The Significance of Quality Teacher Training for the Development of Quality Education

Preparing teachers for the ever-changing world

October 2009
Acknowledgements

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1.0 Introduction

It is obvious that the development of any society depends much on education. Education empowers people, providing them with strong analytical and problem solving skills. These skills are used to overcome challenges that a given society faces. Quality education outcomes are dependant upon quality teachers who are the main actors in the teaching and learning process.

There are many initiatives taken by the government and other education stakeholders to improve the education sector. The popular strategies or programmes undertaken recently include the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) as well as the Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDP). These two programmes have borne positive results: there has been an increase in enrolment and an expansion of classrooms. Government initiatives have also brought an increase in teaching and learning facilities. Moreover, the number of teachers has increased since the PEDP and SEDP initiatives. These efforts on the part of the government should be recognized and acknowledged by the people. Despite these major improvements in the education sector, the quality of education (what students really get in class and the outcomes of the learning process) is declining day to day. It is now quite common to find some students completing primary school without knowing how to read and write. Poor quality education is manifested in all levels of education, from primary, secondary, tertiary, and even collegiate. Students are graduating and being awarded certificates, but the knowledge they leave with is inadequate and sometimes irrelevant. This therefore impedes effective contributions to society. What are the causes of the poor quality of education?

Although there are many reasons for the plummeting quality of education in Tanzania, the main reason is the teachers. The teachers we now have are poor due to inadequate training, large classes, poor working and living conditions, and low salaries. The increase in student numbers causes teachers to be overworked, and, despite these large numbers, no incentives are offered to help or motivate these teachers. Teachers are still minimally paid, and their job is not valued. Worse still is the poor training they undergo in teachers’ colleges. There is no doubt that a school with motivated and well-trained teachers will produce good results. Examples of schools with outstanding performances are the seminaries and other private schools—the schools we fall over ourselves to send our children to.

Teacher training in the country is now unpredictable and unreliable. The time for a teacher to receive training in colleges has been shortened, the curriculum for teacher education is outdated, and there are no incentives or motivation for teachers. These are the areas that need our attention if we want to improve the education of our youth. Some difficult questions to ask ourselves are: What are we really focusing on when we reduce the time teachers spend in colleges? What ambitions do we have? Where are we heading? For instance there has been an increase in the number of pupils in both primary and secondary schools. In order for all these students to get a quality education, qualified and motivated teachers are highly needed. Many people assumed that an increase in enrolment would correspond to a sufficient number of qualified teachers. However, shockingly, pre-

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1 Research study conducted by HakiElimu to determine the reading, writing, interpreting and drawing abilities among children in six districts, Tanzania mainland, August, 2007.
2 NECTA-PSLE 2007 and CSEE results show the drop in performance among primary and secondary school students.
3 An opinion made by the senior lecturer Prof Mbise in education interviewed at University of Dar es Salaam, May 2009.
service teachers’ enrolment in colleges has dropped from 30,893 in 2004 to only 16,700 in 2008.\textsuperscript{4} This shows that we have an acute shortage of teachers in our country (See Table 2). According to the data given by Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania (BEST), the decline in the number of trainee teacher enrolment in teacher training colleges is due to the fact that some of these colleges have been turned into universities.\textsuperscript{5}

Although these changes were made with good intentions, they have in fact jeopardized the educational needs of thousands of Tanzanian children, especially those in rural areas who have a desperate need for qualified and motivated teachers. These changes could be beneficial to the policy makers, whose families tend to live in upper-class, urban vicinities. But as for the many children from rural and poor areas, the shortage of teachers deprives them of educational opportunities since they depend much more on pre-service teachers for their education. In order to respond to the existing acute shortage of teachers, the government has now resorted to using unqualified teachers. These are teachers who lack professional teacher training. The government is currently employing teachers who are not qualified but have joined the teaching profession just for the sake of employment; these teachers do not have the skills, professionalism, or the ethics to teach. The government has been using these kinds of teachers since 2005. They are employed (most of them) to teach in rural areas where the majority of children from poor families live. (TEN/MET, 2008)

Teachers of this kind have been employed only to satisfy political conditionalities and statistical requirements, and children are made to believe that they have teachers. But in practice these are not teachers. Although they possess teaching licenses, these people do not deserve to be called teachers. Most of them perhaps are killing the education in our schools because their weaknesses are evident.\textsuperscript{6} Most of them are not even willing to teach, which is one the most important qualities of any good teacher who loves his or her job.

Most teachers under this category teach just because they are forced to do so. They are in the teaching field as a last resort, while others enter the field as a way through to other jobs. This is depicted in dilemma most of them find themselves in when they get opportunities in other fields. The majority of teachers leave the teaching field; the rest stay just because they do not yet have other alternatives. Those who remain in the teaching field are also unmotivated and some even frustrated by the teaching and learning conditions.

Unqualified teachers are ineffective and cause unnecessary inconveniences in schools. The few qualified teachers are now teaching both students as well as new staff. However this exercise is being done without any pay. This situation is highly demotivating for qualified and unqualified teachers alike, and most teachers hate it.\textsuperscript{7} The new teachers are incapable of teaching important subjects like science, English and mathematics. It is very common to find most of these teachers evading or refusing to teach these subjects. When they are obliged to teach, they perform inefficiently, with some even misleading students, imparting incorrect knowledge.\textsuperscript{8}

\textsuperscript{4} Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania (BEST), page 80.
\textsuperscript{5} Statistics showing the decline in enrolment of pre-service teachers are in Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania (BEST), page 80.
\textsuperscript{6} Part of the interview I conducted with the senior lecturer in education, Prof. Mbise, May 2008.
\textsuperscript{7} Teachers comments during the interviews conducted with Kilangalanga teachers at Mlandizi Pwani, August 2007.
\textsuperscript{8} Contributions given by licensed teachers from seven districts, Dodoma Municipal, December 2008.
These challenges prove that there are no shortcuts either toward improving the education sector or toward preparing teachers. Shortcuts will ruin our nation by creating a pool of ignorance. It is imperative therefore, that teachers are well-trained and that they teach from an appropriate curriculum that matches the needs of Tanzanian children. This kind of teaching will be in accordance with the needs of the people and not merely the wishes of politicians.

The findings in this publication show that teacher training needs to be given special attention in order to help pre-service teachers and teacher trainees learn more effectively and appropriately. This publication also gives some recommendations on how to improve the teaching profession.

This publication does not give new criteria regarding the quality of education a teacher is supposed to have. However, it does give insight into the importance of incorporating knowledge and skills that a new teacher is supposed to acquire. Moreover, this publication does not include everything that a pre-service teacher is supposed to cover as per the curriculum, but it does pay much attention to research reports and professional consensus. It does not focus on everything that may seem important for a pre-service teacher to know. The most important point to be stressed in this publication is the need to have preparations that will help teachers learn more efficiently in the future as experts. We believe this publication will act as a guide towards what teachers are supposed to know as well as what they are supposed to do. The publication will be a useful resource to society as it can be used to evaluate and assess the learning process in our country. By evaluating teachers’ performances, it is possible to determine their abilities and weaknesses and hence come up with strategies for improving those weaknesses.

Moreover this publication is the continuation of contributions made by HakiElimu toward improving the quality of education in our country. In 2008, HakiElimu published a similar work that explained in detail about who is a teacher, the qualities of a good teacher, as well as his or her responsibilities towards improving the quality of education. In this publication the qualities of good teacher training have been spelt out. These qualities are important not only to teachers but also to policymakers and citizens. It is important for all citizens to understand these qualities in order to be in a good position to follow-up how teachers teach and hence monitor their efficiency. This publication is targeted to teachers, policymakers and other education stakeholders. It evaluates learning outcomes and gives recommendations on how to improve the education sector.

It is our hope that this publication will be useful to both teachers and students. This publication will also act as a springboard towards teacher education as it highlights important considerations when preparing quality teachers who are motivated, willing, and ready to help students achieve their educational endeavors. Such teachers will enable students to get required knowledge and hence perform well in their studies. A famous education philosopher, Professor Lee S. Shulman, once said, "Those who can, do. Those who understand, teach!"

Elizabeth Missokia  
Executive Director  
HakiElimu  
October, 2009
2.0 The meaning of teacher education

Teacher education has been defined widely and differently by education stakeholders. In order to obtain the correct meaning of the term, we have revisited different books and documents written by academicians and other education stakeholders. Teacher education has been defined as follows:

It refers to the training offered to a teacher trainee in order to enable him or her fulfill his or her responsibility. In any profession there are both pre-service and in-service training. In-service training is aimed at equipping a teacher trainee with the knowledge and skills to cope with new challenges and to be efficient at his or her job.

Teacher training refers to the process of preparing teachers in their career development. This process considers a lot of things: qualifications required to join the profession, admission, the learning environment as well as classrooms, hostels, laboratories, teaching aids, curriculum, qualified tutors and education levels of the prospective teachers (Principal, Teachers’ College, 2009).

Teacher training prepares future teachers through teaching strategies and methodologies, academic subjects, education management, guidance and counseling, ethics, as well as administration.

Teacher education is the process of preparing youth for the teaching profession imparting to them the knowledge and skills that are relevant to their job. The content of teacher training is interpreted in the syllabus from the given curriculum and is offered for a specified period of time according to type and level of teacher training. The training can also be offered to in-service teachers. Such training focuses on improving teachers’ skills and knowledge (Programme Officer, Coalition of Teacher Resources Centre, 2009).

Teacher training refers to the process in which a pre-service teacher is given effective teaching strategies, is given skills and knowledge for effective teaching as well as for guidance and counseling. It is a process by which a person is integrated into the teaching profession through relevant knowledge and skills. A teacher is also taught methodologies that are intended to help him or her excel in his or her career. For that matter, it is not true to claim that anybody can be a teacher. The teacher must undergo teacher training for a specified period of time in order for him or her to qualify to be called a teacher (Senior Education Officer, Ministry of Education and Vocational Training).

Teacher training refers to special programmes aimed at preparing teachers at different professional and academic levels, as Grade A, Diploma, and Degree holders. This training also prepares teachers to work as counselors, administrators, and educational managers.

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9 Part of elaborations given at an interview conducted with assistant lecturers, Dar es Salaam University College of Education (DUCE), May 11th, 2009.
10 Part of the contributions made by students interviewed at Morogoro Teachers’ College, May 2009
In short, we can say that teacher training prepares a teacher for the teaching profession. This training is offered within a specific period of time, a specific environment, and also includes specific theory and practice. This training should prepare a teacher in three specific areas: first, by giving a teacher specific capabilities and knowledge that will enable him or her to teach effectively. Second, a teacher is given teaching methodologies as well as theories that will help him or her to undertake effective teaching. Third, a teacher is given the information and skills that will enable him or her to understand the national education philosophy and vision. All of these are intended to help a teacher supervise and guide students.

3.0 Theory and practice in the teaching profession

For music fans watching a concert, they may think that the easiest job on earth is that of being a conductor. You just stand in front of the orchestra moving your hands back and forth in time to the music, and the orchestra produces a beautiful sound. Music fans do not understand that there are hidden skills behind a good performance in music. They include the ability of the conductor to understand and interpret tunes and melodies, the ability to play and understand each musical instrument, and the ability to plan, communicate, organize and monitor the whole orchestra.

So too, for the teaching profession, a teacher is merely considered to be the one who listens and communicates with students, completes paperwork, and marks students’ exercises. Teaching is seen as a simple job. However, the hidden matters surrounding this profession are unknown to most people. Teaching involves a lot of issues like nurturing students’ potentials from one level of knowledge to the other within a specified period of time.

Every day teachers encounter new and difficult situations that need their attention. Decision making relating to these matters depends on the knowledge and view of a given teacher. However they have a great impact on the future lives of students. In order to make good and wise decisions, teachers need knowledge. They should also know and recognize learning differences between children, as well as the role of language, culture, individual differences, interests, and strategies and the ways all of these affect learning. Apart from these, a teacher should also know appropriate learning strategies for effective learning and teaching.

In decision making, teachers should consider the interest of their students. This may seem to be an easy job, but it has a great impact on what is happening to individuals as well as to other students in the school. The need to prepare teachers so that they make good decisions in the future is one of the priorities of contemporary society. Both workers and citizens in general need enough knowledge and skills to help them solve different socio-economic challenges and live prosperous life.

Imagine! A big cargo ship carrying thousands of tons and traveling thousands of miles while carrying thousands of people’s lives. What would happen if such a ship had no captain, no fuel, and no frequent service and repair? The ship refers to a teacher; power steering is like formal teacher training; fuel is the same as the teacher’s salary and motivation; and service and repair refers to in service teacher training and incentives.
### 4.0 Objectives of teacher training in Tanzania

The objectives of teacher training are derived from the national vision and education philosophy. They are well stipulated in Tanzania’s Education and Training Policy. According to the policy, the aims and objectives of teacher training include:

- To impart to teacher trainees the theories and principles of education, psychology, guidance, and counseling.
- To impart to teacher trainees the principles and skills of pedagogy, creativity, and innovation.
- To promote an understanding of the foundations of the school curriculum.
- To sharpen the teacher trainees’, teachers’, and tutors’ knowledge and mastery of selected subjects, skills, and methodologies.
- To impart the skills and techniques of research, assessment, and evaluation in education.
- To enable teacher trainees, in-service teachers, and tutors to acquire organizational, leadership, and management skills in education and training. (ETP 1995:5)

The objectives of teacher training can be looked at from a different angle by asking ourselves the following questions.

- What knowledge and skills are the teachers supposed to have in order to teach efficiently?
- What knowledge and skills should teachers have in order to come up with effective teaching or learning outcomes among students with different learning and cognitive abilities?
- What knowledge and skills do teachers need to enable them to evaluate their own teaching methodologies?
- What academic assistance do teachers need so that they can help children realize their education aspirations and goals?

Answers to these questions pave a way towards understanding what pre-service teachers are supposed to know. These teachers should be aware of who they are going to teach, what they are going to teach, for whose benefit, and at what time. Obviously teachers learn many things at college, but not everything they learn is useful to students. In a similar vein, not all student needs are the same, and thus all teachers training need not be similar. In addition, the aim of teacher training is to prepare teachers for their career. Teacher training should take much longer time because it is supposed to acquaint learners with enough teaching skills and pedagogy.

We know that teachers continue to learn new knowledge and skills through practice at their working places as well as the daily lesson plans and preparations they make. The aim of pre-service training is to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills that are useful in carrying out the teaching and learning process. This approach considers teachers as the only “source of knowledge, stimulator of knowledge, and facilitator in the learning process” (Cohen and Ball, 1999: 6). Therefore good teacher training should help teachers cope with changes that are taking place in the world and such training should be sustainable. Teacher training should keep teacher trainee abreast with day-to-day changes (Hatano and Inagaki, 1986).

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11 The Education and Training Policy of 1995 is the main guide for educational matters in Tanzania. All programmes, plans, and education strategies adhere to this policy.
Apart from the objectives of education that are geared toward preparing teachers for life-long learning, we are also obliged to mention the skills that a teacher is supposed to have in order to teach effectively. We believe that all students (regardless of their background, from rural or urban areas) need a quality education. It is a violation of this maxim if students are deprived of their education rights as is now happening in many rural schools where we find teachers who are incapable of teaching effectively. As a result these teachers mislead our children.

It is important for this issue to be taken seriously since it is very common to hear that teachers who are incapable of teaching and those who are new to the job are posted to rural areas where they teach children from poor families, excluded pupils, vulnerable and disadvantaged children, as well as children in remote areas. These children need to be taught by teachers who are highly qualified so that they can attain full success in their learning and life.

5.0 Types of teacher training in Tanzania

Currently, in Tanzania teacher training is divided into two categories:

5.1 Pre-service training: This prepares a person for a teaching career. It provides future teachers with comprehension in educational theories, knowledge and skills in different subjects, education philosophy, teaching methodologies, social skills, and educational ethics so that he or she can begin a successful teaching career. A teacher is expected to master his or her area of specialization so that he or she can be in a good position to help learners. We should strive to avoid producing half-baked teachers because it is likely they will produce half-baked learners.

5.2 In-service training: This training is given to teachers who are already working. This training is supposed to be provided constantly and consistently and differ in approaches. The aim of in-service teacher training is to improve the quality of teaching among teachers as well as acclimatizing new teachers so that they can carry out effective teaching and learning. Without this training, teachers will be outdated, will not manage to cope with changes, and will thus lose their ability to work effectively and efficiently. According to Educational psychology teachers who do not receive in-service training do not enjoy their jobs and hence become demotivated. It should be noted that teachers always keep on learning, updating, and refreshing their knowledge; therefore they continually need new knowledge and skills to enable them to carry out effective teaching. Most of the time, in-service training is offered through short courses, seminars, workshops, meetings and other special training. This training is offered by the government and other education stakeholders within or outside the country.

Teacher training is currently offered through three clusters; training to become Grade A teachers who can teach at primary school only; training to become a Diploma holder who can teach in both primary and secondary schools; and training for a Degree in education who are prepared to teach in advanced secondary education as well as in teacher training colleges (see Table 1 for more clarification).

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12 Research on quality education (conducted by HakiElimu in August, 2007) determined reading, writing, dictation, interpretation of simple sentences, and math skills among Tanzanian children in rural areas. However research findings indicated that most children in the rural areas do not know how to read and write as compared to their colleagues in urban areas.
Table 1: The current structure of teacher training in Tanzania

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Level of education</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Grade A teachers</td>
<td>These are the teachers who are trained to teach pre-primary (nursery) and primary school students. Normally, teachers who are eligible to join the training to become Grade A teachers are supposed to be form four graduates with at least 28 points, i.e. division IV. The training offered to these teachers lasts for two years with an emphasis on teaching methodologies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Diploma teachers</td>
<td>These are the teachers who are trained to teach in secondary schools, although most teach in primary schools as well. Normally these trainees are employed after completing teacher training college, and they are form six graduates with at least division three. The Diploma in Education training lasts for two years. Due to the existing shortage of teachers in the country, diploma trainees currently stay one year in college to study theories of education, and the remaining year is spent in schools as part of Block Teaching practice. Teacher trainees’ curriculum at this level puts more emphasis on teaching methodologies and ethics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Degree teachers</td>
<td>This is the highest level of teacher education. Normally degree holders are trained in order to teach in secondary schools and teacher training colleges. Training at this level lasts for four years. But nowadays such training takes three years in order to meet the demand of teachers. Teacher training at this level varies in specializations: there are teachers who are trained as college tutors who specialize in teaching methodologies and education psychology, and there are teachers trained to teach in secondary schools who learn many academic subjects and fewer teaching methodologies.</td>
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</table>

Despite the acute shortage of teachers in our schools, there are still no deliberate attempts or efforts to attract the most qualified teachers. The teachers we have are still poorly skilled. The rate of enrolment in teacher education is surprisingly decreasing each year. For example, in 2004 the enrolment of student-teachers was 30,892, but in 2008 it was only 16,700 (see Table 2). This is contrary to the increased rate of enrolment in schools. Who will teach these children?

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13 According to the Education and Training Policy (1995: 10), pre-primary education is not part of the formal education system. However, children whose age is between 4-6 are encouraged to attend pre-primary education before proceeding to primary school. This kind of education is offered in public as well as private primary schools. Teachers who teach at this level are those who possess Grade A teaching certificates.
Table 2: The enrolment of teacher trainees in public teachers’ colleges 2004-2008

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>number</td>
<td>percentage</td>
<td>number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004</td>
<td>16245</td>
<td>52.6%</td>
<td>14647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>12502</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>11513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>10155</td>
<td>53.2%</td>
<td>8929</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>10036</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>8718</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>9209</td>
<td>55.1%</td>
<td>7491</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: BEST, 2004-2008: 80

6.0 Qualities of good teacher training

Good teacher training is that which is acceptable professionally and relevant to society. The characteristics of good teacher training as described by interviewee and educationalist include:

6.1 Teacher training is expected to enable a teacher to understand broadly the way students learn, i.e. students’ cognitive and social development. A teacher should understand the way students understand and perceive reality and the way it forms the students’ own perspectives and experiences. The teacher should be able to integrate any knowledge students already possess with the new knowledge they are being taught. The teacher should also understand the way students receive, process, and use information. Another important consideration is the need to understand different learning abilities among students and what motivates them to learn effectively. This is the most important area in any teacher training. A teacher who does not know his or her students’ limits of understanding or thinking abilities will not teach effectively. Also a teacher must know the strengths and weaknesses of his or her students as well as their interests. A teacher who does not possess this knowledge or understanding of his or her students is at a severe disadvantage (as are the students). As a result a teacher may find him or herself leaving the teaching profession.

6.2 Teacher training should enable a teacher to understand the kind of knowledge and skills students need. Training should enable a teacher to determine the most important skills that are useful to students as well as to the society in which they live. However, today most teachers are examination oriented preferring to drill their students to pass exams rather than impart wider societal skills. Most student-teachers in colleges think they are there just to pass exams; they forget they are supposed to acquire relevant skills to be used in the future. This is the greatest weakness of the current teacher training programmes and results in students and new teachers lacking vital skills.
6.3 **Teacher training should equip a trainee with relevant skills to understand a child's growth and development.** By so doing a teacher will be able to attend to the needs and abilities of each student accordingly to their development. Understanding child development is integral to being a proficient teacher. The teacher should understand the child’s physical, cognitive, linguistic, and social growth. Also he or she should understand students’ emotions and feelings associated with their development and the way they influence learning. The teacher should also know that these changes are not homogeneous and that they do not occur at the same time among students. In order for a teacher to teach effectively, he or she should understand all these changes as well as the learning differences among learners at school. By understanding the changes that occur in human beings, a teacher will be in a better position to understand students’ interests and learning behaviors and thus select appropriate learning strategies.

6.4 **Teacher training should acquaint a teacher with knowledge of national education objectives, education policy, philosophy, and a thorough understanding of the national curriculum.** A teacher with such training will be able to determine the expectations of society and the nation at large. A teacher who is knowledgeable in curriculum matters will be creative and hence manage to achieve education objectives as shown in the curriculum. A good teacher is capable of giving comments related to curriculum improvements according to the needs of society. The teacher should be conversant with curriculum matters for him or her to have effective teaching (Miller, 1980; O’Malley, 197; Legemann, 1983). The teacher who knows all of these will be confident and will work with a lot of assurance in his or her endeavors. It is surprising to find that thousands of our teachers including new graduates do not know the education policy as well as national education objectives. How can we claim the teachers’ training is complete without them being fully conversant in such information? How will teachers interpret a policy they do not know?

6.5 **Teacher training should enable the prospective teacher to have broad knowledge and skills related to their subject matter.** The teacher is expected to be fully conversant with what he or she is going to teach. This is essential for the following reasons: First, one will be able to teach correctly and effectively using appropriate theories and practices. Teachers who do not understand their subject matter well may completely mislead students. Second, ability in the subject matter gives a teacher confidence and enjoyment in his or her teaching. Such a teacher will also be able to plan for his or her lesson and select appropriate teaching and learning materials that promote students’ learning.

6.6 **Teacher training should inculcate in the teacher's mind a sense of patriotism and love for the country.** The patriotic teacher will be fully dedicated to teach his or her fellow citizens and will take his or her time to educate students about available resources and how they can be utilized for the betterment of people’s lives. Such a teacher will preach about peace, solidarity, and harmony in society. Without a feeling of patriotism, the teaching will be book-oriented and other important social aspects will be left unhandled. The patriotic teacher will also inculcate a sense of patriotism to students and hence be in the position to defend the rights of thousands citizens who are deprived.

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14 About 90% of the teachers interviewed (Dodoma and Morogoro Municipal from November to December 2008) said they do not know anything about education policy although all completed teacher education.
The patriotic teacher will defend national resources and interests wherever he or she will be. He or she will tirelessly spend time serving the county for the benefits of the majority. The patriotic teacher will be democratic and will effectively cooperate with students. Teachers are expected to be part of students’ lives and are obliged to offer different services including guidance and counseling. Academic advice is highly needed by students since the education sector is facing many problems.

6.7 **Teacher training should act as a catalyst in building high level thinking abilities among teachers so that they can help students realize their potential.** Creativity is the most important weapon of a teacher. Teacher training should strive at building creativity among teachers so that they can face existing challenges. In 2007, Tanzania Institute of Education gave a guideline regarding the teaching profession. This guideline indicated that teachers have to go beyond the norm if they really want to achieve positive learning outcomes with their students. The identified task areas include:

- Training that enables a teacher to nurture students’ educational potentials by encouraging learners in active learning experience.
- Setting high and meaningful student learning expectations.
- Recognizing and responding to different learning styles and promoting the development of multiple intelligences.
- Presenting real-life situations.

This kind of training should meet students’ needs and learning aspirations. It should also help a teacher determine different learning abilities among students and hence give relevant examples aimed at helping all students. A well-qualified teacher will encourage classroom interaction where students will be given opportunities to realize their potentials. Also a good teacher will always give relevant examples that reflect the life of students and society in general. Also such a teacher will use different methods and approaches to evaluate and assess students. Moreover a good teacher is always striving for continuous professional development.15

6.8 **Good teacher training should instill in the teacher’s mind a permanent change in terms of cognitive and psychomotor domains.** This training should help teachers have permanent discipline and integrity. In the world today, nothing can be successful without discipline. Misconducts are a result of indisceipline and are heavily costing the world. How many Tanzanians are dying of reckless driving! How many drivers drive while drunk? How many drivers violate traffic regulations? Discipline is important everywhere. For example it keeps the army strong, without discipline the army cannot survive. So too, for the education sector—education and discipline are intrinsically linked. Teacher training is expected to inculcate in the teacher’s mind academic, intellectual and interpersonal discipline. Also, teacher training should instill solid professional and political discipline. A teacher who lives according to his or her professional ethics will act as a good model to students and will help thousands of children from poor families to realize their dreams.

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But, unfortunately some teachers do not live according to this principle: think of teachers who impregnate their students! Think of teachers who mislead or cheat their students in class! Think of teachers who arrive late at school! Think of teachers who skip classes! Think of those who ask for bribes from students in return for good grades! The misconducts of some teachers have resulted in mistrust between parents and teachers. These conflicts are contributing to the deterioration of quality in education.\(^{16}\) One famous education philosopher stated:

“\textit{We are undisciplined at home, school, in offices, in streets, and in roads. This is costing our nation heavily in terms of resources and manpower. Lack of educational discipline can take our nation to hell since we shall lose vision and philosophy and hence leave our nation in the hands of ignorant people who will live as beggars.”} (Paulo Freire 1998:89)

6.9 Teacher training should broaden the teacher’s ability to select and design different teaching methodologies, learning approaches, and strategies in order to facilitate teaching. This gives a teacher different teaching options depending on the nature of the students, the subject matter to be taught, and resources available. The teaching approaches and strategies depend on theories of education that emphasize learner-centred education. Learner-centred education emphasizes active participation and problem solving. A teacher should have an ability to handle students with different learning characteristics and abilities. Some people naively think that any person with knowledge can teach! It is like a football fan who thinks that the game of soccer is simply the matter of kicking the ball and that any person can do so on the football pitch.

6.10 Teacher training should instill in a teacher a love of teaching. It is like a musician who does not sing with feeling: such a musician will not attract fans. The same applies to a teacher. Teacher training should help teachers value the teaching profession and motivate them to teach well to bring about positive learning outcomes. Ability and willingness to teach are the most important aspects of the teaching profession. Teacher education should inculcate in prospective teachers’ minds a willingness to teach and love of the career. This will help bring about positive learning outcomes. Comments made by a senior lecturer in education justifies this;

“\textit{If a teacher does not know his subject matter well, he or she will not be able to carry teach effectively. It could be asserted that our teachers today do not have attributes that help them carry teach effectively. An effective teacher is one who teaches with feeling and makes her or his lesson interesting and hence harnesses good learning outcomes.”} (Co-coordinator, Tanzania Education Network, April 2009)

\(^{16}\) Interview conducted with residents of Mbalagane Village in Meatu District on the general conduct of teachers, as part of HakiElimu research, 21\textsuperscript{st} July 2009.
7.0 Teacher education and the teaching environment

Improvement of the education sector does not only involve posting teachers to their work place, it has a special purpose. If we want our teachers to work well we should create a good working environment. This means they can easily integrate with the society in which they live. This will facilitate learning. Teachers should also work in an environment where the curriculum is well prepared and books are available. The availability of books will help to evaluate the curriculum and hence create an effective learning environment. Unfortunately, due to policy related problems, environments for effective learning are not realized in most Tanzanian schools.

The reality in most schools is that there is no opportunity in which students can stay with a teacher for even a year, nor one in which teachers can stay and plan educational matters together. Furthermore, the Tanzanian curriculum does not create opportunities where teachers can take part in curriculum development.

Teachers should be given opportunities to evaluate the learning process as well as solve learning problems. In our country we still have a problem where teachers are not given opportunity for their own academic advancement. Moreover, there is still education marginalization where few teachers are posted to the rural areas while urban centres have many teachers. Poor working conditions are why this becomes an inequality.

A teacher’s life in the village is very difficult, and, out of despair, many seek better opportunities. Some teachers leave the teaching profession because of this problem. Due to the challenges that the education sector faces, it is wrong to think that such challenges can only be solved by preparing good teachers—there are many other things to consider in bringing about positive learning outcomes. We must consider the importance of providing a good teaching and learning environment if we want to provide a good education.

8.0 The importance of quality teacher training to teachers and Tanzanian education

A teacher’s ability to teach is one of the most important factors in education. This can only be achieved through good teacher training (Ferguson, 1991a; Ruvkin, Hanushek and Kain, 2000). The importance of a teacher in the learning process is unquestionable, and the demand for teachers is increasing due to the increase in student enrolment.

Teachers are expected to give students knowledge and skills that will be used to solve different problems in society. They should facilitate the acquisition of knowledge and skills that would in turn be used to solve complex socio-economic issues. In order for a teacher to achieve all of these, he or she should be given quality and relevant education. A well-trained teacher will be able to produce students who are also productive to society. The teacher is the main actor in the learning process and therefore is supposed to have a broad knowledge and abilities in order to effectively help students. As stated in the Education and Training Policy (1995),
“A teacher is the most important actor in the teaching and learning process. The teacher organizes and guides students in their learning experience and interaction with content of the curriculum, and promotes at all levels, students initiatives and readiness for their own learning.”

Teacher education is what makes the teaching profession special when compared to other fields. The uniqueness of the teaching profession is manifested through the following aspects:

Teaching is a profession because a teacher is an expert of a particular subject. The teacher deals with human beings directly through education psychology. Teachers are to be equipped with the tools of analysis for understanding human behavior in society.

A teacher is very special and different when compared to an engineer who, for example, deals with buildings or machines. The teacher is a trained professional (as well as engineers, doctors, nurses, accountants and even farmers who are special and experts in their fields!) who, through education psychology knows different stages of child development and the impact of each in the learning process.

Teacher education helps a teacher determine relevant theories and select appropriate teaching approaches. This is the area where the actual teaching and learning environment will be realized, and therefore students will be given skills that will foster them to be productive members of society.

Teacher training supports the vision of the nation. Poor teacher education will result in poor students and hence generate a poor knowledge base of the society and hence society members will not be able to overcome challenges that society. Poor education cannot help to fight poverty because with poor education it is difficult to utilize the available resources regardless of their abundance (See Chart 1) below that shows the relationship between quality teacher education and social development).

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17 “Who is a teacher - Uniqueness of the teaching profession,” HakiElimu, 2008 page 20; Comments by parents, Mbalagane Village, Meatu District-Shinyanga, July 2009.
9.0 The dangers of poor teacher training

The dangers associated with the absence of quality teacher training are evident in our society. Let me start by quoting a reputable education specialist, who showed his dissatisfaction in the education sector in our country:

...“many teachers begin to cheat rather than teach as many of the academic and pedagogical issues they encounter are either incomprehensive or unfamiliar in their everyday work life. But children are in school not to be cheated but to be taught and to be taught truth” (Ishumi, 2008).

The impact of insufficient training among teachers differs in terms of scale and magnitude depending on the groups of people affected. The following are the effects of poor training among our teachers:

9.1 Killing the capabilities and talents of our children: A teacher without teacher training will enter the classroom just as a routine. Because he or she lacks relevant knowledge and skills, he or she will simply kill the creativity of our children. Additionally, he or she will confuse children.
According to education theory, every child is born with certain abilities, and children differ in terms of intelligence and talents. The talents of children should be nurtured to produce good results. Unqualified teachers will not be able to nurture these talents in our children. Teachers who lack training will face difficulty in selecting the appropriate theory to be used and hence fail to help children realize their academic potential. Instead of promoting students’ talents such teachers will discourage students. By relying on unqualified teachers, our education system will be at risk of collapsing!

There are many examples related to this problem. A student may finish primary education with enough knowledge and skills to do mathematics and science, but upon joining secondary school, such a student may lose these credentials because he or she encounters a teacher who does not know how to teach well. This is a very common phenomenon, especially in villages where there is a greater number of incompetent teachers. That is why most leaders do not take their children to rural secondary schools. They make sure their children are transferred to the best schools that are equipped with the best teachers and learning facilities. They avoid killing the talents of their children.

9.2 Creating a class system in society: The current education situation in our country has created a class system: there are schools for the poor and schools for the rich. Schools for the poor are generally poorly staffed, more likely to be staffed with inexperienced or incompetent teachers, and have few learning and teaching facilities. Rural public (Government) schools are on the verge of collapse. In contrast, schools of the rich are well equipped with a qualified, experienced, and knowledgeable staff. The people who are financially well-off are taking their children to the best schools, especially international schools, seminaries, and other private schools. But children from poor families do not have any alternative. This class system in accessing education is threatening our existing national unity. The national unity our founding father created is now at risk. Are we on the right track?

9.3 Making our nation a magnet for exploitation from people with skills and knowledge: With poor quality education, our nation will be turned into a market for exploitation from those countries that give quality education to their children: we will also be house-boys and house-girls of rich Tanzanians and foreign investors who come with skills and knowledge to invest. Poor quality education will also make us slaves and victims of foreign culture because we will not be able to compete with other nations that have invested much in education. This is a fact because poor investment in education results in producing incompetent people who are not capable of facing challenges. Such people will not be able to compete in the global market because they lack relevant knowledge and skills to enable them flourish in the globalized world.

In the global village only individuals who are highly educated can compete. We have real examples where some Tanzanians are now moving from the rural areas to urban centres to seek junior jobs offered by wealthy Tanzanians and foreigners. Some do auxiliary jobs such as night guards and house boys or girls while they have left behind many resources. They do not know that there are a lot of resources in the rural areas. They do not see that because they do not have the eyes for it (knowledge) or good teachers. Good teachers, if they were available, could help people utilize the available resources for the betterment of their life. Why tolerate the weaknesses of our teachers?

9.4 In some cases it has increased conflicts in school: Poor teacher training has also in many cases contributed to conflicts in schools and inefficiency of school management. Some of the teachers who are poorly trained lack ethics and values, and thus some of them indulge in unethical
conducts like impregnating students, dodging classes, abusing alcohol, and torturing students. These acts on the part of these teachers have caused tension at school and society at large.

These conflicts have resulted in riots at school where some students are expelled. Society used to depend much on teachers for advice as well as for guidance and counseling of students. But contrary to the expectations of society, today’s teachers do not fulfill their responsibilities of being guardians and parents. Instead they are acting as one of the sources of moral decay and contributing in polluting our children. Teachers should be good role models so that other people can emulate them.

9.5 Slowing social development: Social development cannot be achieved when we have a poor education system. Poor teachers will always produce poor outcomes. In a society where teachers are poorly educated development can not be realized. This is because in such a society there will be no experts who can bring about socio-economic development. Poorly educated people will not possess enough knowledge and skills for development, instead they will just be a burden to the few who are well trained. Few people will be obliged to produce for the masses. A nation with few productive people cannot prosper in terms of development. This is where we are. Are we supposed to be here?

10.0 Conclusion and Recommendations

It is the expectation of the majority of Tanzanians to see their children excel in academics. Through education these children will acquire the knowledge, skills, intellect, and ability to think critically, solve problems, and communicate effectively. These proficiencies combine to become a springboard for true development. Quality education will help Tanzanian children face existing development challenges and hence bring about national development. A nation with a poorly educated populace will not achieve sustainable development. An education system that does not focus on these issues will not be useful to current or future generations and will put our nation at risk.

We have evidence of the misuse of foreign aid and grants from the IMF, World Bank, and other institutions of developed nations. Although these countries and monetary institutions have been financing us heavily, these funds are not reflected in real life as we find ourselves swimming in a pool of poverty. Even though we receive this financial assistance, development will never be realized until our education system improves. With quality education, it is possible to wisely plan income and expenditure for our own good.

Many developed countries became rich because they invested much in human capital. A country cannot develop if dependent on foreign aid. The founding father of our nation, Mwalimu Nyerere recognized this and stated, “If you want to help a poor person, take his children to school.” Nyerere believed that education was the tool for liberation of the nation. He believed that by investing in education development can be realized. It is only through quality teachers and education that we can build a nation with vision, a nation in which her people will live with hope and future prospects.

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If we understand this fact we will take initiatives to transform our education system. We can do so by creating a teacher education curriculum that meets the needs of the people and is relevant to our environment. We should shun copying and pasting curriculum materials from other countries which are irrelevant to our current needs.

Most teachers we interviewed were shocked by the decision made by government to shorten the training period, especially for Diploma and Degree teachers. It is no doubt that teachers need much training time for them to really be conversant with what they are going to teach in schools. Such time is needed to learn theories and then out these theories into practice. With sufficient training time we will be able to reach our aim of producing competent experts.

We should extend the assessment period so that education experts get enough time to assess students and hence suggest better ways to improve the teaching and learning process in our schools. We should also improve in-service training programmes to help our teachers improve their knowledge, skills and teaching methodologies. In-service training helps teachers add value to the teaching and learning process. This kind of learning is a necessity and it cannot be avoided if we want our teachers to be updated.

In-service training can be conducted through seminars, short courses, workshops, and meetings as it is done in other sectors. Politicians and other officials have been conducting many seminars and workshops aimed at improving efficiency in their jobs. Teachers’ in-service programmes should be sustainable and be given at a specified period of time. We, as Tanzanians, should strive to differentiate education from politics since educational matters are more technical than politics! By mixing education and politics, it is difficult to improve our education system. Most of the political decisions on education have cost the education sector heavily. Furthermore, politicians are not affected by their decisions because their children are not educated in ordinary schools. This is a betrayal, and the current Tanzanian generation will not pardon them. Let us forget politics and concentrate on professionalism and academic.

The time has now come where the education system should be monitored by a special agency or professional board as happens in other countries which have successful education systems. By so doing, the value of education and its attending professionalism will be manifested in all educational aspects. We shall have the education system that will be useful and beneficial to all. It is our duty to save this nation and the talents of thousands of Tanzanians who are taught by incompetent teachers. We shall only be able to do so if we invest in quality education. This can be done. Let us cooperate.
Further Reading


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