

Decentralization of Secondary School Management in Tanzania: Strengths and Prospects

Henry G. Godda
St. John's University of Tanzania, P.O.Box 47 Dodoma, Tanzania
hgodda@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper discusses the strengths and prospects of decentralization of secondary school management in Tanzania with the focus on Dodoma Municipality. The paper presents findings on how decentralization has improved the working and living conditions of teachers. The study employed a qualitative approach with some aspects of quantitative. Data were collected through interviews, questionnaire, documentary review, and focused group discussions. The findings from Dodoma Municipality revealed that decentralization has increased the number of classrooms, student desks, text books, laboratory apparatus and chemicals in secondary schools. Besides, decentralization has accelerated the promotions of teachers and increased the number of seminars and workshops for science teachers. However, the findings suggested that decentralization has failed to improve many aspects of teachers' living conditions such as accommodation and health facilities.

Keywords: Decentralization and Teacher welfare.

1. Introduction

The education sector all over the world has been experiencing several political and administrative reforms. One of these reforms is decentralization, which attracted education policy makers in both developed and less developed countries including Tanzania. These individuals usually contend that decentralization can facilitate better management and governance of education and, in turn, improve efficiency and enhance relevance.

It is believed that decentralized educational institutions are more efficient because they tend to reflect local priorities and encourage participation (Bloomer 1991), bring decision making closer to the people (Galiani et al. 2005), and improve governance in public service (Azfar et al. 1999).

In Tanzania, the decentralization system began in 1972 when the central government transferred some of its powers and functions to the local authorities. During that time Tanzania was experimenting with a revolutionary system of social-economic development known as "Ujamaa" –socialism (URT 2004). Socialism has elements of decentralization in the sense that it promotes a system of governance which gives people more freedom to make decisions and participate in matters affecting their lives.

To conform to socialist development Tanzania reorganized the government administration by abolishing the local authorities and establishing deconcentration field offices in districts and regions (Mniwasa & Shauri 2001). The deconcentration field offices were accountable for the provision of basic public services at the local levels

In 1984 the government re-enacted the Local Government Act and re-established the local governments. Re-establishment of local governments is attributed to bad administration and the failure of deconcentration field offices to deliver goods (Mukandala 1998); and to the rapid decline in essential services due to the economic crisis of the late seventies and eighties (Mniwasa&Shauri 2001). In 1996 the central government launched the Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) and consequently introduced Decentralization by Devolution (D-by-D) policy. The D-by-D policy aimed to transfer more power of making decisions, functional responsibilities, and resources from central government to the local government authority (URT 2006).

In the education sector, the local governments were given a mandate to own and manage primary schools (Galabawa 1997). Later in 2009 the management of secondary schools was also placed under local governments. Administratively, local governments have the mandate to build school infrastructures and improve teachers' living conditions, including providing regular salaries, housing, safe water, and reliable communication and health services among others.

Despite the efforts to decentralize public services including education, many scholars reported negative outcomes of educational decentralization in Tanzania and few of them show the strengths and prospects of decentralization. For instance, it was reported that under the decentralized system some teachers are less favoured in the process of promotion (Therkidsen 2000; Kayombo 2007). Decentralization has also been blamed for lack of support for teachers to develop professionally (Nkumbi et al. 2007) and lack of adequate teaching and learning facilities (Balwitegile 1991; URT 2008). This paper explores the prospects and strengths of decentralization in the management of teacher welfare and the focus is on what is working best in order to reveal the best strategies to run secondary schools in the decentralized mode.

2. Theoretical Perspectives

Decentralization is a highly ambiguous concept that has been variously defined and interpreted (McGinn&Welsh 1999).Decentralization means different things to different people and it is basically a function of the applications. To better understand this phenomenon and its implementation, various theories such as the Soufflé Theory of decentralization and the Sequential theory of decentralization have emerged and provided significant framework for decentralization studies. This paper focuses on Soufflé theory

Soufflé theory describes three major elements of decentralization namely administrative, fiscal, and political decentralization (Parker 1995). Administrative decentralization seeks to redistribute authority, responsibility and financial resources for providing services among different levels of government (Hossain 2000).The central government transfers some of its responsibilities for planning, financing and management to the local level authorities. By doing so the central government gives the local authorities administrative autonomy to respond effectively to the local needs (World Bank 2008).The local authorities can therefore make changes and enforce regulatory decisions to govern various systems at local offices such as the procurement system and human resources management-including recruitment and performance management.

Fiscal decentralization gives local government authority and power to generate revenues and decide on expenditures. It also transfers some funds from central government to local governments so that the local governments can deliver decentralized function (Ghazia 2009).Fiscal decentralization takes many forms like cost recovery through user charges and expansion of local revenues through property or sales taxes, or indirect charges. Nevertheless there should be fiscal policies and procedures to govern the practices of local officials; checks and balances must also be built into the system (Kerr 1998).

Political decentralization transfers policy and legislative powers from central government to elected local authorities (Azfar 1999).This implies that local representatives can make detailed decisions within policy guidelines formulated by the center and the legal framework is improved to show clearly the division of responsibilities between the center and the local authorities. However, the allocation of the power of decision-making to local authorities is not enough to create successful decentralization if local officials are not accountable to the local population (Elsageer &Mbwambo 2004).Local accountability might be promoted through various mechanisms such as third party monitoring by media and NGOs, extensive participation and central government oversight of local governments.

Generally Soufflé theory emphasizes that for decentralization to work effectively, all elements of the decentralization package-fiscal, political, and administrative need to be balanced and implemented simultaneously. Soufflé theory is relevant to this study since it incorporates the aforementioned elements of political, fiscal, and administrative decentralization as they related to outcomes of educational decentralization. The awareness of these elements of decentralization has equipped us with knowledge regarding some aspects to be identified for studying the strengths and prospects of decentralized educational system.

3. Conceptual Framework

In the framework decentralization is based on our working definition where the MoEVT yields some of its powers of managing secondary schools to the District and Municipal councils. This decentralization aims to reduce the bureaucracy of MoEVT in the provision of secondary education and empower the local educational authorities to meet the needs of citizens at the grass root levels (URT 2008)

To achieve the objectives of decentralization the MoEVT is expected to devolve some of its policy and legislative powers regarding educational services to the local field units-District education authorities and schools. In addition, the MoEVT is obligated to give its field units enough administrative autonomy to make changes and enforce regulatory decisions to govern various systems at the local offices. These systems can be such as the system of procuring school materials and equipments; system of recruiting and deploying teachers. Besides, the MoEVT is anticipated to give local officials and school management board power to generate revenues and decide on school expenditures. For instance, the local officials are expected to be able to shift expenditures within their budget and cut some expenditure in response to the crisis without approval from the higher level.

However, all of these decentralization efforts work better when they are complemented by appropriate conditions and implementation strategies. First, there should be mechanisms to hold the local officials accountable for appropriate use of powers to which they have been entitled. The local official can be accountable to elected or non elected public officials or by being answerable directly to the citizens. Second, it is necessary to have a proper institutional arrangement which ensures that there is no overlap of functions between local education authorities and the central ministry. Also commitment of local officials, collaboration between stakeholders, and involvement of the local community are essential for improving the conditions of schools. Besides the local officials and school staff members should undergo progressive capacity building so that they can execute their decentralization functions effectively.

Where the above conditions and strategies work effectively, decentralization helps to improve

conditions of schools such as teaching-learning facilities, teachers' promotion and professional development. The assumption is that the decentralization of the management of secondary schools has brought successes on the conditions of teachers' welfare.

3. Methodology of the Study

The study employed a qualitative approach with some aspects of quantitative. Specifically the study employed a phenomenological approach which was focused on collecting people's meanings attached to the successes and strengths of decentralization as "they existed". The respondents were teachers and heads of schools from seven selected public secondary schools in Dodoma municipality. Besides, the study involved government officials who constitute the District Secondary Education Management Organs (DSEMOs). Data were collected through interviews, questionnaire, documentary review, and focused group discussions.

This study was conducted in the Divisions of Dodoma Municipality. Some of the divisions like Zuzu and Hombolo are located in rural areas and others like Urban-Mjini division are found in urban areas. Thus, the study was conducted in Dodoma municipality because it offers a representative sample for both urban and rural teachers who had different experiences about the outcomes of decentralization policy.

3.1 Sampling Procedures and Sample Size

One hundred and twenty two (122) respondents participated in the study. The composition of this sample included one hundred and twelve (112) classroom teachers, seven (07) heads of schools and three (3) government officials from Dodoma Municipality. Purposive sampling was used to select Municipal officials with certain titles and qualifications. They were selected by virtue of their offices and functions. Classroom teachers were selected through stratified random sampling and simple random sampling. First, teachers were located into two strata through stratified sampling. The first stratum constituted teachers who were employed before decentralization and the second stratum contained teachers who were employed after decentralization. Thereafter, simple random sampling was used to get the number of teachers from each stratum that formed a sample. The categorization of teachers was done to bring up diverse experiences of teachers about the conditions of teachers' welfare before and after implementation of decentralization. Each Head of selected schools constituted the sample of the Heads of schools.

4. Study Findings

This part presents the study findings. It provides the findings on the successes achieved in the decentralization regarding the welfare of teachers. Also it gives the findings on the strategies used by local governments to improve the welfare of teachers. Besides, this part presents the findings of the best school in the decentralization and the strategies this school used to gain this title.

4.1 Successes of Decentralization in the Management of Teachers' welfare

One of the major goals of educational decentralization is to increase the outcomes of teaching and learning process. This goal requires high performance of teachers by improving their welfare such as availability of teaching and learning facilities in schools and by developing them professionally. In addition, decentralization must ensure that teachers are promoted to the higher grades and to administrative posts.

4.1.1 Availability of Teaching and Learning Facilities in Schools.

This item presents the responses collected from teachers and heads of schools (HOS) on the conditions of teaching and learning facilities in secondary schools after decentralization. The responses are summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Responses of HOS and Teachers on the Availability of Teaching and Learning Facilities.

<i>Response</i>	<i>Teachers N= 112</i>	<i>Head of schools N= 7</i>
Decentralization had improved the conditions of teaching and learning facilities in secondary schools	92 (82.1%)	7 (100%)
Decentralization had not improved the conditions of teaching and learning facilities in secondary schools.	13 (11.6%)	

Source: Field data (2012)

The findings shown in Table 1 reveal that 92 (82.1%) of responding teachers and 7(100%) head of schools reported that decentralization had improved the conditions of teaching and learning facilities in secondary schools. On the follow up question on how decentralization had improved schools, the following were identified: an increased classroom buildings, books, student desks; laboratory apparatus and chemicals in some secondary schools.

However, thirteen 13 (11.6%) of the responding teachers reported that there are no improvements in

the conditions of teaching and learning facilities in secondary schools. The reason to support their responses is the opposite of their counterparts, that there is still lack of text books, libraries, laboratory rooms and equipment in secondary schools.

These findings tally with findings by Swart and Nibbering (2007) who reported that decentralization has enthusiastic supporters but also many critics. They explained that while some people consider decentralization as a means which allows local people to exercise their voices and make decisions over the management of local affairs, others disagree, saying that there is not enough social capital at local level to promote effective engagement in local affairs.

In the interview schedules, the District Secondary Education Officers and Principal Human Resource Officer reported that decentralization has increased the supply of teaching and learning facilities in secondary schools. They specified that decentralization has increased the supply of text books, classrooms, student desks, laboratory chemicals and apparatus in many schools.

The responses from questionnaires and interviews were triangulated through documentary review and some of the collected data are summarized in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Supply of Student Desks and Classrooms in Secondary Schools in Dodoma Municipality

Item	Financial Year	Demand	Supply
Classrooms	2006/2007	311	302
	2007/2008	358	307
	2008/2009	389	313
	2009/2010	441	325
	2010/2011	456	333
	2011/2012	456	372
Student desks	2006/2007	9743	9352
	2007/2008	10121	9952
	2008/2009	10365	10134
	2009/2010	10,641	12997
	2010/2011	15,647	13,928
	2011/2012	17,542	16,683

Source: Field data (2012)

Data in Table 2 indicate that in the financial year 2011/2012 the number of students increased by 6% and the number of desks also increased by 16.5% while in the financial year 2007/2008 which was in the era of centralization the number of students increased by 3.7% and the number of desks increased by only 6%. This implies that while school enrollment increased in both periods-before and after decentralization, the rate of increase in school facilities such as desks during decentralization was much higher than before.

The findings also support the majority of responses in the questionnaires and interviews that decentralization had improved the availability of teaching and learning facilities specifically the availability of classrooms and student desks. The findings partly corroborate the report by Baganda (2008) that local authorities in Tanzania had managed to increase the enrollment, textbooks ratio, and school infrastructures.

From these findings it is clear that decentralization had improved the availability of teaching and learning facilities in secondary schools particularly the availability of classrooms, student desks, textbooks, laboratory apparatus and chemicals. If teaching and learning facilities are available, managed and used effectively in schools, it is more likely that the quality of teaching and learning outcomes will be improved. On the contrary, the lack of a favorable teaching-learning environment has negative impact on the teaching-learning process (McGowen 2007). For instance, lack of laboratory chemicals and equipment can result into students doing the science subjects theoretically. Consequently, the situation can lead students to dislike and avoid science subjects.

4.1.2 Promotion of Teachers

Scholars had found that availability of teaching resources is not the only determinant of teachers' motivation to performance. Teachers are also concerned about the opportunities for promotion. Lieberman (1995) argues that promotion is one of the noteworthy rewards for employees and it is associated with the increase of employees' hope and motivation. However, when teachers are promoted without being paid the new salaries tied to the promotions they become demoralized and consider the promotions senseless. Promotions become sensible to employees if they are allocated in ways that give them hope and motivation (Chilumba 1994; Obanya 1999). In this study the researcher sought to find out whether decentralization has helped to improve the promotion of teachers or not. The responses from teachers and heads of schools are summarized in Table 3 below:

Table 3. Responses of Teachers and Head of Schools on the Promotion of Teachers

<i>Response</i>	<i>Teachers N= 112</i>	<i>Head of schools N=7</i>
Decentralization has improved the promotion of teachers to higher grade levels.	46 (41.1%)	
Decentralization has improved the promotion of teachers but payment of salary entitlement for a new grade is delayed.	50 (44.6%)	7 (100%)
Decentralization has not improved the promotion of teachers	9 (8%)	-

Source: Field data (2012)

According to Table 3, 46(41.1%)of the responding teachers reported that decentralization has accelerated the promotion of teachers to high grade levels. Fifty 50 (44.6%) of responding teachers and all seven 7 (100%) heads of studied schools reported that decentralization has accelerated the promotion of teachers though the payment of salaries tied to specific promotions is delayed. In addition, data in table 3 reveal that 9 (8%) of the responding teachers reported that there was no improvement in the promotion of teachers after decentralization. These teachers had reasons to support their responses and one of them observes:

We are still not promoted on time because they (local government officials) demand many documents from teachers but they do not act on them promptly. Sometimes these documents get lost and you have to resend them to the municipal office; such a disturbance!

Such responses indicates that the problem is not that the teachers are not promoted on time but that delays to process their rights, which may be attributed to lack of data management or the incompetence of human resources at the district level.

In the interview schedule with DSEOs and PHRO, the researcher posed the question “To what extent does decentralization improve the teachers’ promotion in your municipality?” Both (100%) district secondary education officers and the principal human resource officer stated that decentralization has accelerated the promotion of teachers. They explained that it takes about three months after the commencement of the new government financial year for all qualified teachers to be promoted to their respective new grades. They added that teachers must submit all the required documents to support their promotions.

Responding to the follow up question: “do teachers receive the new salaries tied to their promotions on time?” both DSEOs and PHRO agreed with some teachers that there were delays in the payment but not longer than during centralization. One of the education officers asserted that it hardly takes six months for teachers to receive their new salaries after being promoted. He emphasized that during centralization teachers might take a year to get the new salaries tied to their new grades and even years to get their salary arrears resulting from delayed promotion. The PHRO added that usually the payment is delayed due to the late disbursement of the required funds from the national treasury to pay teachers their new salaries. This response shows that, while decentralization also means taking powers to the local government, not all the powers are vested in the local leaders, such as salaries that are still from the national treasury.

The responses from the questionnaires and interviews were validated through documentary review and the data collected are summarized in Table 4 below:

Table 4. Promotion of Secondary Schools Teachers in Dodoma Municipality.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Teachers to be Promoted</i>	<i>Teachers Promoted</i>	<i>Teachers Not Promoted</i>
2006/2007	21	7 (33.3%)	14 (66.7%)
2007/2008	43	11 (25.6%)	32(74.4%)
2008/2009	46	34 (74%)	12(26%)
2009/2010	62	54 (87%)	08 (13%)
2010/2011	106	104 (98%)	02 (02%)
2011/2012	98	98 (100%)	-

Source: Field data (2012)

Data in Table 4 indicate that teachers are promoted in a timely manner in decentralization than in the centralization. For instance, during three years of decentralization 2009-2012 the average rate of delay in teachers’ promotion is only 5% while during three years of centralization 2006-2009 the rate of delay in teachers’ promotion was 55.7%.

From these findings it can be argued that due to the fact that teachers’ demands are processed at the local government, decentralization has improved the promotion of secondary school teachers in Tanzania. The findings are contrary to Thekildsen (2000) and Kayombo (2007) who observed that despite of educational decentralization in Tanzania there were a good number of teachers who were less favored in the process of

promotion to the extent that they remained in one rank for many years.

4.1.3 Professional Development of Teachers

Whenever there is a reform and advancement in the education system, particularly when there are changes in curriculum, teachers are expected to play a new role. One of the approaches that enable teachers to cope with the changes and perform the new roles is professional training. This study collected the views of respondents about the successes of decentralization in the professional development of teachers. Teachers gave multiple responses to this aspect and their responses are summarized in Table 5 below:

Table 5. Responses of Teachers on Professional Development of Teachers

<i>Response</i>	<i>Teachers N=112</i>
Teachers get study permission and leave on time but without financial support	51 (45.5%)
The number of seminars and workshops for science teachers has increased.	42 (37.5%)
The number of seminars and workshops for teachers in all fields has increased.	4 (3.6%)
Teachers get study leave and they are supported financially	3 (2.6%)
There are no improvements in the professional development of teachers	12 (10.7%)

Source: Field data (2012)

As from the table 5, three 3(2.6%) of the responding teachers reported that decentralization has helped teachers to get study leave and financial support while 51(45.5%) teachers indicated that in the decentralization teachers get study leaves on time but they are not supported financially. Forty two 42(37.5%) of the responding teachers reported that decentralization has increased the number of seminars and workshops for science teachers while 4(3.6%) of the responding teachers reported that decentralization has increased the number of seminars and workshops for teachers in all fields. Twelve 12(10.7%) of the responding teachers indicated that decentralization has not improved the professional development of teachers.

In the interview schedule three 3(42.9%) of the responding heads of schools reported that in decentralization teachers who aspire to join further studies get study permission and leave on time. However, these heads of schools added that usually teachers get study permission if they are ready to pay for their study expenses. They argued that very few teachers get study permission and financial support from the employer. Five 5 (71.4%) head of schools indicated that decentralization has increased the number of seminars and workshops for science teachers. This supports the response which was given by 42 (37.5%) responding teachers. These heads of schools highlighted that the number of seminars has increased because some of seminars are organized at district level and heads of schools are more involved as one of the facilitators. They added that there are also capacity building workshops for heads of schools. One heads of schools had these words to comment:

“These workshops are very helpful to us; as you know this decentralization is also a new experience to us and we are still learning especially on how to work well with local leaders and communities”.

In their responses to the question: “To what extent does decentralization improves the conditions of professional development of teachers in your district?” the DSEOs and PHRO also indicated that decentralization has increased the accessibility of teachers to professional development programmes. One (1) District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO) reported that decentralization has increased the number of seminars and workshops for teachers in all fields. Another DSEO and PHRO indicated that in decentralization many teachers are given study leave and some are supported financially to cover their study expenses.

The DSEO and PHRO explained that most of the studying teachers who are sponsored by the municipal council are those undertaking distance learning programs such as those offered by the Open University of Tanzania and licensed teachers who join teacher colleges. They asserted that distance learning programs are less expensive and thus the council can easily afford to support the studying teachers financially while maintaining them in schools. They added that for teachers who take their own initiative to finance their studies the local council gives them study leave and permission on time.

From these findings one could assert that decentralization has increased the number of seminars and workshops for science teachers and enabled teachers to get study leave on time. By extension, decentralization has made it possible for what Baytekin (2004) observed that seminars and workshops enable teachers to share certain teaching skills and understand important behaviors in classroom teaching. Teachers also gain new instructional techniques to improve their classroom practices and consequently raised student achievement in learning. Such positive elements, however, are more linked to science teachers, who get more chances to attend seminars and workshops. Other categories of teachers are left behind and this may lead to attitudes that only science subjects and science teachers are important.

Thus, while decentralization may create very positive elements in secondary schools, the fact is that these elements are not spread equally to all teachers. This situation may have created low work motivation for teachers in other fields. Besides, if teachers are allowed to foot the bill for their study expenses, they are likely to lose commitment to their employer-the government and decide to join other fields with more profit after

completing their studies. Hence this situation may intensify the problem of losing teachers to other sectors of employment.

4.1.4 Other Successes of Decentralization in the Management of Schools

Having posed the follow up question “What other success stories would you like to share that were brought about by decentralization of the management of secondary schools?” The principal human resource officer (PHRO), one (1) of the responding education officers and five 5(71.4%) of the responding heads of schools reported that management of secondary school teachers at the local government level has reduced the problem of delayed salaries to the new employed teachers.

The PHRO and education officers claimed that in the centralization period there was a delayed submission of required documents for new employed teachers to be included in the salary payroll by the Ministry of Finance; and therefore there was remarkable delay in the payment of salaries to new teachers, something that occurs rarely in the decentralization period. They added that if it happens that the central government fails to deliver the salaries of new teachers on time the council reallocates some money from other budget items to pay the new teachers their salaries. Mosha (2000) argues that when teachers are well motivated and satisfied with their salaries in terms of amount and timely payment with minimum levels of harassment, good performance is realized.

In the teachers’ responses to the same question, forty nine 49 (43.8%) of the responding teachers reported that teachers were paid allowances and transport fare before going for their annual leave. They indicated that during centralization the majority of teachers were paid their allowances after returning from leave. In the interview schedule one of the responding head of school confirmed and supported the responses from teachers when he testified that last year his annual leave allowance was included in his September salary though he had to start his leave in December. School leave is one of the aspects of working environment that teachers need in order to function well (Bennell, 2004; Mosha, 2000; Farrell&Oliviera 1993).

5. Strategies for Improving Teachers’ Welfare in Decentralization

This section explored the major practices and strategies by the municipal council that have helped to improve the welfare of teachers. Teacher welfare in this study refers to things which teachers need in order to carry out their teaching responsibilities effectively and for their better lives. These things can be such as teaching and learning facilities, promotions, professional development, and housing. The findings revealed the following imperative practices and strategies which are summarized in Table 6 below:

Table 6. Strategies for Improving the Condition of Teachers’ Welfare

<i>Response</i>	<i>Respondents</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>Frequencies percent</i>
1	Involvement of local community in the management of schools	Classroom teachers	12 77(68.8%)
		Head of schools	07 06(85.7%)
		Municipal officials	03 03(100%)
2	Increase education budget	Classroom Teachers	112 -
		Head of School	07 -
		Municipal officials	03 03(100%)
3	Involve other education student holder in finalizing school projects	Classroom teachers	
		Head of schools	07 07(100%)
		Municipal officials	03 03(100%)
4	Good keeping of Teachers’ records	Classroom teachers	112 47(41.9 %)
		Head of schools	07 04(57.1%)
		Municipal officials	03 03(100%)

According to findings in Table 6, 68.8% of responding teachers, 85.7% of heads of schools, and all 3 (100%) municipal officials pointed out that involvement of the local community in the management of schools have helped to improve the conditions of teachers’ welfare and schools at large. Also, all 3 (100%) municipal officials revealed that the increasing education budget has enabled the council to cater for the increasing expenses of teaching and learning facilities as well as the allowances of teachers. In response to a follow up question: “where does the council obtain the money to cover the additional budget?” the respondents indicated that the funds are secured from the central government.

These findings suggest that though the local governments increase the education budget to cater for teachers’ requirements the additional funds are set up for ordinary expenditure. The increased budget could have a big impact on teachers’ working and living conditions if it could be directed to major school projects such as construction of classrooms, staffrooms, laboratories and teacher staff houses. It also appears that financially the local governments depend much on central government and thus it can be suggested that they could increase

their education budgets from local sources.

Besides, the findings indicate that local government also raises funds from other education stakeholders such NGOs and government or private institutions to support its schools as reported by all seven 7 (100%) heads of schools and all 3 (100%) municipal officials. Moreover, about 42% of the responding teachers, 4(57.1%) of the head of schools, and all 3(100%) municipal officials reported that good keeping of teachers' records is one of the practices that has reduced the problem of delayed promotions which was likely to be caused by poor record keeping. The municipal officials added that good keeping of teachers' records also has been providing reliable information about teachers' welfare in the budgeting process. Thus it has reduced the problem of unpaid salaries to newly employed teachers and unpaid annual leave allowances to teachers.

6. Conclusion and Recommendation

So in the light of the findings of this study, decentralization of secondary school management has mainly improved the working conditions of teachers particularly through local community participation. However, it seems that decentralization has failed to improve many aspects of teachers' living conditions such as accommodation, health facilities or coordination of teachers to have effective SACCOs to solve individual financial problems. Based on that observation, it is recommended that local governments should create other sources of income to rid themselves of depending solely on the central government. This includes mobilizing community resources (human and non-human) to contribute to education in their areas. Also local governments should acknowledge the efforts of teachers and motivate them to improve both their working and living conditions. Besides, more decision-making power to manage schools should be devolved to the school level where the specific needs of students and teachers can be easily identified and met.

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