

# Chapter 1

## Educational Changes and Teacher Identity in Tanzania: Implications for Industrial Development

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This chapter highlights the extent to which the Tanzanian secondary education expansion policy shaped teacher identity and thereby affecting the country's industrial economy. The study approach was 'qualitative', and social 'cognitive theory' was adopted. The participants' lived experiences were gathered through interviews and document analysis. Findings revealed that the objectives stated in the policy were inconsistent with the actual enactment of strategies in relation to the improvement of teaching career. This has resulted in eroding teacher identity, particularly teacher efficacy. Teachers of this category would not (the author argues) help students to develop their capabilities of crucial to fully engage in industrial development. This chapter, therefore, supports a view that taking into account the social positioning of teachers when educational policies are developed and enacted would enhance their level of professional standards. These teachers may prepare competent school graduates, and hence be able to realise the set country's industrial development goals.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Reform is an inevitable part of any education system. Most educational reforms, particularly in the developing nations aim at increasing access to education, achieving equity and improving the quality of education. The change in the world market-oriented economy is one of the factors which intensify most educational reforms (Barker, 2008; Tabulawa, 2011). For this reason, creation of learning environment that facilitates better acquisition of a more market-oriented education is an inevitable endeavour as it enhances individuals' creativity, curiosity, and innovation for social and economic success (Barker, 2008). In the last two decades, the international agenda such the World Conference on Education for All, Millennium Development Goals, and Sustainable Development Goals also served as a catalyst for

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most educational reforms. Literature (Hardman, Abd-Kadir, & Tibuhinda, 2012; Vavrus, 2009) points out that educational changes and/or reforms have far-reaching impact. For example, financial educational reforms and elimination of school fees in particular, may enhance enrolment rates of the poor. The introduction of school fees may, however, reduce enrolment among the same low income households. This has implications for labour power availability of potential to contribute to national development.

Educational changes enactment varies from one country to another. In England, for example, teachers are familiarised with, reskilled and upskilled enough before implementing reforms (Braun, Maguire, & Ball, 2010). While teachers are held accountable for this activity, less attention was taken into account by policy-makers about the complexity of environments in which these reforms will be enacted and implemented. Educational reforms in China are top down with decision-making being held by few selected actors (Han & Ye, 2017). Teachers, citizens and other interest groups are strictly prohibited from participating in education reform processes. This suggests that the role teachers' play in reforms implementation is highly overlooked. Akyeampong, Lussier, Pryor, and Westbrook (2013) asserted that reforms which do not involve teachers are likely not to be well achieved. Unlike in developed world, however, political will in developing countries dominates the implementation of educational changes (Little, 2011). As a result of this, changes are enforced to be either autocratically or democratically implemented. However, how this determines and impacts on the quality of education delivery is still questionable.

As with other countries, Tanzania has enacted and implemented various changes and or reforms in its education system. From 1967 to early 1990s, for instance, the integration of education and the world of work was a priority in both primary and secondary schooling levels (Ministry of Education and Culture, 1995). This aimed at ensuring that each school leaver would have at least knowledge and skills useful to the economy (Psacharopoulos, 1996; Vavrus, 2009). Despite this effort, however, teaching and learning resources such as teacher guide and textbooks were extremely limited. In the recent few decades, moreover, Tanzanians have also been witnessing a rapid change in their education sector. These changes include the adoption of primary and secondary education development programmes (Hardman et al., 2012). The secondary education expansion policy, for example, required at least two, three or four villages to build at least one community school. Given the need to address the quality of the tremendously increasing teaching force in the established schools, the Ministry of Education initiated a nationwide in-service teacher preparation, and Teacher Development and Management strategies. The initiation of the two strategies relied upon the assumption that African pre-service teacher inadequately prepared teachers for the conditions they faced in their workplaces (Akyeampong et al., 2013). Similarly, the government promised in the expansion plan that it would hire adequate number of competent teachers in order to enhance teaching and learning. Regular classroom teaching observation was also emphasised in the policy as an important strategy to help teachers grow professionally. Notwithstanding the ministry endeavours to enhance teaching professionalism, evidence shows that most teachers influence student learning below standard (Hardman et al., 2012). This raises concern about whether or not in-service teacher career development was effectively implemented.

Scholars (Schultz & Ravitch, 2013; Thomson & Palermo, 2014) argue that no education reform can be better accomplished without improving the quality of its teachers. These scholars assert that high-quality teachers can increase student learning outcome as compared to low-quality colleagues. The poor student performance trends in the context of the secondary education expansion plan in Tanzania suggest that teacher professionalism was adversely affected. This study, therefore, investigated how the expansion policy affected teacher identity and thereby shaping their abilities to produce proficient labour force. Teacher identity is a crucial factor in determining their professional lives and their commitment

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