

# THE STATUS OF IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION POLICY OF THE TANZANIA GOVERNMENT IN KARATU DISTRICT

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**Abstract** - The study aimed at assessing the status of implementation of education policy of the Tanzanian government in Karatu District. The study was guided by one specific objective that sought to explore and identify possible obstacles for the falling standard of education in Tanzania. A mixed research approach was used to collect data in this study. With the use of quantitative and qualitative research methods, data was collected through the use of questionnaire and rigorous interview. Thematic analysis was used in the analysis of the qualitative while Descriptive analysis by using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was also used to analyse the quantitative data. The sample size of the study consisted of four (4) head of school, forty (40) class teachers and forty (40) students from four secondary schools in Karatu District. Most respondents expressed lack of teaching and learning materials, especially textbooks, workbooks and supplementary readers as setbacks for education policy implementation. Head teachers, teachers and students of secondary schools argued that textbooks and supplementary readers are the only tools available for most Tanzanian children to acquire knowledge and skills, absence or limited textbooks and supplementary readers in the secondary school will affect the educational foundation of students. The findings revealed that the availability of classroom, parental level of income, availability of textbooks, presence of a well-stocked library, have influence on attainment of policy implementation in the study area. Based on the study findings, the Government and school principals should make sure that schools must conducive environment for the learning to take place.

**Keywords:** Secondary Education, Education Policy, Implementation

## INTRODUCTION

Tanzania, being a member of the United Nations, committed to education for all initiative in 2000 and has since implemented series of educational reforms to meet the target for the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2. Despite the numerous government interventions to achieve the MDG 2, many children in Tanzania have been denied quality secondary education by the state. This has resulted in mass illiteracy among children of secondary school age, unacceptable examination results and overwhelming increase in anti-social behaviour nationwide.

Since five years, despair and uncertainty have clouded Tanzania's Education system due to unsatisfactory performance of secondary school students, and its negative impact on further studies [1]. Basic school teachers are moaning about marginal performance of students and limited teaching and learning materials, parents are concerned about their children's unsatisfactory results and future; as most of them find it very challenging to write a single sentence correctly, and the whole nation appears to stare helplessly in anguish [1].

A good number of United Nations country and regional reports, thesis and articles on Tanzania's performance on secondary education programme have established that a lot have been achieved in relation to increasing enrolment, training more teachers, bridging gender disparity and infrastructure [2, 3 & 4]. While education management and parents are strongly blaming government for not doing enough, government officials are robustly defending government for doing the best [1].

## LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Kostman [5] observed that population of students in classrooms does not create favourable situation for learning which can lead to poor academic performance of secondary school students. Abagi [6] he found out that private school administrators and educators believe that a low teacher-pupil ratio boosts pupils performance. Also, report of World Bank [7] which cited that private secondary schools operate in a rather imperfect environment. The learner enrolment in any school should think about the accessibility of enough classrooms. Also, Atkinson [8] in his study on secondary school efficiency in Britain he observed that smaller classes lead to higher educational attainment. Many secondary schools with fewer number of students in classroom achieve high academic performance in national examinations, such as seminary schools, there are fewer students in classroom and each teacher teach one subject, that is why in every year the schools like this enter in top ten in academic performance compared to the others.

Tanzania's efforts to guarantee education for all are further informed by the 1990 World Conference on Education for All, which set out a vision for education and restated the goal of achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 2000 (UNESCO, 1990). However, by the year 2000, many countries including Tanzania had failed to achieve UPE targets. Consequently, the Dakar Framework for Action (DFA) (UNESCO, 2000) and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) restated formally what was required. The DFA and MDG goals for education required governments to ensure that, by 2015, all children, regardless of their gender and geographical location, had access to and completed their basic education.

Following the policy statement on fee-free basic education, the Government Circular No. 5 was established to formalize the government's commitment to provide fee-free basic public education, as stipulated in the Education and Training Policy of 2014. The Circular also provided directives to corresponding public bodies to ensure that primary and secondary education is free [9]. Significantly, the circular releases parents from all contributions, as it reads: "The provision of free education means students will not pay any fee or other contributions that were being made by parents or guardians before the release of the new circular". Following the issuance of this circular, the government released grants amounting to Tshs. 49, 173, 165,000 for the 2015/2016 academic year (URT, 2015a). Of the total amount, 64 percent was set aside for primary schools while 36 percent was earmarked for secondary schools. Consistent with the previous fee- and contribution-free primary education, the current fee-free basic education initiative exempts parents with children in public primary schools from paying tuition fees and making other school-related contributions. In addition, the initiative extends to public secondary schools at the ordinary level (Form 1 - 4). This is in recognition that fees place a burden on parents, a condition which limits the maximization of school enrolment.

The fee-free basic education funding that the government provides for primary schools is Tshs. 10,000 per child per year. Of this amount, 60% (Tsh. 6,000) is transferred directly from the Treasury into the school's accounts, whereas 40% (Tshs. 4,000) is retained by the government for the purchase of textbooks. The capitation grant set for secondary schools is Tshs. 25,000 per student per year. Of this amount, only Tshs. 12,500 is expected to be transferred direct to a school. Furthermore, the government compensation for day and boarding secondary school tuition fees is set at Tshs. 20,000 for day secondary schools and Tshs. 70,000 for boarding secondary schools per student per year, respectively. The cost of meals at boarding schools amounts to Tshs. 405,000 per student per year [3].

The findings reveal variations in the amount of grants that the schools received. Some schools reported receiving less than the expected amount while others, the secondary schools in particular, received slightly more than they had anticipated. Nearly all of the heads of schools complained that the capitation grants they received were inadequate to meet the basic school requirements [4]. In particular, the heads of schools were concerned about the amount of funding they received for academic and administrative purposes. For administrative purposes, secondary schools used the funds received to produce identity cards for the students and teachers, buy files and other stationery, and pay for electricity and water as well as security guards [1]. In fact, some heads of schools added that the funds they received were on the basis of the number of children enrolled in their schools, failed to meet the school's needs, which varied depending on the school's location and socio-economic factors in the respective school communities [4].

## METHODOLOGY

In an attempt to explore and identify possible obstacles for the status of Implementation of Education Policy in Tanzania, a mixed research approach which involved a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods was used to obtain comprehensive views and experiences of respondents. Data was collected through questionnaire and interview. Two different sets of data were collected for this study, quantitative and qualitative data. Thematic analysis was used in the analysis of the qualitative data in order to help capture the complexities of meaning within the documented data. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was also used to analyse the quantitative data in order to obtain a descriptive statistics to summarize and organize the data for easy understanding.

Descriptive analysis was used to summarize the data, which was presented in tables and expressed as ratio to make it meaningful and easy to understand. In all, four (4) secondary schools were selected for the study. Two of these schools were urban schools and two rural schools in Karatu District. The choice of these schools was to obtain representational data on the textbook/pupil ratio in both urban and rural secondary schools in general. Ethical approval was sought and obtained from the Head Teachers and Teachers of the four schools. Voluntary informed and written consent was obtained from all participants.

Questionnaires were sent across the four (4) secondary schools by researchers. Whilst all school heads and class teachers were given questionnaire, Students were interviewed. For clarity, understanding and confident self expression, English and Kiswahili were used for students' interview. Interviews were audio taped and transcribed. All respondents were obtained through purposeful sampling, as they were students and teachers in the various Secondary Schools studied. Respondents included, head of schools (4), teachers (40) and students (40). Due to the purpose of this study, purposive sampling was deemed appropriate, as targeted respondents were either teachers or students in the selected schools and could provide comprehensive and useful data for this study. Seventy six (76) questionnaires were obtained out of the 84 distributed to participants. There were eight (8) missing data.

## PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUALITATIVE DATA

To explore and identify possible challenges for the falling standard of education in Tanzania, 20 respondents were interviewed from the students sample. Four (4) broad themes, which were supported with relevant quotations from the transcribed interview emerged from the analysis of the interview data. They include limited textbooks, non-availability of supplementary Readers, Financial constraints and Inability to Read. These four (4) themes are all related to respondents perception, opinions and experiences on textbook and supplementary readers in secondary education.

### Theme 1: Limited Textbooks

The limited textbook theme dominated students interview. Students were very concerned about the difficulty associated with three or four students sharing one textbook most of the time. They lamented about not being able to read the text from their various positions and had to stretch their necks to catch a glimpse of the text. They also stated that they gave up following the text when their neck is hurting and have to rely on what their teachers tell them or what other students read from the textbooks. Students were of the view that the limited textbooks are having negative impact on their performance.



**Table 1: Quotes from Students (SU) relating to limited textbooks**

Student	Illustrative Quotes
SU 1	"In my class, we have textbooks but they are not enough. Three of us share one English textbook."
SU 8	"We do not use maths textbooks/workbooks, Madam always write the questions in the maths books on the blackboard for us."
SU 7	"I have all the textbooks but since some of my friends do not have, I share mine with them, however, I wish everybody has books so that I can sit down comfortably and enjoy the lesson."
SU19	" I am tired of stretching my neck to look in the textbook, I wish there are enough textbooks for all of us. I enjoy the lesson if we do not use the textbooks and Sir has to do all the talking."
SU16	" I can't remember the last time I looked in any textbook in class, It's not comfortable when you have to share a textbook with somebody for two good periods."
SU 4	" We have textbooks at master's office but madam says we are ripping them so she does not give them to us anymore. She is the only one who has the textbook during lessons. Also, at times she will dictate notes from the textbooks for us to write but because my spellings are not good, I find it very difficult to read and understand my own notes."

**Source: Research findings**

On the issue of limited textbooks, evidence from studies suggest that if students have access to textbooks and access to reading, they perform better [10]. The current textbook situation in the schools under study is disturbing and need urgent attention, to help provide students with the basic life skills they will need for the rest of their lives.

**Theme 2: Non-availability of supplementary readers**

In the course of the interview with students, all respondents saw the importance of reading in their education and the need for them to be able to read with understanding in order to pass their exams. Most respondents lamented for not being in any position to acquire a single storybook or have access to any school or public library to help them improve their reading skill.

**Table 2: Quotes from Students (SU) Non-availability of supplementary readers**

Student	Illustrative Quotes
SU11	"We do not have supplementary readers in school and I don't have books at home, so I do not read."
SU 8	"I don't read any book apart from my school textbooks."
SU 7	" I love reading but I do not know where to find any public library."
SU19	" I hate reading because I cannot read."

**Source: Research findings**

The importance of supplementary readers in quality primary education has been well established [10]. Unfortunately, for most primary school students in Tanzania, it is impossible to have access to supplementary readers from schools, libraries, bookshops, retailers, older siblings and other relatives. Thus shattering their hopes of good education and bright future.

Also the findings are in line with that of Heyneymann [11] who observed that secondary school that has adequate instructional materials is likely to post better quality grades than a school which has poor quality physical resources. Adeogun [12] cited that schools endowed with more materials performed better than schools that are less endowed. Fuller [13] also noted that private secondary schools performed better than public schools because of the availability and adequacy of teaching and learning materials.

Mwiria [14] also observed that students academic performance is affected by the quality and quantity of teaching and learning materials. The researcher noted that schools with adequate facilities such as textbooks stand a better chance of performing well in examination than the poorly equipped ones.

**Theme 3: Financial constraint**

The financial constraint theme was also one of the major concerns raised by students during the interview, as this has resulted in non-availability of some textbooks and supplementary readers. Students were of the view that poverty, (due to unemployment, unfavorable business conditions as a result of frequent power outage and unbearable high cost of living), parents are made them unable to buy textbooks for them. Students explained that though the school provided them with some textbooks, they were inadequate, therefore parents have to supplement.

**Table 3: Quotes from Students (SU) relating to financial constraint**

Student	Illustrative Quotes
SU 1	"High cost of living makes it very difficult for my parents to buy textbooks for me and my four siblings."
SU 3	"I live with only my mother who is a seamstress but because of her backache she cannot work with her hand machine. However, because of the many light offs she does not sew much so she has no money for all my school needs."
SU 7	"I remember when I was in primary school my parents used to buy me books, but since I came to secondary I hardly get all my school textbooks because daddy is out of work and mum's cold store business is gradually collapsing because of regular power cuts."
SU 15	"When I ask for textbooks, my father always tells me that buying food for the family is a problem and you are worrying me with textbooks."
SU 16	"My dad always tell me, have patience, at the moment I can't afford to buy a single textbook for you, when things get better I will buy them. I have been waiting for more than two years without things getting better so I have stopped asking for textbooks."

**Source: Research findings**

This studies revealed that some students were going through very pathetic educational conditions as they go through the whole four year secondary education without ever possessing any of the textbooks the parents are required to provide. Thus, students always rely on teacher's lessons and notes. Students were concerned about their inability to obtain these textbooks and were completely lost for words to explain how they feel about the complete absence of some textbooks in the course of their study.

It was also observed that absentee fathers, break down of family system resulting in single parent, break down of social/financial systems, lack of employment opportunities, large family size and poor economic conditions were huge contributing factors to financial constraints on parents. It also came to light that due to the huge financial constraint on parents, most students indulge in selling of various items to support family financial demands.

These activities prevents students from going to school regularly and doing any school work at home after school or during the holidays.

This findings are in line with that of Jeyness [15] who observed that low level income of parents has resilient effects on their children's academic works. That causes them to lack enough resources and funds to sponsor their education. Also, Kapinga [16] observed that learners with high level of socio- economic status perform better than the middle class learners and the middle class learners perform better than the learners with low level of socio- economic status. Therefore, low income is statistically significant to poor academic performance. These findings are also in line with that of Staffolani and Bratti [17] who observed that parent's income correlates with negative school outcome but, it is not always true that lower-income parents are neglectful parents, but it is easy to slip into that stereotype under extreme pressure.

#### **Theme 4: Inability to read**

Another vital theme that came up strongly in the course of the interview with students' was their inability to read fluently. Students explained that some of them find it very difficult to read and understand written texts, and also have problems of confidently expressing themselves in English language. Students lamented that, apart from occasionally reading their textbooks in school, they hardly read any storybooks in school or at home as there are no books to read. It also emerged during the interview that although most of them do not have their own textbooks, there are a few lucky ones among them whose parents have actually provided them with all the seven textbooks required for Primary Education. However, because some of these students cannot read fluently and are not in a position to explain what they read, they either leave their textbooks at home or keep them in their school bags during lessons, for fear of being asked to read. Students see all these as having adverse effect on their education as most of the time they find it difficult to read and understand examination questions.

**Table 4: Quotes from Students (SU) Inability to read**

Student	Illustrative Quotes
SU 2	" I can read some words but not much."
SU 9	" I love reading and can read fluently so I always read in class because most of my class mates cannot read."
SU 14	"If you want me to die ask me to read. I hate reading because I cannot read."
SU 19	"In my class, only five of us can read very well and I am one of them."

#### **Source: Research findings**

The inability of students to read with understanding and express themselves in English could result in poor academic performance and lack of self confidence.



## PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE DATA

This section of the study provides a presentation and description of quantitative data. The data is presented in tables and expressed as ratio for easy reading, understanding and conceptualizing of the results.

**Table 1: Availability of Maths Textbooks**

Subject	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	Average
MATHS 1	0.41	0.55	0.51	1.62	1.16	0.84
MATHS 2	0.37	0.36	0.34	0.97	0.89	0.63
MATHS 3	0.4	0.49	0.47	1.05	1.15	0.71
MATHS 4	0.26	0.78	0.37	0.72	0.75	0.51
MATHS 5	0.53	0.49	0.48	0.72	0.67	0.58
MATHS 6	0.29	0.4	0.4	0.7	0.66	0.5

### Source: Research findings

From Table1, results on the availability of Maths textbooks suggest that Y5 had the highest number of Maths textbooks ( 0.53) in 2015/2016 academic year and Y4 had the least (0.26). The remaining year groups had between 0.41 and 0.29 of Maths textbooks. In the subsequent academic year (2016/2017), Y4 had the highest number of maths textbooks of 0.78 and Y2 had the lowest (0.36). The remaining year groups had Maths textbooks ranging between 0.55 and 0.4. Figures in 2017/2018 academic year suggest a significant loss of maths textbooks in Y4, as the number of textbooks drastically reduced by over 0.5.

Thus making Y1 the class with the highest number of maths textbooks of 0.51 in that year and Y4 with the least of 0.34. However, the picture changed considerably in 2018/2019 academic year with a sharp increase in the number of maths textbooks for all year groups. These were as follows: Y1-1.65, Y3-1.05, Y2- 0.97, Y4-0.72, Y5-0.72 and Y6- 0.7. In the following academic year, 2019/2020, the data shows a few reduction in the number of maths textbooks for all year groups and this could be as a result of mal-handling of books, stealing of textbooks, poor handling of textbooks and over use of few textbooks. On the average data from Table 1 demonstrate that, for the five year period of this study, textbook/pupil ratio for maths was 1:2.

This suggest that the number of maths textbooks in the various schools would be enough for only half of students in all year groups. The government committed itself to enhance the capacity of the Tanzania Publishers association URT, (2010). Such publishers are BEN and Company Ltd, oxford publishers, Macmillan company ltd and Mkuki na nyota ltd. They were formed for the purpose of, among other roles, to provide books of various kinds. However, as findings revealed, this purpose has not been fully achieved. The World Bank report [7] also observed that lack of school facilities hinder enrolment rates and academic performance.

The findings are in the line with that of Mlozi et al. [18] in a newspaper article postulated that a well-equipped library give opportunity for learners to benefit from a wide range of reading and diverse ideas that boost their academic performance. Also the study of Babyegeya [19] concurs with Muya by observing that those secondary schools that appear in the top-ten in national examination must have adequate text books.

**Table 2: Availability of English Textbooks**

Subject	2015/2016	2016/2017	2017/2018	2018/2019	2019/2020	Average
ENGLISH 1	0.45	0.48	0.5	1.21	0.96	0.92
ENGLISH 2	0.33	0.37	0.3	0.95	0.0	0.71
ENGLISH 3	0.34	0.36	0.38	0.86	1.97	0.73
ENGLISH 4	0.28	0.14	0.25	0.84	0.78	0.57
ENGLISH 5	0.33	0.26	0.23	0.68	0.65	0.54
ENGLISH 6	0.4	0.4	0.32	0.65	0.61	0.6

**Source: Research findings**

Results on the availability of English text books revealed that Y1 had the highest number of textbooks (0.45) in 2015/2016 academic year and Y4 had the least (0.28). The remaining year groups had between 0.4 and 0.28. In (2016/2017), Y1 had the highest number of English textbooks of 0.48 and Y4 had the lowest (0.14).

The remaining year groups had English textbooks ranging between 0.37 and 0.26. Figures in 2018/2019 suggest that, Y1 had the highest number of textbooks of 0.5 and Y5 with the lowest of 0.23. 2012/2013 academic year shows a boost in the number English textbooks for all year groups as follows: Y1-1.21, Y2- 0.95, Y3- 0.86, Y4- 0.84, Y5-68 and Y6- 0.65. During 2019/2020 academic year, the data shows that, with the exception of Y4 which had an increment of about 0.11, English textbooks for all year groups had a slight reduction. On the average, it is estimated that within the five year period of this study, textbook/student ratio for English was 1:2. Again it could be suggested from the information in Table 2 that only half of students had access to English textbook, which requires two students to share one book in the course of English lessons.

The findings are in line with the study of Jeyness [15] observed that the presence of learning-teaching resources is based on the vision that learning should be active, varied, socially engaged and self regulatory. Lumuli [20] cited that in some nations text books are supplemented by libraries, other print and graph materials, audio cassettes, films, radios, television and computers. This supported is by Fuller [21] who found out that almost all studies of text books in low and middle income countries show that the books have a positive impact on student academic performance. Lack of availability of textbooks affect must academic performance of secondary school students.

**CONCLUSION**

The main objective of this study was to assess the status of Implementation of Education Policy of the Tanzania Government in Karatu District, with the availability of textbooks and supplementary readers as the main focus. The findings revealed that the availability of classroom, parental level of income, availability of textbooks, presence of a well stocked library, have influence on attainment of policy implementation in the study area. Based on the study findings, the Government and school principals should make sure that schools must conducive environment for the learning to take place. Tasks such as homework, exercises, weekly test, monthly tests, midterm and annually examinations should be administered so that to improve competence to students learning and evaluation requirements.



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