

## Editorial

*Papers in Education and Development (PED)* Volume 41, Number 1 of June, 2023 is ready for your reading. In this issue, we provide a collection of research-based papers that address current issues in education in Tanzania and elsewhere. The papers cover a diverse range of the educational sectors including pre-primary, primary, secondary and higher education. Besides the formal education sector, adult and non-formal education (ANFE) sector is included as well.

In the first paper, Moses Amosun and Adedamola John examine the effect of interactive book reading on speaking skills of pre-primary school children in Ibadan Metropolis in Nigeria. By adopting the pre-test and post-test quasi-experimental research design they found that there was a significant main effect of treatment on pre-primary school children's speaking skills ( $F_{(1, 32)} = 34.95$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ;  $\eta^2 = 0.52$ ). Hence, a conclusion that interactive book reading is an effective reading strategy for pre-primary school children. The second paper is Geraldina Edward's and Richard Shukia's exploration of socio-cultural barriers to children's acquisition of Kiswahili pre-reading skills in rural public pre-primary schools in Tanzania. Thematic analysis of data revealed that mother-tongue interference, limited parent-teacher collaboration and community beliefs about children's education were the perceived socio-cultural barriers to children's acquisition of Kiswahili pre-reading skills. The paper concludes that children's acquisition of Kiswahili pre-reading skills is hampered by the presence of various socio-cultural barriers. In the next paper, George Kahangwa and Eugenia Kafanabo establish school-based factors explaining why several primary schools in Lushoto district, in Tanzania were experiencing poorest academic performance across years. Findings from mixed methods research revealed that weak school leadership, imbalanced allocation of teachers, poor management of learning time and inadequate infrastructure were the most critical reasons.

Mariam Nyang'anyi and Eustella Bhalalusesa present findings on the exploration of parental engagement approaches in developing children's literacy skills in primary schools. It was revealed that parents in high-performing schools were highly engaged in their children's literacy development through regular parent-teacher communications, parent-teacher trust and parent-teacher cooperation. Parents in low-performing schools, on the other hand, were less engaged due to reasons such as hectic schedules on socio-economic activities. The paper recommends that teachers use encouraging and friendly approaches to parents so that they can feel comfortable engaging in developing their children's literacy skills. The fifth paper is Mjege Kinyota's investigation into the extent to which selected aspects of role modelling predict undergraduate students' performance,

self-efficacy, persistence and sense of belongingness to Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). Overall, results from hierarchical regression analysis indicated no significant effects. Also, the proportion of female instructors significantly predicted academic performance for female students. Further, personal variables such as gender identification, majoring in engineering and attending a private school had significant influence on some dependent variables, with notable variations across gender. Next is Armstrong Matogwa's examination of the relationship between natural science knowledge and development of science and technology in Tanzania. It is a response to the puzzle that, why despite decades of dissemination of modern science knowledge, Tanzania is still technologically behind? Findings suggest that, imperialist forces in forms of colonialism, neocolonialism and neoliberalism have sporadically weakened the development of science and technology. Further, in the neoliberal era, schools disseminate eurocentric, reified and disarticulated science that limits students' potentialities to invent and innovate relevant and articulated technologies.

Florence Kyaruzi's paper presents factors leading to gender discrepancies in secondary school students' Mathematics performance and how they could be addressed. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, latent mean analyses and thematic analysis techniques. Quantitative results indicated that students evaluated their Mathematics teachers' instructional practices positively across gender. Qualitative results showed that students had gendered perceptions toward Mathematics and perceived it as a masculine subject. Further, findings unveiled that students' masculine orientation toward Mathematics was partly attributed to a biased distribution of domestic chores, social persuasions about girls' ability in Mathematics and restrictive parenting of girls. Next, John Siayi, Ismail Pangani and Stephen Mabagala provide findings of the study about teachers' pedagogical beliefs in teaching Physical Education (PE) in secondary schools. The study found that PE teachers believed on the learner-centred teaching approach, discussion teaching method as the best teaching approaches in teaching. It was further found that verbal warning, oral questioning, column and row as well as semicircle seating arrangements were the best way of enhancing students' obedience to school rules and regulations.

In the penultimate paper, Hezron Onditi presents different forms of bullying, victimization and witnessing behaviour among secondary school students. Findings from a self-reported questionnaire and in-depth interviews indicated that students were commonly engaged and witnessed more verbal, physical, social bullying, followed by cyberbullying. For victimization, students reported experiencing more physical, verbal and social followed by cyber victimization. Female students were more likely to experience different forms of victimization

and witnessing different forms of bullying compared to male students. Further, female students reported to be engaged in perpetrating verbal and social bullying more than male students. Contrary to the expectations, students in rural location were more likely to engage in cyberbullying perpetration more than those in urban and semi-urban areas. In the last paper, Aristarick Lekule and Gennes Shirima examine the conceptions of sustainability of open schools in offering quality secondary education to complement the conventional education system in Tanzania. Thematic data analysis indicated that, limited learner support services were a major impediment for the sustainability of open secondary schools in offering quality secondary education. Further, lack of qualified facilitators, library facilities, study centres, academic guidance and counselling services have adversely affected the learners' academic performance in open schools.

On behalf of the Editorial Board, I extend our heartfelt appreciations to all anonymous peer reviewers, authors and both content and language editors for making this issue a reality.

Eustella P. Bhalalusesa

**Chief Editor of Papers in Education and Development**