

Preparation and Professional Development of Teacher Educators in Tanzania: Current Practices and Prospects

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Abstract

Teacher educators play a key role in teacher education and education in general. Worldwide, little is known about preparation and professional development of teacher educators. This paper critically examined teacher educators' preparation and professional development in the context of educational reforms and mushrooming of teacher education institutions in Tanzania. The document review method was used to analyze and review relevant literature. The analysis of findings indicates that the preparation of teacher educators in Tanzania receives considerable attention and focus in undergraduate programmes with little attention in postgraduate programmes. The professional development of teacher educators is limited and characterized by few professional development activities. It is suggested that the preparation of teacher educators should be well structured and enhanced with effective professional development activities and opportunities. Various recommendations to improve the preparation and professional development of teacher educators are also provided.

Keywords: teacher educators; preparation and professional development; teacher education programmes; Tanzania

1. Introduction

The teacher educator has been identified as the most influencing factor in the preparation of high quality teachers (Snoek, Swennen, & Van der Klink, 2010; Robinson & Macmillan, 2006). However, little attention has been paid to teacher educator research (Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Lunenberg, 2010). Little is known about teacher educators and their professional development: how they are trained and educated and what makes a good teacher educator (Lin, 2013; Villegas-Reimers, 2003). How best to prepare good teacher educators has remained a challenge (Lin, Wang, Spalding, Klecka & Odell, 2011). Worldwide, there are varied interests on teacher preparation with very little interests on teacher educators' preparation (Lunenberg, 2010). Although, recently, there has been an increased research interest on teacher educators, it still remains a relatively new area of research concern (McIntyre, 2009; Lunenberg, 2010) hence few literatures exist (Snoek et al, 2010).

Similar to the situation in other countries, the profession of teacher educators in Tanzania has received little attention in research and educational literatures (Chambulila, 2013). Lunenberg (2010) reports that the current understanding about teacher educators is much informed by research on western developed countries and emerging research in Asian countries. Generally, research on teacher education and teachers educators in particular is very low in African countries (Lunenberg, 2010). This review paper attempts to address such research and fill in the literature gap.

1.1. *The Context of Teacher Education in Tanzania*

Teacher education in Tanzania is mainly provided by teachers' colleges and universities. Teachers' colleges provide non-degree pre-service teacher education programmes while universities provide non-degree (e.g. diploma), degree (e.g. bachelor degree) and postgraduate (postgraduate diploma and master's) programmes in teacher education (URT, 1995).

Following the liberalization of education provision (URT, 1995) teacher education began to be provided by both public and private institutions (universities and colleges). Since then, there has been a proliferation of teacher education institutions and the demand for teachers has been increasing yearly due to the expansion of enrolment in both primary and secondary education (MoEVT, 2008).

In 2005 the Tanzanian Government for example, transformed two teacher colleges into university colleges of education and at the same time private universities and colleges have also been increasing in number (Chambulila, 2013). Currently, Tanzania has about 76 higher education institutions (universities, university colleges and non-university institutions). Almost half of them provide teacher education courses (Tanzania Commission for Universities [TCU], 2015). According to the Basic Education Statistics in Tanzania, teacher colleges have increased from 34 (all public colleges) in 1995 to 126 in 2013. The private teacher colleges have almost tripled the number of public teacher colleges which has remained 34 prior to and after the liberalization of the teacher education provision (MoEVT, 2013). Consequently this situation has increased the demand for more teacher educators to work in colleges and universities at the same time increasing burden and pressure to teacher education institution and particularly teacher educators to prepare more teachers to cater for the increased demands of teachers. The expansion of teacher education provision if not well planned might compromise the

quality of teachers produced (Imig and Imig, 2007).

1.2 Objectives

The main objective of this review paper was to examine the preparation and professional development of teacher educators in the Tanzanian context. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the preparation of teacher educators in Tanzania
2. Assess the practices of teacher educators' professional development in Tanzania

1.3. Structure of the Paper

The previous sections have introduced the problem and objectives of the study as well as the context of teacher education in Tanzania in brief. The next section is the conceptual framework which is centred on the nature of teacher educator profession. The methodology section explains in detail what kind of literatures were consulted and how the reviews were carried out. The methodology section is followed by findings and discussion section which provides the main findings and interpretation. Based on the findings, various recommendations are provided for the purpose of improving the preparation and professional development of teacher educators in Tanzania.

2. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on definitions and characteristics of teacher educators, roles and knowledge of teacher educators as well as professional development of teacher educators. These concepts are explained in detail in the next subsections.

2.1 Conceptualizing Teacher Educators and their Characteristics

The broad definition of teacher educators encompasses all individuals who are responsible for educating teachers. Based on the continuum of teacher learning and development (apprenticeship of observation, pre-service teacher education, induction and in-service teacher education) these include; teachers in primary and secondary school teachers, college and university instructors, cooperating teachers/mentors, professional development staff and agencies (Fisher, 2009, pp.32-33).

The narrow definition of teacher educators includes instructors working in universities and colleges who are primarily responsible for educating teachers (Chambulila, 2013; Fisher, 2009). Based on the departmentalized nature of teacher education within colleges and universities (Tom, 1997), teacher educators can further be divided into subject matter teacher educators and pedagogy teacher educators. Within the pedagogy group, teacher educators are further divided into different departments such as educational psychology, foundations of education, curriculum and instructions, adult learning, and more depending on the nature of the university and faculty. This review paper adopts the narrow definition of teacher educators.

According to Lunenberg (2010), characteristics of teacher educators differ from one country to another. For example, in the United States and England, most teacher educators are former primary or secondary school teachers (Lin, 2013; Field, 2012; Murray & Male, 2005). However, recently there has been the emergence of teacher educators with high academic qualifications without school teaching experience (Yuan, 2015; Lunenberg, Dengerink & Korthagen, 2014). The educational qualifications of teacher educators range from bachelor's degree for teacher educators working in non-university settings to master's and doctorate degrees for teacher educators working in universities (Lunenberg, 2010). In Israel for instance, a doctorate degree is the minimum qualification for teacher educators (Smith, 2010; Katz and Coleman, 2005).

Teacher educators in Tanzania can be described according to the nature of institutions providing teacher education i.e. colleges and universities (URT, 1995). This means college teacher educators and university teacher educators. The college teacher educators are professionals responsible for educating student teachers in respective teacher colleges. The minimum required qualification for a college teacher educator is a bachelor's degree in Education (URT, 1995). However, until 2008 most of the college teacher educators were under qualified (MoEVT, 2008) and interventions were put in place to upgrade their qualifications (MoEVT, 2008; Meena, 2009). University teacher educators on the other hand, are professionals responsible for educating teachers at the universities. This group includes both the education and non-education faculty. According to the Tanzania Commission for Universities the minimum required qualifications for both university faculty and teacher educators is a masters' degree (TCU, 2014).

2.2 Roles and Knowledge Base of Teacher Educators

Being at the universities and colleges, teacher educators like other academic staff are required to teach and conduct research as well as undertake consultancy. However, teacher educators seem to have multiple roles based on their tasks of educating teachers. Lunenberg et al, (2014) identified about six teacher educators' roles which are; teacher of teachers, researcher, coach, curriculum developer, gate keeper and broker (p.19). However,

these roles were developed by considering both university and school-based teacher educators.

What constitutes the knowledge base of teacher educators has recently attracted attention among researchers of teacher education and teacher educators in particular (ibid.) owing to the fact that how teacher educators are educated for their roles is not well known (Lin, 2013; Villegas-Reimers, 2003) with exception of Israel where teacher educators are formally educated (Van Veen, 2013). Notably, Cochran-Smith (2003) reported a lack of curriculum for educating teacher educators.

In an attempt to define the knowledge base of teaching, Shulman (1987, p.8) suggested seven categories of teachers' knowledge which include "content knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, curriculum knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, knowledge of educational ends, purposes and values, and their philosophical grounds". He further suggested that pedagogical content knowledge is the most important category of teachers' knowledge. Since these categories of knowledge are expected to be developed by student teachers during their teacher education course, they also apply to teacher educators who are primarily responsible to make these categories of knowledge explicit and accessible to student teachers. This has been described as the pedagogy of teacher of education (Field, 2012; Loughran, 2006). Field (2012) suggests that teacher educators especially the novice ones need to develop the understanding of pedagogy of teacher education in order to excel in their roles.

Lunenberg et al (2014, p.90) reported the development of the knowledge base of teacher educators based on Dutch perspectives in which they identify ten domains of teacher educators knowledge base. These are "core domains (the profession of the teacher educator, pedagogy of teacher education, learning and learners, and teaching and learning), specific domains (subject-specific teacher education and programme-specific teacher education) and extended domains (context of teacher education, organization of teacher education, curriculum development and assessment, and research by teacher educators)". Another attempt to define the knowledge base of teacher educators has been through the development and use of teacher educators' professional standards which are very common in United States, Netherlands, and other western countries (ibid.). However, the challenge has remained on how to prepare effective teacher educators and ensure sustainable professional development for them.

2.3 Professional Development of Teacher Educators

Professional development refers to formal and informal increase in knowledge and skills. It is regarded as the key to professional practice in all professions. Villegas-Reimers (2003) contends that the professional development of teacher educators is not popular as compared to teacher professional development.

Studies have indicated that teacher professional development is one of the influencing factors in students learning and achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Similarly, the professional development of teacher educators is a critical factor for preparation of quality teachers (Snoek et al, 2010; Robinson & Macmillan, 2006). Chambulila (2013) defines teacher educators' professional development as "formal academic and professional advancement courses aiming at equipping educators with relevant and up to date knowledge and competencies essential for quality enhancement" (p.51). Smith (2010) defines professional development as an "internal process in which professionals engage within a formal or informal framework, rooted in critical analysis of professional practice" (p.681). According to Smith (2010) the purpose of teacher educator professional development is four fold; "improving teacher education, meeting external standards, internal drive to learn and improve and strengthening the professional status within higher education" (p.682).

Smith (2003) describes various routes to professional development of teacher educators which range from formal to less formal, individual to whole staff development. These include higher academic degrees, in service workshops and seminars, staff development within the institution and peer tutoring. Kennedy (2005) provides a framework for analysing models of continuing professional development which consists of nine models of professional development. The models include; training, award bearing, deficit, cascade, standard-based, coaching/mentoring, community of practice, action research and transformative model (pp. 236-237). Although Kennedy's models are meant for teachers of lower levels of education particularly primary and secondary education teachers, some of the models are relevant to teacher educators since teacher educators are also teachers with more advanced roles such as research scholarship and consultancy. Based on the works of Smith (2003) and Kennedy (2005) this paper explains the professional development of teacher educators in Tanzania based on four routes; higher degrees, research activities, workshops and seminars, and mentoring.

3. Methodology

This was a review study about teacher educators' preparation and professional development in the context of educational reforms and mushrooming of teacher education institutions in Tanzania. This was linked to the current international understanding about the emerging profession of teacher educators.

This study therefore, relied on different educational literatures such as published articles, theses and books. Majority of them were obtained from research databases such as Web of Science and Google Scholar. In

order to obtain relevant literatures, search words such as “teacher educator” and “professional development” were used. In addition, educational policies and information from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and teacher education institutions were also consulted. All the obtained literatures were summarized into main points. This allowed the researchers to extract and incorporate key information about preparation and professional development of teacher educators into this paper.

The examples drawn in this review study reflect the context of public teacher education institutions especially the University of Dar es Salaam, the Open University of Tanzania and the teachers’ colleges. The selection of these institutions as cases was based on their influential and leading role in provision of teacher education in Tanzania.

The roles and characteristics of teacher educators were used to explain and analyse the preparation of teacher educators while professional development models suggested by Smith (2003) and Kennedy (2005) were used to analyze professional development of teacher educators in Tanzania.

4. Findings and Discussion

This part presents the findings and discussion of the study according the order of research objectives.

4.1 Preparation of Teacher Educators in Tanzania

This part reviews the preparation of college and university teacher educators. The focus is in on how they are educated before assuming their roles.

4.1.1 College Teacher Educators

College teacher educators are normally educated in universities which provide teacher education programmes. According to the Education and Training Policy, a bachelor’s degree is the minimum qualification for college teacher educators (URT, 1995). Undergraduate programmes related to education at the University of Dar es Salaam include Bachelor of Education (which has various specializations), Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science with Education (B.A Ed and B.Sc Ed). The Bachelor of Education programmes specifically Bachelor of Education in Arts (B.Ed Arts) and Bachelor of Education in Science (B.Ed Science) were designed for preparing teacher educators to work in teachers’ colleges while the other two programmes for preparing secondary school teachers (UDSM, 2014; Meena, 2009).

Prior to 2005, the duration for all education programmes was four years, however, since then, it was reduced to 3 years in order to meet the demands for teachers and teacher educators in schools and colleges following expansion of primary and secondary education (Wedgwood, 2007). The Open University of Tanzania, offers Bachelor of Education (Teacher Educator) which is provided through the distance mode of delivery. In B.Ed programmes more weight is laid on pedagogy, educational studies and a single teaching subject whereas in B.A. and B.Sc. Ed programmes, student teachers are required to take two teaching subjects with a little amount of pedagogical and educational studies (UDSM, 2014; OUT, 2014). They are aimed at preparing secondary school teachers.

The Bachelor of Education programme has been criticized for being inadequate to prepare teacher educators for colleges of education based on the duration of the programmes which is relatively short following the change from four to three years in 2005 (Chambulila, 2013). The programmes prepare subject specialists rather than teacher educators (Babygeya, 2002 & 2006 as cited in Meena, 2009; Bhalalusesa et al. 2011) and low priority on research (Chambulila, 2013). The students recruited in education programmes have relatively low credentials (Chambulila, 2013). In most countries education programs are well known to recruit students with average performance (Imig and Imig, 2007). The teaching and learning environment is not conducive as the lecturers mostly use lecture method and inadequate teaching and learning resources particularly books (Bhalalusesa et al, 2011). Although the number of college teacher educators with bachelor degree has increased in the last decade, still there is a portion of college teacher educators who do not meet the required minimum qualifications (MoEVT, 2008; Bhalalusesa et al, 2011).

Since 2008, the government through the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training has employed many new qualified teacher educators to cater for needs in teacher colleges. However, most of the newly recruited teacher educators lack the experience of teaching in primary and secondary schools. In order to develop as a teacher educator, the role of previous experience is very important (Fisher, 2009). Prior to the recent education reforms and expansion of education provision, newly recruited teacher educators without teaching experience in lower levels of education had to teach in attached schools for a few months before assuming the college duties as teacher educators. This practice no longer exists. The recent trends in preparation of teacher educators worldwide show the increase of teacher educators without previous experience of school teaching (Yuan, 2015). These teacher educators are prepared in teacher education programmes which focus on research and scholarship of teacher education (Mayer, Mitchell, Santoro & White, 2011; Zeichner, 2005).

4.1.2 University Teacher Educators

University teacher educators’ qualifications fall under general university qualifications framework which is

regulated by the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU, 2014). Like other university academic staff, university based teacher educators are required to have at least a masters' degree in educational related fields. The recruitment of teacher educators in university is based on academic credentials rather than experience (Komba et al, 2013). According to the TCU regulations, the minimum qualification for university academic staff to be recruited is bachelor degree with upper second class which is equivalent to a G.P.A of 3.5 and above (TCU, 2014). While for assistant lecturers is a master degree with B+ average (TCU, 2014). However, due to shortage of qualified and experienced academic staff, for a long time, universities in Tanzania have embraced the culture of recruiting individuals with bachelor's degrees as tutorial assistants. The tutorial assistants and assistant lecturers are regarded as training posts in which the respective staffs are supposed to obtain a doctorate degree within a specified time (Komba et al, 2013; TCU, 2014).

The teacher educators with bachelor's degrees are supposed to enrol in masters' degrees programmes before pursuing doctorate degrees (TCU, 2014; Chambulila, 2013). The Master of Education programmes currently offered in these two universities include: Master of Arts in Education, Master of Arts in Applied and Social Psychology, Master of Educational Management and Administration and Master of Education in Science Education (M.Ed. Science Education) at the University of Dar es Salaam (UDSM, 2013, pp.151-156). The Open University of Tanzania offers Master of Education, Master of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies, Master of Education in Open and Distance Learning, Master of Education in Language Teaching (OUT, 2014, pp. 198-200) and Master of Education in Curriculum Design and Development¹. These programmes are offered by both coursework and thesis. However, most of these programmes are either general or specific to a particular field of education apart from teacher education.

4.2 Professional Development of Teacher Educators in Tanzania

Teacher educators' professional development activities range from formal to informal activities. The professional development of teacher educators in Tanzania has not been well formalized since the profession of teacher educators is characterized by low qualifications as some of them lack the basic qualifications (MoEVT, 2008), lack of professional development (Galabawa, 2001; Meena, 2008). Low professional status and development of teacher educators is caused by underqualified personnel (Binde, 2010; Temu, 2007) and ineffective professional development strategies. Lack of professional development is also a common problem to primary and secondary school teachers (Mulkeen, 2010; Komba & Nkumbi, 2008). Building from the works of Smith (2003) and Kennedy (2005) this part describe the professional development of teacher educators (both college and university teacher educators) in Tanzania based on higher degrees, research activities, workshops and seminars as well as mentoring.

4.2.1 Higher Degrees

Recognizing the need for more qualifications and skills for college teacher educators, the Ministry of Education and Vocational training in partnership with Åbo Akademi University of Finland and Stockholm Institute of Education developed professional development programmes for college teacher educators in 1990's. The programmes were hosted at Morogoro Teachers' College. Through these initiatives, few college tutors attained teacher educator certificates, master's and doctorate degrees in teacher education. After the end of the first phase, the Teacher Educator Programme is currently conducted under the leadership of the Open University of Tanzania. The programme however, has frequently been affected by lack of funds hence hindering its effectiveness. While the ideal situation was to provide the teacher educator programme to all tutors, relatively few tutors have been trained (Chilumika, 2013; Meena, 2009). From 2006 to 2010, about 1309 teacher educators participated in this programme (Bhalalusesa et al, 2011). Besides this, little is known about effectiveness of this professional development programme, hence there is need for evaluative research studies.

In order to attain more qualifications, some of the tutors have acquired higher degrees in various professional disciplines including education. Surprisingly, educational specializations related to management and policy studies attract most college tutors; this might be influenced by their future aspirations to be educational managers rather than continuing to grow in the profession of teacher educator.

The professional development of university teacher educators as observed by (Chambulila, 2013) is also very limited. The focus is on attaining higher degrees preferably doctorate degrees as the required qualification for university teacher educators. The opportunities for teacher educators to study doctorate degrees are limited. While attaining higher degrees is part of teacher educators' professional development, it is not sufficient in itself because professional learning is a lifelong learning endeavour (Lunenberg, 2010; Cochran-Smith, 2003). The problem with the higher degrees of education (master's and doctorate) is lack of a clear focus on teacher education (Lin, 2013).

During the mid-1990's, the University of Dar es Salaam in collaboration with three Dutch universities (Vrije University, University of Twente and University of Utrecht) under the sponsorship of the Dutch

¹ <http://out.ac.tz/banners/MEDCDD%20BrochureEnglishFrench2016.pdf>

government established a project named “Teacher Education Assistance in Mathematics and Science” (TEAMS) which was aimed at raising the status and provision of Science and Mathematics Education in Tanzania (Ottevanger et al, 2005). Through this project, junior teacher educators obtained scholarships for master’s and doctorate degrees in Dutch universities in order to enhance capacity building at the University of Dar es Salaam. The experienced teacher educators attained informal professional development through cooperating with their Dutch counter parts and international exposure on science teacher education (Ottevanger et al, 2005, p.117). Apart from professional development of teacher educators, this project resulted into development of M.Ed. Science Education programme which is still offered at the University of Dar es Salaam. The evaluation of this project indicated that it was very successful in terms of its objectives. The project ended in 2004 when there was still need for professional development of teacher educators.

4.2.2 *Workshops and Seminars*

Workshops and seminars are common routes to professional development in different countries. They are often used for introducing new knowledge and practices (Kennedy, 2005). However, in most cases the knowledge gained is hardly implemented in workplace setting since the knowledge is provided out of context. According to Eraut (1994) the context in which knowledge is acquired is equally important to the knowledge learned. Both college and university teacher educators in Tanzania attend workshops and seminars. For example Filipatali (2013) and Chilumika (2013) found that workshops and seminars are the dominant routes of professional development for college teacher educators in Tanzania. However, the seminars and workshops tend to have relatively large content to be covered and little time for participants to reflect. These affect the effectiveness of these initiatives and the subsequent application of the knowledge gained (Bhalalusesa et al, 2011).

Besides that the seminars and workshops are mostly provided to science teacher educators than social studies teacher educators (Filipatali, 2013). This suggests that relatively few teacher educators get opportunities for seminars and workshops. This has resulted into a cascade model of professional development (Kennedy, 2005) in which few teacher educators represent others in the seminars and workshops and once they come back they share what they have learned with their colleagues (Bhalalusesa et al, 2011).

Despite few shortcomings of the workshops and seminars, they are still useful in professional development especially when they are improved and used together with other forms of professional development particularly institutional based initiatives. In addition to this, the follow-up mechanism about effectiveness of workshops and seminars should be instituted (Filipatali, 2013; Chilumika, 2013).

4.2.3 *Engagement in Research*

As teacher educators, college tutors are supposed to engage in research activities as part of their main role and professional development. However, their engagement in research activities is almost non-existent (Filipatali, 2013; O’Sullivan, 2010; Meena, 2009) even though they supervise student teachers in their small research projects. O’Sullivan (2010), in her study of Diploma Teacher Educators in Uganda observed similar situation. In Tanzania, the lack of research activity by college teacher educators is contributed to by tight work schedule, lack of research policy, lack research knowledge and skills, and lack of literature and scholarly works about teacher education (Chambulila, 2013; O’Sullivan, 2010), lack of formal support and a highly prescribed curriculum which restricts their professional autonomy (Meena, 2009). With low and non-involvement in research, the teacher educators’ roles and functions are restricted to teaching and assessing student teachers in their block teaching activities (Meena, 2009).

The university teacher educators by virtue of being at universities, they are supposed to assume leadership in advancing teacher education as a professional education (Chambulila, 2013). They work under the core functions of the university, which are teaching, research and consultancy (Komba et al, 2013; Chambulila, 2013). The teacher educators’ involvement in research, which is part of their job and professional development, seems to be less satisfactory. Chambulila (2013) observed that “Papers in Education and Development” a journal managed by the School of Education at the University of Dar es Salaam is not published regularly. Similarly, the Faculty of Education at the Open University of Tanzania has a journal called “Journal of Issues and Practice in Education. However, it is also not published regularly. These journals focus on all educational issues including teacher education.

Bangi (2014) study on research productivity from universities indicated that generally the research productivity is low. Komba et al (2013) explained reasons for low research engagement of academic staff at the University of Dar es Salaam which include: lack funds for research, lack of transparency on allocation of research funds and lack of research policy (p.199). However those studies involved academic staff from different faculties. Chambulila (2013) found similar findings when he interviewed teacher educators only. The low productivity in research further hinders teacher educators’ participation in other professional development activities such as professional forums such as conferences and symposia. Teacher educators involvement in research activities improves teaching as new knowledge obtained can be applied to enhance teaching and learning.

Recently, the Faculty of Education at the Open University of Tanzania has initiated research teams in

order to increase research productivity and the teams to serve as group professional development initiative. Each research team consists of three to four teacher educators with different levels of experience and educational qualifications. The members within each group are supposed to identify areas and topics for group research. This is a good initiative although it is still in initial stages of development.

4.2.4 Mentoring

Mentoring refers to the practice of experienced professionals to provide guidance, experience and expertise to novice ones (Kennedy, 2005). It is so far not a popular professional development practice in teacher colleges in Tanzania (Chilumika, 2013; Filipatali, 2013). Teacher education policies and documents recognise the importance and role of mentoring in professional development of teachers and teacher educators. For example one of the strategies of Teacher Development Management Strategy of 2008 was; “*establishment of mentoring services for professional support and development for primary and secondary school teachers as well as teacher educators*” (MoEVT, 2008, p.18). This was supposed to be implemented by 2012, however, this policy target has not been achieved so far.

The universities of Dar es Salaam and the Open University of Tanzania had mentoring programmes for junior academic staff in which a junior academic staff was to be attached to a senior academic staff for professional guidance (Komba et al, 2013). Over the last decade, mentoring practices are almost nonexistent. Lunenberg (2010) asserts that novice teacher educators receive minimal guidance from experienced teacher educators in terms of their work and research in particular. This suggests that mentoring for professional development of teacher educators has not been effectively used even in developed countries.

Teacher education institutions in Tanzania have not embraced other forms of teacher educator professional development such as reflection, communities of practice, self-study practice as part of their professional development. While the teacher professional standards and the Teacher Development and Management Strategy (MoEVT, 2008) mention reflection and inquiry skills as key competencies for teachers and teacher educators, generally reflection is neither practiced in teacher education nor developed in student teachers (Chambulila, 2013).

5. Recommendations for Improving the Preparation and Professional Development of Teacher Educators in Tanzania

In order to improve the preparation and professional development of teacher educators and ultimately improving teacher education and education in general, the following recommendations might be useful in the Tanzanian context.

First, teacher educators should take the initiative to develop and establish teacher education as a distinct profession with a sound professional qualification framework (professional standards to serve as minimum standards required for teacher educators), a clear professional path, formal preparation and sustainable professional development. The experience in developed countries such as the United States, Netherlands, Belgium, Australia and other European countries shows that teacher educators through their professional organizations take the leading role in professionalizing teacher education and the profession of teacher educators in particular (Koster & Dengerink, 2001). Such professional organizations could also be established in Tanzania for similar purposes. While educational authorities recognize the need for such professional organizations, very little effort has been devoted to establish such organizations. Primary and secondary schools teachers also need a professional organization that will seriously attend to issues of teacher professionalism since the existing one is a mere trade union. The establishment of professional organization for teacher educators will be instrumental to the improvement of teacher education, teacher educators’ profession and education in general.

Secondly, there is also need to develop graduate programs (master’s and doctorate programmes) which will solely focus on teacher education as a professional field within the education discipline. The universities and colleges, which provide teacher education, should develop curriculum for educating teacher educators at undergraduate and postgraduate levels (Cochran-Smith, 2003). These curricula will define the professional knowledge of teacher educators and their roles.

Thirdly, since the current practice of teacher education in Tanzania is considerably based on teaching, there is a need to increase research engagement and output without compromising the effectiveness of teaching. Teacher educators’ involvement in research is part of their work and a means of professional development, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training should develop a support framework for college teacher educators to engage in research (Meena, 2009; Yogev & Yogev, 2006). The support that teacher educators might need for engagement in research include training in research methodology and mentoring (Lunenberg et al, 2014), financial support and timely recognition of their research output (Yogev & Yogev, 2006). The faculties of education should have research policies that clarify the nature of teacher educators’ research and related rewards.

Fourthly, the collaboration between universities and colleges of teacher education is of paramount importance in improving teacher education and teacher educators’ competences in particular. Currently the partnership between universities and teachers’ colleges does not exist (Meena, 2009; Chambulila, 2013).

Therefore, partnership between teacher education institutions (universities and colleges) and schools should be established in order to improve teaching, teacher education and the profession of teacher educator (Meena, 2008; Snoek et al, 2010). Currently the Faculty of Education at the Open University of Tanzania is working on establishing partnership with schools. The partnership will enhance research in teacher education and production of local knowledge relevant to teacher education and teaching in Tanzania.

Fifthly, there is a need for induction courses for novice teacher educators. These will ease their transition to new roles (see Murray, 2005). Apart from formal induction in form of courses, mentoring and coaching practices should be instituted in both universities and teacher colleges (O'Sullivan, 2010). The mentoring and coaching practices will be instrumental in developing the research capacity of novice teacher educators. Furthermore, Zeichner (2005) suggests that novice teacher educators should engage in professional development activities such as self-study of own practice, active involvement in developing curricula and course, learning about new school reforms and reading up-to-date literature on teacher education.

Lastly, the Teacher Development Management and strategy of 2008-2013 indicates the need for establishing a symposium for Tanzanian teacher educators to share their knowledge, research and experience. Despite the good will of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, such a practice has not yet been established. Such forums are very important for the betterment of teacher education in Tanzania, therefore effort to establish these should be increased. The existence of a symposium for teacher educators together with other forms of collaboration might set the grounds for professional networks among teachers of primary and secondary schools, college teacher educators and university teacher educators. The communities of learning and practice are important avenues for professional development (Wenger, 1998).

6. Conclusion

This review study has reported the current status and practices of both preparation and professional development of teacher educators from public teacher education institutions in Tanzania. With the liberalization policy on education provision in Tanzania, there exist a considerable number of private teacher colleges and universities that provide teacher education. Similarly little is known about preparation and professional development of teacher educators working in private teacher education institutions.

It is evident that various initiatives are needed to improve the quality of teacher educators in Tanzania in order to enhance the quality of teacher education and education in general. The currently implemented educational reforms which emphasize learner-centred and competence-based education necessitate substantial changes in both preparation and professional development of teacher educators. The above mentioned is necessary if teacher education has to keep up with the current educational policies and directives. The recommendations provided in the next part might serve as a starting point towards improving the preparation and professional development of teacher educators and teacher education at large. The recommendations provided above might save as a starting point towards improving the preparation and professional development of teacher educators and teacher education at large.

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