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Original Article

### Teaching Effectiveness of Teachers Who Engaged in 2015 Curriculum Design in Selected Public Primary Schools in Geita Region Tanzania

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Curriculum Design.

This study explored the teaching effectiveness of teachers who were involved in 2015 curriculum design in public primary schools in the Geita Region, Tanzania. The study conceptualized effective teaching as planning and preparation for teaching, actual instruction of learning, management of classroom environment as well as professional responsibilities. Five teachers who engaged in the 2015 curriculum design constituted the cases. Data was collected from these cases, curriculum developers, DCSQAOs, and pupils; using interview guides, lesson observation checklists, focus group discussion guides, and document review checklists. The study findings revealed that teachers' 2015 curriculum design influences their teaching effectiveness in ways that assume ownership of the curriculum requirements even though they did not directly get involved in the actual designing of this curriculum. It was thus concluded that teachers' involvement in curriculum design moderately influences their teaching effectiveness because how their involvement influences their teaching effectiveness, simply renders them to assume ownership of the curriculum although these teachers never directly got involved in its actual designing. The study recommends that Primary school teachers should have a positive attitude towards the 2015 curriculum and thus should assume ownership of the curriculum requirements.

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## INTRODUCTION

Despite all deliberate efforts made by the Tanzanian government through MOEVT and its partners in the educational sector to enhance effective teaching, teaching is highly ineffective. It has been reported by TWAVEZA (2021) that there is a poor selection of content, a lack of adequate preparation, inappropriate teaching methodologies and high cases of mistrust in carrying out an effective assessment of the curriculum. In this report, it was indicated that part of the curriculum content followed was left by the colonial masters in the 1960s with limited chances to transform this curriculum and instructional methodologies. Although the curriculum was changed in 2015, the scenario of teachers' failure to teach effectively at the primary school level, especially for grades 1-3 has always been attributed to several factors including overcrowded classrooms, lack of teaching and learning resources, low salaries, lack of motivation, political interventions in the education sector. Teachers' involvement in the 2015 curriculum design has not been given adequate attention and if its influence on teaching effectiveness is not addressed, it could result in primary school graduates who are not able to master their environment. This missing link, therefore called for a scientific study with a major focus on the teaching effectiveness of teachers who were involved in 2015 curriculum development in selected public primary schools in Geita Region, Tanzania. The study specifically sought to examine the influence of teachers' involvement in the 2015 curriculum design on the effectiveness of teaching in selected public primary schools in the Geita Region.

## Background of the Study

Tanzania's evolution of effective teaching at all levels of Education right from primary education has more to do with the curriculum. For instance, Annala *et al.* (2016) showed that the concept of curriculum followed in teaching owes much from Ralph Tyler, 1949, works based on the four key principles. For instance, defining learning objectives, introducing

learning experiences (Content), organizing experiences to maximize their effect (teaching methods) and evaluating the process of revising areas that are not effective. However, these were discussed in a broader sense and not specifically empirical in the context of primary schools in Tanzania. Martin, & Etzkowitz (2001) in a study about the origin and evolution of primary education showed that the teaching curriculum highly determined knowledge production. The curriculum was highly considered essential in teaching effectiveness in line with community expectations. However, this analysis was not in the African context with specific reference to Tanzania leaving room for the current study to be carried on to show whether the involvement of teachers in curriculum development influences teaching effectiveness in selected public primary schools.

The history of Tanzania's education curriculum development specifically its designing process can be traced back to the independence of Tanganyika in 1961 (Galabawa, 2005). The independent Tanganyika inherited an education curriculum that was available only to a minority and distinguished by race, economic position, geographical location, and religious denomination (Ishumi, & Nyirenda, 2002). Curriculum development was particularly controlled by the Advisory Committee on African Education established in 1925 after the recommendations of the Phelps Stoke Commission (Sefu, & Siwale, 1977). Curricula were inferior, less equipped, and irrelevant to Africans as it was based on British prototypes (Sefu, & Siwale, 1977). Soon after the independence, an elaborated Ministry of National Education was created under Oscar Kambona and programs to reform the curriculum started (Ndunguru, 1973). In 1962 Education Act No. 37, was passed to replace the Education Ordinance of 1927 (Sefu, & Siwale (1977). The act aimed at abolishing racial segregation in education and streamlining the education curriculum (URT, 1995). The inherited colonial Education System of 4-4-2-2 was changed to 7-4-2-3 and half-time teaching in STD III and IV was abolished (URT,

1995). This was accompanied by the abolition of the provincial Standard Four Examination, Territorial Standard Eight Examination, Territorial Standard Ten Examination and the Cambridge School Certificate Examination at the end of standard twelve (URT, 1995).

After the above efforts, in 1963 a new curriculum was approved for use in primary and secondary schools. This was accompanied by great changes in the number, nature, content and periods allocated to subjects (Sefu, & Siwale 1977). For example, Kiswahili, which had fewer periods during the colonial era, was given more than English, especially in the lower classes. The curriculum development section was placed under the Ministry of National Education and the University College of Dar es Salaam. In 1975 curriculum development section was taken over by the newly established, autonomous institute, the Institute of Curriculum Development (ICD). In 1993, the Institute of Curriculum Development (ICD) was renamed and became the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) (Sefu, & Siwale, 1977; URT, 1995). During the post-independence era, the adult education curriculum was also developed and given priority through the establishment of the Kivukoni College in 1961, the Institute of Adult Education in 1964, and the National Institute of Production in 1965 (Sefu, & Siwale, 1977). These early educational programs and policies were mainly directed towards correcting the inherited colonial curriculum defects, integrating education with productive work, and creating manpower to fill positions left by colonial personnel.

However, despite these programs described above, according to Ndunguru (1984) and URT (1995), there were no significant changes in the goals and objectives of the education curriculum until 1967 when the philosophy of Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) was proclaimed. Most of the textbooks, subjects, and examination systems, remain the same as those used during colonial times. Education for self-reliance is the phase in the development of education where Tanzania swung towards more socialist-based and egalitarian policies. The guiding philosophy for the provision of education was 'Education for Self-Reliance'. The philosophy was suggested by President Nyerere in his book

Education for Self-Reliance (ESR). According to Ishumi, & Nyirenda (2002), education for self-reliance was a translation of the national socio-economic philosophy in terms of educational tasks. Nyerere (1967) strongly criticized colonial education curriculum contents and its mode of delivery. Several writers such as (Nyerere, 1967; Ndunguru, 1973; Ishumi, & Nyirenda, 2002) argued that colonial education encouraged the individualistic instincts of mankind, induced attitudes furthering human inequality and domination, upheld alien values, was elitist, created a class-ridden society and taught uncritically.

There were several Education programs, policies and plans during the Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) phase to ensure that the philosophy was well implemented (Bogonko, 1992). These curriculum reforms have been intended to improve the learning outcomes and create an education system that is relevant to Tanzanians. In 2005, for example, Tanzania introduced a competency-based curriculum, which emphasizes students' competence development rather than their acquisition of content knowledge. In 2014, the government of Tanzania implemented the 3Rs reform to strengthen the teaching and learning of the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic (3Rs). The overall purpose of this was to improve competence in the 3Rs at the primary education level and during the early grades (Standard I - II) in particular. This reform constituted a major reorganization of the subjects taught at each stage of primary school and a sharp narrowing of the focus of instruction in standards I - II. Despite these curriculum reforms, criticism of the quality and relevance of the education provided in Tanzania persists. There is an outcry from society that the education provided in Tanzania fails to promote skills that are relevant to the 21st century to help individuals cope with ever-emerging challenges in their environment. On Thursday 22nd April 2021, Her Excellence President Samia Suluhu Hassan addressed the parliament of the United Republic of Tanzania for the first time. One of the priority areas that the sixth President identified was to improve the quality of education. Consequently, in her education budget speech addressed to Parliament on 5th May 2021, the Minister for Education Science and Technology announced plans to review the policy

and curriculum. This suggests that the government of Tanzania intends to re-orient the school curriculum to accommodate the public concern related to the limited 21st-century skills and the President's directives. However, we know little about the extent to which teachers especially those who engaged in 2015 curriculum design in Tanzania influence their teaching effectiveness which this study seeks to address.

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Curriculum design involves planning activities, reading, lessons, and assessments that achieve educational objectives. It focuses on the creation of the overall course blueprint, mapping content to learning objectives, including how to develop a course outline and build the course. The curriculum progression movements (USA) in the mid-1990s revealed an extensive use of teachers as central to curriculum designing programs. The Virginia curriculum design and revision program in 1931 is one of the examples. Advanced three teachers meeting in various school districts preceded the 1932 curriculum reforms. Deliberations included conceptualization of the philosophy behind the changes, major areas and reasons for the revision, the place of subjects, and nature of objectives among other curriculum processes and products (Bennet op. cit: 18-20). Teachers' recommendations from these meetings formed a basis and direction in which the changes took place. The mid-1990s curriculum innovations witnessed the use of a Laboratory School by Tanner, & Tanner (1995) to enhance teacher participation in curriculum decision-making. The hub harnessed teachers' views about the curriculum designing process through collaborative and teacher-reflection approaches. The teachers reflected on their 'real classroom instructional-based' experiences and students' interaction during the curriculum implementation process to inform the reform designs. The concrete educational experiences became the primary sources of all inquiry and reflection in the laboratory which helped to refresh the curriculum designing process (Bennet op. cit:6).

Whenever there is a need for curriculum development, the teacher's role and involvement come to the fore of necessity (Carl, 2012). It is

evident from the literature that there have been some differences, inconsistencies and gaps between official, written, planned, intended, and formal curricula Hale (2008); McNeil, (2006); Ornstein, & Hunkins (2009); Posner (2004); Wiles (2005) and taught, operational, experienced curriculum (English, 1980; Hale, & Dunlop, 2010; Weber, 2011). The teacher is, definitely, the heart of the matter. One cannot proceed with any curriculum development process without the full cooperation of the teachers and local authorities. Teachers are the most critical resources in the provision of any formal education anywhere in the world. Careless (1997), Kyriakides (1997) and Mulat (2003) further emphasized that teachers' perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about curriculum reform play a crucial role in the adoption, reinvention or rejection of a new or revised curriculum. Teachers therefore play a very important role in the facilitation of the learner's acquisition of the desirable knowledge, skills, values and attitudes (Mulenga, 2015). However, much as teachers are perceived to be very essential in the curriculum development process from various literature to the knowledge of the researcher, little or no studies have been done in Tanzania to establish the teachers' perception of their involvement in curriculum development. Teacher skills and attitudes count for a great deal more in curriculum development than do changes in content and methods (Bishop, 1985). It is crucial that teachers are involved and 16 participate fully in the entire curriculum development process due to the vital role and responsibility placed on them during curriculum implementation.

Carl (2012; pg.193) emphasized the need 'to bring the teacher as implementer together with the institution or person involved with the design so that mutual co-operation may be brought about. There must be teacher input; it should not be otherwise.' Teachers having the knowledge and class experience must contribute to the process by conveying their ideas and transmitting the know-how; they must be in the planning stage of what they are going to implement (Beane, & Apple, 2007). Teacher voice and ownership of curriculum change provide a key to understanding the perennial problem of the transformation of innovative ideas from conception to implementation (Kirk, & Macdonald, 2001). Full



teacher participation in curriculum development is a necessity which once ignored cannot go without long-lasting effects on the developed curriculum. The success of any curriculum depends on how it is interpreted by its implementers who are the teachers. Bantwini (2010; pg.89) noted that “teachers’ perceptions and beliefs influence and shape the meanings that the teachers eventually attach to the new reforms, which in turn play a vital role in their acceptance and classroom implementation.” Teachers therefore can only interpret the curriculum correctly if they have a full understanding of it which can only come forth if they are fully involved in curriculum development. Gorsuch (2000) noted that the attitudes and beliefs of the teachers are the single strongest guiding influence on teaching and learning. Getting views of the actual teachers on how they experience the entire curriculum development is significant to have a thorough understanding of the consequent curriculum implementation.

This study therefore sought to inquire from the actual teachers on their involvement in the curriculum development process and further analyze the possible roles that teachers could play in developing the curriculum. Teachers have been described in various ways concerning educational change and curriculum reform as the implementers (Wang, 2008), playmakers (Cuban cited in Priestly, 2005), the centrepiece of educational change (Datnow, & Castellano, 2000) and key players (Kirkgoz, 2008b). This simply entails that however good the plan is, it will be of no use if teachers do not implement it well. In addition, Karavas-Doukas (1995; pg.55) further explained that “in the long arduous journey of implementing an innovation, the teacher’s role and contribution is essential because teachers are instruments of change”. Without teachers’ willingness, participation and co-17 operation, change in education is impossible. Hence centrally initiated curriculum change will be of no value if it fails to engage the teachers as key players or implementers to improve learner outcomes (Cuban, 1998 cited in Priestly, 2005). In the UK, Rahman (1987) takes the School Council, which was behind the designing of curriculum reforms between the 1960s and 1970s as accountable for strikes behind the teacher participation in the curriculum designing process. The paradigm behind the

movements perceived curriculum innovations of the time as self-evident, self-directing and intended to benefit schools. Perpetuated by the nature of the curriculum reform models used in the 1970s, the paradigm by the reform champions did not see the importance and the place of the teacher in the curriculum designing process. This brings in another dimension of factors behind teacher participation as inflicted by either the reform models or lack of understanding of the importance of the various curriculum reform agents, committees and panels behind the curriculum designing process (Rahman, 1987).

Irembere (2019) conducted a study on Teacher Involvement in School Curriculum Design and Development in the Philippines. The study aimed to explore Teachers’ involvement in curriculum design and development in a private school in the Philippines. The study was a purely qualitative study and the data were collected through the use of interviews and documentary reviews. In that study participants were teachers and college principals and the study had a sample of 6 participants whereby 5 were secondary school teachers and 1 college principal. The results/findings showed that although teachers are willing to participate in curriculum development including designing they are not involved in something that also affects the teaching process. Findings from that study further revealed that ignoring teachers from the curriculum designing process forces teachers to become slaves because they are implementing curriculum content that they were not involved in its development. This study relates to the proposed study in terms of study focus which is curriculum but it differs in terms of study location.

Mundokwini (2016) investigated challenges towards curriculum implementation in high schools in Mt. Fletcher District Eastern Cape. With the use of qualitative data collected using open-ended interviews, results revealed that teachers’ low involvement in the different levels of curriculum development limited the chances and possibilities to teach effectively. Also, Huizinga et al. (2014) showed that teachers are not supported and involved in curriculum design. This was identified as highly responsible for pedagogical knowledge weaknesses,

and curricular inconsistencies which almost are the key engines during the teaching and learning process. Besides, this study was not based on Danielson's (1996) model for effective teaching which will be based on in this proposed study.

Meanwhile, Thijs, & Van den Akker (2009) showed that curriculum materials such as lesson series represent the operationalized curriculum reform and therefore play an important role during the design of curriculum reforms. Alternatively, this was a theoretical analysis while this current study will be highly empirical. Similarly, Mohanasundaram (2018) investigated curriculum design and development; Reviewed articles showed that teachers' involvement in curriculum design allows them to have a clear out of the curriculum. This gives a professional outlook on the curriculum. This allows these teachers to teach effectively as the curriculum set is standardized and in line with their professional disciplines. Besides, this study was a review of literature while this current study is empirical in Nature. In Ghana Abudu, & Mensah (2016) used a questionnaire to investigate barriers to participation from 130 teachers in Ghana. The authors analyzed various reforms and studies done in Ghana and elsewhere (Nigeria and South Africa). The argument behind the study was that teachers were trained and attained different qualifications from different 45 institutions and contexts (certificate, diploma, postgraduate diploma, and degree). Implicit from this diversity is that teachers enter teaching with little and significantly varying knowledge and skills about the curriculum development process. Involving them in curriculum reform processes would help the teachers to attend to the gap and diversity. However, the findings reveal that the mention of teacher participation in the curriculum development process was peripheral in both sources. The study by Abudu and Mensah found out that, teachers were either neglected completely in the process, and where they had a chance, it was a shortened participation. One of the explanations for this gap was that, Ghana's curriculum is centrally organized it was the government planners who managed the whole development.

Teachers in Zimbabwe would rather be involved in income generation projects to supplement their meagre income leaving very little time to get involved in curriculum development work (Chinyani, 201 pg.63). Chinyani's (2013) study on curriculum was in a way a response to critics of the school curriculum who raised concerns about the effectiveness of a curriculum planned by a Ministry of Education designated Curriculum Development Unit (CDU). Referring to curriculum innovation projects after independence in Africa and particularly in Zimbabwe, the study revealed that at least 70% of educational innovations die before they achieve their stated purpose. One major reason for the failure of educational innovations "is the marginalization or limited involvement of teachers in curriculum development, particularly at the planning stage. The curriculum developed using this rather Centre-periphery approach was viewed by Chinyani as experiencing a large gap between the planned curriculum and the transacted curriculum, which caused uncertainty and mistrust among stakeholders.

In another study by Buchanan, & Engerbreston (2009), it was ascertained that clear information and theoretical understanding about a curriculum change in religious education is as important as it is in any other field of study. In the absence of information on curriculum and understanding, the teachers responsible for implementing the curriculum made certain curriculum accommodations that were not in keeping with the theoretical underpinnings of the change. Teachers' knowledge is therefore important to enable the correct conceptualization of a new reform requirement. In addition, Wette (2009) conducted a study in South Africa among seven well-qualified teachers of English as a second language (ESL). Data was collected through weekly interviews and analysis of documents and materials produced throughout the whole course for each teacher. It was established that teachers' knowledge and experience were apparent in their ability to conceptualize and plan globally in the pre-course phase to establish rapport and diagnose learners' development priorities as soon as teaching began. The ability to understand and implement with fidelity the curriculum depended upon the right conceptualization. These studies emphasized the

importance of involving teachers in curriculum development without bringing out the actual voice of the teachers. It was therefore the intent of this study to fill the gap. A study conducted by Ndum, & Okey (2015) on teachers' involvement and role in climate change curriculum development and implementation in the Nigerian secondary educational system discovered that teachers were mostly not involved in curriculum development instead, they were just expected to implement the already developed curriculum. It was recommended in that study that reforms should be initiated from the grassroots, bottom-up, particularly by teachers who are in the field and know what and where a change is needed. Similarly, that study was only conducted in the specific area of focus of climate change. It was therefore interesting to get insights on how teachers in general experienced curriculum development and establish the extent to which they were involved in the development process. In addition, little or no information was known on the prevailing situation in Tanzania as far as teacher involvement in curriculum development was concerned therefore; this study intended to fill the gap.

Teachers inevitably have a cardinal role to play in the curriculum development process in that excluding them will not go without consequences on the developed curriculum. It is in the classroom where the curriculum is carried out. Since the classroom is the work field of teachers, teachers experience first-hand results of curriculum planning and how these make an impact on the learners (Oliva, 2005). This entails that, teachers can witness whether the curriculum is at odds or is keeping up with the needs and interests of the pupils. Despite this significant role placed on teachers in the curriculum development process, to the knowledge of the researcher, no study seems to have been done to establish the views of the teachers on the way the curriculum is developed in Tanzania as well as how they perceive their involvement in the curriculum development process. In the Tanzanian set-up, a study conducted by Kihumbe (2015) on the state of parents' and teachers' participation in pre-primary school curriculum development in Tanzania also gives a clear direction. This study was conducted to answer the main question; to explore the state of parents' and teachers' participation in pre-primary

school curriculum development where 12 parents, 12 teachers and 6 officers from the Tanzania Institute of Education were involved in the study. Also, data were collected through Focus Group Discussions, Documentary reviews and semi-structured interviews. The study applied a mixed-method approach backed up by critical theory as the theoretical framework. The study findings revealed that parents and teachers were hardly involved in curriculum development because of different factors such as an inhibitive education system, avoidance of expenses, limited time, poor communication between the government on one hand and parents and teachers on the other hand and misallocation of funds. Moreover, that study used a mixed approach while the current study will be purely qualitative.

## METHODOLOGY

The study being qualitative followed a constructivist/interpretivist paradigm for its focus on the interpretation of people's actions, views and interactions (Cohen, & Manion, 1994; Guba, & Lincoln, 1994) and it provided the right frame we needed to understand the phenomena (Creswell, 2003). A descriptive case study design was used with teachers who engaged in 2015 curriculum design as the unit of analysis. A sample of 5 teachers, 5 curriculum developers, 5 district chief school quality assurance officers, and 15 students were purposively selected. Interviews, lesson observations, focus group discussions and documentary analysis were the primary data collection methods we used. Data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Data quality control which addresses issues of trustworthiness was considered on the criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability of findings. The study was conducted in public primary schools in Geita Region, Tanzania. This area was selected for its premeditated value and not for representativeness. For example, the reason for choosing the Geita region is that Geita region is among the five regions whose public primary schools are experiencing teaching ineffectiveness in Tanzania (URT, 2022). Also, in these public primary schools found in Geita Region, there were challenges in terms of implementing the curriculum during teaching and learning (URT, 2022).

## STUDY FINDINGS

Data from interviews, lesson observations, focus group discussions and documentary sources suggest that the five teachers I interacted with unveiled

several ways in which their involvement in 2015 curriculum design influences their teaching effectiveness as summarized in Table 1 below

**Table 1: Ways in which Teachers' Involvement in 2015 Curriculum Design Influences their Teaching Effectiveness**

Domains of Pedagogical Effectiveness	How teachers' involvement in curriculum design influences teaching effectiveness
Planning and preparation (PP)	Focused assessment and feedback Collaborative processes Ensures curriculum fitness for pupils Simplifies administrative support
Classroom environment (CE)	Develop ownership of change Gaining pupil's confidence Fostering creative space for learning
Instruction (I)	Develop pedagogical competence and practices Benchmarking instructional practices The feeling of importance at work
Professional responsibilities (PR)	Positive attitude in school practices Enhanced record keeping Adherence to holistic pedagogy Breaking out of the box

### Planning and Preparation-related Ways in which Teachers' Involvement in Curriculum Design Influence their Teaching Effectiveness

Data analysis results in Table 1 provide four ways that emerged, showing how teachers' involvement in curriculum design influences their effectiveness in planning and preparation for lessons. The assumption was that since curriculum design centres a teacher's practice based on the individual needs of learners in the classroom, it was critical to understand how these teachers' involvement in the process of curriculum design influences how they effectively plan and prepare for lessons. From Table 1 therefore, it is clear that focused assessment and feedback, collaborative processes, ensuring curriculum fitness for pupils as well as simplifying administrative support, emerged as how teachers' involvement in curriculum design influences their effectiveness in planning and preparation for lessons.

**Focused assessment and feedback** are used in this study to refer to teachers' ability to remain objective in setting their instructional goals when planning how to teach, assess and offer feedback to the learners. From the interviews, all five teachers

agreed that without their involvement in the curriculum design process, being objective in setting focused assessments and feedback to their pupils would be difficult. Teacher A for example informed me that her involvement in the 2015 curriculum design gave her a picture of how objective assessments would be planned for the learners because of achieving its intended objectives. In the same way, Teacher D indicated how his feedback to the pupils after doing class activities depended so much on what he realized when giving his contribution during the curriculum design process. When asked about how their involvement in curriculum design influenced assessment preparations for their pupils, they had this to say:

*'...of course, I do make a lot of imaginative reference to what we went through and the questions we answered during the process of curriculum design although it was indirect since the developers just brought for us a questionnaire to fill and maybe some short interviews. I, therefore, plan assessments for my learners after confirming that such assessments are in line with the curriculum need given the fact that I was indirectly part of those who designed it...' (Teacher D, rural-based school).*



When I asked the other teacher also acknowledged that,

*‘...yes, you know when the curriculum was still under development, we were asked about how better it would be designed and we gave our thoughts. I did not know that this would help me so much in planning my teaching especially how to give good assessments and feedback to my learners. That involvement has helped me so much ...’* (Teacher A, urban-based school).

In the interpretation of the above arguments, teachers’ involvement in curriculum design partly gave teachers ownership and control over their preparations to teach because of keeping with the requirements of this curriculum. In other words, teachers plan their assessments and feedback in due respect to the curriculum requirements.

The analysis of data from the relevant documents indicated that assessments had been prepared in all the five teachers’ schemes of work that I observed. At the end of their schemes of work, pupils’ feedback was provided in the form of test scores for at least the so far done assessments. Nevertheless, Teacher B’s knowledge of assessment content as seen in the schemes of work was lacking simply because the assessments were very sketchy and thus not strongly relevant to some lessons’ expectations. For Teacher E, assessments were orally responded to by the pupils and thus a proper record of feedback could not easily be traced although I observed it during my observation of her lessons.

Focused assessment and feedback prove to be one way in which teachers’ involvement in curriculum design influences effective planning and preparation. This is because of the way teachers embrace their involvement when planning the assessments and feedback for their pupils. Supplementary and deeper probing of study participants highlighted more existing ways in which these teachers’ involvement in 2015 curriculum design influences their effective planning and preparation for their lessons.

**Collaborative processes** also emerged and are described as teamwork in planning what to teach, especially through making inquiries with fellows who also got involved to perfect what they organize

for learners to learn. Teacher D in his interview revealed that he always made his lesson plans and shared them with colleagues who also got involved in curriculum design and advised each other on the best way to plan lessons that achieve the objective set by the curriculum. This is of great help to him since he is always advised where he goes wrong right from the planning stage. The colleagues also benefit from him because at times they also get advice from him, all in the name of achieving the objectives of the curriculum.

*‘... I no longer teach in abstract, I know some of my fellow teachers who also got involved in curriculum design we share ideas for effective planning of our lessons and in such sharing, I greatly improve in terms of effective planning and preparation for my lessons. My involvement in curriculum design was a very strong turning point for me to start engaging in teaching that is well thought through which is also an indication that what I teach is well planned....’* (Teacher D, rural-based school)

The meaning of this is that the involvement of teachers in the process of curriculum design offers them the opportunity to mutually benefit from each other, especially as regards their lesson preparation mechanisms and in the end effective planning results in the effective achievement of the curriculum's intended objectives.

**Ensures curriculum fitness for pupils.** This emerged as another way in which teachers’ involvement in curriculum design influences the effectiveness of their planning and preparation for lessons. It is about ensuring that the components of the curriculum are in line with pupils’ needs, abilities and weaknesses to achieve the intended objectives. From the interviews, all five teachers indicated how their involvement in curriculum design at least informed the curriculum developers about how the curriculum would be crafted to fit the pupils’ level of comprehension since these teachers knew those learners better. As such, Teacher B informed me that when he was requested to advise on curriculum design, he had to give a clear picture of the kind of pupils they have in their schools so that the developers could come up with a curriculum that did

not appear so strange to the needs and abilities of the pupils.

*'...I saw the chance to give my opinion on the curriculum development process as an opportunity for me to help pupils all over the country to go through a curriculum that fits their abilities as well as help them to become better citizens in future...I am not sure whether my issues were seriously taken by the developers but at least what I see in the curriculum now speaks to what I informed them when they were collecting data from us...' (Teacher B, urban-based school).*

During the interview with Teacher C, the issue of attaining a fitting curriculum after engaging teachers in its design was over-emphasized. She revealed to me that, teachers being part of curriculum design is very crucial if it is to fit the needs of the intended learners since these teachers are the ones that spend most of the time with them. She also indicated how she was in a position to do whatever she could to forward what she thought her pupils and the rest of the learners in the country needed in the then-upcoming curriculum.

*'...Although we were made to be involved in curriculum design indirectly by simply interviewing and perhaps filling out the questionnaires, we would be put at the front line of this process and am sure you also agree with me. When I was being interviewed, I made sure that I told them everything they had to include given seeing that what our pupils need is what we teach them I think it worked well for me...and like you show in our lesson, pupils now enjoy the lessons compared to before when the amended curriculum had not yet come...(Teacher C, urban-based School).*

The implication of Teacher B and C's arguments is clear that even if teachers were indirectly involved in the process of curriculum design, everything that teachers wished to see in the curriculum was put by the developers, an indication that the curriculum fits the learners' needs, abilities and weaknesses.

Analysis of data finally revealed **simplified administrative support** as another way in which teachers' involvement in curriculum design

influences the effectiveness of their planning and preparation for lessons. Simplified administrative support is about easing the school administrators' understanding of what is needed in terms of teaching/learning materials to ease the effective planning of lessons. Data from teachers' interviews show that all five teachers used their knowledge of curriculum design and simplified their respective school administrators (their bosses) about what they needed to achieve well-planned lessons. For example, Teacher E indicated that where her knowledge of curriculum design was used to understand how simply they would find learning materials with ease and thus not strain the school resources.

*'...like you saw in my lessons, this new curriculum requires a lot of instructional materials and once one cannot improvise by identifying alternatives, it may be difficult for our bosses here at school to provide us with whatever we need... my involvement in curriculum design exposed me to its dynamics and at least I can advise the bosses about the easier alternatives which I do plan during the making of my lesson plans...and I think you have seen some in my... (Teacher E, rural-based school).*

Teachers A and D revealed that when they wanted to go and improve their knowledge about the 2015 curriculum through attending workshops, it was easier for them to ask for acceptable financial support from the school administrators since they (school administrators) already knew about these teachers' involvement in curriculum design. Unlike Teacher E who used simplified administrative support by planning for resource-friendly teaching materials which the bosses could easily afford, Teachers A and D were able to attend extra curriculum trainings that sharpened their planning and preparedness to teach. This was possible simply because the bosses were already pleased that these teachers had already engaged with the designing of this curriculum and all they needed was further sharpening of their skills through organized workshops which they willingly financed.

*'...ever since they involved me in the process of curriculum designing, every time workshops and*

*training arise and get to know about them, it has always been easy for me to convince my bosses to facilitate me to attend them...maybe it's because they are aware of what my involvement in designing has caused in terms of improvement...the truth is that I now plan my lessons better than I used to do. I have not yet done my schemes of work whatsoever because this job is the mother of coaching...* (Teacher A, urban-based school).

This means that school administration considers their teachers' involvement in curriculum development as one of the strongest points in the attainment of their major goals and objectives. Therefore, facilitating them to become more efficient in their planning for lessons becomes easier and less burdensome for them.

### **Classroom Environment-related Ways in which Teachers' Involvement in Curriculum Design Influence Their Teaching Effectiveness**

From Table 1, the five teachers' involvement in curriculum design influences their classroom environment effectiveness in three ways. For example, the analysis of interviews, lesson observations and focus group discussions yielded subthemes such as the development of ownership of change, gaining pupils' confidence as well as fostering creative space for learning.

**Development of ownership of change** is used in this study to reference the feeling by the teachers that whatever does not move well in their classrooms is their responsibility to change for the better. During the interview with teacher B for example, I was informed that his involvement in curriculum design puts him in a position that keeps on identifying what is lacking especially within classrooms to have the curriculum successful and this initiative to change where applicable.

*'... just imagine we were indirectly involved in the design process but personally I started being very keen about my classroom activities such that I spot what needs to be changed in order to have the curriculum successful and I happily do this* (Teacher B, urban-based school).

In fact, when I met Teacher E's pupils during the focus group discussions, they informed me how their teacher kept on changing where they learned from. For example, one of them was very excited when we met from outside the classroom and told me that whenever their teacher taught them from outside, they learnt more than when they were inside, especially in the afternoon time.

*'... our teacher can sometimes repeat for us what we fail to understand by arranging for us to study from outside the classroom... we find those lessons enjoyable and we even understand than when we study from inside the classroom.'* (pupil, rural-based school).

Further evidence of this was obtained when I observed Teacher E's lesson. The organization of the learning environment was appropriate for the learning activities and thus active listening by pupils during the lesson was suitable when I asked her what helps her to manage an organized classroom conducted from outside, she had this to say

*'... this curriculum is very flexible for us as teachers since learning can take place from anywhere ... and being one of those who contributed to its design, I always keep on changing modes of classroom setup until I attain my objectives...* (Teacher E, Rural based school).

This implies that the involvement of these teachers in curriculum design entitles them to kind of ownership of all mistakes they may make during the classroom activities and thus make sure that they are ironed out in view of seeing the curriculum successful.

**Gaining pupil confidence** is used in this study to refer to the respect and trust that teachers get from the learners after realizing that they got involved in curriculum design. It was understood during teacher interviews that managing an effective classroom environment necessitates the teacher to command authority from the learners. Teacher A for example revealed to me that her involvement in the 2015 curriculum design gave her strong authority over her pupils since not everyone in the school was involved. She continued that because of that, pupils in her classes know that to do where to move and when to

do so during the lessons. The observation of her classroom indicated that pupils respected the clearly stipulated standards of conduct and indicated that the teacher commanded respect.

Also, observation of Teacher D's lessons indicated that pupils cleaned the blackboard as soon as the teacher entered, organized their desks and the teacher's seat as well as played other important roles regarding classroom routines. In his response to such organization, Teacher D that his involvement in curriculum design gave him an advantage in shaping his report among the pupils. He narrated during his interview that;

*'... my involvement in curriculum design indirectly forced me to read more and understand it better... so pupils can easily tell that whenever I go to them, I am always on the spot and I think that is how they start gaining confidence in me...' (Teacher D, Rural-based school).*

This means that involving teachers in curriculum designing is not only to seek their views being the immediate people to the learners but also increases the confidence that the learners are able to gain from their teachers.

In the same line of argument, the interview with curriculum developers indicated that teachers are very crucial in the process of curriculum design. They informed that there was no way pupils and other stakeholders could perfectly remain confident with the teachers who did not have any idea about how the curriculum they teach came to exist. They continued that, even if the involvement was not very direct, but at least they were involved. One of them for example said:

*'... of course, without teachers, there is no way we can successfully design the curriculum because they are basically the ones to implement it. It also makes them authoritative when teaching and pupils therefore become confident with their teachers.... (Curriculum Developer's Interview)*

This means that curriculum developers have hidden agendas in their attempts to involve teachers in curriculum designing but the general goal is to see

teachers owning the curriculum since they are the major implementors and perhaps evaluators.

**Fostering creative space for learning** lastly emerges as another way in which teachers' involvement in curriculum design influences an effective classroom environment. It is used in reference to ensuring a teaching/ learning environment that suitably achieves learners' needs. An interview with teacher B informed that his involvement in curriculum design introduced him to the need to be creative especially in the organization of classrooms if the lessons are to achieve the curriculum's intended objectives. In his classroom for example learners sat facing each other in rows but with reasonable spaces where the teacher kept on passing through to observe their activities. When asked about this arrangement, he had this to say;

*'... this curriculum requires the teacher to reach each student in class ... like you have seen, our pupils are very many in each class and without creatively arranging their sitting plan, one can hardly teach to the expectations, of the curriculum and I think you have seen how we struggle with them.'* (Teacher B, urban-based school).

This implies that teachers' involvement in curriculum design stimulates their creativity skills especially because they would love to see a curriculum in whose design they were part, to succeed in all its aspects.

However, during the observation of his lessons, noise covered the class and it was not easy to tell whether it was objective questioning among pupils or just useless noise. Besides, the class population was too high and, on some occasions, the teacher concentrated on those in front while those at the back were completely neglected. I was forced later to ask the DCSQAOs about the large numbers of pupils in public primary schools and their response was simply that the government did not have enough funding to provide enough infrastructure as well as solve the issues of teacher-pupil ratio. This means that an effective classroom environment is hard to achieve however much teachers try to innovating organize them.



Creative classroom space was achieved by Teacher C through her strategy of sending pupils learning materials to be used in class. During the observation of her lessons, pupils had brought plants and grains to the class and the teacher was heard telling each pupil to hold his/ her material. She effectively controlled them and surely enjoyed the class session. When asked why she did so, she had this to say. ‘... this curriculum was designed in a way that promotes pupil’s understanding of life around them.... we thus find it easy to teach based on what they can access at home. In fact, my involvement in curriculum design shaped my handling of lessons creatively (Teacher C, urban-based school).

This means that apart from the teacher’s creativity, learners love what they learn to the extent that although these pupils were urban-based, they could look for the possible plants and grains to be used during their learning process.

### **Instruction-related Ways in which Teachers’ Involvement in Curriculum Design Influence their Teaching Effectiveness**

From Table 1, the five teachers’ involvement in curriculum design influences the effectiveness of their instructional practices in three ways. The analysis of data from the interviews, lesson observations, focus group discussions and documentary analysis provided the development of pedagogical competence and practices, benchmarking instructional practices as well as the feeling of importance at work as the cross-cutting ways.

First, the **development of pedagogical competency and practice** is used to refer to the gaining of teaching/ learning skills suitable for attaining intended curriculum objectives. The five teachers agreed that their involvement in curriculum design shifted their understanding of effective instruction through gaining competencies that improved their instructional practices. The same was supported by the curriculum developers, DCSQAOs as well as pupils when engaged with them in focus group discussions. One of the curriculum developers for example informed that the new curriculum required teachers to understand well before they could teach it. In this context, he emphasized the fact that

engaging teachers in the process of curriculum design yielded competencies which these teachers required in their instructional practices.

Observation of Teacher A’s lesson however portrayed some lack of competences in the instruction of learning where she failed to stimulate pupils’ participation in classroom discussions probably because the teacher overused complicated words which some pupils would not easily understand. When asked about limited pupil participation in classroom discussions, Teacher A informed me that;

*“... the curriculum has straightforward guidelines for conducting of lessons.... you find yourself not engaging pupils but the issue is that the curriculum guidance strictly requires you to remain in such a position. This is something I did not know not until I was involved in curriculum design...my teaching competence has really improved since then.”* (Teacher A, urban-based school).

This means that, since involvement in curriculum design was not done for all teachers all over the country, many of them could be still deeply engaged with old teaching practices which may not yield to the intended objectives of the 2015 curriculum.

DCSQAOs were asked about what they were doing and even planning to do for the teachers who had never been involved in curriculum design to see that they also become competent and one of them informed that;

*‘... yes, it is true that not all teachers in this country were involved in the process of curriculum designing... we have a program of workshops, and seminars that keep on rotating in different regions of this country and the aim is to see that all teachers at least become competent/ equipped with the requirements of the 2015 curriculum for the primary schools in the country* (DCSQAQO’s interview)

Further evidence about the development of pedagogical competence and practice shows that teachers were able to provide valid instances as examples to pupils while teaching them. Teacher E for example was heard during the lesson asking

pupils whether they had brothers and sisters who dropped out of school after grade seven but did not have any work to do. Some pupils accepted that they had such people. The teacher then emphasized how this curriculum would not leave any child idle even until the end of grade seven because of its emphasis on creativity and innovativeness. When asked during her interview to clarify this, she had this to say:

*‘...it is true because the way the curriculum was designed, at least not irrelevant content is now taught to our learners...I assure them that when they are attentive to this curriculum, they cannot fail at least to find what to do in society after school with the little innovative and creative knowledge the curriculum provides to them...’* (Teacher E, Rural based school)

This implies misleading pupils, especially by discouraging them from continuing with further studies. As teachers assure them of having a job after grade seven, their minds might become diverted from continuing with further studies.

**Benchmarking instructional practices** is used in this study to refer to borrowing teaching methodologies and adopting them in view of attaining the best instructional practices. Teachers’ involvement in the 2015 curriculum design introduced such teachers to new teaching approaches that were adopted and used in their daily teaching and learning processes. My observation of the five teacher’s lessons for example indicated that they adhered to the aspects of effective instruction by being clear on the purpose of their lessons, assessing pupil’s comprehension of the content taught and also ensured that pupils actively worked rather than watching their teachers working. These teachers also indicated a desire to reach all pupils and, in some cases, due to the large number of pupils in the classrooms, teachers tried to suggest ways of at least reaching everyone by requesting even one to submit his/ her work individually.

However, Teacher C demonstrated some kind of inability to circulate well in the classroom to monitor pupils learning as well as failure to give a clear explanation of concepts in the lesson probably arising from the content errors observed in her schemes of work.

For other teachers like Teachers B and D, close attention to evidence of pupils understanding was missing. They also lacked suitable pacing for the lessons since their lessons were dragged and rushed. When asked how the involvement in the 2015 curriculum design influenced their instructional practices Teacher D narrated that.

*‘... ever since I was involved in curriculum design, I have always taken my time to copy and make use of what the curriculum requires in terms of lesson delivery but the challenge is that you get confused and you end up failing to perform to the expectations...in fact, its comprehensive and complicated...’* (Teacher D, Rural based school).

This means that teachers required constant training about the proper handling of the requirements of this curriculum to avoid mixing its intended goals with those of the curriculum that was phased out. With such training, pedagogical benchmarking would become more actionable.

**The feeling of importance at work** is used in reference to the recognition a teacher is given at school arising from the fact that he/ she was involved in the curriculum design process. This recognition was reported by the teachers who informed their instructional strength and commitment were enhanced because of this kind of recognition. Teacher B for example revealed that;

*‘... I never knew I was that important in this school until I was involved in the 2015 curriculum design... I tell you my bosses and my learners have highly charged their attitude towards me simply because of my involvement in curriculum design. In fact, my instructional practices have improved following such recognition...’* (Teacher B, urban base school).

This means that teachers required constant training about the proper handling of the requirements of this curriculum to avoid mixing its intended goals with those of the curriculum that was phased out. With such training, pedagogical benchmarking would become more actionable.

Other teachers further informed me that because of such recognition at their respective schools, they

were able to realize that their teaching methods were ever-improving, they could meet pupils to realize their areas of weakness and correct them as well as assess their previous teaching in view of meeting students' needs. Teacher A went further to inform me how she used to be told by the bosses to train fellow teachers on how they could effectively facilitate this curriculum which sharpened her instructional competence further.

*'...I remember when I had just gotten involved in curriculum design, I was given a chance to attend another worship where my instructional practices were improved... my bosses requested to also train my fellow teachers at schools... This really made me more effective in instruction of learning... (Teacher A, urban-based school).*

This implies that involving teachers in curriculum design gives them a feeling of importance that stimulates their moves towards achieving effective instructional practices especially where the involvement is followed by corresponding training about how to facilitate the curriculum.

### **Professional Responsibility-related Ways in which Teachers' Involvement in Curriculum Design**

Table 1 provides four ways in which teachers' involvement in curriculum design influences the effectiveness of their professional responsibilities. These are: a positive attitude in school practices, enhanced record keeping, adherence to holistic pedagogy and breaking out of the box.

**Positive attitude in school practices** is used in reference to teachers being optimistic about their profession, their interactions while at school work as well as professional conduct of him/ herself. Analysis of data indicates that teachers happily got involved in out-of-school activities simply because the curriculum stipulates clear time for such activities and why they are important. The fact that these teachers were part of those who designed it, there is no way they are eliminating themselves from engaging in such activities. Teacher C for example clearly informed me that:

*'...I was one of those people who recommended that extra-curricular activities needed to be*

*strengthened in the curriculum and surely when the curriculum was finished, these activities were given adequate instructional time... It can be ashaming for me to avoid engaging in such activities during their time ...' (Teacher C, urban-based school).*

This data was further supported by pupils' focus group discussions where pupils accepted that these teachers took them for co-curricular activities twice every week and told me how they enjoyed the activities so much. They clearly informed me that they do physical education, they make handicrafts, while those from the rural setting are sometimes taken to gardens to practice farming. One of the pupils for example narrated that:

*'... yes, we always go with her to the garden and weed her crops. We go there when we have finished class work... (Pupils, rural-based school)*

This means that the curriculum is not only promoting numeracy and literacy but holistically equipping learners with other important skills that would probably support their survival, especially after school.

**Enhanced record keeping** is used in this study to ensure that learners' records are safely kept by the teachers, especially after understanding its importance. Teachers informed me that after understanding the requirements of the curriculum, especially after their involvement in its design, they no longer take record keeping for granted and thus ensure in whatever they do, they keep records. Data collected from Teacher D and E's schemes of work and lesson plans indicated that a record that tracks their instructional and non-instructional processes was seen. When asked how their involvement in curriculum design influenced this, Teacher D had this to say;

*'...the truth is that when I was given a chance to engage in curriculum design, that is when I realized that I had to educate myself on the need for this curriculum to be an example for others....for sure record keeping is one of the important aspects that the curriculum requires and besides, it also professional to do so... (Teacher D, Rural based school)*

This data was further supported by the findings from the DCSQAOs who revealed that they were carrying out special visits to the schools to see teachers' records on the progress of the curriculum especially regarding pupils' performance in both academics and co-curricular activities. They therefore informed me that, without these records, there is no way they could monitor the progress of the curriculum. One of the DCSQAS for example narrated to me that:

*'...everything in this curriculum moves by the record and without recording whatever the learners achieved, then the curriculum cannot easily be monitored ...we always emphasize our teachers in the different schools keep track of pupils' performance in the different activities to ease our work of monitoring the curriculum progress (DCSQAQO' interview).*

This means that enhanced record keeping as a way in which teacher's involvement in curriculum design influences the effectiveness of their professional responsibilities is no longer by choice to the teachers but rather, it is something compulsory for all teachers to do given the fact that the supervisors of the curriculum start by looking for such as they visit the schools.

**Adherence to holistic pedagogy** is used to refer to teachers' ability to educate the pupils as a whole person, beyond just the core academics. The five teachers agreed that the curriculum is no longer focusing on helping learners to achieve academically but also to achieve in other spheres of life that are important for survival in society. During the interview, teacher A, for example, informed me that, they were no longer simply helping learners to pass examinations but to have them grounded holistically. In her words, she narrated that:

*'...when you critically look at the kind of curriculum we are teaching now, there are extra-curricular activities that were allocated time such as subject clubs and self-reliance activities...I am sure they were designed to help our pupils be trained in all aspects of life to be better citizens after school (Teacher A, urban-based school).*

About the above, analysis of data collected from the curriculum developers further confirmed that one of

the goals of education in Tanzania is to offer quality and holistic education that enables graduates to participate fully in enhancing initiatives by the government to boost the national economy by 2025. It was confirmed to me that the 2015 curriculum focuses on equipping the pupils in all domains of learning by offering them the necessary competencies. One of the curriculum developers for example narrated that:

*'...I understand that we live in a society whose needs are constantly changing due to changes in science, technology and the economy... we plan to constantly keep on improving this curriculum to keep pace with the changes that occur after the completion of the seven-year cycle and its only possible if it is holistically handled (curriculum developer's interview)*

This means that adherence to holistic pedagogy is at the centre of the 2015 curriculum that was designed in Tanzania since primary education now aims to produce graduates with various knowledge and skills that will enable them to contribute to play a significant role in the development of the country in achieving an industrial economy.

**Breaking out of the box** lastly emerged as another way in which teachers' involvement in curriculum design influences the effectiveness of their pedagogical responsibilities. It is used in this study about the ability to escape from the confines of the old curriculum after realizing the requirements of the new one, especially arising from their involvement in curriculum design. During the interviews with the teachers, it was understood that their professionalism in the handling of pupils was ever-improving.

In fact, after their engagement in curriculum design, teachers realised that their engagement with students after classes improved since these engagements were strongly recommended by the curriculum. Besides teachers started assessing their previous teaching and were thus in a position to check whether they were always up to pupil's needs and this is what the 2015 curriculum required. In brief, they were able to adjust their professional practices to fit both the pupils and the material, recognizing that different



pupils learn in different ways. Teacher B for example informed me that:

*‘... I can assure you that ever since I involved in curriculum design, I no longer just teach and go ... I got to realize that pupils need us beyond the class work we give them ... the curriculum is also very clear that pupils must not only be trained in only class work, but we also need to guide them in other areas such as Art and sports that may even be more profitable to them in future than the class grades (Teacher B, urban-based school).*

As a way of triangulating, focus group discussions with the pupils of Teacher E indicated that their teacher could always take them for independent learning sessions as well as involve them in self-reliance activities. This was further confirmed when I checked the school's weekly duty rota and I saw Teacher E being scheduled to engage the pupils in their extra co-curricular activities. One of the pupils during the focus group discussion for example narrated that:

*‘... yes on Friday this week we have subject club competitions and Teacher E is going to organize them for us ... we learn how to make arguments and it is also enjoyable ... and when we do some sports, some of us are very happy because they think they are going to become professional footballers and netballers in future...’ (Pupil, rural-based school).*

This implies that both teachers and pupils are step by step forgetting about the old teacher-centred curriculum to the move towards perfecting the new 2015 learner-centred curriculum, whose aim is to produce primary graduates that can reasonably think and contribute to the economic and social development of the country.

### Cross Case Analysis

Based on the evidence brought on board about how involvement in curriculum design influences teachers' effectiveness, the five teachers agree that their involvement stimulated their ownership of the curriculum requirements since they developed a feeling that they were the initiators of this curriculum although their involvement was at the

periphery. This explains why almost all of how their involvement influenced their teaching effectiveness, the issue of entitlement/ ownership of the curriculum is brought to bear. Important to note is that all teachers are in favour of this curriculum compared to the old one especially due to its emphasis on learner-centred as opposed teacher-centred approach of the old curriculum. The five teachers' teaching effectiveness is therefore influenced by their involvement in curriculum design in ways that make teachers assume ownership of curriculum requirements despite the fact that their involvement was indirect in the form of questionnaires and interviews from the curriculum developers.

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Teachers' involvement in curriculum design is expected to facilitate the process of implementing educational reforms as well as teachers' classroom practices. This is because curriculum is one of the major aspects of education since it sets plans, objectives and processes involved in educating learners and teachers. Involving and consequently understanding the design process therefore ensures that their instruction is aligned with the standards and expectations of learners.

In line with research question one of the current study, findings from teacher interviews and lesson observations contend that teachers' involvement in curriculum design ensures curriculum fitness for pupils simply because as teachers were requested to advise on curriculum design, they had to give a clear picture of the kind of pupils they have in their schools so as the developers could come up with a curriculum that did not appear so strange to the needs and abilities of the pupils. This finding agrees with Ndum *et al.* (2015) study in Nigeria that teachers are the ones in the field and know what and where a change especially in terms of curriculum is needed. However, Aherback, *et al.* (2018) argue that when it comes to planning and preparation for teaching, it is an integral part of the teaching and learning process that should not only be done at the curriculum design stage but instead should take place before, during and after the actual instruction.

The study findings also revealed that when teachers who were involved in curriculum design wanted to go and improve their knowledge about the 2015

curriculum through attending workshops, it was easier for them to ask for acceptable financial support from the school administrators since they (school administrators) already knew about these teachers' involvement in curriculum design. This indicates that their involvement simplified the acquisition of administrative support. This disagrees with the findings of Huizinga *et al.* (2014) which revealed that teachers in most cases are not supported to be involved in issues relating to curriculum designing and many of them have been reported to be lacking the necessary pedagogical-related knowledge as far as curriculum design is concerned.

There is also evidence in the study's results that teachers' involvement in curriculum design puts them in a position that keeps on identifying what is lacking especially within classrooms to have the curriculum successful and this promotes initiative to change where applicable, meaning that teachers develop ownership of change. Tembere's (2019) study conducted in the Philippine indirectly agrees with this finding by indicating that failure to involve teachers in curriculum design made them serve as slaves when it came to its implementation, which is an indication that they could not suggest any reasonable changes. In fact, according to a study by Neyenglosky (2018), 75% of teachers worldwide are not satisfied with the way curriculum components were designed.

Findings further portrayed that, teachers' involvement in the 2015 curriculum design gave them strong authority over their pupils since involvement was not for everyone in the school. They continued that because of that, pupils in their classrooms knew what to do, where to move and when to do so during the lessons. In other words, their involvement enabled them to gain pupil's confidence while engaging with them. This finding disagrees with the findings of Nodding (2012) who found out that even if teachers were engaged in curriculum development, there was still a need for them to be attentive to their learners to respond and deal with their needs appropriately. Besides, a study by Abudu *et al.* (2016) done in Ghana indicates how teachers were neglected and even when they were given a chance to engage in curriculum design, it

was shortened participation which could not adequately strengthen their authority over pupils.

Further analysis of findings revealed that teachers' involvement in curriculum design introduced them to the need to be creative especially in the organization of classrooms if the lessons are to achieve the curriculum's intended objectives. In their classroom for example learners sat facing each other in rows but with reasonable spaces where the teacher kept on passing through to observe their activities which was an indication of fostering creative space for learning. This finding agrees with Izuagba *et al.* (2018) that classroom spaces respond to educators' goals and facilitate the development of rigorous thoughts from the learners. The finding further agrees with Nabiryo (2021) who stated it clear that disorganized classrooms which are always noisy due to congestion fail to support collaboration of individual work among learners and thus negatively impact learning. This discussion is also supported by the fact that effective instruction entails communicating with learners, questioning and discussion as well as engaging them in learning in a suitable learning space (Danielson, 1996).

Lastly, findings revealed that teachers' involvement in the 2015 curriculum design introduced such teachers to new teaching approaches that were adopted and used in their daily teaching and learning processes in a way of benchmarking instructional practices. This finding agrees with Ngussa *et al.* (2017) study in Tanzania that there is always a lack of teacher preparedness to deal with the changes that may be necessary in the process of teaching and learning if not involved in the process of curriculum design. Besides, in Zimbabwe, 70% of teaching-learning innovations by teachers die early partly due to failure to engage teachers in the process of curriculum design (Chinyani, 2013).

In summary, the discussion of results for this study's first objective establishes how teachers never directly got involved in the process of curriculum design but simply provided some data which the curriculum developers could have used or not. Besides, the discussion also reveals that, although teachers were currently happy with the indirect involvement that was offered to them, it was not enough to provide vivid evidence that their exhibited

teaching effectiveness was adequately influenced by their involvement in curriculum design. As a result, active participation aimed at attaining certain professional competencies is needed if teachers' involvement in curriculum design is to adequately support their teaching effectiveness, although these also need to be accompanied by other stakeholders' involvement as well as teachers' ownership of curriculum aspects.

### CONCLUSIONS OF THE STUDY

From the findings, the study makes the following conclusions;

- Teachers' involvement in curriculum design moderately influences their teaching effectiveness because the ways in which their involvement influences their teaching effectiveness, simply renders them to assume ownership of the curriculum although these teachers never directly got involved in its actual design.
- There is a big gap between the actual curriculum developers and the teachers as evidenced by the contradictions between these two groups in their responses during data collection.
- Teachers simply advised the curriculum developers through interviews and questionnaires about the process of curriculum design, of which most teachers doubt if they were used or not.

### Study Recommendations

- I. Primary school teachers should have a positive attitude towards the 2015 curriculum and thus should assume ownership of the curriculum requirements.
- II. These teachers should be given a full mandate and active participation in all curriculum design activities such that the ownership is justified by their active involvement in its design processes.
- III. There is a need to strengthen the role of teachers in the process of curriculum design instead of simply involving them indirectly through questionnaires and interviews.

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