dar es Salaam City Education Officer's directive to the zonal authorities to stop training the 1978/9 batch and instead have a fresh selection under clearly spelled out guidelines.

- In terms of gender women trainers were under represented as only 9% of the WEC and 10% of the head teachers were women. This was not surprising because at that time there were very few women Ward Education Coordinators and Head Teachers. Gender sensitivity and equity was not in force.
- All trainers were supposed to have attained O – level education. This criterion was met by 62% of the WEC and 45% of the head teachers. These findings imply that the criteria were set before ascertaining the existence of trainers with requisite qualifications and without a clear knowledge of their geographical distribution.
- Trainers were to receive two months orientation course to meet the demands of the new programme. The results show that only 50% of the WEC and 30% of the head teachers undertook the training. The duration ranged from less than two weeks to more than eight weeks.

(v) *Equipment and Instructional Materials:*

- Nearly 75% of the recorded cassettes were unavailable or not in a working order;
- There was almost total lack of buttheries in the villages, which were the only source of electricity for most training centres for operating the cassette players;
- The correspondence study units were not always forthcoming as expected as reported by both trainers and trainees. When study units came they were never in time nor were they distributed immediately on arrival. Certainly there were a lot of transport problems in addition to lack of keenness among those, who handled the study materials.
- About 50% of trainees were dissatisfied with timely return of marked scripts.

The conclusion we can make is that few centres could claim to have been adequately equipped to implement the distance programme effectively and efficiently as observed by some evaluators.

- (vi) The hurried nature of the recruitment and preparation of primary school teachers meant that the graduates could not be well grounded in the academic, attitudinal or professional fields (MOEC 1989; P. 68);
- (vii) As Omari et al, (1989; P. 14) observe MOEC employees worked under heightened anxiety and insecurity, which did not necessarily enhance effectiveness and efficiency;
- (viii) According to MOEC (1989; P. 25) the program for the preparation of Grade C teachers by Distance was hurriedly planned and the teacher trainees were hurriedly prepared;
- (ix) The Grade B/C teachers, who were supposed to teach not higher than standard IV were forced by shortage of teachers to teach even beyond standard V which implies that they stretched themselves to their limits in terms of their academic and professional qualifications;
- (x) The relatively dwindling resources to the teaching profession meant increasingly worsening the inadequacy of teaching materials and equipment; which portray the impression that perhaps teaching aids and other materials are unnecessary. This impression is largely due to the general thinking that teachers or tutors are custodians of knowledge, which leads to the prevalence of teacher rather than child centred instruction.
- (xi) Unattractive learning environment has ran against effort to improve instruction; the dilapidated buildings, crammed classrooms, limited teaching materials, lack of furniture and more seriously the question of hungry children. These non-friendly environments are not conducive for effective learning.

The quality of tutors in the TTCs does not match the existing prescription. Williams (1998) found out that only less than a third of the TTC staff are graduates compared to the prescribed 100 per cent according the to Education and Training Policy (1995).

- (xii) In terms of effectiveness/usefulness of the training the recorded cassettes and radio programmed strategies were the weakest points in the training strategy. A minority (25 – 30%) of the WECs felt that the use of the strategy was effective. It should be noted that most of the cassette tapes were received either spoilt or not in working order.

### ***General Conclusion/Lessons learnt***

- (i) Whatever differences between the participants of the Distance *vis as vis* the Residential Programmes that existed before and immediately after

a few years of regular teaching disappeared as regards subject matter knowledge and teaching competency in the core subjects of the curriculum with the only exception of Science, which the residentially trained teachers excelled. This finding is not surprising in view of better facilities and equipment in the Colleges of Education compared to the primary schools, where the Distance Teachers were trained.

- (ii) Globally speaking the distance and residential training programme succeeded in developing the teachers' confidence in their own competence with the distance programme being relatively less successful in reinforcing self-confidence among female teachers.

This conclusion is supported by the inspectors' ratings, which put them at the lowest level in terms of respectability and authority in the classroom and self-confidence. They also reported to have received less teaching practice and less instruction on how to teach the subjects during their training than their male colleagues of the same programme.

It is possible that women teachers may have suffered from the perception of the distance training of not being as prestigious as the college-based training. Omari (1998) provides a clue in his study in Kilimanjaro region that not only female teachers, but also the male ones that though globally were satisfied with the distance programme, expressed preference for college-based training partly for reasons of prestige.

- (iii) The Distance Training Programme is a viable alternative to the Residential, College-Based Programme in terms of its cost-effectiveness, subject matter knowledge; and classroom performance.

Substantial number of teachers were trained rapidly and at a low cost compared to the residentially trained ones. This point should be interpreted with caution due to a lot more hidden costs of the Distance *vis-a-vis* the Residential Programme.

- (iv) On-the-job training and conselling coupled with face-to-face tuition by experienced teachers were the main assets of the Distance Strategy making the programme:

- Adapt itself to real situations and therefore inducing those concerned to finding realistic and relevant solutions in their settings. This was possible due to on-the-spot guidance by experienced tutors,
- having tutors and trainees, who could meet at any time they wanted removed the barrier between theoretical and practical solutions on the ground.



- (v) The distance component of the training strategy was quite problematic but its correspondence part was promising and potential for future development. While correspondence materials were generally forthcoming and the units were discussed with tutors, timely return of the marked scripts constituted a great weakness as trainees lacked immediate feedback.
- (vi) Listening to radio and recorded cassette was very problematic and as a strategy for teaching and learning must be handled carefully with close monitoring.
- (vii) The relative success of the Distance Programme was partly due to a strong political and government will and support and the favourable acceptance of the teachers in the local community.
  - The local tutors' experience and commitment was very important for the good results.
  - Conducive Local conditions including political ones facilitated the successful implementation of the Distance Teacher Education and Training programme and certainly not least the support from the International Community and organizations.
- (viii) In the light of the cost-effectiveness of the Distance Programme its prospects for teacher education and training seem to be encouraging. It should be noted that the success of the practically oriented type of training acquired on the job, partly influenced the restoration of the Block Teaching Practice into the Residential Training Program, which had been suppressed due to, among other factors, lack of funds.
- (ix) The closing of the Grade C Teacher Training Programme was due to its low academic level rather than necessarily the professional component. Primary Education, as a qualification is considered inadequate for teaching subject like mathematics as observed by Galabawa (1979); and Omari, et. al (1983) in the teaching of English.

## **Part Two: Current MOEC Efforts to Prepare Teachers by ODL**

This Section outlines Government efforts for quality improvement of pre-service and in-service teacher education and development; and to evaluate it. How can the experiences and lessons learned in the 1970s contribute to improved implementation of the current efforts?

## THE POLITICAL AND POLICY CONTEXT

Government efforts to improve the quality of both pre-service and in-service teacher education and development is anchored on its commitment to fulfil the right of every human being to access equitable, and quality education that meets one's learning needs. According to the ETP (1995 pp. 94 – 97) Government efforts to UPE underpinning equitable access and quality are reflected in various policies; among which include:

- (i) Pre-primary school education for children aged between 5 and 6 years to be formalized and integrated in the formal school system;
- (ii) Primary education to continue to be of seven years duration and compulsory in enrolment and attendance;
- (iii) Recognition, promotion, strengthening, coordinating and integrating non-formal education to formal education and training system.
- (iv) Government guaranteeing access to pre-primary, primary education and adult literacy to all citizens as a basic right;
- (v) Government promotion and facilitation of access to education of disadvantaged social and cultural groups;
- (vi) Universal and compulsory primary education to all children at the age of 7 years until they complete this cycle of education and;
- (vii) Adult education programme to encourage and promote the enrolment and attendance of women.

These policies and initiatives demand the supply of 48,000 new teachers (MOEC 2002). Contrary to the first (1974) UPE drives when donors were uncoordinated with fragmented primary education projects; this time are united policy-wise with the Government on the basis of Development Partners with the aim of improving equitable access and quality of primary education. This partnership can be a great asset in achieving Government educational objectives if the Development Partners are satisfied with the Government efforts and commitment to meet the agreed conditions effectively and efficiently because the much needed resources can then flow in to finance the planned activities. On the other hand, if accountability of finances or value added is at stake the withholding or withdrawal of support by Development Partners can be a serious set back to the activities already started.

In addition to recognizing education as a basic human right Tanzania is also a signatory of international organizations and forums, which advocate universal and free basic education. These include, among others: the Jomtien Conference 1990; in which Governments signed the World Declaration on Education for

All and adopted the framework of action: Meeting Basic Learning Needs for All (Mnjagila 2002). Driven by such motives the current efforts have the support of the International Community. The move is not only to provide education to all in the sense of enrolling them and ensuring that they attend classes regularly but more important is that they receive quality education. Furthermore; this time it is not just a question of getting any person willing to teach the children to do so but rather to have professionally qualified teachers to do so. This makes the question of preparing teachers for the current MOEC initiative a more complex and demanding task than was the case in the 1970s when politicians wanted anybody, who had higher education than the learners to teach them (TANU, 1974 P. 7)

The Tanzania Development Vision (TDV) 2025, the ETP 1995, the renewal of the Government's interest and efforts to UPE as reflected in the Education Sector Development Programme (Ed – SDP), the Local Government Reform Program (LGRP) and the Basic Education Development Plan (2002-2006) constitute the political and policy context for the new initiative towards the improvement of teacher education and professional development. According to the TDV 2025, it is envisaged that the nation will have attained a high level of quality education at all levels; will produce the quantity and quality of educated people sufficiently equipped with requisite knowledge to solve the society's problems, meet challenges of development and attain competitiveness at the required and global levels; a vision that can be attained through sustained preparation and development of capable and quality teaching force (URT 1999: 05).

On the basis of this vision the ETP (1995, pp. 47 – 49) makes provisions for:

- Liberalization and ownership of Teachers Colleges; a measure intended to provide opportunities for supplementing government efforts of training quality teachers to meet the expanding teacher needs of the nation;
- Establishment of minimum qualifications of college tutors aimed at improving the quality of tutors in Teachers Colleges so that they can improve the preparation of quality teachers;
- Pegging the minimum entry qualifications of the Grade A teacher trainees to Certificate of Secondary Education at Division III; the objective being to improve the academic knowledge base of teacher trainee entrants into the teaching profession; and
- Kiswahili to be the medium of instruction for facilitating the shaping of trainees' thinking and quality of learning because, after all, the primary school pupils will have to be taught in Kiswahili.

The need to improve both Kiswahili and English as languages of communication and English as a medium of instruction at higher levels of education has been emphasized.

The Ed-SDP provides for expanded Basic and Secondary Education, which in turn leads to increased demand for professional, well trained quality teachers and therefore the need for expanded programme for teacher education and professional development.

The emphasis in preparing quality teachers is not accidental. The quality of professional preparation and development of teachers is perceived to be an important key step towards the provision and delivery of quality education to all. Not only that; teachers are believed to wield a lot of power and influence as they have a long period to work and socialize with pupils as Nyerere (1967 emphasizes). "It is teachers more than any single group of people who determine the attitudes of society, and who shape the ideas and aspirations of the nation. This is power in its reality ..."

As such, having quality teachers implies increasing teachers' ability and power to influence the future of Tanzania through the interaction with pupils and parents. So, the teacher's role in molding the nation is critical and must be given adequate attention to ensure that they attain highest level of professional quality, positive attitudes and values.

#### **CURRICULUM RELEVANCE AND APPROPRIATENESS**

The starting point for the improvement of education is an assessment of the relevance and appropriateness of the curriculum in force in terms of its content and implementation methods. Teacher education curriculum at Grade A level is criticized of being academically focused rather than pedagogically and professionally oriented.

The ETP (1995) takes note that neither practical training components of Single Lesson Teaching Practice, demonstration lessons nor Block Teaching Practice, have been adequate for professionally well-trained teachers. The ETP (Ibid) makes Block Teaching Practice mandatory and requires owners and managers of Teachers Colleges to provide adequate financial resources for the duration of the prescribed practice teaching period.

The proposed Teacher Education Curriculum is meant to correct the weaknesses of the operating curriculum, which MOEC (2002 P. 55) clearly points out to have little to do with participatory, active learning and cooperative approaches. The proposed changes are meant to build upon the recently developed curriculum to ensure it develops teacher trainees' competences in educational sciences, enhances knowledge, instils positive attitudes and values, imparts knowledge and skills for arresting the speed at

which the HIV/AIDS virus is spreading, promotes gender sensitivity and control environmental degradation as cross-cutting issues.

According to MOEC (2002 – Draft) the envisaged curriculum is expected to be child-friendly in terms of content and methods, producing competent, creative and committed teachers to improve classroom practice in teaching and learning. For certificate teachers, the programme envisages one year of residential training in the Teachers Colleges, followed by another year of School –based training as part of a coordinated programme. At the end of the programme trainees will be expected to demonstrate the following professional attitudes and competences:

- (i) Academic knowledge and skills
- (ii) Participatory/interactive approaches to teaching and learning;
- (iii) Professional ethics and code of conduct,
- (iv) Analytical skills and their use in specific conditions pertaining to pupils, the school and the environment,
- (v) Provision of HIV/AIDS education, gender sensitivity and sustained preservation of the environment and
- (vi) Ability to diagnose pupils' learning needs, assessing their capability and assisting them to achieve.

The new curriculum can be effectively and successfully implemented because of the development of a concurrent programme for in-service teacher education improvement that is sustainable, continuous and complementary.

The Ministry of Education and Culture (2002) recognizes the fact that Primary Education Development Plan objectives can hardly be attained without first addressing the issue of teacher professional development and management. MOEC has therefore identified the following six constraints to be addressed through in-services distance learning and training strategy: (i) Low tutor competences (ii) lack of systematic and continuous tutors professional development; (iii) inadequate college facilities and infrastructure; (iv) inadequate college management skills; (v) poor information technology; and (vi) lack of competency based curriculum and curriculum materials.

#### **TUTOR COMPETENCES**

As a pre-service and in-service provider of education to teachers, tutors occupy a very strategic and crucial position regarding teacher education and professional development. Thomas (1968 p. 12) succinctly points out the role of the teacher and therefore of the tutor in the following way:

“In a particular progression, as the result of a recent discovery or a new application, the knowledge gained at school or

University no longer suffices; adults have to take themselves to a centre for further training or readaption. The role of education is therefore changing. Rather than passing on set items of knowledge, teachers should try to give their pupils the taste and the ability for continuous learning by awakening their interest in the world around them”

The objective of the current initiatives is to enable tutors to change from being imparters of knowledge and skills to being facilitators and guides in the learning process; through enabling tutors to change their behaviours, attitudes and values from being custodians of knowledge to learners along with their trainees such that trainees can discover knowledge and skills in an exiting and cooperative atmosphere.

MOEC intends to train college tutors, who have all the time been operating without formal training as teacher educators. They will be trained through radio programme to attain the desired competences, attitudes and values. The use of this strategy needs to be re-examined in the light of the experiences of the 1970s.

Tutors will be trained through distance learning at the level of postgraduate diploma in education offered by the Open University of Tanzania for a period of three years or other alternatives leading to all tutors in Teachers Colleges being able to demonstrate effective and professional classroom practices in teaching and learning.

## EVALUATION OF THE MOEC INITIATIVE

### *The Strengths of the Sector and Holistic Approach*

The approach to teacher education, improvement and development is sector-wide, coherent comprehensive, child-centred and focused on the teaching and learning in the classroom where qualitative improvement is likely to have an impact.

It addresses the following weaknesses: Under-qualified and under-trained 50,000 Grade B/C teachers; teachers already teaching for many years without appropriate professional teaching skills, strategies and techniques; about 10,000 – 15,000 teachers who have the requisite qualifications but have not been using them for more than five years, most of them since their graduation and therefore needing refresher courses.

Teachers lacking appropriate knowledge and professional skills to deal with specific problems like: Multi-grade teaching contexts where there are too few pupils in each class; double shift where there are too many pupils per class and equipping teachers lacking knowledge of integrating cross cutting issues such as AIDS/HIV, preservation and upgrading of the environment, gender

sensitivity, drug abuse and corrupt tendencies in the society.

It addresses the issue of production and distribution of instructional materials including: Equipping the zones, manning and maintaining the equipment by trained technicians/personnel; providing transport facilities to facilitate operations, establishing mini-libraries in Schools, Wards, and TRCs; installing ICT equipment to enhance the acquisition of knowledge by both pre-service and in-service teacher trainers. The introduction of this technology is very important for awareness and its use at college and later in the field when and where appropriate; emphasizing self-study through distance education to degree level, which is a requirement for tutors in Teachers Colleges.

Tutors, who are not professionally prepared will have post-graduate diploma in Education with the Open University of Tanzania and upon graduation will be able to demonstrate professional knowledge and skills in guiding/facilitating teacher trainers to effectively learn professionally.

Diploma holders in Teachers Colleges will upgrade themselves through self-study and distance learning programmes to at least first degree level.

The new curriculum for Certificate holders will enable trainees to take advantage of developments in education technology and method for acquiring knowledge and skills; to improve their pedagogical practices through fostering active, cooperative and participatory learning approaches.

The exposure of the teacher to advanced information technology can be quite exiting and rewarding. It is now possible to get higher qualifications within the profession through the internet and looking into the future is to accommodate that technology.

The installation of ICT in Teachers Colleges will enhance self-learning if tutors and trainees are socialized and trained to use the technology especially when it is user friendly.

It addresses the issue of infrastructure to deal with the influx of teacher trainees through improving the learning environment in terms of rehabilitating old structures; constructing new structures; and the re-organizing programmes in Teachers Colleges – Grade A or Diploma.

The adoption of Kiswahili as a medium of instruction to teachers of primary school children is very crucial for understanding their lessons, concepts and ideas. This is an important step forward towards the improvement of the quality of education. The earlier practice, whereby trainees were trained in English but be required to teach in Kiswahili was actually counter productive in many ways. First trainees could hardly understand English text. As such, they failed to conceptualize ideas and to communicate them to pupils in Kiswahili effectively.

According to the ETP (1995) teacher trainees in-take qualifications for Primary Schools are raised to O-level Certificate with a minimum of Division III so as to have trainees with sound academic background. MOEC's current proposal of reverting to O-level Certificate with division IV of 27 points is inconsistent with the Government policy. The early eighties witnessed a tendency to move away from the school-based distance learning and raising the duration of in-college training from three to four years; the first two years being for academic upgrading. The current practice of having one year of residential training and one year in-service training through the distance approach seem to be dictated by the urgency of supplying the required 48,000 primary school teachers for attaining Universal Primary Education by 2006 rather than by soundness of any approach to teacher training. These contradictions seem to support MOEC's ambivalence over the declared policy of providing quality education to all (Ed – SDP; vision 2025). However, it could be argued that the one year of residential training, which has been removed from the residential course is quite in order because it was used for academic upgrading, which does not constitute the role of TTCs. The one year of teaching in the classrooms under supervision can be perceived as an improvement over the previous programme.

### *Weaknesses*

Nearly all evaluations/studies on classroom interactions show the prevalence of "chalk and talk", notes taking" and "recitation". Answers to questions on why the situation is like that end up at accusing "tutors" for not having adequate professional competences but not beyond that! What about those, who prepare the tutors? Do they train tutors well and professionally? Do they have the necessary skills and strategies?

The emphasis on training trainees to take their own decisions does not seem to feature strongly in the write-up. As the world is constantly changing, one has to find solutions to problems through weighing the circumstances and then taking appropriate decisions. Preparing teachers to this type of learning demands reversal of how tutors, who prepare teachers are trained. The lecturers from the Universities need to reflect and review their ways of training tutors short of which improvement efforts will be protracted.

Children are being prepared for life in the future. Therefore there is need to see education in its totality – the mission must not overshadow the vision of education as stipulated in the vision 2025 and this must be reflected in the way tutors and teachers are prepared.



## Part Three: Discussions and Recommendations

### DISCUSSIONS

The relative “success” of the ODL in the 1970s has perhaps given the government the courage to adopt the Open and Distance Learning in its current initiative to prepare primary school teachers for the attainment of Universal Primary Education by 2006. This section discusses the two programs and draws recommendations for the effective implementation of MOEC’s current initiatives.

The two programmes have as their driving force the desire and commitment of the Government and the Ruling Party to provide Universal Basic Education to All because it is a right of every body and is the only level of education, which the government can “provide” albeit some difficulties. The support provided by the Party and the Government in the 1970s was enormous and can hardly be underestimated. With a multiparty system it is difficult to have full support of the nation due to self – interest and perspectives of the different parties.

The two programmes operate in a climate of advocacy for universal and free basic education. In 1974 the Government abolished school fees for primary education though at a later date (1978) a nominal amount, T.shs. 20/= was charged against each pupil as parental contribution. The nominal fees increased to T.shs. 2,000/= but when in 2001 it was found to be partly responsible parental failure to enroll their children it was abolished by the Government as per commissioner’s circular No. 7 of 2001. The abolition of school is a deliberate measure to remove possible pretexts for parental failure to enrolling their children in school.

While in the 1970s the Open and Distance programme involved standard seven leavers those under current MOEC’s plans have O-level education and above. The professional upgrading of Grade As to Diploma, those with Diplomas to degree level and those with degrees to Post-Graduate Diploma through the Open and Distance Learning modality is a more comprehensive programme than that of the 1970s which are possible because candidates are more mature and have enhanced capacities for learning compared to the standard seven leavers in the 1970s.

Economically, the late seventies and early eighties were difficult years; partly as a result of the effects of the war with Uganda and partly due to under-performance of the economy with nose-dividing prices of primary products, scarcity of essential commodities, which resulted in inflation and subsequent depression of incomes due to the effects of hoarding. Vehicles were few as they were considered to be luxury items while government transport system was inefficient, unavailable and sometimes misused. Transportation of materials was difficult and inefficient. Postal and communication services

were inefficient, a situation which explains at least partly the difficulties, which the distance programme faced during the late seventies and early eighties. Donors operated singly and their financial and material support were directed to their areas of interest and in fields which were in line with their policies concerning aid to developing countries.

The current MOEC initiative are taking place in a different economic and political environments. The presence of multipartism has divided the stand of the nation and support on any one issue. The current initiatives are taking place in an economically better situation than in the late seventies and early eighties. Under the Education Sector Development Programme donors are in principle United with respect to the development and financing of the social sectors. This provides a very favourable environment for raising essential funds for the various educational programmes jointly agreed upon and developed by the Government and the Development Partners. The revolution in communication technology development and transportation facilities have improved tremendously, which make monitoring of programmes easier than before. MOEC is now in a advantageous position to effectively and efficiently implement its current initiative and efforts regarding teacher education and their professional development than in the late seventies. The current competition to render related services is very likely to inject in the programme some degree of efficiency contrary to the 1970s where the Government had full monopoly over many sectors including education.

There is no evidence that the proposed pre-service and in-service teacher education curriculum is a result of a scientifically carried out study and that the current efforts are meant to fill in the inadequacies identified. What has been done is to remove the academic component in the curriculum and to concentrate on the professional training.

Educationalists as well as politicians often refer to pupils or students as the future nation or future leaders. Implied in the statements is the need to educate pupils not for yesterday but for the future. Teachers must be trained to educate pupils to be able to achieve in the world of the future. As Swarts (1997) argues, pupils must be taught as to have an understanding of the whole or total picture. Sometimes teachers are so much involved with trivial things that they lose focus of the purpose of education. The teaching of Mathematics, Geography or Chemistry are perceived by most teachers as ends in themselves rather than means of producing the individual described in the vision 2025. When the training is so factual and examination oriented, it fails to be reflective and takes the world to be static rather than dynamic. Teachers must be well grounded professionally to ensure that whatever subject they teach they have at the back of their minds a clear vision of the individual they want to produce - the individual, who is holistically educated.

We have noted that teachers tend to teach the way they were trained. In

preparing tutors and teachers the focus must be to enable all concerned to equip themselves with analytical, problem solving knowledge and skills, which they can then use to take decisions when confronting problems in life after schooling. The point I underscore here is that the process of training teachers is critical in producing the quality and calibre of teachers the nation aspires to. It is important to note that however beautiful and artistic the physical infrastructure of a school may be, however relevant, high quality and appropriate the curriculum may be, and however good and high quality the instructional materials may be, there can never be quality outputs and outcomes without quality process. The quality of what takes place in and outside the institution has a lot of influence on the quality and adequacy of the physical infrastructure, the quality, appropriateness and relevance of the curriculum and instructional materials all play a facilitative role to quality process to produce the desired quality outputs and outcomes including their values and attitudes. The teacher must be trained to be creative participative, proactive and willing to learn from those s/he guides.

There should be no compromise on the thoroughness of pedagogy. As Thomas (1968) aptly argues, severe shortage of teachers must not be dealt with measures, which detract or endanger professional standards already in place or to be established. It implies that entry qualifications to emergency programmes must be the same as or higher than those of normal programmes. Arguing in the same line, too large classes or too long instructional hours can be harmful to trainees and pupils as they are incompatible with the objectives and aims of education.

Research studies in developing countries show that the quality of teachers has a positive impact on school outcomes especially because instructional materials are in short supply. This finding is not surprising because the dearth of instructional resources in the schools makes the teacher a key resource in the classroom, much as her/his strategy remains chalk and talk. The implication of this finding is that the professional quality of teachers must be given top priority if the quality of basic education is to be improved as stipulated in the Education Sector Development Programme.

According to Sumra et al; (n.d.) "the way the upgrading is carried out reinforces the teaching practices of teachers. It recycles the same teaching strategies that the teachers have been following in school"

Referring to the upgrading of primary school teachers Sumra et al; (n.d.) further state:

"It becomes obvious that secondary school teachers do not have the skills to teach adults, in this case primary school teachers. As in the case of Secondary School teaching the emphasis was on

passing examination rather than learning. The following lesson profile illustrate this. Worst teaching practices, writing endless notes without understanding, coaching students in answering exam questions etc. are repeated during these upgrading classes”.

The 1965 Conference on the Afro Anglo-America Programme on Teacher Education report emphasizes the importance of cooperative study of child development for purposes of coordination and comparison of significant results. In this conference Mr. Kayubi, Director of the Uganda Institute of Education referring to East Africa emphasized the need for a study of child rearing, development and growth. According to him little (he said) had been collected about how children are brought up and how they develop in different parts of Africa (reported in the *Editor* 1966, p. 43).

He further observes that the systematic assembly and interpretation of such information would be of vital importance in planning educational policies and developing curricula, which are relevant to local conditions and circumstances.

Honey Bone, the representative from Tanzania in the conference wished to see the supply of teaching aids examined, with a possibility of providing package lessons on tape and film strips in collaboration with the Tanzania Broadcasting corporation among other comprehensive aids. Programmed learning as an aid to teacher education was commended by Prof. Turner. It could be a good starting point to improve teacher education and professional growth. All these suggestions are quite pertinent and deserve serious attention.

Basically the College –based and Distance Approach to teacher training during the seventies used the same curriculum, which explains why the entry qualifications and certification remained the same for both Programmes. The two tier pre-service training in which the first year is residential and the second year is school-based does not have an open and distance learning components. Only the teacher professional growth and development is based on Open and Distance Learning. While the Department of Teacher Education does not seem to be in favour of shortening the curriculum to fit in with the one year of residential training the Curriculum Developer, who participated in a workshop to discuss the initiative unambiguously stated that the curriculum will be shortened and accommodated to the one year residential training. This inconsistent thinking needs to be resolved to remove the state of confusion. The Department of Teacher Education needs to collaborate with the Tanzania Institute of Education concerning curriculum for Teacher Education within the context of Ed-SDP reforms. So far the Tanzania Institute of Education seems to work almost in isolation of the educational reforms, which started in the second half of the nineties; a practice, which is not healthy.

The heart of the usefulness of any programme is the quality, relevance and appropriateness of the methods for delivering its curriculum. In my opinion, the curriculum should remain a two-year programme in addition to improvement of its quality, relevance and delivery modalities. Part of the curriculum should be covered in the residential training while the remaining part is covered through in-service training under Distance Learning Approach with the support of other stakeholders like the Ward Education Supervisors (WES) and School Inspectors on the basis of face to face tuition, recorded lessons, the ICT and well written correspondence materials. The professional grounding must be as thorough as possible.

Studies comparing classroom practices between the two Programmes show that they do not differ significantly as far as professional knowledge, skills and strategies are concerned. This does not mean or even imply that the teachers demonstrate best professional classroom practices. On the contrary, research evidence (Omari, 1995; Mbunda and Mbise, 1993; Temu, 1995; Wort and Temu, 1996; Wort, 1998 and Sumra et al; (n.d.) show the prevalence of chalk and talk strategies. These teaching methods and strategies have hardly changed over the last 40 years. As Omari (1995, p. 40) succinctly argues the experience in Tanzania is that teachers tend to be “glued to their notes, which they either recite for the children or write on the blackboard for children to copy”, which make one wonder why the situation is like that despite many in-service re-orientations, seminars and workshops on improved classroom delivery systems and strategies. The following examples are meant to illustrate the point, underscored above. In a study (draft) carried out by Sumra et. al, (n.d.) relating to the academic upgrading and professional development of primary school teachers the authors conclude:

*“Overall we did not find any difference between Grade C teachers both who went through normal teacher training or those who had upgraded themselves through teachers’ centres. There was remarkable similarity across teachers in the way they teach ... During this lesson it was also common for pupils to answer in chorus ... Teacher taught the new topic – by chalk and talk method. Teacher taught the class rather than individual in the class. Seldom did we see pupils working together in small groups or talking to each other ... Questioning techniques were extremely poor. Nearly all the questions asked were of the factual type”.*

What Sumra, et. al, (n.d.) describe above is the pattern, which other researches have found out in their studies and to a large extent reflects how teachers were trained. Schindler (1966) in his study of Teacher Training Colleges has the following to say:

“However, enough discussion was with tutors and principals and enough visitation was made to convince this advisor that the gravest weakness of the Teachers Colleges is the child growth and development area and methods appropriate to good teaching practice based on understanding of the *development theory*”  
“(Schindler, 1966, p.48)

Commenting on the tutors the advisor said:

*“Difficulty also lies in the fact that just about all instructors, as well as students (teacher trainees), are so examination conscious that they tend to teach methods, point by point until the students can memorize them. Much of the instruction is deadening. Too many of the well trained (degree) instructors resort entirely to the lecture method. Some methods course teachers displayed such poor methods themselves that faulty learning surely followed. On one occasion, the information given was clearly wrong in term of modern educational theory and practice. On another occasion, in a school organization course, it was obvious that the tutor as soon as he noticed a visitor, switched to some previously covered materials and asked questions in a parrot-like manner and, of course received parrot – like answers. There was absolutely no life in the lessons”.*

## RECOMMENDATIONS

According to PEDP (2002 – 2006) MOEC is bent to improve pre-service and in-service teacher education and professional development by way of upgrading teachers’ qualification and their professional knowledge, skills and strategies; through relevant quality curriculum and relevant quality text materials within appropriate instructional methods along with improved teaching and learning environments. This being the case, it is recommended that:

- (a) Instead of cutting short the curriculum, efforts should be made to evaluate the curriculum in terms of its relevance, content and methods against the objectives of education and vision 2025 and plan it in such a way that part of it can be delivered during the College-Based training and the remaining part through the Open and Distance Learning strategies during the in-service period, carefully planned, systematically and consistently implemented and monitored to attain the qualitative and pedagogical improvement objectives.
- (b) For over forty years of classroom practice most of the certified “qualified” teachers have hardly demonstrated sound professional competence strategies and methods in their teaching and what Schindler (op.cit) found out of tutors in the 1960s is still true today with newly qualified or even experienced teachers. On the basis of this consistent prevalence of

inadequate professional practices; it is recommended that it is high time the Universities come to grips with trainers of tutors. Those who are entrusted with the task of training tutors in the Colleges of Education must themselves demonstrate their ability to do so professionally. This can be done by bringing in from other universities experts in the relevant fields, who can run seminars and workshops to those, who will train tutors. This will help to produce teachers with the essential pedagogic skills while efforts continue to improve the professional skills of those who are already serving in the schools. For most of them what they need are the methods of delivering lessons to enable effective learning to take place. Ward Education Supervisors and School Inspectors must be grounded in the interactive methods so that they can make demonstrations whenever they visit the schools.

- (c) The experiences of the 1970s have been quite informative of most useful strategies and problems encountered. There is no doubt that in future the Open and Distance Learning will be the most cost-effective, feasible and viable strategy. That being the case what is important is to plan it carefully; stick to focusing on the learner, the vision and correcting whatever is not working in the right direction as soon as it emerges. Unless tutors make a turn about in terms of their methods and strategies the same professional deficiencies will be repeated by the newly “qualified” teachers. So, the programme must be carefully monitored to ensure that the appropriate methods are being used in the Colleges and in the Schools.
- (d) MOEC must ensure that what takes place in the Teachers Colleges is appropriate in terms of imparting high quality professional knowledge, skills and strategies. Tutors must not tell trainees what to do in the classroom but must do what they expect their trainees to do after successfully graduating from their Colleges.
- (e) All teaching and learning materials must be prepared in an interactive manner and strategies, for both tutors and teacher trainees. The curriculum, the syllabi and text materials must in their preparation emphasize and reflect child-centred approaches both in the pre-service and in the in-service professional development programmes.
- (f) The assessment of teacher professional competences need to be reviewed and improved such that certification is based on the competence in effectively delivering the lessons professionally and not on the sum of the parts of the whole. According to the current assessment of the teaching practice it is possible for one to pass without actually attaining professionalism in practical delivery of a lessons; because it is the sum total of the parts of the whole, which matter rather than the actual delivery of the lesson per se. this is not to under-estimate the facilitative

preparations necessary for effective and professional delivery of lessons but to underscore the critical importance of effective practical and professional delivery of lessons.

- (g) The MOEC must ensure that the current initiative in teacher preparation on the basis of one year in College and another year under in-service conditions are closely supervised by professionally qualified teachers, and that trainees complete their professional training in accordance to the required pre-determined standards.
- (h) For professional growth and development, retention and sustainability, teachers must be recognized, have their social and economic status improved, motivated to learn so as to make the profession attractive and rewarding. In this context, influential leaders must refrain from making statements which belittle, frustrate or despise teachers because by so doing they facilitate the development of negative attitudes towards the teaching profession. Leaders' actions must recognize the powerful role of the teacher, enrich the teaching/learning environments and enhance her/his esteem and pride in the teaching profession and not to tarnish their reputation. The remuneration should be such that the teacher attains higher incomes as she/he improves in teaching in the classroom and not to leave teaching and join the administration.
- (i) The fruits of professionally trained teachers can hardly be realized unless the teachers are well managed. The implication of this statement is that heads of schools must imbued with technical, professional and interpersonal and communication skills so that they manage teachers well and to ensure their continuous improvement.

## CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to review and evaluate experiences of teacher training by the Distance Approach in the 1970s; to describe current MOEC initiatives on teacher education and professional development and to assess lessons learned in guiding current and future teacher education and professional development through Open and Distance Strategy. The paper underscores the success of the grade C teacher training programme of the 1970s by Distance strategy despite many problems and difficulties, which the programme encountered. Among the strong points, which emerged include the feasibility of training a large number of primary school teachers over a short period of time cost – effectively; the high effectiveness of the face to face tuition by local tutors, the discussions of the correspondence materials and the residential sessions. It is a viable alternative for teacher education and professional development. The current MOEC initiatives constitute a holistic



approach with effective linkages, child-centred, child friendly and aims at producing professionally competent, creative and skillful teachers, who have positive attitudes and values with the ability for addressing cross-cutting issues like gender, improvement of the environment, HIV/AIDS; multi-grade teaching and to ensure that children with varying abilities learn including dealing with the cancerous vice of corruption which is entrenching itself in our society. The holistic approach to teacher education and professional development is critical for quality teacher education and aims at addressing the assumptions, which have for a long time remained untested. Making the professional development component of teacher education a continuous process based on felt needs is commendable as it is tantamount to addressing realistic needs of the teachers, which are likely to have an immediate impact on the quality of pupils' learning. The lessons and experiences of the Grade C teacher education by Distance Strategy in the 1970s and the recommendations drawn from this paper must be taken seriously if the current MOEC's initiatives are to sustainably succeed.

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