



Original Article

Effectiveness of Teachers' Service Commission on Ensuring Quality Services to Public Secondary School Teachers in Ruangwa District Tanzania

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The main purpose of the study on which this paper is based was to assess the effectiveness of the Teachers' Service Commission in ensuring quality services to public secondary school teachers in Ruangwa District. Using a mixed research technique, the study collected both qualitative and quantitative data. The targeted population of the study was 126; the sample size of 88 drawn from the targeted population. The data collection tools involved the questionnaire, in-depth interview, and documentary review. Qualitative data were analysed thematically, while quantitative data were analysed through descriptive statistics with the help of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21. The study was guided by Transformation Leadership Theory founded by James MacGregor Burns in 1978. The findings revealed that the Teachers' Service Commission had been ineffective as it failed to promote teachers timely and to administer in-service training programmes for secondary school teachers who qualified. This is because the employer (the government) has the upper hand in deciding whether to pay for promotions and in-service training programmes or not. The study recommends that TSC should be empowered by making it have a say or being in control of the salary system.

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INTRODUCTION

In many countries in Africa and the world at large, teaching is regarded as a noble profession and the mother of all professions which comes with so many responsibilities and duties towards students (Adeoye, 2014). Despite their significant role, teachers have been experiencing a number of challenges inhibiting them from rendering quality service. Issues such as salary variation from one employer to another, stipend payments by agencies and difficulty in transferring from one system to another, among others. The conditions varied considerably from agency to agency. In an effort to curb the experienced challenges of this profession, most countries established commissions of teaching services to make teachers' conditions uniformly better and improved.

The Teachers' Service Commission is an organ established in different countries to bring about important transformation in the management, administration, and maintenance of teachers' service within the country (Adeoye, 2014). These commissions were mandated to observe both primary and secondary teachers' services in most countries. For instance, in China, it is named the Civil Servant Commission. In Nigeria, it is called the National Union of Teachers; in Uganda, it is known as the Education Service Commission (ESC), in Zambia, Kenya, and Tanzania, it is known as the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) (URT, 2016). Generally, the organ has different names in different countries. However, it has the same main function of providing services to teachers both in primary and secondary schools. Historically, the teaching profession in Tanzania has experienced different challenges. In response, the government established the Unified Teachers' Service (UTS)

under the Education Act of 1962 in the then Tanganyika. The organ aimed at regulating teaching activities in Tanganyika. Under this organ, things were not good enough as education was offered on a racial and religious basis (The United Republic of Tanzania, 1964). There were schools for Christians and Muslims and schools for Europeans, Indians, and Africans. As a result, the organ changed its name to the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) in 2015 under the Parliament Act of 1989 (URT, 2022).

Later on, the organ changed into what became known as the Teachers' Service Department (TSD) with similar functions to those of the Teachers' service commission, although the objectives were not achieved as required. With time, the name changed again to Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) which prevails to date. This was established under the Teachers' Service Commission Act No. 25 of 2015. All these organs with different names same purpose, intended to appoint, promote, and discipline teachers in the country. However, the current TSC adopted management policies and principles that enabled the best use of the available resources through efficient and effective planning, organising, staffing, directing, coordinating, motivating, advising, and training as stated in the public service management and employment policy of 2008 (URT, 2016).

In accordance with Teachers' Service Commission Act No. 25 of 2015, the fee has been given the following obligations: to keep and administer services to instructors, to advise the Minister of Education on school matters, especially trainers' reputation; to hyperlink teachers and the employer; to preserve the registration of teachers and hold the teachers accountable to their employer; to make

certain equitable deployment and distribution of instructors amongst and within nearby authorities; to decide appeals from disciplinary authorities; to design instructional behaviours and assessments on the topics associated with teachers' service and advocate the Minister to prescribe the code of ethics and behaviour of teachers' career and to rent, promote, and discipline instructors (URT, 2016). According to URT (2016), section 11(1) of the Teachers' Service Commission Act No. 25 of 2015 stipulates that TSC shall have offices at the district level and shall perform different functions of the commission as directed under section 12 of appointing, developing, and promoting teachers.

As stated earlier, the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) is responsible for the provision of services to primary and secondary school teachers in public service in Mainland Tanzania. However, despite its presence in almost all districts in the country, reports show that many teachers who qualify have neither been promoted nor gone for in-service training since 2014, contrary to what is stipulated under section 12 of the TSC functions (TTU, 2021). Failure to fulfil its duties reduces the morale of teachers to work diligently. Thus, assessing the effectiveness of the Teachers' Service Commission in ensuring quality services to Public Secondary School Teachers in the study area is of great importance as the study has policy implications that would bridge the gap between TSC and the government of Tanzania. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to assess the effectiveness of the Teachers' Service Commission with a view to understanding how quality services are achieved in Public Secondary School Teachers in Ruangwa District despite the fact that TSC has not lived according to the expected standard. It is more interesting as the selected area experiences the problem of teachers not being promoted and not getting any in-service training since 2014, as has been the case in other districts in the country.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature Review

The study is guided by the aid of the modern-day idea of leadership; this is so-referred to as Transformational Leadership Theory based by James Macgregor Burns in 1978. This concept is based totally on leaders' moving the fee, ideals and wishes of their followers. This theory requires leaders to provide vision and assignment and inspire others. According to this principle, the organisation needs to cautiously clear up the problems and provide private attention to the employees by treating each worker, in my opinion. This principle pertains to the current examination in which the Teacher's Service Commission (TSC), as the enterprise of teachers, have to adopt a change leadership style for its effectiveness to ensure first-class offerings to instructors.

Empirical Review

Different related studies were reviewed on the effectiveness of TSCs in ensuring services. Marika et al. (2021) comment that the "Teachers' Service Commission is tasked with the responsibility of ensuring teachers provide quality education in the schools they teach" (p. 69). In their study conducted in Kenya, they showed that the Teachers' Service Commission monitors teachers' performance in terms of the teaching process, preparation of subject matter and nurturing the learners' talents. In this perspective, the reform of TSC was intended to ensure effectiveness in providing quality services to teachers. In Kenya, despite the Teachers' Service Commission having been revised in 2014, the functions of the commission like promoting and transferring teachers, were not well provided as quality services to teachers. This indicated that TSC in Kenya was not rendering the services at the desired effectiveness.

In Zambia, the Teachers' Service Commission was established by the Service Commission Act, Cap 259, and section seven, as amended by Act No. 19

of 1994. The Teaching Service Commission's duties and responsibilities, among others, were to promote, confirm, appoint, demote, suspend, dismiss and retire teachers serving in public schools as well as lecturers in Teachers' Colleges of Education. It was established that the commission didn't perform its duties effectively including delays in confirming and promoting teachers despite the clearly stated functions that were supposed to ensure the delivery of quality services to secondary school teachers (Simufwi, 2017). The study recommended that the Teachers' Service Commission ought to adopt an electronic teachers' confirmation and promotion system for effectiveness. This review shows the knowledge gap in the effectiveness of the Teachers' Service Commission in the case of Zambia, which the current study aimed at assessing.

In Tanzania, the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) was established under Act No. 25 of 2015 to transform the administrative aspect of teachers' management and ensure quality delivery of services to teachers. The achievement of teacher's service in Tanzania depends on the implementation of different strategies including good governance practice and advocacy at all levels of TSC enhanced, effective communication between TSC offices and effective financial management mechanism in TSC. The effective implementation of this strategic plan is expected to bring about fundamental changes in improving performance and creating more relevant institutional structures for TSC (URT, 2016).

A study by Songela (2015) on the effectiveness of teachers' service department in promoting secondary school teachers' moral and ethical values in Tanzania, specifically in the Rufiji District. The study employed a mixed research approach in data collection and analysis. The findings of the study revealed that Teachers' Service Commission was not effective, especially in promoting teachers' moral and ethical values. In this perspective, the quality of service provided by the Teachers' Service

Commission is questionable as far as its roles toward teachers are concerned. The author recommended that the government and Teacher Service Department should participate effectively in promoting ethical and moral values.

METHODOLOGY

The research that provided the data for this paper used a mixed research technique. The approach allows the researcher to get a comprehensive understanding of the research topic, and it gives room for the collection of in-depth information concerning a study. Under a mixed research approach, the study employed a convergent parallel design, which enabled the researcher to collect data concurrently. The targeted population of the study was 126 included 102 teachers, 22 Heads of school (H), 1 Secretary of the Teachers' Service Commission (DSTSC) and 1 District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO); the sample size of 88 drawn from the targeted population. The study used a simple random sampling technique and purposive sampling to select the required sample size that got involved in the study. The required information was collected through a questionnaire and interview. The schools involved in the study were named based on the alphabet, namely A, B, C and D. This study was conducted in Ruangwa District. The area was selected because it experienced the problem of teachers not being promoted and not getting any in-service training since 2014 which is the case in other districts in the country. The collected qualitative information was analysed through thematic analysis, while the quantitative information was analysed through descriptive statistics with the help of Statistical Package for Social Science version 21.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Performance of Teachers' Service Commission

This study investigated the effectiveness of the Teachers' Service Commission in ensuring quality service provision among secondary school teachers. The Teachers' Service Commission, among other

things, is responsible for promoting and organising in-service training programmes. *Table 1* presents

the responses from teachers with regard to the general performance of TSC.

Table 1: Performance of Teachers’ Service Commission

Statement	Frequency	Percentage
Teachers were not promoted timely	54	67
Teachers did not attend in-service training	27	33
Total	81	100

Source: Field Data (2021)

Table 1 indicates teachers’ responses to the performance of TSC. The findings show that 67 per cent of teachers reported that they were not promoted timely, and 33 per cent of teachers said that they had not attended any in-service training. This implies that TSC was not performing its duties as stipulated in ensuring quality service provision to teachers through influencing the government. One of the roles of TSC through the government is to ensure teachers are promoted and attend in-service training though the function was not achieved well due to different challenges encountered by the commission.

Promotion of Teachers

From the responses of teachers on promotion trends in Ruangwa District, one of the roles of TSC within the government is to ensure teachers are promoted. The study found that the majority of teachers reported that teachers were not promoted timely, as indicated in the manifesto (*Table 1*). Therefore, this implies that Teachers’ Service Commission failed in fulfilling one of its duties of promoting teachers through reinforcing the government to ensure effective teacher promotion; hence this is perceived as a failure to ensure quality service. Failure to promote secondary school teachers timely as one of the functions of the Teachers’ Service Commission, as indicated in the manifesto, indicates that the commission is underperforming.

From the findings obtained from the questionnaire and interview there were different themes generated to show the effectiveness of the service provided by TSC to secondary school teachers. These themes included;

Teachers’ Promotion.

Through the interview, the District Secretary of the Teachers’ Service Commission was asked why teachers were not being promoted timely as stipulated in the manifesto. He responded as follows:

The commission failed to promote teachers due to the incidence that they don’t own a salary system which would enable them to make increments to the teachers. However, they used to observe the performance of the teachers in ensuring the provision of quality education. Therefore, TSC has no direct means a hundred per cent to mandate the fulfilment of the promotion rights of teachers timely. This consequently leads to delays in promoting teachers on time as the promotion is achieved with the allocated national budget by the government (Interview: DSTSC, 2021).

This implies that though the Teachers’ Service Commission has the mandate to promote teachers, it is the government which facilitates salary increments to those promoted; then the commission is trapped in between either promoting teachers or not based on the discretion of the government of whether to pay them the salary increment or not. Thus, the organ ends up observing the performance of the teacher in ensuring the provision of quality education. The findings concur with Marika et al. (2021), who commented that the Teachers’ Service Commission plays a great role in observing the performance of teachers in terms of preparation and teaching process, thus ensuring quality education in schools.

In-service Training

As for in-service training of teachers, the Teachers' Service Commission is responsible for the supervision of teachers' in-service training programmes. Through the provision of the in-service training programme, teachers are enabled to attain professional growth. The study found that 33% of teachers reported that they did not go for in-service training, as it is stated in the public service that teachers have to attend training after a period of three years. When the Head of School D was asked whether teachers who were qualified under the public service circular to go for in-service training were able to do so, he had this to explain:

For a long time now, teachers have not attended any in-service training to upgrade their skills. Most of the teachers who have qualifications to undergo the in-service training are not supported to do so. This can basically be argued to have resulted from the severe failure of the TSC in supervising in-service training for qualified teachers. Consequently, as the number of teachers who are recruited now and then keeps going higher, the accumulation of teachers who have no in-service training keeps rising day by day. This leads to teachers relying on their everyday experience and one-time professional skills obtained in their teaching colleges (Interview: HoS, D, 2021, 2021).

The findings correspond with the information provided during the interview with the Head of School C who explained as follows:

In order to provide quality service to secondary teachers, teachers should undergo professional training. The provision of in-service training among teachers will ensure the effective growth of teachers hence enabling them to provide quality service to students. There is a strong relationship between teachers' professional training and their working performance at their workplaces. If teachers' skills are upgraded,

they will likely render quality service teaching (Interview: HoS, C, 2021).

On the other hand, when DSTSC was asked whether teachers who qualified to go for in-service training, they were able to do so, he stated:

The Teachers' Service Commission is responsible for organising in-service training for secondary school teachers. However, TSC lacks funds to facilitate teachers' in-service training programmes. Consequently, TSC fails to provide in-service training to teachers since this duty cannot be politically fulfilled by mere words. A sufficient budget is required to meet the teachers' needs to upgrade their profession in their workplaces, particularly those who have qualifications for in-service training programmes (Interview: DSTSC, 2021).

This means that Teachers' Service Commission has the power to organise teachers for in-service training, but this role did not fully fill by the Teachers' Service Commission simply because of the challenge the commission encountered in handling their responsibilities. Thus, it becomes a challenge to ensure quality service to secondary school teachers.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study intended to examine the effectiveness of the Teachers' Service Commission in ensuring quality service provision to secondary school teachers. It is concluded that the Teachers' Service Commission is ineffective in ensuring quality service provision to secondary school teachers. The study found that in Ruangwa District, TSC failed to promote teachers timely, and teachers were not able to go for in-service training as required. Hence, different strategies were to be adopted in the provision of service to the teachers. Besides, this paper recommends that the central government should come up with a new approach which will be adopted by the Teachers' Service Commission in the promotion of secondary school teachers. The

Teachers' Service Commission should set a goal for each year to be attained in the provision of service to secondary school teachers so as to ensure quality service provision to teachers. Furthermore, the Teachers' Service Commission should adopt a new approach to ensuring the effective provision of in-service training among secondary school teachers.

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