



## **Managerial Related Factors Challenging Leaders in Providing Professional Development to Open Secondary School Teachers in Arusha City, Tanzania**

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### ***Abstract***

*This study sought to explore managerial related factors challenging leaders in providing professional development (PD) to open secondary school (OSS) teachers in Arusha City, Tanzania. Three OSS (Midland, Kaloleni and Hovinai) were targeted for the study. Qualitative approach with exploratory research design was used. A sample of 41 respondents from three OSS was drawn using stratified and purposive sampling technique. The three OSS were systematically selected. Semi-structured interviews were used to obtain data, which were then analysed qualitatively. The study found that; most of the leaders from OSS to regional level lack leadership skills in planning for and providing PD, lack transformational and instructive skills to influence teachers to engage in PD, do not receive enough training and support on how to develop the PD programmes, and lack fund to conduct on-job or off-job training. Henceforth, it is recommended that, practitioners in institutions responsible to oversee OSS such as the heads of OSS, the District Adult Education Officers, and the Regional Resident Tutors should pay more attention on OSS teachers' PD by assisting the OSS on PD strategies, technological infrastructure and financially.*

**Keywords:** *Challenges, professional development, open secondary school.*

### **Introduction**

Open secondary schools (OSS) were established to provide education to those who missed or dropped out of secondary schools for economic or social reasons. Yimam

(2019) ascertained that OSS is vital in providing education to students in less formal situations.

Less formal situations in OSS require effective and relative teachers' professionalism that is continuously developed, as reported by Dachi (2016), that the centre of gravity of teachers' professionalism is teachers' professional development (TPD), as it improves teaching efficiency and hence improves students' academic levels. However, most OSS teachers lack PD. The TALIS (2013) global report points out that 46–51% of teachers report never having received any form of PD due to managerial factors challenging their leaders in developing PD.

According to Desimone and Garet (2015), in the USA, open-school teachers who participate in PD also benefit from the participation of their colleagues. Holmqvist (2020) ascertains that Finland and Sweden are among the countries with an acute lack of PD, as more than 70% of open school (OS) teachers report never having received any PD due to lack of a well-organized managerial system. Walker and Qian (2015) found that OS teachers in Nordic countries reported almost no opportunity to participate in mentoring activities. In China, PD has adopted an ambitious series of curriculum reforms; hence, educational leaders have found effective ways to enhance teachers' professionalism. "In Britain, among the reasons for poor performance of OS learners is being taught by teachers who have not participated in PD due to ineffective managerial system" (Asikhia, 2017 p.41). According to Pryor, Akyeampong, and Lussier (2015), in Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania, and Uganda, the provision of PD to OSS teachers faces gaps in the curriculum taught and in teacher knowledge and skills due to ineffective management.

Since independence, Tanzania has devoted much of her efforts to education. In 1974, it was committed to Universal Primary Education (UPE). However, by the early 1980's and the late 1990's, "UPE failed to achieve quality education due to lack of fund to purchase necessary resources and developing teachers professionally" (URT, 1995 p.31). Consequently, in 1995, the Education and Training Policy (ETP) was developed, which insisted on in-service training and retraining teachers to comply with curriculum changes. Again, in 2002, primary education was freed under the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) 2001–2006, leading to an increase in the enrolment rate. Meanwhile, in 2002, a crash program was designed to train teachers, which led to the recruitment of Certificate and Diploma teachers who were licensed after a year (URT, 2016) while some were

hired in OSS on apart-time basis; however, not much attention has been paid to TPD (Komba & Nkumbi, 2006). Later, the Tanzania's 2014 ETP stated the fee free education that resulted to "a massive rise in enrolment but developing teachers professionally remained constant" (URT, 2018 p. 63).

According to Desimone and Garet (2015), leadership plays a key role in supporting and encouraging teachers to implement ideas and strategies they have learned in PD. According to Lai, Li, and Gong (2016), the fundamental role of school leaders is to motivate and support teachers to engaging in PD. However, "there is a problem of having OSS teachers in Tanzania who have not attended any PD for a good number of years due to lack of opportunities and motivation" (Komba & Mwakabenga, 2019).

Some countries have weak teacher management systems and hence fail to develop teachers professionally. Yimam (2019) ascertained that school leaders' often have neither suitable training nor background experience to provide teachers with proper support or oversight. Cordingley et al. (2019) reported that leaders' lack of training leads to teachers losing trust in their leaders and the established system, lowering expectations and motivation. An observation by Salleh (2016) in schools in Singapore revealed leaders' lack of strategies to organize effective TPD. This indicates the extent to which leaders from the school to the regional level must be provided with managerial training to plan TPD.

Despite the general acceptance of PD; "there is ineffectiveness of most programmes" (Tschida et al., 2016 p.63) due to various reasons as observed by Guskey and Yoon (2016) that leaders do not consider what motivates teachers to engage in PD, and the process by which change in teachers typically occurs. This indicates that management could play a role in motivating and bringing change to teachers. A study by Komba and Mwakabenga (2019) on the status of PD in Tanzania revealed that PD is predominated with a traditional approach, involving seminars and workshops, and is common when there are changes in curricula, contrary to the intrinsic nature of continuous PD. Their study also indicated that PD is characterized by the presence of many providers who are not coordinated, unevenly scattered in the country, and fragmenting teachers into those who benefit from PD and those who do not. Komba and Mwakabenga's study revealed challenges facing PD, including the lack of explicit policy and guidelines, limited knowledge of stakeholders, predominance of traditional approaches, and ineffective organization of activities. Finally, their studies concluded that

institutions responsible for PD should be strengthened and use different communication networks and the national optic fibre to promote self-directed.

According to Walker and Qian (2015), systemic challenges characterized by poor leadership and limited administrative capacity; challenge teacher access to effective PD. Furthermore, most educational leaders at the school, district, and regional levels paid little attention to follow-ups over the impact of PD, especially on how trainees apply what they learned.

Haiyan, Walker, and Xiaowei (2016) found that leadership is important since leaders can harness traditional structural teaching and research settings; enhance teachers' motivation and teacher engagement in professional learning activities. A study by Kilinc, Bellibas, and Polatcan (2020) conducted in Turkey on learning-centred leadership and change in teacher practice revealed that learning-centred leadership had a direct effect on changes in teacher practices and an indirect effect through teacher collaboration. Moreover, according to Piyaman, Hallinger, and Viseshsiri (2017), collaboration establishes trust between teachers and leaders.

According to Tournier et al. (2019), professional and participatory accountability mechanisms are interesting strategies to nurture and sustain professional growth and motivation among teachers, as they can directly lead to senior teachers providing important PD for their junior colleagues. A study by Yaqub et al. (2020) found that in Nigeria, a culture of learning is lacking due to a number of institutional bottlenecks in policies and management. Their study recommended assurance of a supportive environment and policies for training.

A study by Kasuga (2019) found that the majority of teachers teaching science and mathematics at Chang'ombe secondary school in Tanzania were not mentored but were provided with responsibilities without any induction. It was further revealed that, within four years, only four science and mathematics teachers out of 19 attended PD programs. Following this introduction, the current study seeks to explore the managerial factors that challenge educational leaders in the provision of PD to OSS teachers in Arusha City, Tanzania.

## **Methods**

This study used a qualitative approach with an exploratory design. An exploratory design was used to identify the challenges facing PD among teachers. The study was conducted in the Arusha City Council. Three OSS were systematically selected through stratified sampling, and 36 teachers were selected from the three open

schools. 10 teachers were obtained from Hovinais open secondary school, while 12 and 14 were obtained from Midland and Kaloleni schools. Purposive sampling was used to obtain three OSS coordinators, one district adult and non-formal education officer (DANFEO), and one Regional Resident Tutor (RRT). Hence, the sample comprised of 41 participants. The study used semi-structured interviews to collect data from the teachers, OSS coordinators, district adult and non-formal education officer and the Regional Resident Tutor. The obtained data were subjected to content analysis to make valid inferences. The data were subjected to thematic analysis for further interpretation.

## **Results and Discussion**

This study sought to explore manager-related factors that challenge educational leaders in the provision of PD to OSS teachers. Using interviews, OSS coordinators were asked to mention the plans they had for PD to teachers (as it is among the most important managerial activities). All three 3 (100%) responded that they had no plan regarding PD. Commenting on this, one of the OSS coordinators said:

... Absolutely no, we do not have any plan for the provision of professional development to our open secondary school teachers developed by us or received from the top management authorities.

This question was also asked by the Regional Resident Tutor (RRT) and the district adult and non-formal Education Officer (DANFEO) through interviews. Their responses were similar to those provided by coordinators. The R.R.T. responded:

... No please, it is unfortunate that we have not prepared the plans for TPD due to the fact that, the provision of PD is rare. However, we bear in mind the importance of PD to open school teachers, such as improving their effectiveness in attending their job.

On his part, the DANFEO responded:

We do not have specific plans for PD, but we keep our mind open that when PD training courses emerge, we shall ensure that our teachers get access to PD based on the importance that we recognize.

Based on the verbatim quote above, it implies that most education leaders at all levels of management find it difficult to develop their teachers professionally because they do not have plans for TPD (succession planning). Notwithstanding the importance of planning in developing any endeavour, most education leaders

do not prepare plans for personnel (teachers) development; hence, it is difficult for professionally developed teachers to develop. Planning such as succession is vital as it highlights the roadmap for effective PD. Moreover, this shows how the planning and participation of various stakeholders in planning for P.D is essential as it gives direction to what, why, when, where, and how PD can be made available to teachers.

OSS coordinators were further interviewed to determine whether they had attended any managerial courses. Their responses varied, as most of them (66.7%) noted that they had never attended any training, while others (33.3%) indicated that they had attended. This is evident in the following quotation.

No. I had never attended any managerial training course since I was appointed to sit for this coordination position four years ago.

The responses in the verbatim quote above imply that most education leaders have not attended any managerial training courses that could enhance their capacity to plan for and manage teachers' PD. Had the leaders attended managerial training courses, they would have been in a good position to manage PD, as developing personnel (human resources development) is among the major components of managerial courses. This implies the importance of providing managerial training to educational leaders so that they can develop their subordinates.

The RTT and DANFEO were interviewed to explain the duration of the training they attended. Their responses showed that the training duration was short, as most of them did not exceed a week. This is shown in the following quotation:

... Most of the training I ever attended had just covered a period of at most a week. This means that most of the training programs covered a period of three to five days. Meanwhile, the training programmes I attended had an average interval of more than three years.

The responses by the DANFEO were also similar as he said:

... Yes, I got an opportunity to get some on-job training; nevertheless, most of them were done for just a week. These trainings rarely occur within two to three years. This is contrary to the actual professional development needs I have based on the professional gaps I have in my career.

Moreover, the OSS coordinators, district adult and non – formal education officers, and regional adult and non–formal education officers were also interviewed

regarding the duration of the course (s) they attended, if any. Their responses are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Open Secondary Schools Coordinators Responses on Duration of the Courses Attended**

<b>Responses</b>	<b>Frequency (ΣN = 5)</b>	<b>%</b>
Undecided	2	40
1 to 30 days	3	60
1 to 6 Months	0	0
7 to 12 Months	0	0
1 to 2 years	0	0
3 years and above	0	0
Total	3	100.00

Source: (Field Data, 2022)

Data presented in Table 3 show that most of the respondents, 3 (60%), were undecided, so they did not answer the question as they had never attended any PD, and 2 (40%) responded 1 to 30 days. These findings imply that most of the education leaders have never attended managerial courses, while some of those who did attend for too short a duration become well equipped with skills to plan for and provide PD (evidence of this was revealed through the responses by the RRT and the DAEO in the previous quotes). This further implies that the leaders could not be in a good position to acquire enough knowledge that could make them competent and conversant on PD as they missed managerial courses that could equip them with skills on TPD, while some who got it, it was for a short period of time. Hence, this makes the provision of PD for OSS teachers challenging. Had these educational leaders received adequate training, especially on managerial issues, they would have been more knowledgeable about PD for teachers, and hence be able to promote their teachers on PD. Systematic challenges. Teachers' professional development in fragile locations.

Oversee issues related to teachers' professional development. Systematic challenges. In fragile locations, PD often suffers from a lack of leadership; a lack of understanding of teacher needs, administrative capacity, and budget constraints; and a lack of coordination between entities, agencies, departments, or personnel that design, coordinate, or oversee issues related to TPD.

The presented findings revealed that there were managerial related challenges facing educational leaders in the provision of PD to OSS teachers. The lack of

managerial skills, particularly regarding PD, by most educational leaders is among the challenges that these leaders face in developing teachers professionally. This is a consequence of having most leaders to have never attended managerial courses wherein skills in career development or succession planning could be enhanced. This is evidenced by leaders who have not developed any plans for teachers' PD. This is in line with the findings of Montalvo and Haro (2019), Tournier et al. (2019), and Yimam (2019) that school leaders often do not have suitable training or background experiences to provide teachers with proper support or oversight.

Findings show that some educational leaders lack leadership skills, particularly related to PD provision, such as planning for and provision of PD, hence making the processes challenging. Again, some leaders lack transformational and instructive skills that could influence teachers to engage in continuous learning through such leadership strategies. This reflects the findings of Slegers, Thoonen, Thea, and Peetsma (2014) that the more school leaders stimulate teachers to professionalize themselves and the more teachers collaborate, the more teachers are engaged in professional learning activities to keep themselves up to date in their responsibilities.

Again, the findings indicate that school leaders who lack managerial skills (PD skills in particular) are likely to lose confidence in generating PD, thus losing trust from teachers to whom PD is provided. This corresponds with the findings of Cordingley et al. (2019) that lack of leadership skills by school heads can lead to teachers losing trust in their leadership and the established system, lowering expectations and motivation. It was revealed that the lack of PD skills by most school leaders is challenging because some of those who conduct PD do so traditionally and in special cases only when introducing new changes. This corresponds to Komba and Mwakabenga (2019) that most PD are dominated by a traditional approach, involving seminars and workshops, and are common when new changes are introduced in the school curricula, contrary to the intrinsic nature of PD, that is supposed to be continuous. Hence, this prompts institutions responsible for PD to ensure that educational leaders at the school, district, and regional levels are enhanced with managerial skills in the provision of PD.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that most of the educational leaders who specialize in open schooling from the school to regional level lack managerial skills, particularly in developing teachers professionally. This comes as a result of



having most of the leaders who never attended managerial courses, wherein skills in career development or succession planning could be enhanced. Despite some of them having attended managerial courses, they just attended for a very short time, which was not enough to cover substantive subject areas. Moreover, some educational leaders lack leadership skills, which make it difficult to plan and provide PD. This in turn results in teachers' loss of trust in their leaders and the established system, lowering their expectations and motivation for PD. Moreover, educational leaders lack transformational and instructive skills that could influence teachers to engage in PD, since the teachers lose motivation. Generally, school leaders do not receive enough training and support on how to develop the PD programme at their centres, thus challenging the provision of PD as well. Again, OSS teachers lack the funds to conduct on-job or off-job training. In addition, most educational institutions have limited resources, particularly funds to cater to the professional development of teachers.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and the conclusion, it is recommended that the institutions responsible for OSS, such as the Institute of Adult Education (IAE), in collaboration with educational development partners should ensure the provision of training to OSS leaders on skills for planning and developing teachers professionally. This prompts institutions responsible for PD to ensure that educational leaders at school, district, and regional levels, such as the OSS coordinators, the DANFEOs, and the RRTs, are enhanced with managerial skills in PD provision. Meanwhile, institutions responsible for overseeing OSS, such as the IAE and Tanzania Library Service (TLS), in collaboration with educational partners should pay more attention to OSS teachers' PD provision. The focus must be on assisting OSS centres on strategies suitable for PD provision. Moreover, sustainable plans should be implemented for professionally developing teachers. Meanwhile, assistance should be provided to education leaders in making strategic plans for PD and providing them with training, particularly on management and leadership. Furthermore, OSS leaders should develop a tendency toward individual learning on managerial issues and prepare infrastructure that supports technological learning approaches to increase teachers' access to learning by distance. Again, plans should be developed for TPD to sensitize teachers on the importance of PD in their careers. Finally, leaders in the institutions responsible for overseeing OSS in the country from the OSS to the ministerial level should raise funds for resources necessary for TPD and supply them to OSS.

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