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Realization of Time as a Resource in the Practice of Adult Education: The Case of COBET Programme in Dar es Salaam Region
Editorial Note

Teaching and learning in Adult and Non-formal Education (ANFE) is an in-depth exploration of key skills, principles, practices, concepts, and professional issues involved in delivering of youth and adult education, literacy and non-formal education. This edition offers six articles raised by research on training innovations that facilitate adult literacy educators and practitioners to participate and retain what they have learned as well as apply them in their working environment. Other articles cover relevant topics on practices and effectiveness of alternative learning programmes for out of school youth and adults.

The article on Teaching with heart and soul: The missing link among lower public school teachers in Tanzania by Godfrey Mnubi highlights the need for proper teachers’ motivation and incentives in the country. Findings from the study revealed that majority of teachers were dissatisfied with the teaching profession, unhappy with their status as teachers and lack proper recognition by society. Teachers were also dissatisfied with financial incentives as well as living and working environment. The article recommends for national policy debates on better needs-based resource allocation in education and teachers’ promotions.

Understanding students’ perceptions on training programme has a great role in the evolution process of developing sound and meaningful programmes. This is revealed in the article by Belingtone Mariki, which presents findings from research on students’ perceptions on Bachelor’s degree programme in Adult Education and Community Development (BAECD). The study focused on getting students’ views regarding choice and interest in programme including their stance on merging the fields of adult education and community development. It revealed that students were fond into the programme; and merging the fields will produce multi-skilled professionals with wider career opportunities.
The article by Said Kayege on Effectiveness of Alternative Learning for Secondary School Dropout Adolescent Girls due to Teenage Pregnancies addresses relevancy of alternative education and its contribution to girls’ self-employment and income. Also it discusses transformation of societal attitudes on girls’ education and challenges ahead for the said programme.

Difficulties in handling examinations activities and shortcomings in providing students’ feedback were the main challenges found by Onesmo Emannuel when assessing teaching and learning process of a diploma course offered through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) at the Institute of Adult Education (IAE) in Tanzania. Other contributing challenges were also presented. The article emphasizes on use of modern technologies in assessment and employment of reliable number of staffs for supervising learning activities and students’ assessments.

Time is an intrinsic resource among adult educators but sometimes it is overlooked or not subjected to close scrutiny. The article by Onesmo Emannuel assesses the extent to which the value of time is realized in the Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) programme. Findings reveal that consideration of time as an important attribute of adult learning is not effectively taken care of. This conclusion was reached after assessing learners’ attendance schedules as well as teaching and learning methods. The article challenges researchers in adult education, policy makers and COBET implementers to emphasize on value of time during design and execution of adult learning programmes.

Lastly, Belingtone Mariki examined use of electronic technology by IAE facilitators. The study focused on terms of application, existing competencies and experienced challenges including offered in-house training. Findings show enormous improvements on use of technology compared to the situation in 2000s. The study recommends use of
social media platforms, establish an electronic platform (e-platform) for facilitators, training of facilitators and enhancing one to one (1:1) computer ratio among facilitators with reliable Internet provision at IAE.

Contributors to this issue of the Journal deserve special gratitude for their valuable contribution on varied themes. I appreciate the hard work of the Editorial Board of JAET and secretariat team for bringing out this issue of the Journal. We look forward to receive articles for the forthcoming JAET issues.

Dr. Honest J. Kipasika
Chief Editor
Abstract
This study explores the extent to which teachers in public primary and secondary schools are motivated as well as satisfied with the teaching profession as a critical factor for improving students’ performance and positive learning outcomes. The participants of this study were 178 primary and 126 secondary school teachers from 12 randomly selected regions in Tanzania. A self-reported questionnaire to assess motivation and job satisfaction was filled in by a random sample of 163 female and 104 male teachers. The response rate was 87 percent. Findings from the study indicated that 59 percent of teachers, about 70 percent of whom were female, reported being dissatisfied with the teaching profession, while 59.5 percent were unhappy with their status as teachers. Some 59 percent of teachers indicated that they would quit teaching if they had an opportunity to do so. Over two-thirds (69%) of the respondents felt that teachers lacked recognition by society, 72.8 percent reported receiving unsatisfactory financial incentives, while 59.5 percent indicated that teachers were given few professional development opportunities at their place of work. In terms of living and working conditions, the majority of teachers (81% and 79%) were
dissatisfied with their living and working environment, respectively. In conclusion, there is low morale and lack of motivation to teach among public lower school teachers, which might impede the government’s Five-Year Development Plan of 2016/17-2020/21 which, among others, aims to improve students’ performance, learning outcomes and the overall quality of basic education, as well as achieving sustainable livelihoods in line with the Sustainable Development Goals, 2030. The untapped asset is that a large number of teachers (80%) believed it was possible to improve students’ performance and learning outcomes, while 91 percent believed that resolving the issue of teachers’ motivation would improve their performance in school. This requires a participatory approach, such as an open debate with teachers, and a better allocation of resources based on needs to support the provision of allowances for teachers, to increase their salaries and improve their working and living conditions, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach places and areas that are difficult to teach.  

**Keywords**  
Teachers’ motivation, Teaching profession, Students’ performance and learning outcomes
INTRODUCTION

The increased enrolment rate following implementation of the fee-free primary education policy in 2001 and the expansion of ward secondary schools has led to a rapid expansion in the numbers of schools and the corresponding student enrolment rate in Tanzania (BEST, 2012). As recently as 2016, the total number of students enrolled at both public education levels stood at 8,639,202 for primary and 278,690 for secondary schools, representing a 23 percent increase from 2012-2016 (BEST, 2016). It is evident that increased access to and expansion of secondary education has not been matched by the provision of adequate teaching and learning resources, including the availability of sufficient qualified and motivated teachers to handle teaching challenges and improve students’ learning outcomes (EFA, 2015; Mohan, 2012).

The government of Tanzania through its policies and strategies, such as Tanzania Education and Training Policy of 2014 (TEP), Teacher Development and Management Strategy (TDMS), Secondary Education Development Programme 2010-2015 (SEDEP II) and Education Sector Development Programme (2016/17-2020/21), highlight the urgent need to recruit, train, deploy and retain an adequate number of qualified and motivated male and female teachers, especially for science, mathematics and languages (URT, 2016). These policies and strategies also emphasize establishing and improving the quality of Pre-service training (PRESET) and In-service Education and Training (INSET) programmes through the proper training of teachers, developing and improving teaching and learning materials, continuous in-service teacher training and professional development while creating a conducive teaching and learning environment for teachers (BEST, 2016).
In 2016, Tanzania introduced the National Five-Year Development Plan 2016/17-2020/21 as the main national development strategy, which among other priorities highlights the importance of improving the quality of education at all levels, including primary and secondary education, while transforming teachers’ perception of the teaching profession and raising their morale through the use of both monetary and non-monetary incentives. The need to increase the quantity and improve the quality of the teaching force in Tanzania is also a priority for the country under the UNESCO Education Strategy (2014-2021) that aims to tackle the shortage of teachers and support quality teachers and their professional development, particularly in Africa’s priority areas. Despite the on-going initiatives to increase the quantity and improve the quality of teachers in lower education levels, Tanzania is still facing many obstacles in obtaining an adequate number of qualified and well-motivated teachers to handle the challenges of teaching and learning in schools (EFA, 2014; Mumbo, 2012; Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005). There is a growing consensus and empirical evidence of the fact that well-trained and motivated teachers are the single most influential and powerful factor in determining equity, access and the quality of education (Cherry, 2013; Mumbo, 2012; UNESCO, 2016). Well-trained and motivated teachers can do this through their professional interaction with students that will give them the competence and courage to cope with their learning. The acute shortage of qualified and well-motivated teachers has also been identified as one of the biggest challenges hindering the realization of the quality Education for All (EFA) goals for Sub-Saharan African countries, including Tanzania, in 2015 (EFA, 2014). Therefore, this paper sought to find out the status and challenges of teachers’ motivation, including job satisfaction in public primary and secondary schools in Tanzania, as crucial for enhancing the quality and quantity of teachers in Tanzania.
Objective of the study
The main objective of this study was to assess the extent to which teachers in public primary and secondary schools are motivated and satisfied with the teaching profession as a critical factor for improving students’ performance and positive learning outcomes. In this regard, motivation refers to the psychological processes that influence individuals’ work behaviour in achieving organizational goals (Bennell, 2004).

METHODOLOGY
This study employed the quantitative research approach. The participants were public primary and secondary school teachers from 12 randomly selected regions in Tanzania, which were Rukwa, Mbeya, Morogoro, Songea, Kigoma, Lindi, Dar es Salaam, Mwanza, Moshi, Kagera, Mtwara and Dodoma. A convenient sample of 178 primary and 126 secondary teachers was given a questionnaire to fill in between March and September, 2016, designed to provide information on the status of teachers’ motivation and job satisfaction in Tanzania and the challenges they face. A total of 267 questionnaires were returned, a response rate of 87 percent. The teachers who volunteered to take part in the survey gave their consent.

Data Collection Methods
The study employed a questionnaire that consisted of 21 questions with three main constructs dealing with teachers’ motivation and job satisfaction. The teachers’ motivation and job satisfaction constructs were teachers’ support system, teachers’ perceptions and teachers’ job satisfaction. The construct of support dealt with teachers’ living and working conditions. The construct of perception related to how teachers felt about the teaching profession and the construct of teachers’ job satisfaction sought to find out whether teachers were happy and motivated to teach so as to improve students’ learning, performance and outcomes in schools.
A Likert scale was used to rate teachers’ answers to each question as 6 = strongly agree, 5 = agree, 4 = slightly agree (all some form of agreement), 3 = slightly disagree, 2 = disagree, and 1 = strongly disagree (all some form of disagreement).

**Procedure**
Teachers from 12 regions were asked if they were willing to take part in the study. They were informed that there would be no financial compensation for participating in the study nor any consequences for not participating. All the responses were anonymous. The teachers were also informed that if they became uncomfortable filling in the questionnaire, they could stop taking part at any time without any consequences. The survey was distributed to teachers at their convenience and collected when completed.

**Limitations**
One limitation of this study is that it employed a convenience sample of primary and secondary school teachers. However, the sampled regions varied widely and the teachers were from all grade levels. An additional limitation is that teachers self-reported their experiences.

**Design/Analysis**
The SPSS software Version 21 was used to analyse quantitative data from the self-reported surveys. To assess the association between sex and the constructs of teachers’ job satisfaction level, teachers’ support services and teachers’ perception, independent t-tests were used. Each test was given its own Type 1 error rate of 0.05. The dependent variables tested for these comparisons were the scores from the averaged questions for each construct. For the comparison of sex, the independent groupings compared were male and female. In the case of job satisfaction, the independent variable was grouped into
those teachers who had indicated some form of satisfaction with the teaching profession versus those who had not. A further comparison was done between teachers who would like to switch or quit teaching if an alternative opportunity was to emerge and those who would not. Within the cross-tabulation analysis of female teachers, a comparison was also done between female teachers who would like to quit teaching and those who would not. For the final comparison, the independent variable was the availability or not of quality teachers’ support services.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic information
The respondents were predominately female (61%), and 69.9% were aged between 26 and 40, which may partly be due to the fact that female teachers, particularly in primary education, make up more than 52 percent of the teaching force in Tanzania (BEST, 2016).

Because the respondents represented the distribution of Tanzanian teachers, this appears to be a very representative sample. In addition, because the majority of respondents (95%) were over 20 years old, it means they had at least 3 years’ teaching experience, and so could responsibly answer questions about their teaching experience (for further information see tables 1 and 2).
Table 1: Demographic Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Respondents</th>
<th>Education level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>267</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total 260 100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age-Category Distribution</th>
<th>Working Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Age-category</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under 25</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-40</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-45</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46+</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>243</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Teachers’ job satisfaction level, quality teaching support and teachers’ perception

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Questions</th>
<th>% Some Form of Agreement</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers Satisfactions</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q1. I decided to become a teacher by choice</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q2. I am satisfied with the teaching profession</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q3. I believe that teachers whom I know and work with are satisfied with the teaching profession</td>
<td>48.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q4. If I had the opportunity to switch or quit teaching, I would do so as soon as an opportunity emerged</td>
<td>58.8</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teachers’ Support System</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q5. Involvement in professional development to improve teaching knowledge and skills</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q6. Degree of recognition and positive status as a teacher, i.e. praise, awards for teachers from school administrators, community, parents and students</td>
<td>31.3</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q7. Degree of job security among teachers</td>
<td>40.9</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q8. Quality of interaction between teachers and students</td>
<td>67.2</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q9. Quality of interaction between teachers and administrators</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey Questions</td>
<td>% Some Form of Agreement</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Standard Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q10. Provision of financial incentives, including salary and allowances</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q11. Degree of working environment, i.e. building, workload, facilities</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q12. Degree of living conditions, i.e. housing</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Teachers’ Perceptions**

| Q13. I enjoy the professional status as a teacher                              | 39.5                     | 3.0  | 1.7                |
| Q14. I believe that I am able to effectively improve students’ performance and learning outcomes | 80.2                     | 4.9  | 1.5                |
| Q15. I believe that resolving the issue of teachers’ motivation would improve their performance in school | 91.4                     | 5.4  | 1.2                |

**Miscellaneous**

| Q16. Having a second income apart from teaching                               | 16.4                     | 1.8  | 0.37               |

Note that valid percent refers to a calculated percentage based on the proportion of respondents who gave an answer to the item.

**Teachers’ satisfaction**

Regarding their choice to teach, just over two-thirds (67.3%) of teachers reported that they chose to do so. They were asked to rate their current view of the teaching profession. As can be seen in Table 2, it is disheartening that more than half of the teachers (around 59%)
indicated currently being dissatisfied with the teaching profession, while only a minority (39.5%) were happy with their status as teachers.

Six out of ten respondents reported that many teachers whom they knew and worked with were dissatisfied with their job. In addition, a little over half (58.8%) of the respondents reported their willingness to quit teaching if an opportunity occurred. As many studies indicate (EFA, 2014; Mkumbo, 2012; Bennell & Mukyanuzi, 2005), teachers’ motivation crisis calls for investing in their professional development and improving their working and employment conditions.

**Teachers’ support services**

In terms of the quality of teachers’ support services in school and the surrounding environment as a motivational tool, 67.2 percent of teachers indicated having good interactions with students. However, 61 percent of teachers indicated having little interaction with administrators, including the District Executive Officer, District Education Officer and Regional Education Officer. In addition, 68 percent of teachers indicated that they had not received any recognition, including praise or any kind of teaching award from school administrators, the community, parents or even students for the past three years.

As regards the quality of living and working conditions such as housing, 80.5 percent of teachers indicated their frustration with poor living conditions and the lack of decent housing for teachers. In many Tanzanian societies, teachers tend to be the backbone of families, as they play an important role in teaching and raising children. In this regard, virtually all the respondents harboured negative feelings about their community’s response to the role they play. These findings are most likely a result of the low quality of teachers’ living and working conditions as documented in numerous studies (Haki Elimu & TTU, 2013;
EFA, 2014; Olaniyan & Adedeji, 2011). The teachers were not given
the definition of job security and so the author presumes they gave their
own views on it. This referred to the teachers’ ability to meet their basic
needs and be able to live a decent life while enjoying teaching.

Furthermore, over 72 percent of teachers were dissatisfied with the
current financial incentives, including salaries and allowances. They were
also concerned about the issue lack of professional development as a
demotivating factor because more than half of them (59.5%) had not
attended any in-service training course to improve their pedagogical
content knowledge and skills, particularly for handling issues emerging
in education, including the increased number of students, leading to
a decline in the quality of teaching and learning. These findings are
consistent with previous studies on the need for teachers’ financial
incentives and professional development (EFA, 2014).

**Teachers’ perception**

As regards teachers’ perception of their ability to effectively improve
students’ performance and learning and outcomes, the majority (80%)
were positive about their ability to effectively improve students’
performance and learning outcomes, while 91 percent stressed
that resolving the issue of teachers’ motivation would improve their
performance in school. Questions 4 and 15 had the highest form of
agreement at 80% and 91%, respectively.

Table 3 shows the correlation between each of the constructs. The
findings revealed positive statistical correlations between the three
constructs at 5 percent level (Table 3). The coefficient of correlation
between job satisfaction and teachers’ support services was 0.371 with
p = 0.000. With regard to job satisfaction and teachers’ perception,
the coefficient of correlation was 0.294 with p = 0.000. Moreover,
the coefficient of correlation between teachers’ support services and teachers’ perception was 0.306 with \( p = 0.000 \). This would indicate both conceptual and statistical interdependence of the constructs measured.

### Table 3: Analysis of Correlation of Scale Constructs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct Number</th>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>C1.</th>
<th>C2.</th>
<th>C3.</th>
<th>( \alpha )</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C1.</td>
<td>Job satisfaction ( q7,q8,q9, q10 )</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers’ Support Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C2.</td>
<td>q11,q12,q13,q14, q15,q16,q17,q18</td>
<td>0.371*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teachers’ Perception q19,q20,q21</td>
<td>0.294*</td>
<td>0.306*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

A comparison between male and female teachers was conducted on all three constructs, namely, job satisfaction, support services and perception. All three constructs were not statistically significant at 5 percent level. In the case of job satisfaction, female teachers (\( M = 3.91 \)) indicated being more satisfied with the teaching profession than their male counterparts (\( M = 3.80 \)), \( t (253) = 0.684, p = .495, d = 0.09 \). These findings suggest that female teachers are more tolerant and have good interpersonal relationships in their work setting than their male counterparts. As regards teachers’ support services, males (\( M = 2.94 \)) were more in agreement that they had received quality teaching and learning support than their female counterparts (\( M = 2.91 \)), \( t (219) = , p = .763, d = 0.03 \).
**Table 4: Independent Sample Tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>md</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>.684</td>
<td>.495</td>
<td>.10566</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Support Services</td>
<td>-.302</td>
<td>.763</td>
<td>-.04095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers’ Perception</td>
<td>-.879</td>
<td>.380</td>
<td>-.10017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A further comparison was done between teachers who would like to switch or quit teaching versus those who would not when an alternative opportunity emerged. The findings disclosed that there was no significant association between switching from teaching and the sex of teachers at 5 percent level (p-value = 0.166). This indicates that switching or quitting teaching does not depend on the teacher’s sex.

Within the cross-tabulation analysis of female teachers, a comparison was done between female teachers who would like to quit teaching and those who would not (Table 5). The results revealed that more female teachers (62.1%) were more likely to quit teaching than those (37.9%) who would not when an alternative opportunity occurred (Table 5). The same applied to male teachers (53.5%) who were ready to quit teaching compared with 46.5 percent who would not (Table 5).
### Table 5: Variable cross-tabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable (Sex)</th>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Quitting Status</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td>37.9%</td>
<td>62.1%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% within Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td>46.5%</td>
<td>53.5%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>% within Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td>41.2%</td>
<td>58.8%</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of the revealed challenges, Tanzania recognizes that teachers and corresponding national policies, including strategies relating to the teaching profession, are of critical importance for increasing the quantity of qualified teachers and providing good quality teaching and learning in schools. It is also understood that ensuring educational quality, equity and access depends on teachers’ pedagogical content knowledge and skills that are lacking in most of the teaching force. However, there is an acute shortage of teachers because of the low status of the profession, as well as the low wages and poor living and working conditions, causing them to lack motivation for the task of teaching.

Similar to other studies that have identified the crisis of teachers’ lack of motivation in the country (UNESCO, 2015; Haki Elimu&TTU 2004
and Bennel and Mukyanuzi 2005), this paper highlights the need for teachers to be given proper incentives so that they are motivated to work hard. As revealed in the study, 58.8 percent of the surveyed teachers indicated their willingness to quit the teaching profession if an opportunity emerged. Developing a comprehensive approach to addressing the need for teachers to be motivated in the country, as highlighted by many studies including the United Nations Education for All National Review (2015), is absolutely crucial. UNESCO (2016) emphasizes that, “No education is possible without an adequate number of qualified and motivated teachers.” It would seem therefore that the country should use similar innovative practices, including teacher training, as advocated by UNESCO, to make teachers a priority in the education system (UNESCO, 2016).

The strategy to attract and retain qualified teachers, particularly in rural and hard-to-reach areas, has been successful in the neighbouring countries of Malawi, Mozambique and Uganda through continuously improving and providing incentives (UNESCO, 2009). These incentives include good salaries, allowances and good living and working conditions based on the level of difficulty associated with the area they are working in. Measures to address the issue of teachers’ motivation would require well qualified teachers to be involved in debates on educational policies, a better allocation of educational resources based on needs and teachers’ promotion based on their performance conducted in a transparent manner.
REFERENCES


Abstract
This study was conducted at the Institute of Adult Education (IAE) by exploring perceptions of the first intake students that were studying the newly established bachelor’s degree programme in adult education and community development (BAECD). The study questions focused on the following aspects: students’ choice and interest for the programme; programme’s contribution to students’ career development; merging of adult education and community development fields of study in the programme; and students’ recommendations on improving the programme. Descriptive research strategy was used through mixed research approach (qualitative and quantitative research approaches). A sample of 35 students out of 80 class members participated in the study. Five (5) were student leaders purposively selected and 30 were voluntary study participants. Interview and questionnaire data collection methods were used to gather data from student leaders and other participants, respectively. Findings revealed that BAECD students are fond of their programme to the extent that they would not have opted for another degree programme at IAE even if they were given an opportunity to do so today. Most (87%) student support merging
of the two fields of adult education and community development in the established programme because the fields are closely related and the programme will produce multi-skilled professionals with wider career opportunities. The paper concludes that students’ perceptions on their choice of the programme and interest prove beyond doubt that the programme adds value to their career development and hence, establishment of BAECOD programme by IAE was the right decision. The study recommends that similar studies should be conducted regularly to get insights from students regarding the programme.

**Keywords:** Students, Perceptions, Adult Education, Community Development.
INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Adult Education (IAE) as one of higher learning institutions in Tanzania accredited by the National Council for Technical Education (NACTE) is entitled to design, develop and implement its own training programmes that meet existing market demand. In 2008, IAE designed a new curriculum for bachelor’s degree programme in adult and continuing education (BACE). The programme was designed to substitute the then advanced diploma in adult education and community development (ADAE & CD). However, the IAE decision to substitute the title “adult education and community development” with “adult and continuing education” in the new programme was criticised by several stakeholders who argued that the title should have remained the same (IAE, 2014b). IAE students demanded, at different occasions, for re-establishment of the previous programme. Also Mjema (2013) in his institutional audit report recommended for IAE to revert to its previous programme of adult education and community development. Furthermore, findings from situational analysis conducted in 2014 indicated that students and other stakeholders commended the adult education and community development programme because it met the labour market demand (IAE, 2014b). The report also indicated that IAE students and alumni were interested in the programme due to its title believed to sell more in the existing labour market than the BACE programme. Mjema (2013) reported that research showed that BACE programme was among non-famous degree programmes registered by NACTE in the country.

As a result of the research and recommendations from various stakeholders, in 2014, IAE established a bachelor’s degree programme in adult education and community development (BAECD). The programme was designed and developed at national technical award (NTA) levels 7 and 8 aiming at enhancing skills and competence
in adult education and community development fields of expertise. Some of the core modules developed in the programme include the following: Application of information and communications technology (ICT); Principles and philosophy of adult education, Psychology of adult learning; Project planning and management; Principles of community development; Management of community development programmes; and Research, monitoring and evaluation (IAE, 2014a). In examining developed modules, merging of the two fields is evident. However, in addressing the context of this paper, one would like to know the link between adult education and community development so as to judge the integrative nature of the BAECDD programme. “...adult education is customarily used as a field of operations and study, both involving any context in which adults learn to improve their knowledge, skills and sensitiveness” (Mushi, 2010 p.2). On the other hand, United Nations defines community development (CD) as “a process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems” (UNITEC, 2015 para 2). These meanings depict similarities in terms of applying the fields at communities’ context. Thus, community development and adult education similarities lie on their approaches used in addressing community or learning needs, respectively.

Community development, just like adult education, calls for beneficiaries’ participation in addressing their needs. For instance, a study by Ndiwaita, Kilobe and Katega (2015) shows that participatory rural appraisal (PRA) was used to identify socio-economic and ecological opportunities as well as constraints for establishing participatory agricultural development and empowering project (PADEP) in Singida, Mvomero and Iramba districts in Tanzania. The approach allowed for farmers (beneficiaries) participate in decision-making to the project as per principles of community development. Jesse and Mattee (2015)
insist that it is important for community members to be involved in a community development projects right from the initial phase of project identification to implementation phase.

Similarly, participatory approaches are used when establishing an adult education programme in a community. For instance, the IAE involved community members through interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions to get their views on establishing the complementary secondary education programme in Tanzania (COSET). Community members were visited in seven programme districts of Temak, Magu, Makete, Bagamoyo, Mtwara Rural, Siha and Hai to identify culture and social practices found in the respective districts. Recorded practices included polygamy, ritualism, pastoralism, gender discrimination and traditional dances (IAE, 2009). Collected information from community members was then used as a basis for developing curriculum content as per respective learners’ context.

Practices show that there is evidence as to when adult education programmes bring-in some aspects of community development and in other cases as to when community development programmes bring-in aspects of adult education. This is because these are inextricable related disciplines in which “discussion of one is incomplete without a discussion of the other” (UDOM, n.d. para 1). In 2009, learning needs survey was conducted for adult education programme of COSET shows a scenario linking the two disciplines. In the survey, learners pointed out that they not only wanted to study academic subjects but also generic themes, namely, entrepreneurship, environmental studies, bee keeping, nutrition, livestock keeping, poultry keeping and fishing, to mention a few (IAE, 2009). In principle, mentioned generic themes included community development themes because they are geared towards
establishing income generating projects to overcome their common problems. Thus, programme designing and implementation require both adult education and community development skills. In such scenarios and many others, it is evident that community development aspects are well featured in adult education programmes and vice versa.

Loth and John (2015) in their study on women economic empowerment argued that education initiatives encompass a solution to address financial literacy challenges facing women in their community development projects. Thus, adult education interventions are needed to address such community challenges even though community development skills are concurrently needed. Also gender discriminations that hinder women from participating in their community development projects as indicated by Mongi (2005 cited in Loth and John, 2015) need adult education intervention to create awareness on socio-economic rights among community members.

Considering the relationship between the two fields of adult education and community development, it is clear that establishment of a degree programme that merged the two was a wise decision. However, IAE is not inventing the wheel because experiences show that such practice is happening not only at IAE but also at various academic institutions in Tanzania and other countries. In Ethiopia, for instance, the Haramaya University established a degree in adult education and community development (AECD) through its department of adult education and community development (HU, 2017). Also University of Nairobi, in Kenya, offers a post-graduate diploma in adult education and community development under the school of continuing and distance education (UoN, 2017). In Tanzania, the University of Dodoma offers a bachelor of education in adult education and community development under its school of educational studies (UDOM, n.d.).
Practice by different academic institutions as in literature shows that adult education and community development degree programmes are designed to produce graduates who can both work as community development practitioners and adult educators (HU, 2017). Also practice shows that the two fields of adult education and community development are inextricably related (UDOM, n.d.). It is within this context where research problem and questions for this study were built at aiming at getting learners’ perceptions on the newly established programme at the Institute Adult Education.

**Research Problem**
Merging two fields of Adult Education and Community Development in the newly established BAECD programme has been perceived as the needful and important step by IAE in meeting the market demand. The fact is evident disclosed by Mjema (2013) and IAE (2014b) whereby establishment of BAECD programme has been appealed because it has a higher market demand than to the only BACE degree programme that existed. As a result, the two programmes - BAECD and BACE - are concurrently run and students enroll to both. However, BAECD is quite new and the first degree programme of the Institute comprises both adult education component and non-adult education component i.e. community development. Previously, only adult education programmes were offered by the Institute. Hence, such unique feature calls for an investigative research towards exploring students’ perceptions on the newly established BAEC programme.

**Purpose**
The study explored students’ perception on the newly established bachelor’s degree in adult education and community development of the Institute of Adult Education.
Research Questions

1. What are students’ insights regarding their choice and interest to the BAECD programme?
2. What are students’ perceptions with regard to BAECD programme’s contribution to their career development?
3. What are students’ views on merging adult education and community development fields of study in the programme?
4. What are students’ recommendations towards improving the BAECD degree programme?

METHODOLOGY

This study used descriptive research strategy to search answers for the research questions and employed both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The population of the study comprised of all 80 second year students of the BAECD - 2015/2016 academic year. The class was purposively selected because it was the first batch and with longer experience in the programme than their first year counterparts. By virtue of their leadership positions, 5 class members were purposively selected and requested to participate in the study through interviews. They included the president of IAE students’ organisation (IAESO), two class representatives to IAESO government, class chairperson and class deputy chairperson. The rest class members were then invited to voluntarily participate in the study. Out of those, thirty students (16 females and 14 males) volunteered to participate and responded to the study questionnaires.

Data Analysis Plan

In analysing closed-ended questions, the researcher used tallying to get frequencies. For the case of open-ended questions, the researcher grouped and coded responses of similar opinions and then tallying was used to get frequencies as well as percentages. The researcher used
tables and figures to present the analysed data. Apart from descriptive statistics, content analysis was also used to analyse qualitative information. Important excerpts from interviews were captured and presented in findings.

RESULTS

Students’ Decision to Join the Programme
This study tried to find out whether students chose to join the programme voluntarily by themselves or with some external influences. Findings indicated that 73 percent respondents chose the programme themselves without external influence, while 27 percent chose it as a result of influence from others (Figure 1). None of the students reported to have been allocated unwillingly to join the programme.

![Figure 1: Distribution of students' choice of the programme (N=30)](image)

Figure 1: Distribution of students’ choice of the programme (N=30)

Also interviewed students had similar responses regarding their decision to join the programme. One of the interviewed students said that, “actually I had no interest about this programme but my husband influenced me to join it ... I now find it very useful and interesting.” Another respondent said that, “I heard about the programme from a colleague and developed interest in it. Therefore, I decided to join through a word of mouth.”
Having got insights on their decision to join the programme, the researcher wanted to know whether or not students regret joining the BAECD programme. Results to this aspect showed that students are positive with no regrets. Table 1 shows distribution of responses on the question.

**Table 1: Students’ responses on whether or not regret to have joined BAECD programme (N = 30)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I regret because I dislike this programme</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I regret and feel lost but trying to cope</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not regret because it is what I wanted</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>77%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not regret though I knew little about it when applying</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings in Table 1 show that 77 percent of respondents wanted the programme and therefore, do not regret joining it. Other (23%) respondents indicated that they do not regret though they knew little about the programme when applied for it. One of the student leaders said that, “I do not think if there is anyone among us who might be regretting for being in this programme. The programme nature and content make it unique as well as attractive.”

**Students’ interest in the BAECD programme**

Findings indicated that students are fond of BAECD programme. It was revealed that the BAECD students would not have opted to another degree programme at IAE even if they were given the opportunity to
do so today. All students said that they were unwilling to switch from BAECD to another programme because their programme is better than other programmes offered at IAE since it is multidisciplinary in nature and promotes self-employment. Another degree programme offered at IAE is bachelor in adult and continuing education (BACE), which BAEC students compared with their programme.

Students revealed their interest in the BAECD programme by stating aspects that they like in the programme. Findings showed that aspects liked the most by students in the programme range from facilitation methods, programme content to resulting competencies.

Table 2: Aspects liked the most by students in BAECD programme (N = 30).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participatory facilitation methods</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Training on resources mobilisation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community participatory approaches in solving problems</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme content</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills on project planning and proposal writing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows that majority like skills provided on how to solve community problems by involving community members themselves. Other students like the programme content because it addresses community needs. Also part of project planning and proposal writing is of interest to students because it is applicable in day-to-day life entrepreneurial activities. One of the interviewed students said that, “What I like most in
this programme is its applicability to real life situations. Learning is also highly participatory.” Students emphasized that the programme content is designed in a way that focuses more on real life issues rather than theory. “Contents such as planning and management of simple domestic projects like poultry, livestock, or bee keeping make the programme lively and realistic to actual students’ life ways” (interviewed student).

Apart from aspects that students like the most, there were few that students dislike in the programme. Table 3 presents a list of aspects that students are unhappy with.

Table 3: Aspects that students dislike most in BAECD programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No specific areas allocated for students’ field work</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Actual field practice learning is inadequate</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusion of teaching subjects in the programme</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No enough learning materials in library</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dislike nothing</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>30</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings in Table 3 show that (37%) students have nothing to dislike in the programme because they are satisfied with the way the programme is designed and implemented. However, other (30%) students dislike inclusion of teaching subjects in the programme. Others (16%) complained of inadequate internship period. The students argued that
one and half months of internship to students is inadequate for them to practice learned skills. Some students (10%) are also unhappy based on the fact that there are inadequate learning materials in the library and others alluded to the fact that IAE does not organise internship placements for its students. They argued that it is difficult for students to organise internship placements on their own.

**The programme versus students’ career development**

From this study, it was found that students agree that the programme is adding value to their career development. One of the students said that, “The programme has added value to my career development because I have learnt how to write a project proposal and acquired competence in lobbying, advocacy and mobilising communities.” Another student said that, “The programme adds value to my career since it makes me multipurpose and gives me self-empowerment skills. It promotes self-reliance spirit among us.” From these excerpts, it shows that students believe in themselves with regard to what they are learning. Students believe that with skills they had before joining the programme, there was no way they could have been able to do such aspects like project proposal writing, applying participatory methods to solve community problems, identifying development projects, planning for programmes, monitoring projects and evaluating projects, to mention a few.

Furthermore, other students argued that competence emanating from the programme has a direct relationship to their career development since it makes them highly resourceful. One of the students stated that,

“The programme gives new skills that enhance our efficiency in undertaking our duties... Now I can confidently say that we are good planners who can budget, monitor and evaluate implementation of an adult education or community development programme. We are greatly resourceful at our workplaces, I believe.”
Another student who is one of the long serving and experienced primary school teachers claimed that, “I now know about participatory approaches in adult learning and community problem solving. This makes me special and expert of my own caliber among teachers at my school.”

The two quotations indicate that BAECID students have confidence on their competence acquired from the programme so far. It shows clearly that there is value-addition to their knowledge and skills that eventually add value to their career.

**Students’ views on merging of adult education with community development**

The study revealed that few (13%) students thought that the two fields of study should stand alone as two different study programmes to reduce students’ work load. However, most (87%) students preferred merging of the two fields of adult education and community development based on reasons indicated in Figure 2.
The two quotations indicate that BAECD students have confidence on their competence acquired from the programme so far. It shows clearly that there is value-addition to their knowledge and skills that eventually add value to their career.

Students’ views on merging of adult education with community development

The study revealed that few (13%) students thought that the two fields of study should stand alone as two different study programmes to reduce students’ workload. However, most (87%) students prefer merging of the two fields of adult education and community development based on reasons indicated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Students’ reasons of merging adult education and community development fields of study

Figure 2 indicates that out of 26 students who argued for merging of the two fields, (56%) thought that the said fields should be merged because they are closely related, while (27%) thought that they should be merged because they produce multi-skilled professionals. Other students (19%) thought that it will provide a wide range of career development (Figure 2).

Students’ recommendations towards improving BAECD programme

Students gave several recommendations towards improving BAECD programme. Most of recommendations are reactions to the list of aspects students dislike the most in the programme as stipulated before (see Table 3). Table 4 gives students’ recommendations for improving BAECD programme.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendation</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adult Education produces multi-skilled</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides wider career opportunities</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4: Students’ recommendations to improve BAECD Programme (N=30).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recommendations</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Increase programme study materials</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Establish programmes at Certificate, Diploma, and Masters levels</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Organise internship placements for students</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Allow more fieldwork practical than classroom teaching and learning</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Omit teaching subjects from the programme</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Collaborate with other institutions offering the same programme</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Advertise the programme to employees and public</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 indicates that 10 (33%) students recommended that there should be more study materials, while others (23%) argued for more fieldwork practical than classroom learning. Other students (17%) recommended for establishment of the programme at other qualification levels and organise field practice to students rather than let students organise internship placements on their own. Furthermore, some (13%) students recommended that the programme should be advertised further to stakeholders. One of the interviewed students said that, “IAE should market the programme intensively because there are many community development and adult education practitioners in the country who would like to join this important programme but they are not informed of its existence.” Another student added that, “IAE has not advertised the programme in our district councils. Most of us knew
about the programme through Institute alumni. Otherwise no one would have known about BAECD.” These excerpts show that the programme information should be widespread to community so as to reach a large population. In addition, some (10%) students in Table 4 suggested that collaboration with other institutions offering similar programmes is necessary to ensure programme quality and programme sustainability (Table 4). Furthermore, some other (10%) students recommended for removal of teaching subjects from BAECD programme.

**DISCUSSION**

Based on results from this study, it is evident that all students joined the programme voluntarily without being coerced. Amongst them, majority chose the programme by themselves and few were encouraged by other people. Findings indicated that none of the students regrets for being a BAECD student. Also based on the fact that none of the students would have wanted to swap from BAECD to another programme, therefore, it is evident that students contented with what the BAECD programme offers. This being the case, ideas for reverting the BAECD programme as stated before IAE (2014b) in the situation analysis report and by Mjema (2013) in the institutional audit were valid.

From the findings, it is evident from students’ perspectives that the programme is strongly adding value to their career development. Most students seem to be attracted to the community development part of the programme probably because 98 percent of class members are professional teachers and they have never studied the courses. A question here is on whether responses could have been the same if such respondents were not teachers or if they were fresh from school. Could the programme deliver similar satisfaction to such kind of students? This question remains unanswered and might not carry much weight in this paper but the fact remains that current students are highly motivated
and satisfied as a result of adding community development content to the adult education field of study.

Merging the two fields of adult education and community development in one programme was a decision that was reached based on survey and recommendations by stakeholders as indicated in IAE (2014b) but it was never piloted anywhere in the country. BAEC students having joined the programme and studied for two years are in a position to portray a clear picture of the merged fields in the programme. Merging of the two fields appears to be a good decision accepted by majority of students. Most students claimed that the programme makes them multi-skilled with wide career opportunities. It is likely that one might critique that the programme is heavily packed and therefore, the two fields should be separated to reduce students’ workload. However, it should be noted that today’s labour market is very competitive (Gordon, 2013). Thus, graduates who are multi-skilled have wider opportunities in the market than those who are not. The more the skills one acquires, the greater the chance for absorption in the labour market and also for career advancement. Graduates of this programme have an opportunity, on one hand, to work as community development practitioners and on the other hand, they will play the role of adult education practitioners in public or private sectors in the country (HU, 2017). However, it might be too early to judge benefits accruing from the programme since at the moment, there are no graduates of the BAEC programme on the labour market. Hence, such pattern calls for a tracer study to BAEC students graduating from IAE.

In line with all success stories from second year BAEC students, the Institute should put into consideration recommendations set by students. All recommendations as presented in Table 4 should be considered equally regardless of frequencies indicated because each affects growth and success of the programme probably in the same extent. In due regard, further research is equally important in addressing the recommendations.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Students’ perspectives regarding their choice of the programme and interest in it proves beyond doubt that the programme adds value to their career development and hence, establishment of BAECDD programme by IAE was a right decision to make. Merging the two fields of adult education and community development remains an important intervention that creates professionals with multi-skills who can serve as community development practitioners and adult education experts at the same time. Therefore, significance of merging the fields cannot be overemphasized. The following are researcher’s recommendations:

i. IAE should establish a follow-up mechanism to tress BAECDD graduates so as to assess application of adult education and community development skills acquired at the Institute. The measure will help the Institute to improve the programme based on feedback obtained from the graduates.

ii. IAE should consider extending the programme to other campuses in the country so as to reach many prospective students who are in need.

iii. Similar studies are to be conducted regularly to get students’ perceptions on the programme so as to enrich evidence-based decision-making for quality and sustainable endeavors.

Acknowledgement

The researcher acknowledges academic contribution from Professor Enna Sukutai Gudhlanga of Zimbabwe Open University who carried out a critical review on this paper and gave her inputs with regard to methodological rigor, writing style and general quality of the work.
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Challenges of Assessment of Teaching and Learning in Open and Distance Learning (ODL): The Case Study of Diploma Programme Offered by the Institute of Adult Education in Tanzania

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Abstract
This paper presents teaching and learning assessment challenges in open and distance learning, confining itself in the diploma programme offered by the Institute of Adult Education through open and distance learning mode. The study was guided by the following two research questions: How are assessments conducted in the programme? What are assessment challenges that are facing the programme? In this qualitative research, data were collected through direct observation, in-depth interviews and document review. The study involved a programme coordinator and 10 students in the programme. Findings from this study showed that the main two challenges are difficulties in handling examinations activities; and shortcomings in providing feedback to students. It was revealed further that lack of differences between the way assessments are done in the programme and the way they are in the full time conventional programmes is the main feature in the said programme. Factors or causes for that include the following: problem of orientation in face-to-face conventional training system; low technology used; and institutional management system of the programme. The paper proposes for establishment of valid management system of the
programme, adoption of modern technologies in assessment and use of reliable staffs in supervising learning including assessments in the programme.

**Keywords:** Assessment, continuous assessment, dual mode, open and distance learning, semester examination, technology.
INTRODUCTION

Open and distance learning is fast becoming an accepted as well as an indispensable part of the mainstream of education systems in both developed and developing countries [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2002]. All over the world, distance mode of education is gaining momentum and becoming more popular than conventional education (Attri, 2012). The growth has been stimulated by different factors including interest among educators and trainers in use of new internet-based and multimedia technologies and also by recognition that traditional ways of organizing education need to be reinforced by innovative methods, if the fundamental right of all people to learning is to be realized (Attri, 2012). The main two among factors for its growth encompass increasing need for continuous upgrading of skills as well as retraining and technological advances that have made it possible to offer more and more courses at a distance. Distance education has been used for many years (UNESCO, 2001) and the fact that distance education is effective is well recorded (Aluko, 2009). Emergence of the system of open and distance education is an inevitable phenomenal evolution in the history of education developments internationally. While the formal education system continues to be the mainstream of educational transaction, it has its inherent limitations with regard to expansion, provision of access as well as equity and cost-effectiveness. On the other hand, growth of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has facilitated expansion of distance mode of education (Dikshit et al., 2008). All these circumstances have opened widely a door for open and distance learning (ODL) to emerge and grow. It is in this same background that the Institute of Adult Education (IAE) has cherished a long time experience in offering education programmes through ODL.
In 2013, the IAE introduced Diploma in Adult and Continuing Education through ODL. The programme was designed as an attempt to expand enrollment and training opportunities in the adult and continuing education programme to people who are eager to pursue the course but are restricted by various obstacles to attend it at the college campus (IAE, 2013). The rationale for introduction of the programme was based on the fact that there are people who aspire for diploma studies but they are not ready, able or interested to leave behind their home and work responsibilities for pursuing further studies; there are those who cannot afford to bear the high living as well as learning costs in the campus life or in big cities where colleges are located; and there are those who cannot acquire employers’ permission or release to leave their work places for studies (IAE, 2013).

The programme is designed to offer the same course offered through face-to-face conventional system. Such pattern makes the IAE a dual mode institution in the programme. As far as technology is concerned, IAE (2013) shows that the programme is organized in such a way that teaching and learning are conducted through print materials, occasionally complemented with face-to-face meetings among learners and between learners and facilitators. Thus, the main technology in the programme is initially print-based.

Face-to-face meetings are meant to reduce the impact of separation gap between the facilitator and the learner due to shortcomings of used technology. The meetings were designed to take place at learning centres located at the IAE regional offices in selected regions. The programme began with five centres at Dar es Salaam, Morogoro, Mbeya, Dodoma, Tabora and Mwanza. At the centres, students get an opportunity to meet with module facilitators for clarification of module contents and for administering formative assessment (continuous assessment) IAE (2013).
As the most modern form of education provision, Saint (1999) argues, distance education at tertiary level offers Africa the possibility of leapfrogging certain phases in educational development. As such, in efforts to meet the new and changing demands for education and training, open and distance learning may be seen as an approach that is at least complementary and, under certain circumstances, an appropriate substitute for the face-to-face methods that still dominate most education systems. While its benefits can be evaluated by technical, social and economic criteria, distance learning methods also have their own pedagogical merit, leading to different ways of conceiving knowledge generation and acquisition (UNESCO, 2002).

In spite of the enthusiasm generated by the new thrust in open and distance education, the system is not free from challenges and problems. Saint (1999) showed that in the past, distance education was often viewed as inferior by much of the traditional academic community because it tended to have lower graduation rates and less direct interaction between the facilitator and the learner. Today, this no longer needs to be the case. Yet, in most of the developing countries, whose technology is still low, distance learning programme content delivery and assessment administration are still facing notable limitations.

The nature of communication between facilitators and learners in ODL is a necessary component in distance education, like in all other forms of education. Communication technologies distribute messages in text, sound, still images and moving images. In ODL, local support services are usually obtained at the study centre. The centre may also offer access to other learning resources, equipment and so forth. Local centres’ activities include admission, allocation to courses and student services, administering learning and teaching procedures, assignments and assessment, monitoring drop-out and completion and examinations.
Assessment informs evaluation, and according to UNESCO (2002), evaluation, finally, provides information relevant to adjustment of roles and operation of system components in order to secure their optimal contributions and development.

In ODL, like in other modes of learning, assessments are not only meant for students to earn grades and for certification, they are equally helpful for monitoring effectiveness of academic programmes. They also impact on students’ learning improvement and help learners to develop a positive attitude on the institutional system. Therefore, success of any distance education institution, dual or single mode, is highly dependent on efficiency and effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system, without which it may be impossible for administrators to be aware of problems in the system until the system itself breaks down (UNESCO, 2002).

Having presented all points on importance of ODL programmes, one central problem of this study stood to be the following: challenging environment surrounding achievement of effective assessment. The major challenge of conducting assessment in distance education emanates from the very nature of separation between the learner and the facilitator and hence, separation between the potential assessor and the assessed individuals. Without consideration of the effect of that existing space between the two parts, evaluation runs the risk of becoming a meaningless or less useful, exercise that yields little valuable information. It is within this background that more inquiries are expected to be done so as to detect challenges needed to push stakeholders to continue devising more techniques to arrest the challenges.

**Purpose of the Study**
The purpose of this study was to investigate challenges encountered in assessment of teaching and learning in open and distance learning
in the IAE’s ordinary diploma programme offered through ODL. The study was confined to challenges surrounding the interface between the assessor and the assessed during administration of assignments, tests and examinations.

The study was guided by the following two research questions:

(i) What are current assessment practices of IAE’s Diploma Programme through ODL?

(ii) What are challenges facing the practice of assessment in the IAE’s Diploma Programme through ODL?

RELATED LITERATURE

Various literature sources were consulted with the main objective of internalizing the concept of open and distance learning including challenges related to assessments in this mode of learning.

Concept of Open and Distance Learning

Defining the term **open and distance learning** is not a straightforward matter because it may have different characteristics, depending on different contexts. However, the term is used in this paper with recognition that it is a familiar term that has entered everyday usage. The term ‘open and distance learning’ combines two concepts: ‘open learning’ and ‘distance learning.’ UNESCO (2002) defines distance education as any educational process in which all or most of the teaching is conducted by someone removed in space and/or time from the learner, with the effect that all or most of the communication between teachers and learners is through an artificial medium, either electronic or print. The term **distance learning** is used as a synonym for the highly comprehensive and precise term **distance education** (UNESCO, 2002). The two concepts are different in focus though they seem to merge by referring to the same aspect. One of the most comprehensive description was given by Keegan (1996) who observed that distance education is
characterised by separation of learner and tutor as opposed to face-to-face teaching, the influence of an educational organisation, which distinguishes distance education from private study, use of technical media like print, audio, or website to unite tutor and learner, provision of a two-way communication so that the student may engage in dialogue with the tutor, the possibility of occasional meetings for purposes of interaction and self-directed nature of the learner’s involvement.

On the other hand, the term open learning - which has recently gained strength in education - means structural changes that aim at making learning open with minimized constraints in terms of time, pace, place, learning methods or combination of those. It refers to education available to all at flexible conveniences (Yusuf, 2006).

Onwe (2013) argues that, it appears we do not have at present a universally accepted definition of the term open learning. According to him, some educationists argue that ‘open’ simply means open entry and access to learning opportunities and removal of barriers to learning opportunities (see also Kanwar and Daniel, 2010); and others argue that open learning can be substituted for flexible learning. He (Onwe) shows that Jeffries and colleagues (1990), for example, looked at open learning as “any form of learning in which the provider enables individual learners exercise choice over any one or more of a number of aspects of learning.” Commonwealth of Learning (2002) defines open learning as a philosophy of learning that is based on the principle of flexibility to increase access to and equity in education; a philosophy which implies that a provider finds a variety of ways to open access to credible learning opportunities to a diverse range of learners.

The terms open learning and distance education represent approaches that focus on opening access to education and training provision, freeing
learners from the constraints of time and place, and offering flexible learning opportunities to individuals and groups of learners (UNESCO, 1997). UNESCO (2002) puts it clear that the rationale for distance education from its earliest days has been to open opportunities for learners to study regardless of geographic, socio-economic or other constraints. The term open and distance learning reflects both the fact that all or most of the teaching is conducted by someone removed from the learner in time and space, and that the mission aims to include greater dimensions of openness and flexibility (UNESCO (2002)). In distance education, the normal or principal means of communication is through technology.

According to Ridge and Waghid (2000 cited in Dodo, 2013), distance education has developed in three main phases or generations. The first generation is usually called correspondence study or the single medium distance education characterized by study materials that are mailed to students with guides on how to answer some questions and assignments before they are sent back for marking. The second generation or simply multi-media distance education, according to the said authors, is known for its greater range of ‘one-way’ media, especially the print, television and cassettes and some ‘two-way’ communication with correspondence tutors and face-to-face tutorials. The third generation or the telematic system emerged in the 1990s’ courtesy of electronic information technologies like telecommunications, computer and audio-video conferencing facilities. With passage of time and emergence of new technology, the means are increasingly being found to bridge the physical separation in distance education between lecturers and students.

African countries are still backward in technology. They need to embrace forward looking policies on new generation applications of ICT in teaching and learning (Onwe, 2013).
According to its philosophy, as Van den and Schlusmans (1989) put it, open and distance learning is characterized by societal expectations that include the following: making education less expensive, enabling more people take part in cultural life, relieving overcrowded traditional universities, enabling more people to study while working, encouraging lifelong learning, making people gain more qualifications to enable them survive in today’s employment world, and opening up access to university for students without formal entrance qualifications. Any ODL programme is perceived to strive towards meeting those characteristics.

Assessment Challenges in Open and Distance Education
It is a commonly held belief that distance students perform more poorly in assessment than do internal (conventional) students because of additional pressures and burdens of distance study. Different studies have been conducted in relation to challenges facing ODL programmes. Among the recent they include the following: Nyandara (2012), Dodo (2013), Mbwette (2015) and Attri (2012). Nyandara (2012) studied challenges and opportunities of technology-based instruction in open and distance learning (ODL) institutions particularly the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) and Center for Continuing and Distance Education (CCDE) in China. Dodo (2013) studied challenges faced by students learning in virtual and open distance learning system at Bindura University of Science Education in Zimbabwe. Panchabakesan (2011) studied also challenges faced by students in ODL programmes.

Dodo (2013) and Panchabakesan (2011) found that the general challenges included the following: financial constraints, students’ skepticism about the programme, social problems like nursing ill relatives at home, knowledge acquisition pressure, insufficient support services such as lacking identity documents/cards thereby limiting their access to some opportunities and difficulties in struggling to balance their college work, family and work expectations.
Mbwete (2015) studied about academic integrity challenges in open and distance learning delivery including on-line learning and focused on methods and tools to detect academic dishonesty as well as enforcing academic honesty. Attri (2012) studied books, journals and e-content related to distance education to explore problems associated with distance education and their tentative solutions. Identified challenges were in different ways related to, or at least had influence on, assessments. Each of them impacts on assessment quality in a different way.

According to Chaudhary and Dey (2013), three types of assessment qualities, which are essential for effective assessment, are validity, reliability and fairness (Makamane, 2011). For an assessment system to be valid, care should be taken to verify whether the purpose of assessment has been achieved or not. Reliability entails the extent to which assessment is free from errors of measurement (Chaudhary and Dey, 2013). Fairness in assessment speaks about objectivity of assessment and making assessment free from subjective judgment (UNESCO, 2006). Assurance of those in ODL programmes requires much efforts investment.

The variety of proponents were consulted, whose findings are briefly presented thereby showing varying challenges encountered in ODL programmes with assessment challenges in them. In agreement with the assertion by Moore (1999) that one of the few generalizations that can be made about any distance education programme is that a good monitoring and evaluation system is key to its success and thus, the need for finding out whether or not such challenges are also found in the programme under this study is evident.
METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research approach, with critical case study strategy. Usually, case study is a dominant method employed for understanding a phenomenon (Ary, 2010). Participants were the programme coordinator and 10 students in the programme. The latter were chosen on merits of availability and information rich. In qualitative research, sample size does not matter significantly such that what matters is the possibility of obtaining informed participants who are information rich and who are willing to share it with the researcher (Patton, 1990; Creswell, 2012). Thus, convenience sampling, which is about choosing a sample based on availability, time, location, or ease of access (Ary, 2010), was used to obtain the 10 students. The said participants were obtained from the following centres: 2 from Dar es Salaam, 2 from Morogoro, 3 from Mwanza and 3 from Tabora. The programme coordinator was in Dar es Salaam.

Data were collected through three methods: unstructured interviews, observations, and documentary review. In-depth interviews were conducted with the programme coordinator and the 10 students who are studying in the programme. Being one of the learning facilitators in the programme, the author obtained valuable complementary data through direct observation or practice. Other valuable data were obtained from the programme’s guiding document and the Prospectus, which guide students’ activities. Due to limited time and financial ability, facilitators in the programme and heads of ODL centres were not involved in the study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In this part, the study findings are presented and discussed together. Answers are presented according to questions they responded to.
Assessments Modality in the Programme

Findings from the documents and the actual practice showed that assessments in the programme are in two parts: Continuous Assessments (40 marks) and Final Assessments (60 marks). While Final Assessment (FA) is carried out through administration of an examination at the end of each module, Continuous Assessment (CA) is administered in the course of study before sitting for end of module examination (IAE, 2013). The CA constitutes of the following:

Table 1: Continuous Assessment Methods and Distribution of Marks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Assessment Method/ Modality</th>
<th>Number/ Frequency</th>
<th>Marks</th>
<th>Weight in Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Project</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>25.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Portfolio</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Mid-semester test</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>40</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


It was found that CAs are planned and administered by modules’ learning facilitators or their representatives at respective centres, usually during face-to-face session periods. All classroom-based tests are done in classes at the centres. Each centre has got facilitators. In some instances, some centres receive learning facilitators from Dar es Salaam (IAE headquarters).

Assignment works/reports and all other works are brought for submission whereby they are marked by facilitators at the centres, or they are transported to Dar es Salaam for marking. Feedback is given to students via centre’s management.
On the case of FAs, it was found that they are planned and administered by the IAE headquarters whereby students at all centres sit for the same examinations. In some incidents, centre administrators are asked to solicit invigilators to assist in invigilating.

These data indicate that, to some extent, assessment is administered the way they were documented. Some emerging circumstances cause different practices at different centres.

The findings imply that a variety of assessment methods is in place to make assessment results reliable and recommendable. However, the modality of meeting at the centres under direct face-to-face invigilation indicates that the assessment system does not reflect the essence of nature of distance learning in modern days. It seems to be conducted in the same way like that in the conventional face-to-face programme. It was found that while the programme was designed to be implemented by the IAE’s headquarters, through technological media, the actual implementation is done at the very regional centres with only some directives from the headquarters. As such, the programme was observed to be suffering from lack of ownership and poor facilitation as well as assessment. In it, learners are facilitated by hired part-time facilitators who are neither recognized by the regulatory body nor acquainted with the philosophy of ODL. To them, the programme is there for earning money. Such situation contributes in affecting negatively the quality of learning facilitation and assessment.

There is still another observed assessment challenge related to the status of the programme. The ODL centres in the programme seem to have changed their status from acting as face-to-face ODL meeting centres to acting as college campuses in which the programme seems to operate occasionally as conventional or part-time learning programme
centres. At the centres, students do not study like in distance education mode but as conventional part-time students where, in some cases, those students who reside in nearby locations usually meet and get taught. Such pattern affects key defining features of ODL programmes. It also affects modality of assessing teaching and learning. At some other centres, students and facilitators are organized in such a way that they hold learning sessions weekly on the selected days throughout the year or they conduct weekend classes. The pattern tends to confuse students because they cannot tell whether they are learning through distance or in the conventional system. Learners who live in places far from the centres are badly affected by the situation.

**Challenges in Conducting Assessments**

Findings indicated that right from the programme inception, several assessment limitations or difficulties were already known and were noted to include the following:

- Difficulties in attempting quizzes, assignments, tests and examinations due spatial separation between students and facilitators;
- Difficulties in monitoring continuous learner’s progress like in a classroom situation whereby the facilitator can monitor students and visually uphold a level of integrity consistent with institution’s reputation but with distance education, the student is removed from direct supervision; and
- Difficulties in timely provision of feedback to learners and provision of remedial activities.

Data from interviews and observation in the field revealed that two of the three programme’s assessment difficulties or limitations already presented are still prevailing in the programme. The difficulties are in the following aspects:
Difficulties in attempting quizzes, assignments, tests and examinations: students reported that they got difficulties in meeting at the centres for assignments, tests and examination because, to some, centres are located afar, to many of them, the centres are regional headquarters of neighbouring regions. Thus, they face challenges in managing travel to such centres. Their home and work responsibilities including travelling and living costs in the hotels make them fail to afford. Such a case was reported about students who live in Kasulu (Kigoma region) and others in Musoma (Mara region) who have to travel long distances to Mwanza. On the other side, data from the coordinator and information collected through participant observation indicated that facilitators faced shortage of time to meet students’ needs and to administer the CAs.

It was also reported that there were cases where students at different centres felt dissatisfied because they thought that some students at other centres were lucky in having better facilitators who made better coverage of modules than theirs. So they held that having all students at all centres sitting for the same examination was unfair because they were not taught equally. The response raises issues in terms of quality and reliability of teaching and opportunity to learning and hence, assessments. The question that is raised is, ‘assessment of what?’ The answer is, ‘teaching and learning!’ The next questions could be the following: ‘Who teaches?’ Also, ‘He/she teaches what?’ Since such aspects were outside of the study scope, answers for those questions were not sought for.

Difficulties in timely provision of feedback to learners and provision of remedial activities: Students who were asked about challenges related to timely feedback in assessments could not clearly comprehend the concept of ‘timely provision of feedback.’ The researcher found that
the concept ‘timely’ did not make sense to them due to what was conceived by the researcher to be lack of awareness among them about appropriate times for them to receive back.

But when asked whether or not they had their CA results already for the previous semester, they indicated that they did not have such results. The observed situation in the field and responses from the programme coordinator showed that feedback provision is one of the major problems in the programme. It was reported that the problem is greatly contributed due to the fact that some facilitators at many centres are part-time facilitators who are hired and paid to serve students for hours of face-to-face meetings. They use the same hours for assessments. Therefore, after the face-to-face sessions elapse, such facilitators would be unavailable for service in the programme, including providing timely feedback to students.

**Assessment challenges related to general assessment management system:** The response that was given to the interview question: “Who is responsible for assessment in the programme?” was not simple to answer during this study. It was, and is still, apparently too general. The responses from the programme coordinators revealed that management and responsibilities of teaching and learning assessments are in hands of the headquarters via the responsible department, but observation showed that they are greatly left in the hands of regional centres. It was found that the attempt to decentralize administrative and implementation responsibilities to the regional centres has raised two main challenges. The first one is that the IAE or the responsible department has not instituted a quality assurance system or mechanism to take care of the way the programme is currently operating. The second challenge is that it is unclear as to whether or not the programme is managed by the IAE headquarters via the department, which owns
the programme or whether or not it is via the department responsible for regional centres’ coordination, administratively responsible to oversee activities of regional centres. As a result, currently, it is difficult to hold any of the said departments responsible for success or failure in assessments of the programme.

**The Challenge of Technology:** With interests to understanding use of technology in assessments, the researcher included a question on this matter in the interview protocol. Responses showed that the rate of using modern ICT facilities is insignificant and the infrastructure for the same is not well established. For example, it was reported that formerly, the programme was designed in such a way that it could attract development in use of ICT. Besides, the programme was designed in a way that telephone and computer-based communications would be used to bring together students/learners and facilitators or programme administrators. In a long run, these modern technologies would be used to facilitate learning and to conduct assessments. They were shown in the programme’s guiding document as additional measures to reduce the technology gap in the programme. Plans to prepare other content delivery facilities such as audio compact discs (CDs) and digital video discs (DVDs) which contain recorded teaching programmes were put in place (IAE, 2013).

Shortages in use of technology seemed to have been a cause of many challenges in the programme. Also the noted apparent decentralization of the programme and hiring of facilitators right at the centres seemed to have been short-term ways of addressing the challenge of technology. This is like an attempt of removing space between the learner and the facilitator and hence, neutralizing need for technology. As a result, removal of space makes an ODL programme cease to be ODL.
CONCLUSION

This study has raised several challenges. Critical analysis can show that the challenges can be understood if they are collected into main three streams of challenges regarding assessment in ODL. The first challenge is rooted in overall administration and power relations. The study failed to establish a clear boundary in this. It means that feeling of responsibility on improvement of assessments in the programme depends on a wish of any of the IAE units linked to the programme. The second challenge is related to the fact that operation of the programme does not have clear up-to-date guidelines that can be treated as part of the programme curriculum. The existing guidelines are greatly not followed in the current practice and yet, others have not yet put in place. As such, timing and modalities of sitting for examinations cannot be easily predicted. The third challenge lies on the area of technology. Any improvement in an ODL programme implies improvement or development in the technology used. The kind of technology under use makes it difficult to tell about the ODL generation to which the programme belongs. It seems not to belong to any of the three generations, which are mentioned in the analysis of related literature.

Thus, while ODL programmes are increasingly becoming the best learning alternatives at different education and training levels, the practice of ODL programme under this study does not acknowledge this practically. Therefore, it is recommended that the IAE, which has been able to design and run this potentially desired programme leading to award of tertiary education, has to strive to address the observed challenges. The increasing demand and prospects of ODL programmes call for the IAE to invest more in more ODL programmes. The growing emphasis on democratizing education and efforts towards “education for all” call for prioritization of ODL programmes at different levels and in different fields.
For the IAE to address the challenges, firstly, administrative structures of the ODL programme and its operations need to be clearly defined in easily referable documents and should be followed so that a unit responsible for assuring assessment of quality of the programme is put clear and held responsible. Secondly, the IAE should check her rate of adopting technology and innovations so that she uses them instead of finding ways of operating without them. There is a need to use multimedia in the programme activities, including assessment, so as to have a centralized assessment system.
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Abstract
The study was carried out at three district councils of Shinyanga region following inauguration of a pilot programme carried out by UNESCO in partnership with the government of Tanzania. The study was set to achieve two objectives: first, to examine success of alternative learning for secondary school dropout adolescent girls and secondly, to evaluate challenges resulted in programme implementation. The study employed a case study strategy and purposive sampling technique was used to get 166 respondents. Data were collected using interview, Focus Group Discussion and documentary review. Data were subjected to using content analysis after coding them into themes and categories. From the findings, the following achievements were reported: it had helped in self-employment and income generation, building self esteem to adolescent girls, transformation of societal attitudes towards girls’ education, good knowledge on reproductive health and realization of girls’ educational dreams. Challenges reported included delays in receipt of funds, late payment of teachers, scarcity of learning materials, poor attitudes on education, students’ drop outs and lack of teachers to some centers.
Based on results from the study, the following conclusions are drawn: practical part of training has to be given more emphasis than theoretical training, the programme would help teenage mothers to employ themselves and girls will be able to realize educational dreams. Moreover, young girls have benefitted from knowledge about reproductive health. Delay in receipt of funds and late payment of teachers, students’ dropout, community members’ poor attitude on importance of education, lack of trained teachers and scarcity of learning materials were identified challenges of the programme. Recommendations include the following: make comprehensive sexuality education a reality for all schools, scale-up the programme to other districts as well as regions, deliberate efforts to link course participants to markets and invest more money in improving learning environment for girls. It would be fair to conclude that due to short–term benefits of pre-vocational training, the said aspect of the programme is more likely to be sustainable part of the programme than theoretical training. Hence, it has to be given emphasis.

**Keywords:** Alternative learning, adolescent girls, teenage pregnancies, secondary schools
INTRODUCTION

Every child in a country has the right to public education. However, it appears that there are several children who miss that right due to several reasons and hence, they require special treatment to what is called alternative education. Alternative education is primarily used as a substitute for traditional schools when a student is not succeeding in traditional schooling environment. Many times alternative education is used as a last resort for children who have misbehaved either in school or in conflict with the law (Colson, 2010). In appealing to such situations, several countries have adopted alternative education system as a way of helping those who are disadvantaged over traditional education system.

In India, a project known as “Pehchan” developed in 2002 by the Centre for Unfolding Learning Potentials (CULP) in collaboration with the government and UNICEF, offers 2 to 3 years course at primary education level to rural out–of–school adolescent girls for their integration into the formal school system. In the same vein, Bangladesh initiated Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) free schools to respond to a perceived need for quality alternative education for disadvantaged out of school children in Bangladesh, particularly girls (UNESCO, 2014). In United States of America (USA), the National Association for Legal Support of alternative schools was established in 1973 and alternative High School Initiative (AHIS) began in response to the increasing number of High School drop outs in the late 1990s and early 2000s (Colson, 2010). In Gambia, re-entry programmes for girls were initiated in 2002 by the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education targeting girls who have dropped out of school due to social, financial or other reasons, with each participant receiving extensive guidance and counseling services such as personal, social and vocational assistance (ibid.). An initiative “HOPE” for Teenage Mothers
in Kenya provides teen mothers with access to economic and education opportunities through formal education, vocational training and skills building (Centre for Education Innovation, 2014).

In recognizing the central role of education in achieving overall development goal of improving the quality of people’s lives, the Tanzanian government has made excellent progress in increasing school enrollment rates. However, challenges that remain are related to retention of students in the education cycle. Approximately 6,000 female students are expelled annually from secondary education each year due to pregnancy and it is recognized that the actual figure could be even much higher than portrayed (URT, 2013). It has also been approximated that over 55,000 female students have been forced out of education due to pregnancy in the last decade in Tanzania (Center for Reproductive Rights, 2014).

Millions of Tanzanian children and adolescents do not gain secondary education or vocational training due to a number of reasons. It is estimated that a total of 5.1 million children aged between 7 and 17 are out of school including nearly 1.5 million of lower secondary school age. Education ends for many children after primary school: only 3 out of 5 Tanzanian adolescent or 52 percent of the eligible school population are enrolled in lower secondary education and less complete secondary education. Almost 2 out of 5 girls marry before 18 years of age and thousands of adolescent girls drop outs of school because of pregnancies (Human Rights Watch, 2017).

It is in this context that a group of 220 adolescent girls from Shinyanga region of Tanzania, having previously been expelled from secondary school due to pregnancies, were supported with alternative learning opportunities. The programme was carried out by UNESCO in partnership with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. The
main objectives of the programme were as follows: first, to provide adolescent girls who had previously been expelled from secondary schools due to teenage pregnancies access to alternative learning opportunities; second, to empower adolescent girls with income generating activities; and finally, to help adolescent girls with life skills education so as to be able to address different issues related to adolescent girls. The target students were made up of only girls who dropped out of secondary schools due to teenage pregnancies (UNESCO, 2012).

The programme involved a mixture of subjects. At the beginning, foundation courses such as communication skills, English and Basic Mathematics were taught. After the foundation courses, Pre-Vocational courses that comprised of soap making, tailoring, tie and dye (batiki) and petroleum jelly making were taught. Another category of subjects included gender, adolescent reproductive health education, parenting skills, environmental education, Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) and entrepreneurial skills. After course completion, some adolescent girls re-joined secondary education.

The mode of learning in the programme was so open and flexible in the sense that adolescent girls with regard to their conveniences and agreed time had to attend learning programme while continuing with their socio-economic responsibilities. That was done by opening up ten centres, one from each ward that aimed at bringing learning programme closer to learners. In addition, each of those centres became a study centre for secondary education opened and managed by the Institute of Adult Education through open and distance learning programme as evening classes. Learners admitted in secondary education programme are expected to complete secondary education within a minimum of two
years after doing national examinations set by National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) as private candidates. Thus, this study was conducted to examine effectiveness of the said alternative learning opportunities provided to adolescent girls as a result of being expelled from secondary schools.

**Statement of the problem**

The importance of education in bringing socio-economic development in Tanzania has been realized as an important instrument in reducing poverty, ignorance and diseases (URT, 2008). The government of Tanzania introduces alternative learning programmes to cater for out of school youth, either not enrolled or did not complete their basic education (*ibid*.). Several typologies of alternative learning opportunities, which include functional literacy, computer skills, carpentry, cooking and electricity, to mention but a few, have been initiated in Tanzania as a way of helping those who have dropped out from formal education system (*ibid*.). Provision of alternative learning opportunities for adolescent girls forced out of secondary school due to teenage pregnancies was one of efforts of the government of Tanzania to ensure the right to education for a girl child.

However, there have been no data that demonstrate effectiveness of this intervention in the country. UNESCO (2014) reports that little systematic monitoring has been conducted regarding learning outcomes and impacts of alternative learning to children including young people, concurrently with lack of single data source derived from limitation of administrative data, which does not always cover alternative learning; contributes to uneven availability; and quality of data across countries. Most of the studies are western oriented and hence, culminate to lack of clear information about effectiveness of alternative learning opportunities in the country. Therefore, this study explored effectiveness
of provision of alternative learning opportunities for adolescent girls who dropped out of secondary schools due to teenage pregnancies.

**Main objective of the study**
The main objective of the study was to sensitize the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders on the need to allow girls who are forced out of school to be readmitted in school and on the need to ensure rights-based approaches to education.

**Specific objectives**

i. To examine success of alternative learning programme for adolescent girls who dropped out of secondary school due to teenage pregnancies;

ii. To identify challenges of alternative learning programme to adolescent girls who dropped out of secondary schools due to teenage pregnancies; and

iii. To sensitize the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders on the need to allow girls who are forced out of school to be readmitted in school and on the need to ensure rights-based approaches to education.

**Research questions**
This study was guided by the following research questions;

i. What are the notable achievements/benefits resulting from alternative learning programme to adolescent girls?

ii. What have been the challenges facing adolescent girls in alternative learning programme?

iii. What are pertinent approaches and strategies for the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders on the need to allow girls who are forced out of school to be readmitted in school and on the need to ensure rights-based approaches to education?
Significance of the study
Good practices and lesson portrayed by this study will be useful to other adolescent girls and women for improvement of quality of life and their families. The study will also highlight the importance of ongoing development guidelines to education practitioners and policy makers on the manner to enable pregnant girls continue with their studies so as to ensure that the practice of expulsion is discontinued.

Theoretical framework
This study was guided by Howard Gardner’s “Theory of Multiple Intelligences.” The theory stipulates that, all people are able to know the world through language, logical mathematical analysis, spatial representation, musical thinking, and the use of the body to solve problems or to make things, an understanding of other individuals, and an understanding of ourselves. The theory also stresses that individuals differ in strength (profile of intelligences) and in ways in which such intelligences are invoked as well as combined to carry out different tasks, solve diverse problems and progress in various domains. In the alternative learning system, participants are given chances to learn in varied ways and in their own unique learning styles. Multiple Intelligences are being catered for by providing learners differentiated activities and learning modules (Yalmanc and Gozum, 2013).

Theory is relevant with this study since it gives the opportunity to plan our education program by focusing learners’ interests. It also enables educational practitioners to reach more students trying to learn different disciplines. The greatest impact of the theory in the process of teaching is to increase the creativity of teachers in developing teaching strategies.
METHODOLOGY

Research design
The study employed a case study research strategy. The strategy guarantees in-depth investigation of unity of inquiry (Creswell, 2003). The primary advantage of a case study is its ability to provide much more detailed information than what is available through other methods and also allows one to present data collected from multiple methods (such as surveys, interviews, documentary review and observation) to provide the complete picture (Neale, Thapa and Boyce, 2006).

Study area
The study was carried out in two districts of Kahama and Shinyanga rural in Shinyanga region where alternative learning opportunities programme was provided as a pilot study. Five wards were selected from each district for the study. Malunga, Segese, Isaka, Mhongolo and Lunguya wards were sampled from Kahama district, while Shinyanga rural district comprised of Lyabukande, Mwantini, Pandagichiza, Usanda and Iselemagazi. The criteria guiding choice of the study area were based on the fact that the alternative learning programme being explored by the study was conducted in the said area.

Sample and Sample Size
The study constituted a total of 166 participants composed of 103 adolescent girls, 10 Ward Education Coordinator (WEC), 10 community leaders, 20 parents of adolescent girls, 10 vocational teachers, 10 Programme Coordinators and 3 District Adult Education Coordinators. Table 1 illustrates clearly the number of respondents involved in the study.
Table 1: The number of respondents involved in the study as per district council and learning centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of respondents</th>
<th>DISTRICT COUNCILS</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kahama Town</td>
<td>Msalala</td>
<td>Shinyanga</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malungo centre</td>
<td>Mhongolo Centre</td>
<td>Segese Centre</td>
<td>Isaka Centre</td>
<td>Lunguya Centre</td>
<td>Lyakubande Centre</td>
<td>Isalamagazi Centre</td>
<td>Pandagichiza Centre</td>
<td>Usanda Centre</td>
<td>Mwantini centre</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adolescent girls</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>103</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Leaders</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocational Teachers</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme Coordinator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ward Educational Coordinator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Adult Educational Coordinator</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>19</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>166</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field Data (2016)
Sampling Procedures
Purposive sampling technique was adopted in the study to get all categories of respondents. The technique was employed as it gave an opportunity the researcher to choose subjects that were knowledgeable and well informed about the research issue based on their personal experience.

Data Collection Methods
The study employed interview, Focus Group discussion and documentary analysis for collecting field data. Semi-structured interviews were employed to gather information from community leaders, Programme Coordinators, Ward Education Coordinators and Vocational teachers. Focus group discussion (FGD) was applied to gather information from adolescent girls and parents. Documentary review was used to get secondary data from offices of the Regional Resident Tutor and the Regional Administrative Secretary. Reviewed documents reviewed included the following: a letter of request from Regional Resident Tutor for Shinyanga Region to Regional Administrative Secretary asking for acceptance of the role of financing secondary education to adolescent girls through district councils; and a letter from Regional Administrative Secretary to District Executive Directors of Shinyanga, Msalala, and Kahama town councils was reviewed. The letter provided orders and directives for each district council to finance secondary education to adolescent girls. Furthermore, a letter from Regional Resident Tutor to Ward Educational Coordinators submitting learning materials was reviewed.

Data Processing and Analysis
Data obtained from interviews and Focus Group Discussions were subjected to content analysis. The information was transcribed, summarized and thereafter, codes, concepts, categories and themes
were generated. During the analysis, data were organized through research questions/sub-questions.

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

Programme Achievements
The main objective of this research was to sensitize the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders on the need to allow girls who are forced out of school to be readmitted in school and on the need to ensure rights-based approaches to education. From the field, the following achievements were reported.

a) Self-employment and income-generation
Research findings obtained from the study revealed that alternative education provided to adolescent girls had a significant contribution to girls’ self-employment and income generation. These aspects were mentioned frequently as being particularly helpful results of the programme. This was made evident when one of the adolescent girls reported that, “As a result of skills and knowledge obtained from this programme, we are now able to employ ourselves and thus, raise our incomes” (Adolescent girl, Centre D).
Similar observations were also presented by one of the interviewees when he said that,

“Since young mothers are in a single legally registered entrepreneurial group with a constitution, they can now speak as a single voice. Within a group, they get money after selling their products and they are eligible for loans from 5% District Council’s annual budget for women and the youth from its own source account” (District Adult Education Coordinator, Council B).

In the same vein, respondents were celebrating about entrepreneurial skills learned in the programme. Most of them argued that acquired
knowledge and skills will assist them in starting small businesses as one of the groups reported that, “Through entrepreneurial knowledge obtained from this programme, we are able to identify sources of finance for starting a business, how to manage a business as well as records keeping in business” (Focus Group Discussion, Centre E).

To cement on income generation and self-employment, one of the parents noted by saying that,

“Probably one of reasons, which made these girls become pregnant, is economic hardship at home. They are easily bribed. Therefore, economic empowerment and entrepreneurial knowledge covered in the programme will help them get rid of the situation. The training has made my daughter a tough woman such that she will fulfill her dreams and could even run a large company of her own in future” (Parent, Centre A).

b) Realization of educational dreams
Analysis of findings from interviews and Focus Group Discussions indicated that the programme has enabled young mothers get back on track to realize their educational dreams. Most of those interviewed had aspirations of becoming teachers and nurses, both of which are in short supply in Tanzania. One of the District Adult Educational Coordinators commented that,

“This programme has been helpful not only to teenage mothers but also to the government. One of the government’s roles is to provide education to its people. Through this programme, some girls have started attending an evening class registered under the Institute of Adult Education at Kishimba Secondary School (District Adult Education Coordinator, Council A).
Through documentary review, it was revealed that students started attending secondary schools. The findings revealed that 48 young girls joined secondary education through Open and Distance Learning (ODL) since February, 2106 under the coordination of the Institute of Adult Education.

One of programme beneficiaries when congratulating UNESCO and the government had this to say, “I am happy today that I have started secondary education again even though through an evening class. It is very interesting whereby provided education is free of charge because all costs are being incurred for by the government” (Adolescent girl, Centre A).

Table 2 indicates the number of girls who have already joined secondary education through Open and Distance learning Programme.

**Table 2: The number of young girls who have joined secondary schools through ODL**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Study Centers</th>
<th>District Councils</th>
<th>Number of learners</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Lunguya secondary school</td>
<td>Msalala</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mwl. Nyerere secondary school</td>
<td>Msalala</td>
<td>08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Kishimba secondary school</td>
<td>Kahama Town</td>
<td>05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Samuye secondary school</td>
<td>Shinyanga</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Iselamagazi secondary school</td>
<td>Shinyanga</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>48</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field data (2016).
c) Building the girl’s self-esteem and self-confidence
Findings from the study indicated that the programme has helped to build adolescent girls’ self-confidence and self-esteem. That was due to generic courses that girls went through as one of the interviewed groups highlighted that, “From this programme, we have acquired knowledge in gender and life skills, which made us aware on our rights as human beings and girls. It is through such knowledge now we are able to demand for our women’s rights when denied” (Focus Group Discussion, Centre H).

This was evident from the feedback of female student beneficiaries, feedback from parents from all interviewed centres and teachers. All respondents reported increase in skills and confidence of young mothers.

d) Transformation of Societal attitudes on girls’ education
Research findings revealed that the programme has transformed societal attitudes on the right of girls to education. All (100%) interviewed parents were supportive of the programme and their children’s participation in the programme as one of the parents said that,

“To educate a girl is to educate the whole society and to make her become aware on her life. A mother is a family care giver and a lifelong teacher. This programme has increased my daughter’s awareness on various aspects and it has given her something meaningful. I am ready to allow my daughter return to secondary school so that she can be able to fulfill her dream of becoming a nurse” (Parent, Center G).

Moreover, one of the Ward Education Coordinators said;
“As a result of this intervention, there are notable changes in people’s attitudes on the right of pregnant girls to education. You
can see it from the way the guardians speak to their daughters. When we had a meeting with parents, most of them praised the intervention” (Ward Educational Coordinator Centre B).

Therefore, the programme’s major advantage has been in making girls feel connected to school and community once more, something, which is emphasized by many education practitioners. Olds and Papalia (2006) argue that family and school environments play an important part in physical as well as mental health. Perceptions and connectedness to others both at home and at school, positively affect young people.

e) Good knowledge on reproductive health

Findings from this study also revealed that the programme had some contributions in reproductive health to young girls. One of the young mothers highlighted that,

“I have heard about family planning practices for the first time through intervention of this programme. They include injectable, oral contraceptives, counting of days through natural family planning and condoms. I would like to advice the government to incorporate family planning content in the school curriculum so that girls would become aware on their body changes” (Adolescent girl, Center H).

In addition, another young mother reported that, “I want to warn secondary school girls not mix sexual relationship with schooling because mixing the two would impede their dreams as I am today. Let them abstain from sex” (Adolescent girl, Center, F).

In Tanzania, 23 percent of women between 15 and 19 years of age have started child bearing, 17 percent have had a live birth and 6 percent were pregnant with their first child (URT, 2012). In Shinyanga,
15.1 percent of women are using traditional methods of family planning and 12.5 percent of women use modern methods thereby putting Shinyanga on the bottom of Mainland regions along with Mara and Mwanza when it comes to realization of women’s right to decide on the number and spacing of pregnancies (ibid). Therefore, knowledge in family planning is very important to young girls of Shinyanga and the community at large.

**Challenges in the programme**
The study revealed several challenges, which faced effective programme implementation.

**a) Delays in receipt of funds and late payment of teachers**
Findings from the study revealed delays in receipt of funds and late payment of teachers as major challenges of the programme. Most respondents reported late payment of teachers to have been due to delays in receipts of funds from the district councils as one of the programme coordinators explained that, “Let payments of teachers from the district council was a big challenge. In some cases, teachers worked for three months without pay. Such delays demoralized teachers and hence, there ensued teachers’ poor attendance and truancy” (Programme Coordinator Centre A). It was put very clearly that late payments to teachers who were facilitating the programme made them become discouraged and hence, increased teachers’ truancy. The pattern was also evidenced through documentary review whereby documents for teachers’ payments from programme coordinators revealed that for several months, teachers worked without pay.

**b) Students drop-out**
Most respondents from both interviews and Focus Groups Discussions reported students’ dropouts as another challenge during programme
implementation. Similarly, when these findings were triangulated with attendance registers reviewed at the centres, the same was revealed. The programme initially reached over 220 adolescent girls who had dropped out of secondary school due to unplanned pregnancies. However, only 149 students graduated out of 220 adolescent girls enrolled in the programme. The commonly mentioned reason behind student dropouts was delay between phase 1 and phase 2 of the programme. One of the adolescent girls explained that, “Most of us left studies during the first phase due to delays in the second phase of vocational training. For example, at our centre, only 2 out of 15 teenage mothers completed the studies. But when the practical phase started, four of us joined the programme phase” (Adolescent girl, Centre “A”). Apart from the fore mentioned reason for dropouts, other respondents reported income generating activities and family responsibilities as being other reasons for dropouts. One adolescent girl, for example, commented that,

“I do not attend training on a regular basis because I have to take care of my own baby before I go for studies. Besides, heavy domestic chores hinder me from attending the programme. Therefore, financial support to take care of the baby and the family is of importance help to me carry out smoothly with my studies” (Adolescent girl, Centre C).

c) Poor attitudes on education

Most facilitators and programme coordinators were of the opinion that many learners and the community at large lacked appreciation for education. It was noted, for example, that adolescent girls at several centres were skipping classes. One of the Programme Coordinators noted that,
“Generally, people are unaware of the importance of education. They regard education as a disturbance to their normal life ways. This has meant that community members’ response on the programme has been at times negative. Hence, many children drop out in order to participate in other economic activities” (Programme Coordinator Centre B).

A poor attitude by adolescent girls and the community at large was also noted when some girls expected to be paid for them to participate in the programme. One of the learners said that, “When we were about to join the programme, we expected to be paid some money as it has been done by other donors to other projects” (Adolescent girl, Centre F). In addition, community members’ poor attitudes on made girls become discouraged from attending training as one of the girls said that, “Because of ignorance we sometimes felt ashamed to continue with the programme because many people were laughing at us such that discouraged us to continue with the programme” (Adolescent girl, Centre E).

d) Lack of teachers to the centres

Results from the study also revealed lack of teachers to some of the centres, which, in turn, affected successful achievements of the programme objectives. The challenge was noticed at Malunga and Iselamagazi centres where both lacked teachers for cloth making (batiki) and soap making. It was worse at Mwantini centre than at the two mentioned centres whereby only one course of tailoring was taught due to similar challenges. The matter was evidenced when one of the groups of adolescent girls reported that, “At our centre, we do not have a teacher for batiki and soap making since the beginning of the programme. Since then, we are taught cookery and tailoring” (Focus Group Discussion, Centre A).
Through interviews with Programme Coordinators from each centre, it was clearly revealed that teachers for batiki and soap making for Malunga centre (Kahama Town Council) were from Segese Centre (Msalala District Council), while the teacher for similar courses for Iselamagazi was from Pandagichiza centre.

One of the Programme Coordinators from one centre justified the problem when he said that,

“According to the nature of the programme, the centre’s coordinator had to find teachers from his or her locality. Since the area had no experts in batiki and soap making, we depended on a hired teacher from Segese centre, whose attendance was erratic. Up to now she has attended only once. So, insufficient teachers made a good number of learners to drop from the programme because of being discouraged” (Programme Coordinator, Centre A).

Teachers’ absenteeism and truancy to some centres were also mentioned as programme challenges. It was revealed that at centres where teachers were available, they did not attend regularly due to some reasons. One of Programme Coordinators disclosed that,

“Teachers’ attendance at the centre is not good at all. One finds that a teacher may attend today but abscond for two or three days in a week. In due regard, such behaviour occurs probably due to late payment of teachers’ salaries” (Programme Coordinator, Centre Centre J).

e) Scarcity of learning materials
Research findings further revealed complaints about scarcity of learning materials right from the beginning of the programme. The vast majority of respondents requested for additional sewing machines and other
learning materials. One group, for example, said that, “We request for additional tailoring materials like sewing machines so that every one of us will get her own machine to ease learning process” (Focus Group, Centre D).

Another group of learners also complained about shortage of learning materials for their practical training. They said that, “We have been unable to conduct many practical lessons in soap making and batiki making. This is because of scarcity of training materials provided by the centre” (Focus Group, Centre A). When findings from interviews and Focus Group Discussions were cross-checked with findings from several documents, it was similarly revealed that materials distributed to learning centres were not enough.

**DISCUSSION**

The purpose of the study was to explore effectiveness of alternative training programme to adolescent girls forced out of secondary school as a result of teenage pregnancies. Focus was on sensitizing the Ministry of Education and other stakeholders on the need to allow girls who are forced out of school to be readmitted in school and on the need to ensure rights-based approaches to education.

The study revealed some programme achievements that include the following: increased self-employment and income-generation to teenage mothers. Through the intervention, teenage mothers are engaged in making goods such as jelly, soap and cloth within a legally organized group. Therefore, economic empowerment and entrepreneurial knowledge covered in the programme will help teenage mothers get rid-off from economic hardships. Also the programme helps teenage mothers go back to secondary school through non–formal education system organized by the Institute of Adult Education. This is possible
not only because of awareness created among community members and girls but also due to financial abilities gained by girls as a result of selling their products. Apart from that, the programme, as a result of knowledge gained in gender and life skills, teenage mothers became highly confident and raised their self-esteem. Furthermore, the study found transformation of societal attitudes on girls’ education as another achievement. As a result of the intervention, there are notable changes in people’s attitudes on the right of pregnant girls to education.

Apart from achievements, the study also revealed multiple challenges resulting from the programme. Delays in receipt of funds and late payment of teachers affected effective achievement of the programme and hence, demoralized teachers. Another challenge was students’ drop-out from the programme. Some teenage mothers dropped out from the programme due to delay in starting the practical phase. Scarcity of training materials and lack of trained teachers to some centres were reported to have affected programme implementation.

In a general review, these findings concur with findings by Campbell (2011) and Colson (2010). The study by Campbell (2011), for example, reports that though there are organizations to help promote alternative schools, it is clear that there are discrepancies between alternative school. Some perform the best while others face a lot of challenges or a mixture of two. In the same vein, the study by Colson (2010) identified several problems of alternative education such as lack of enough space to allow more students in the programme and staff requirement in alternative schools.
CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

On the basis of results from this study, the following conclusions are drawn: To start with programme achievements, it is fair to conclude that due to popularity and short-term benefits from practical part of training, this aspect of the programme is likely to be the most sustainable/self-sustaining part because its benefits are seen easily without delay, while the theoretical training seems boring for some of the students. The study further revealed that alternative education provided to adolescent girls had a significant contribution to girls’ self-employment and income generation. The programme would help teenage mothers to employ themselves and hence, facilitate increase in their incomes. Furthermore, the study found that the programme has enabled young mothers get back on track in realizing their educational dreams of becoming teachers and nurses, both of which are in short supply in Tanzania. In addition, findings from the study indicated that the programme has helped to build adolescent girls’ self-confidence and self-esteem. Apart from that, research findings revealed contribution of the programme in transformation of societal attitudes on the right of girl child to education. The programme’s major advantage has been in making girls feel connected to school and community once more, something, which is emphasized by many educational practitioners. Moreover, findings from the study revealed the contribution of the programme on knowledge about reproductive health to young girls.

On part of challenges, the study findings revealed several challenges, which include delays in the receipt of funds and late payment of teachers. Such pattern demoralized teachers. Students’ dropout was also noted whereby only 149 out of 220 students completed the training cycle. Community members’ poor attitude on importance of education was reported to have hampered effective programme implementation.
Results from this study also revealed lack of teachers to some of the centres, the pattern, which, in turn, affected successful achievements of programme objectives. Research findings further revealed complaints about scarcity of learning materials right from the beginning of the programme.

**Recommendations**

From the findings obtained in this study, the following recommendations are presented:

• The government needs to advocate for national stakeholders to scale-up the programme to other districts and regions with priority on regions where girls and women, particularly female students are the most vulnerable, such as Mara, Tabora and Simiyu regions. There is a great number of girls in the country, whose education has been aborted in the current decade due to pregnancy. Such girls have right to education and they can contribute to the skilled workforce of the country when they are given opportunities. Therefore, if they are effectively captured back into the education system, they will provide a cost-effective way of increasing the country’s skilled labour force. Moreover, it will support realization of their right to education.

• There should be deliberate efforts to link course participants to markets where their products will have higher value including through cross-border trade fairs. The most important stakeholders like Tanzania Women Chamber of Commerce and Small Industries Development Organization (SIDO) could be highly consulted for this purpose.

• There should be efforts in making emergency contraceptives accessible and available to every secondary school in Tanzania. The recent introduction of Emergency Contraceptives (EC) into the essential Health Care Package of the country is a
welcome measure. The Ministry of Health and Social Welfare in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) should make sure that girls are taught about existence of EC early on a national campaign.

• It is necessary for governments to invest more money in making learning environment favorable and sensitive for girls. It may include building of hostels to avoid long travel of girls from their homes to schools and availability of trained as well as qualified female teachers, especially during the developmental stage of girls in regard to their growth spurts. Districts should be provided with simple budgeting and planning tools to do so.
REFERENCES


Centre for Reproductive Rights (2014). Forced out Mandatory pregnancies testing and the expulsion of pregnant students in Tanzanian schools.


Abstract
This study aimed at examining use of electronic technology by facilitators at Tanzania’s Institute of Adult Education (IAE). The study used descriptive research strategy, which employed both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. A sample of 30 facilitators drawn from a population of 61 facilitators of the IAE Headquarters were consulted aiming at examining their use of electronic technology in terms of application(s) in use, existing competencies, experienced challenges and offered in-house training(s). Questionnaires were administered to some respondents. Findings showed that use of electronic technology by IAE facilitators has now improved enormously compared to the situation in 2000s. Facilitators are ordinary users of computer applications like Microsoft Office Word processing and electronic mail (e-mail) but they are advanced users of WhatsApp and Facebook social media applications. Also facilitators use electronic technology via their personal computers and Internet at their own costs because the office has limited computers and Internet service. It is concluded that having all facilitators using computers and other electronic technology facilities regardless of the existing challenges is a remarkable step towards
professional development. Study recommendations, among others include making use of the existing social media platform of facilitators, establishing an electronic platform (e-platform) for facilitators, training of facilitators and enhancing one-to-one (1:1) computer ratio among facilitators with reliable Internet service provision at IAE.

Keywords: Electronic technology, computer, Internet, facilitators
INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Adult Education (IAE) is an autonomous public Higher Learning Institution in Tanzania responsible for implementing adult and non-formal education policies in the country (IAE, 2008). Since its establishment by an Act of Parliament Number 12 of 1975, under the then Ministry of National Education, IAE has been implementing various adult education programmes at post-primary and tertiary levels. The IAE is the only public institution in the country mandated to offer non-formal post-primary education and at the same time plays another role of a Higher Learning Institution. Currently, the Institute operates under the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training and is fully registered under the National Council for Technical Education (NACTE) as a Higher Learning Institute. At its current state as a Higher Learning Institution, IAE offers Degree, Ordinary Diploma and Basic Certificate level programmes serving students from all over the country. IAE aspires to become a leading world institution that creates a continuously learning society by constantly designing, developing and delivering accessible quality life-long education programmes through blended learning (IAE, 2008). With this objective, mainstreaming electronic technology in its operations is necessary and that being the case, facilitators are mainly the driving force in spearheading this objective. Hence, they were the focus of this investigation.

In this study, use of electronic technology means use of computer-mediated facilities by facilitators to access, design, develop or share digital content related to their daily activities at IAE. Such facilities, among others, include computers, smartphones, removable devices, computer modems, and liquid crystal display (LCD) projectors. Therefore, information and communication technology (ICT) is considered as means to access electronic technology. In due regard, it is obvious that facilitators without ICT skills will not be able to access or use electronic technology while attending their duties.
Historically, IAE largely operated under print technology and facilitators were prompted to use print media in classroom facilitation, development of teaching and learning materials, library information search and communications. The country’s ICT policy for Basic Education shows that IAE has been using print technology in offering its education programmes through Open and Distance Learning delivery mode (MoEVT, 2007, p. 8). In the early 2000s, IAE had computers in some offices that had a very limited access to Internet and with strict access by office secretaries only since they were the only staff with skills to use computers. Facilitators were computer illiterate because technology intervention at IAE was at its initial stage. At that time around, it was not only IAE who faced the challenges but also universities and other higher learning institutions had no adequate computer facilities and reliable Internet services, something that forced students and lecturers to access Internet service through internet cafés (MCT, 2003).

National e-Government Strategy of 2013-2018 recognises importance of e-technology in the public sector. According to clarifications given in e-government strategy, electronic technology evolution in Tanzania is expected to be in stages: The first stage being digital presence whereby government institutions like IAE are expected to electronically provide simple one-way information to their clients with limited interactions; the second stage being Interaction whereby government organisations are expected to use ICT to provide some degree of online interaction with their clients; the third stage being transaction stage whereby government organisations are expected to be able to provide capabilities and features that will allow clients to complete their transactions in full online without the need to visit the offices and; the last stage being transformation stage whereby government organisations are expected to have been fully networked and working together online at all levels (PO-PSM, 2013, p. 2).
In 2007, IAE recruited two ICT staff as the first initiative towards mainstreaming ICT in its operations. Following engagement of such staff, an ICT unit was established aiming at responding to the national ICT policy and enhancing use of electronic technology at the Institute. In 2013, the Institute developed an ICT Policy aiming at ensuring that ICT is entirely integrated into its operations (IAE, 2013). Moreover, in 2013, the Institute was connected to the national ICT broadband backbone (NICTBB) network to enhance access to ICT. Currently, the institute is in the process of establishing a computer networking system to improve the existing infrastructure so as to fully enjoy the NICTBB Internet service.

According to Akpan (2014), university lecturers have various tasks to accomplish like teaching, research and publications, assessing students’ works, supervising students’ research, mentoring students, attending conferences and providing community services, among others. In order for university lecturers to be effective and efficient, competence in electronic technology is inevitable. However, this is not always the case because at some universities and higher learning institutions, lecturers face some difficulties and struggle to use electronic technology in teaching and learning (Segoe, 2014). Fu (2013) argues that lecturers/facilitators are faced with critical challenges in using electronic technology. Some of these challenges include lack of in-service training, insufficient skills for managing teaching materials, lack of specific knowledge about technology, lack of recognition and encouragement, lack of motivation, lack of technical support and lack of financial support. Fu (2013) recommends that facilitators should be given full support in terms of technical skills development; financial support; exposure to well-established institutions; and professional development in electronic technology advancement.
At the Midlands State University (MSU) of Zimbabwe, use of e-technology by lecturers was made compulsory by mainstreaming e-learning in the University’s operations (Chitanana, 2014). Thus embracing e-learning as a principal mode of instructional delivery was made the goal of the university and was stated in the MSU strategic plan. Chitanana (2014) adds that university policies had to then provide direction on how the university e-learning programme should continue. With this case of Midlands State University, use of electronic technology by lecturers is no longer optional but obligatory. Chitanana (2014) states further that at beginning stages of the initiative, lecturers had know skills in using the electronic technology because most of them were using computers for the first time and had no formal training on use of electronic technology in teaching and learning. To overcome the situation, the university introduced a special training for lecturers in ICTs that eventually made them competent and confident in using the new technology.

**Statement of the Problem**

The researcher’s interest in this study was motivated by the fact that IAE is among the old Public Institutions in the country that grew up principally in print technology till the current decade where it has been transforming itself from print to electronic technology. It is a fact that today’s world of work and, in particular, at academic environment, operations are by means of electronic technology. This being the case, most academic institutions are striving to transform themselves from print to paperless technology (Mariki, 2011). Hence, facilitators or tutors in ODL institutions like IAE who were mostly oriented in print technology are struggling to get through the transformation (Segoe, 2014). Technology is growing very fast to the extent that facilitators are compelled to use electronic technology so as to cope with the situation. There have been some indicators for advancement of electronic technology use at IAE such as existence of more computers at IAE and large number of facilitators
using smartphones but this has not been researched. Therefore, it was the aim of this study to examine use of electronic technology by IAE facilitators so as to come out with findings and recommendations that will assist in strengthening use of electronic technology at the institute.

**Purpose**
This study aimed at examining use of electronic technology by IAE facilitators. It specifically focused on the use of electronic technology in terms of application(s) in use, existing competencies, experienced challenges and offered in-house training(s).

**Research Questions**
i) What electronic technology uses and competencies exist among IAE facilitators?
ii) What challenges are faced by facilitators in using electronic technology?
iii) Which in-house training programmes have recently been conducted to facilitators on use of electronic technology?

**METHODOLOGY**

**Design**
This study used descriptive research design so as to draw the actual picture of what is happening at IAE in relation to the use of electronic technology by facilitators (Igbo, Igbo, & Ayaogu, 2012; Ranga & Mhaka, 2016). Also descriptive design was preferred because it is effective in describing who is doing what, at what time, “where and how” (USC, 2016). Thus, it was applied to describe fact about the existing situation and practice at the time the study was conducted. Both qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used in searching answers for the research questions.
Sample and Sampling Procedures

A sample of 30 facilitators, 16 males and 14 females was drawn from a population of 61 facilitators of the IAE headquarters. Based on nature of this study, convenience sampling procedure was used to get the required sample of the study from each Academic Department of the Institute. It allowed the researcher to get respondents who were readily available and convenient at the time. Recently employed facilitators were not involved in the study because it was the researcher’s idea to have those who have stayed with IAE for at least two years for validity purposes (see Mapolisa & Khosa, 2015, p. 104). The IAE top management was also not involved because they are regarded as employers in this case who are actually responsible for setting conducive working environment to facilitators. Figure 1 presents respondents’ distribution by sex and their respective departments. Twenty seven (27) out of the sample of 30 facilitators responded to this study, twelve (12) female and fifteen (15) males.

Figure 1: Respondents’ categorical distribution by department and sex
As indicated in Figure 1, respondents were from each academic department of IAE to ensure departmental representation. The departmental representation is proportional to the size of respective departments in which 9 (33%) were from the largest department of Adult and Continuing Education Studies (ACES) followed by the second largest - Distance Education department 7 (26%) down to Regional Coordination department 2 (8%) – which is the smallest in size.

**Data Collection Methods**

The researcher used questionnaire and observation data collection methods. The questionnaire included both open-ended and close-ended questions so as to collect qualitative and quantitative data, respectively. Self-administered questionnaires were applied and occasionally, the researcher had to administer the questionnaires when necessary so as to ensure timely completion of the questionnaire as well as high response rate. Questionnaires that were returned were at 90 percent - response rate. Observation method was used mainly to collect qualitative data (Kawulich, 2005). The method was suitable for observing availability of computers in offices, their use by facilitators and use of other computer gadgets together with smartphones.

**Data Analysis**

Raw data were analysed manually by tallying on responses from each questionnaire to obtain frequencies. Open-ended questions were grouped and coded thereby tallying was applied to get frequencies. Analysed data are presented in tables and figures. Some qualitative data from questionnaires were quoted and presented in findings to get the voice of the respective respondents on the particular issue. Names of quoted respondents are not real, for anonymity reasons.
STUDY FINDINGS

Use of electronic technology by IAE facilitators
This section presents results on use of electronic technology by facilitators of the IAE in terms of access to Internet services, e-mail and social networks as well as use of computer-mediated facilities.

Access to internet services
Findings as indicated in Table 1 show that facilitators use various ways to access Internet service at work.

Table 1: How facilitators access Internet service at work (N = 27)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Via computer with my personal Internet service</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via computer with office Internet service</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via my smartphone</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Via Internet cafe</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t use Internet</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings in Table 1 indicate that all facilitators have access to Internet but through various means. The majority (85%) of facilitators access Internet computers with their personal Internet service. Also most (70%) facilitators use their smartphones to access Internet services. Only a small number (15%) of facilitators access Internet through the office and (7%) use Internet cafes.

Access to email and social networks
The study revealed that all respondents own an e-mail account and 13 (48%) of them, access their email accounts daily. The rest of respondents access their emails occasionally in a week. One respondent never visited
her email account. Table 2 presents the participants’ responses on their frequency in accessing e-mail accounts per week.

Table 2: Respondents’ frequency in accessing e-mail accounts per week

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once a week</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twice a week</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrice a week</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than thrice a week</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The study also found that 26 (94%) of the facilitators own a social media account whereby 24 (88%), 12 (44%) and 1 (4%) are on WhatsApp, Facebook and Tweeter, respectively. Only one (4%) of the facilitators does not have a social media account. Of the total respondents, 15 (56%) said that they access application at any time when they are free, 10 (37%) said they access it every time when a message comes in and 2 (7%) access it once a day. These findings show that the majority of facilitators have access to e-mail, WhatsApp, Facebook and Tweeter applications but they access WhatsApp more frequently than all other applications.

**Use of Computer-mediated Facilities**

The study revealed that facilitators use electronic technology through their mobile phones to perform their duties. Each facilitator had a smartphone and others were found busy using phones in offices. One of the facilitators, Mr. Upara wrote that, “...use of smartphones nowadays is unavoidable because everyone uses WhatsApp to chat with friends, exchanging photos and getting various pieces of information on what is
happening in the country and elsewhere...I use the app for work as well.”
Another quote written by Ms. Chole reads that, “I use my smartphone to 
read or send e-mails because it is faster than a computer ... but mostly 
I use it on WhatsApp.” The quotes show that facilitators mostly use their 
smartphones to interact with each other using WhatsApp and e-mails. 
Intensive use of WhatsApp among facilitators was the researcher’s 
expectation since this is a widely used application in Tanzania compared 
to other electronic social networks.

This study indicates that facilitators have now gone further from not 
only using their smartphones in personal communications but also in 
oficial duties like searching and downloading information from the 
Internet. Also facilitators use smartphones to interact with their students 
and facilitate teaching and learning process.

“I use computer in most of my office activities especially on 
word processing but I mostly use my smartphone to download 
information, visit websites and communicate with my students as 
well as fellow facilitators. I have sent assessments and learning 
materials several times to my students via their Facebook groups 
and WhatsApp network” (Mr. Zege).

When asked if they use computers in their official duties, all facilitators 
(see Table 3) acknowledged that they do. However, many (67%) 
facilitators use their personal computers in undertaking official duties. 
Table 3 presents facilitators’ responses distribution on whether or not 
they use computers in their official activities.
Table 3: Facilitators’ responses on whether or not they use computers in their official activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I use my personal computer</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I use office computer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes, I use both personal and office computer</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No, I don’t use computer</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>27</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From Table 3, it is evident that with exclusion of 3 (11%) facilitators who solely use office computers, the rest [(67%) + 6 (22%) = 24 (89%)] use personal computers though some use both personal and office computers.

**Facilitators’ Competence in using Electronic Technology**

Findings indicated that most facilitators are ordinary electronic technology users. A bit over half (55%) of respondents ranked themselves as ordinary users, while (30%) ranked themselves as advanced users. The rest (15%) ranked beginners in using electronic technology.

Facilitators’ competence in using computers was also reflected on the kind of official activities performed by facilitators on computers. When asked to mention official activities that they normally do on their computers, facilitators just like Akpan (2014) cited before in this paper, mentioned several activities ranging from office to classroom activities. Most responses indicated that preparation of documents, searching for
teaching and learning materials from Internet and e-mailing are the most activities performed by facilitators on computers. Table 4 presents various official activities performed by facilitators on computers in the course of undertaking their duties.

**Table 4: Official activities performed by facilitators on computers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Searching for teaching and learning materials</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Storing document</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing documents</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing reports</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparing presentations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-mailing</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Challenges Faced by Facilitators in Using Electronic Technology at IAE**

This study by means of observation revealed that ICT infrastructure is a big challenge because there was no Local Area Network (LAN) in place and therefore, the available few computers were not linked to one another. Other challenges as mentioned by facilitators are indicated in Table 5.
Table 5: Challenges faced by facilitators in using electronic technology at IAE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High cost involved in buying Internet service</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of skills in using computer applications</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unreliable Internet service</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer software security issues</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outdated operating system</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Internet services in offices</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate office computers</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor printing services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unreliable power supply</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inadequate LCD projectors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explaining more about the challenges, Mrs. Njui wrote the following,

“There is neither office computer nor Internet service in my office. Therefore, it is challenging to prepare my lesson notes. Office Internet service is a nightmare here. This situation forces me to bring my personal laptop and mobile dongle/modem from home for Internet service. It is challenging and costly, I have to say.”

In-house Training to Facilitators on use of Electronic Technology

Findings (see Table 6) indicated that few in-house training programmes on electronic technology have been conducted. Table 6 shows distribution on in-house trainings that have been conducted to facilitators in a period of not more than five years back.
Table 6: In-house e-technology trainings conducted to facilitators in recent years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learning materials development</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multimedia content development</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic computer applications</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-learning</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DISCUSSION

As reported before, this study aimed at examining use of electronic technology by IAE facilitators. The study revealed that facilitators use electronic technology and most of them use their personal laptops and Internet service from personal dongles including smartphones tethering hotspot to undertake official duties. On one hand, it is a message to the IAE management that Internet service and computers are inadequate. But, on the other hand, this shows the spirit and self-motivation among lecturers towards fulfilling their responsibilities at their own costs. If facilitators have been doing all official activities on their own computers, how would it be if office computers with Internet network were to be supplied to each one of them?

This study shows that facilitators are ordinary users of electronic technology but this is valid only when focusing on use of e-mails and Microsoft Office applications. On one hand, this is because more than half of facilitators access their e-mail accounts only once a week. But, on the other hand, all facilitators use WhatsApp social media daily and actually more than once a day. This makes them advanced users of electronic technology in this context. It implies that facilitators are not illiterate in electronic technology but interest, nature and type
of electronic application in context matter a lot. This means training of facilitators or any other initiative in promoting use of electronic technology should consider utilizing first the technology that is actively in use by most facilitators.

From the findings, it is evident that currently, things have changed. Facilitators are now using electronic technology to, a greater extent, rather than it was in early 2000s where only office secretaries were in a position to use computers. This could be partly because of some training programmes that have been offered or individual efforts on trying to cope with the world of technology. It should also be noted that the cost of accessing Internet in Tanzania went down by 50 percent in 2010 as a result of establishment of the “National ICT Broadband Backbone (NICTBB) [as well as] Eastern Africa Submarine cable System (EASSy) and Southern and Eastern Africa Communication Network (SEACOM)” (MWTC, 2016). In due regard, use of electronic technology especially in accessing internet services increases although some (33%) facilitators mentioned high cost to access Internet services as one of the challenges affecting them in using electronic technology. Apart from ICT training programmes, individual efforts and affordability of Internet services, the other obvious contributing factor to increase in use of electronic technology by facilitators is presence of office computers in some facilitators’ offices. This helps facilitators to use electronic technology more frequently while at their own offices and become more competent as a result of daily practicing because practice is the key towards mastering any learning skill (Hodges & Scott, 2016; Mapolisa & Khosa, 2015). Some (40%) facilitators made it clear that computers are still inadequate (see Table 5). Fu (2013) cited before in this paper argues that some challenges in using electronic technology include financial support, lack of knowledge and technical support. Findings in this paper showed similar and more challenges, for example, lack of skills...
in using computer applications, unreliable Internet services, inadequate office computers and high costs involved in purchasing personal Internet services. This calls for support from the Institute to ensure computer availability among facilitators. As a result, that will enhance more use of electronic technology and challenges will be kept at minimum.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Use of electronic technology by IAE facilitators has improved enormously now compared to the situation in the early 2000s. Having all facilitators using computers and other electronic technology facilities regardless of the existing challenges is a remarkable step towards wider integration of electronic technology in their operations. The lesson learnt here is that self-initiative is the greatest capital towards success in electronic technology. However, to achieve success in use of electronic technology, the following recommendations are suggested:

Recommendations

i) As indicated in the study findings, 52% of respondents do not access their e-mails frequently and only 5% prepare presentations using computers. Also 30% of respondents reported that they lack computer application skills. Therefore, facilitators should be self-determined towards learning new skills in using electronic technology. This is because use of electronic technology is still very low by many facilitators at IAE.

ii) Use of WhatsApp and Facebook applications among facilitators is higher than use of e-mail services and other means of electronic communications. According to the findings, only one respondent had no WhatsApp accounts but the rest (88%) had accounts and access them on daily basis. In addition, 12 (44%) use Facebook frequently. Based on this
practice, on one hand, IAE should think of utilizing this already existing platform to enhance electronic technology use skills among facilitators. On the other hand, facilitators should attempt integrating WhatsApp, Facebook and other relevant social media applications in teaching and learning because the applications are within their reach. According to Hodges and Scott (2016), facilitators can innovatively use applications with the aid of computer-mediated facilities to prepare and share learning contents or instructions to their students to enable effective learning. Aspects like assessments, learning materials, group discussions, presentations, research works, question and answers, and many others can be well facilitated by social media applications.

iii) IAE should establish an e-platform that will require facilitators to apply their electronic technology skills to interact with fellow facilitators, students and management. In such a platform, facilitators will be required to send and receive information online. Therefore, they should have to login frequently enough during the day so as to access announcements, access management meeting reports, ask questions, clarify issues, submit reports and similar other aspects. Such platform will eventually improve facilitators’ skills in using electronic technology due to daily mandatory computer interaction.

iv) Based on the fact that there are few training programmes conducted on electronic technology as indicated in Table 6 of the findings, IAE should ensure regular training stints of facilitators on use of ICT, especially on accessing basic computer applications like Microsoft Office, Internet, Intranet, emailing and searching online materials (see also Afshari, Bakar, Luan, Samah, & Fooi,
2009; Mapolisa & Khosa, 2015; Chitanana, 2014; Fu, 2013). IAE has to make such training programmes obligatory to all facilitators (see Segoe, 2014) to ensure effective teaching and learning.

v) Lastly, the Institute has to invest on ICT facilities like computers, Local Area Network, Internet service and subscription to online library databases. Such investments will motivate facilitators to use electronic technology more frequently to search for literature online, communicate among each other and share information with their students.
REFERENCES


Realization of Time as a Resource in the Practice of Adult Education: The Case of COBET Programme in Dar es Salaam Region

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Abstract
This study investigated the extent to which time is realized as a resource in Complementary Basic Education in Tanzania (COBET) programme. The study was guided by the following two questions: How is COBET programme related to adult education? To what extent is time valued as an important resource in COBET programme? This study, which is inclined to a basic interpretative approach, was conducted in Dar es Salaam, mainly through direct observation and interviews administered to COBET class teachers and heads of learning centres. Documentary review on nature of COBET programme was also done. Findings from the study revealed that COBET programme is not purely adult education, and consequently, consideration of time as an important attribute of adult learning is not effectively taken care of. Moreover, learners’ attendance schedules and teaching and learning methods make learners perceive themselves to be like pupils who are in a normal formal schooling system. Generally, time is not perceived as a very vital resource as adult learners are expected to do. The paper challenges researchers in adult education, policy makers and COBET implementers to pay required attention on time factor with intention of accentuating the value of time to the adult learners.

Keywords: Adult education, resource, time.
INTRODUCTION

Humans are all given equal distribution of time but they differ the way they schedule it or they accept the way others schedule it for them. But individuals consume time while they are alive as lifetime is limited by death for an individual, but not for a society, which may outlive specific individual members (Klein, 2007). These statements imply that time cannot be borrowed, traded, sold, or stored; but only consumed at a constant rate (Klein, 2007). Indeed, the fact that time is perceived to be endless may lead one to think that it is not something to draw much attention, but the reality is that time is worth more than most people realize. We are born in time; we live in time; we study in time; we work in time; and we die in the function of time.

In education, time is so intrinsic among adult educators such that it is often overlooked or at least not subjected to close scrutiny. The value of time is more realistic among adult learners than the way it is expected to be in non-adult learning settings because, as Tull (1968) argues, as people grow older time seems to pass more quickly. While school children live school life as preparation for future life, adult learners live today’s life and, in some cases, strive to adjust to fill the gaps created in their past lives. From such arguments, one can then seek to assert that time is always limited among adult learners because of their many and varying roles and responsibilities and the fact that their age seems to move fast towards the evening of their lives thereby making their time seem to be shorter than the way they wish it to be or the way young people in schools perceive it.

Time is a very precious thing; but it has wings and as such is passing very fast; and once gone, it never comes back (Kenneth, 2011). This perception is more real among adult learners than among school children. It is this prevailing phenomenon that attracted the author of
this paper to conduct this study about consideration of the value of time in the practice of an adult education programme.

**Purpose of the study and research questions**

This study was carried out with the purpose of assessing the extent to which time value is realized in complementary basic education in Tanzania (COBET) programme with an assumption that it is an adult education programme.

The following two questions guided the study:

(i) Is COBET an adult education programme?

(ii) How is time value realized in practice of COBET classes as it is expected to be in adult education programmes?

**RELATED LITERATURE**

**Conception of time**

The concept of time differs, depending on the context and point of reference. From time immemorial, philosophers, teachers and theologians have speculated on true nature of time. In the 5th century, Saint Augustine noted that time is the most familiar of concepts used in organizations of thought and actions; yet, it is also the most elusive because it cannot be given any simple illuminating definition (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2005). Immanuel Kant believed that time has no existence outside the human mind; and Sir Isaac Newton perceived time as a container in which the universe exists and in which change takes place (Gupta, 2008). However, Newton noted that time and the universe are independent of each other because time would have existed even if the universe had not (Gupta, 2008).

Time can be defined by referring it to the fixed period of existence of the world, humanity or things as distinguished from eternity. It may also
be referred to, as the entire period of existence of the known universe, as distinguished from infinity (Smolin, 2003). Humans can grasp easily the concept of time by highlighting the major two characteristics of time. The first one is that time is both objective and subjective. Objectively, it is a linear progression of universal change in which events of different durations occur. It is a continuum, which is endless from the unknown past to the unknown future. In this sense, Smolin concludes, time is available everywhere and to everyone even when it is perceived not to be needed, (Smolin, 2003).

Subjectively, time is the processing rate and a holistically inclusive consciousness of change. It refers to a perceived mind picture of duration of an event, occasion or situation. It may possess different characteristics to different people as it is linked to consciousness. It moves fast when one has higher consciousness and it moves slower when one has low consciousness, (Smolin, 2003).

The second characteristic is that time is measurable. It is measured in units by using clocks and expressed on calendars; and the units of time are derived from upon two movements of planet earth (Tull, 1968). The earth is both spinning round on its own axis and at the same time orbiting round the sun. From the spinning, humans get a day and from the orbiting, humans get a year. The year is the most important unit of time when referring to long time events such as people’s life existence, and it is broken into months. Years are referred to as number of cycles the earth goes in its revolution round the sun; and they can be grouped into tens (decades), hundreds (centuries) and thousands (millennia). A day is an important measure of short events and it is broken into small units, which are hours, minutes, seconds and milliseconds. Yet, it should be noted that time is there even if the earth was not moving and the movements are only used as basis for quantifying it (Tull, 1968).
The beginning of time is very difficult to state. To overcome difficulties of obtaining the beginning of counting time, a point in time is chosen as a starting point in counting years. Christians, for example, number years from the year in which Jesus Christ was born; and thus, each year is counted based on how many years Before Christ (B.C.) or After Christ [Anno Domino (A.D.)], (Tull, 1968). Since this dating system has become popular worldwide, to avoid symbols that are so westernized or Christian-oriented, some historians prefer to use the abbreviations B.C.E. (Before the Common Era) and C.E. (Common Era) instead of B.C. and A.D. (Spielvogel, 1999). The Mohammedans count from 622 A.D., the year in which Muhammad fled to Medina (Tull, 1968).

**Time as a Resource in Adult Learning**


Time is one of the resources people have in life. To an individual, time is scarce: as already said, time once consumed cannot be consumed again (Klein, 2007). This perception is based on the fact that time is a good or resource taken from nature. Consumption of time period by one individual does not preclude use of that same period by another. A lifetime is limited by death for an individual, but not for society, which may outlive specific individual members. Individuals consume time while they are alive. To cease to consume time is to die (Klein, 2007).

Time can be manipulated infinitely (Gupta, 2008). So, one can utilize given time in playing, singing, reading or sleeping. Decision on use of
time is within human control but no choice on whether to spend time or not because time must be spent; the matter is on how to spend it. This situation indicates that unlike other renewable resources, in usual undertakings, time continues but supply of hours cannot be increased beyond 24 a day.

The presented conception of time provides a basis for an understanding that adult education, like other kinds of education, is not practiced in a vacuum, but in the background of time. As a matter of fact, time surrounds the concept and practice of adult education. In this paper, adult education is perceived to be an education avenue in which people who are recognized by society as adults obtain an opportunity of learning without necessarily abandoning their day-to-day livelihood activities and responsibilities. From this view, adult education is not any education and on everything; it is education for adults.

The definition of an adult depends on the interplay of psychological, socio-cultural, legal and age factors. Adult education is the interplay of age aspect and a life-cycle aspect in relation to aspects of time, formality, organization, intentionality and normality (Nordhaug, 2006). Age is the function of time and it influences all other factors. It is hereby argued by the author of this paper that, be it an important factor or not, age (the time one has lived so far) is a central determinant factor in defining an adult because there is no society in which the adult-defining psychological, socio-cultural and legal factors come at any age, say during infancy, babyhood or childhood. Nafukho, Omulabi and Otunga (2005) put the definition of an adult in a simple way, “an individual whose age and biological state require an expected form of behaviour and a set of social roles.”

While time is short to everyone, the problem of scarcity of time is serious among adult learners. They are time-bound and hence, time conscious.
They distribute short time they have to accomplish learning activities and, at the same time, striving to meet requirements of the other roles, responsibilities and desires of today and tomorrow, while making adjustments or rectification of activities, affections and perceptions of yesterday to avoid repetitions of experienced failures.

**Overview on COBET Programme**

The word COBET is an acronym for complementary basic education in Tanzania. It was initiated in Tanzania in 1999 by the Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) with support from UNICEF to cater for learning needs of children and adolescents that for various reasons did not have the opportunity to enroll in primary schools (Macpherson, 2007; Bwatwa and Kamwela, 2010). Its general aim was to mainstream school-age children into the formal system, especially to enroll children and youth from the disadvantaged groups including those with disability and girls (Bwatwa and Kamwela, 2010). It started as a pilot project in five districts, namely, Kisarawe, Masasi, Musoma Rural, Ngara and Songea Rural. In 2003/2004, COBET programme was scaled up countrywide (Bwatwa and Kamwela, 2010).

Since independence, Tanzania has put adult education among the top agenda. In due regard, education has been regarded as a tool for combating poverty, ignorance and diseases (Kassam, 2000). The then President of Tanzania, Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, considered it as a very important tool to help people think clearly; to enable them examine possible alternative courses of action; to make choice between those alternatives in keeping with their own purposes; and to equip them with the ability to translate their decisions into reality (Nyerere, 1978). Such desire brought about a strong drive in establishing different adult education programmes, including COBET, which was under this study.
METHODOLOGY

Research Design
This study followed qualitative research approach and it was informed by a basic interpretative study approach. This approach, according to Ary and colleagues (2010), is employed in seeking to understand cultural patterns, perspectives or naturally occurring behaviour of the group; and it helps to seek for understanding a phenomenon using data that are collected in a variety of ways, such as interviews, observations, and documentary review.

Area and Population Sample
Findings from this study emanated from direct observations and interviews made at four COBET centres in Dar es Salaam Region, namely, Bunju A, Kawe A, Kunduchi, and Muzimuni. All four centres are located in Kinondoni district. The researcher selected those centres because of their convenience in terms of access: they were centres that the researcher happened to assess the IAE students in their field practice. The observations were focused on the way the programme is being implemented in comparison to the way it was designed or planned. Observation went hand-in-hand with interviews held with the head teacher of each of the four COBET centres and twelve (12) teachers in the COBET programme at the 4 centres. The head teachers were purposively sampled and convenience-based sampling was used to obtain the 12 teachers. Selection of the area and participants was based on the fact that in qualitative research, one selects people or sites that can best help understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). The standard used in choosing participants and sites is whether they are “information rich” (Patton, 1990).

A thorough review of three study reports on nature of COBET in Tanzania was done to provide foundational data on nature of the programme.
The first report was that from the study done by John Massawe, Beniel Seka, Catherine Baynit and Jeanmina Mtitu in the year 2000, pioneered by Tanzania Institute of Education in collaboration with the Ministry of Education and Culture and UNICEF. It aimed at evaluating COBET materials and learners’ achievement in the pilot districts of Masasi and Kisarawe. The second document is titled “Country Profile prepared for the Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2008 Education for All by 2015: Will we make it? Tanzania Non-formal education,” which was produced by UNICEF through Ian Macpherson in 2007. The third one is the study done by Y. M. Bwatwa and A. S. Kamwela in 2010 for review and revision of implementation of adult and non-formal education. From these reports, findings related to the theme of this paper are presented together with those from key informants. Besides these three documents, other studies’ reports and other kinds of literature on time, and nature, implementation and performance of the COBET programme were reviewed with an endeavor to establish the background of this study.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are presented and discussed in an organization, which follows the pattern of the questions they answered.

**COBET as Adult Learning Programme**

According to literature on establishment of COBET, the programme is designed for two groups of beneficiaries: Cohort I, which constitutes enrolled out-of-school girls and boys in the age group of 11-13 years, and Cohort II, which constitutes girls and boys in the age group of 14-18 years. Children who enter COBET Cohort I (11 to 13 years) are eligible for mainstreaming into the formal schooling system (primary school) when they finish their learning cycle, while those in Cohort II (between 14 and 18) are eligible to join secondary education and other forms of education such as vocational training and join the labour
market after they complete their learning cycle, (refer for example to Macpherson, 2007; Bwatwa and Kamwela, 2010).

COBET programme is designed to offer tailor made educational instructions based on the real learning needs. The curriculum for the older cohort differs from that of the young ones in order to address their needs for livelihood skill training. While the pedagogy is based on child-friendly principles, it follows the primary school curriculum (see Bhalalusesa, 2002; DeJaeghere, 2004). The programme curriculum, developed by the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) in collaboration with the Institute of Adult Education (IAE) and the Ministry of Education, indicates subjects, number of periods per week, and duration per period including total course duration. For each cohort, there are the following five core subjects: communication skills (Kiswahili and English), general knowledge (maarifa), mathematics (hisabati), work skills (stadi za kazi) and personality building (ujenzi wa haiba) (Bhalalusesa, 2002).

When all programme attributes are analyzed, it becomes difficult to judge whether COBET is adult education or not. Its design signifies some elements of adult and non-formal education. The evaluative study by UNICEF (2009) found that most learners were aged between 15 and 18 years; and that was a result of mainstreaming of those learners in Cohort I, which began in 2006. The fact that the programme was structured to have Cohort II learners indicates that the programme has elements of adult education.

Thus, findings indicated that in its planning, COBET was intended to adhere, to a certain degree, principles of adult learning. The fact that the programme is so flexible to permit multiple entries and that it exists to other openings, depending on the learner’s abilities to accommodating people of different ages and slow and fast learners
(Bwatwa and Kamwela, 2010) indicates that it is an adult learning programme. The fact that the programme is designed to provide an alternative avenue of obtaining basic education (primary education) for those who could not obtain it at the right or regular age makes it a sort of adult education programme. The fact that its curriculum provides for learning about livelihood activities is an indicator that it was designed for individuals who have multiple roles in society.

But contrasts are there. Some organizational and implementation features of COBET permit a person to broadly perceive it in a different view. Answers to the questions, which required analysis on the relationship between COBET as an adult education programme and the way its objective, teaching methods and implementation modality are structured indicate that it is not an adult education programme. That is seen right from the nature of its design.

The main objective of introducing COBET programme was, “to raise the rate of enrollment in primary education” (Massawe et al., 2000). Its rationale is based on the desire to have children attain an avenue for getting mainstreamed into the formal schooling system and hence, clear the backlog of illiterate children and arrest illiteracy from increasing. That is confirmed by Massawe and colleagues (2000 quoting from Katunzi and Manda, 1999) in arguing that the overall objective of COBET is to “provide alternative learning opportunities for out-of-school children, particularly girls.” When based on these policy-related ideas, an argument that COBET is not an adult education programme becomes strong because the programme is meant for ‘children’ and children are not adults. This view is also supported by the fact that learners in COBET programme wear school uniforms.

In this study, through observation, it was evident that learners at all four COBET centres were found dressed in the same school uniforms like
pupils of the regular schooling system. Bwatwa and Kamwela (2010) found the same case and presented photographs of COBET learners in the classrooms and depict that all wore school uniforms at Kiroka centre, in Morogoro district. The reason for this was reported by teachers and heads of learning centres that learners are interested with uniforms and they desire to look like normal schooling pupils. Such learners’ desire indicates that they consider themselves as school children and not COBET learners.

Macpherson (2007) gives some clues, which indicate that COBET is not adult education. He says that key characteristics of the COBET programme are that it is “child centred, based on community participation and capacity building, of integrated development, and with flexibility and relevance.” The first characteristic in that statement, which features out first before others, shows that the programme is child-centred, as opposed to adult-centred. On the other hand, Mushi and colleagues (2002) add that COBET curriculum is flexible and relevant to educational needs and interests of children who are out of school.

It was documented in study reports that learners in COBET are enrolled in cohorts based on age. Bwatwa and Kamwela (2010) report that three target groups are conceived in the Adult Education and Non-Formal Education Strategy: 11-13 year old children and disadvantaged children aged 7-13 from nomadic communities, street children, disabled orphans and out of reach; 14-18 year old youth; and 19+ year old adults. The same authors continue that COBET aims at mainstreaming the first group into formal education and allows the second group to take the Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) and stimulate skills development for the workplace. The integrated community based adult education (ICBAE) programme conducts literacy and functional literacy classes targeted for the third group (Bwatwa and Kamwela (2010)).
On the contrary, findings from this study indicated that the centres enroll children who are between 11 and 16 years to be taught for the purpose of getting mainstreamed into the formal school system. Moreover, the two cohorts, which exist at the centres, are not based on age but degree of academic ability. At some centres (for example, Kawe A), the divisions, which are based on academic achievement levels, are not called cohorts, they are called COBET A, COBET B and COBET C (three classes). At Muzimuni centre, the learners compose of one class and they are few. At Kunduchi centre, the two groups are called cohorts but they are not categorized according to age, but academic ability, and they are usually accommodated in the same room at the same time only with different alternating learning timetables.

In-depth analysis of these findings showed that designing of the programme into the two cohorts implies that Cohort II is purely adult education. Also, people who are enrolled in this cohort are perceived as adults in many Tanzanian societies due to their age and roles in society. Such pattern could permit one to conclude that COBET is a mixture of adult education and child education through the non-formal education system. Yet, implementation in the field is not found to be like what was designed.

In the studied centres, adults who are above 16 years are not accepted for enrollment. At Kunduchi centre, for example, adults (by age) who cannot read and write usually go for enrollment but they are not accepted because they are perceived to be too grown up to enroll. Also, at all four centres, learners in Cohort I and Cohort II (if it is really Cohort II) are mixed in the same classroom. At most of the centres, COBET learners attend classes at one time with the regular pupils and, at one of the four centres, shortage of classrooms forces teaching and learning in COBET to be conducted in the room, which is at the same
time used as teachers’ office (staff room). In this case, COBET is suffering from two challenges at a go: mixing Cohorts I and II, and conducting the mixture of the two categories of learners in a room that has got teachers. While the problem of mixing the two cohorts forces learners of one category to learn contents designed for or delivered through methods designed for another group category or vice versa, there is yet a problem of learning while surrounded by teachers.

**Realization of Time in COBET**

Realization of time was based on three aspects regarded as indicators to show the extent to which time is valued and properly used. The aspects are learning timetables, class attendance, and punctuality on beginning and ending of learning sessions.

When reference is made to learning timetables, responses from interviewees disclosed that COBET classes have got timetables. At all four centres, the same was reported. The researcher could see timetables on walls inside classrooms. In this matter, it is indicated that time is valued as a resource, whose use needs to be planned. However, the time-related problem that observed was about the matter of following the timetables. At all four centres, though at different degrees, attendance of both learners and teachers were observed to be time-table related challenges. The reported reasons for failing to follow the timetable thoroughly varies from centre to centre, but mostly they are common.

The problem of poor attendance was observed at all four centres. At Muzimuni centre, learners’ attendance was so poor that in most cases, the class constituted of only four (4) learners in the class of 23 learners. At Kawe A and Bunju A, attendance was not a serious problem; a reasonable number attended.
At Kunduchi, serious circumstances related to time value were observed. Learners properly attended at the centre because they are required to report at the centre in the morning at the same time when other pupils do. However, the critical problems of this centre, which have something to do with time realization are that the two groups in COBET programme use the same room at the same time where they learn alternatively (i.e., when one group is learning, the other one is in the same room waiting for their turn but remaining quiet in the same room) and the fact that part of the same classroom is the staff room. Two different levels staying in the same classroom at the same time, but having alternative learning sessions, do not only jeopardize the timetable but it also makes time wasted and learning boring.

While the head of Muzimuni centre reported that the main causes of low rate of attendance are long distances from learners’ points of residences to the schools where learning centres are located, engagement in other socio-economic roles and responsibilities, and lack of family support, were reported to contribute to the problem. Teachers at all centres reported about the problem of poor motivation and annoyance among learners due to lack of appropriate and specific teachers who can apply appropriate methods of making the learners learn and get interested to learn.

Information obtained through interviews from teachers indicated that facilitators who are assigned to teach COBET classes are not well trained to undertake such responsibilities. As such, learners are not sufficiently taught. These findings are related to those by Bwatwa and Kmwela (2010), which show that as the programme was designed, each class should have two facilitators - a Para-professional with a minimum qualification of Form IV or above and a professional Grade IIIA teacher - and that, when COBET programme was expanded country wide in
some areas, qualified facilitators were not available and instead, Standard Seven leavers and Form Two leavers were appointed (see Bwatwa and Kamwela, 2010; p 45).

The question about who plans or decides on reporting time and class timetables was simple to be answered by the respondents. “It is the school management,” said one of the heads of centres. The other one said that it is the academic teacher who assists to design timetables. The other two said that timetable for COBET programme is prepared when timetable for all other classes is prepared.

When these findings are critically examined, another problem arises – poor involvement of learners in planning time and learning activities. It is evident that enough efforts are not made to provide an opportunity for learners to plan their limited time. There seems to be low awareness that adult learners have their own perception on their time. Treating their time the way it is treated for formal school children is not fruitful to them. Poor attendance and loss of interests in learning are outcomes.

**CONCLUSION**

This study has shown that partly COBET is an adult education programme. While it was designed to have Cohort I learners who are to be mainstreamed into the formal education system, it has also Cohort II, whose age and other attributes are likely to define them as adult learners. In contrast to their being adult learners, the study has evidently shown that some adult learning characteristics regarding time value are not well observed in the programme. In their attendance, reporting and leaving time, and class timetables, the learners are made to follow the time, which is set by someone else instead of having the learners participate in scheduling their activities and priorities in the limited time that they seem to have.
There is no doubt that with whatever notable challenges, which it has been facing, COBET has achieved a remarkable degree of success in providing learning opportunities for some members in society. It has managed to capture a good number of out of school children and adolescents into the formal schooling system and provides an avenue for others to learn what they could not have opportunities to lean. However, in addition to other challenges that researchers can explore and come out with, time value is a challenge. It is, probably, a serious challenge, but which people may overlook.

The fact is that, among adult learners, time is ubiquitous but it is not an abundant resource that it needs to be reconsidered. Failure to involve them in determining appropriate times for learning and in setting learning timetables is both a motivational challenge in learning and a barrier restricting attendance at the centres. The problems of poor attendance and drop-outs among COBET learners can be connected to their multiple responsibilities and un-educational backgrounds, but deep analysis of the problems arises from their inconveniences in time use and time distribution. To them, time is limited but elastic. It can be stretched in different ways and accommodate more roles and activities, including learning. But, that can best be done by themselves and not someone else scheduling it for them. Therefore, actors in adult education programmes, including COBET, are hereby called upon to keep in their minds the reality that time is a sensitive factor among adult learners in their course of learning. Researchers and policy makers need to find out appropriate implementation strategies that can serve the adult population, which missed out primary education at their right age by reviewing and improving COBET programme or designing new ones that can best provide a better learning opportunity to the adult population.
REFERENCES


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