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### Attitudes of Members of Tanzania Teachers Union (TTU) Toward the Effectiveness of their Union in Improving their Welfare at Dodoma City Council

Radhi Chiku Juma<sup>1\*</sup> & Dr. Daniel Onyango, PhD<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> St. Augustine University of Tanzania, P. O. Box 307, Mwanza, Tanzania.

\* Author for Correspondence ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4469-625X>; Email: [Chikujuma728@gmail.com](mailto:Chikujuma728@gmail.com)

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**Keywords:**

*Trade Union,  
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Effectiveness.*

The purpose of this study was to assess the attitudes of teachers who are members of the Tanzania Teachers Union towards the effectiveness of their union in improving teachers' welfare at Dodoma City Council. The study employed a mixed research approach using convergent parallel design and was guided by the social capital theory of Bourdieu 1984. The population of the study comprised public secondary and primary school teachers who are members of the Tanzania Teachers Union and TTU administrators. The sample size of the study was 64 participants, whereby 50 participants were teachers who were members of the union, and 14 participants being TTU administrators. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect data. Quantitative data obtained was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 computer package and the findings were presented by the use of frequency tables. Qualitative data was coded, categorised, and analysed using a thematic approach, of which description was employed to present data. This study found that a high number of teachers do not have positive attitudes toward TTU. The researcher recommended that the union should schedule a meet the people tour and meet members so as to be in touch with the challenges that most teachers face in their working areas. The study recommends that TAMISEMI who is the teachers' employer should work in partnership with TTU so as to help them in improving teachers' welfare and improve the image of the union among its members. This to some extent will help members to have a positive attitude towards the union hence the posterity of the union and its members.

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## INTRODUCTION

Trade unions are voluntary associations of workers that aim to aggregate their bargaining power in order to help them to protect and improve their welfare which includes pay, working conditions, and other rights (Dromey, 2018). Workers are advised to voluntarily join trade unions to enhance their bargaining power. Trade unions must be formal and organised groups of workers with the aim of defending the rights of workers and improving all spheres of workers' life. Trade unions represent the interests of their members not only in the workplace but also in the broader society. Therefore, these trade unions are formed for the purpose of dealing with employee development and progression within the organisation. Aflcio (2016) says that, around the world, unions work together to confront issues that affect workers like employee rights, unemployment, precarious work conditions, poverty, and inequality.

In several African countries, teachers' unions exist and are among the oldest and the major organisations. Newly employed teachers are expected to join these unions willingly. The main purpose of these teachers' unions is almost the same in all countries. Shipota (2013) suggests that one of the primary functions of the teachers' union is to maintain or improve the employment conditions of

their members and to act as a representative of their members to the government.

According to ICTUR (2005), Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) is a trade union of teachers in Tanzania's landmass. It is operating under Section 48 (5) of the Employment and Labour Relations Act No. 06 of 2004 of the United Republic of Tanzania with Registration No. 004. The union comprises teachers from public schools both primary and secondary, tutors from teachers' training colleges, folk development colleges, and education officers in the ministry of education and vocational training. In spite of TTU being the organ dealing with teachers' welfare, there are also other organs like the Teachers Service Commission in Tanzania (TSC) and Tawala za Mikoa na Serikali za Mitaa (TAMISEMI) that deal with teachers' welfare. Onyango (2021) said that TSC and TAMISEMI deal with issues such as recruitment of teachers, disciplinary matters, promotions, defending teachers' rights and the like, all of which are to improve teachers' welfare.

In Dodoma region, the Tanzania teachers' Union (TTU) recognises that there are various problems that teachers are facing and complain about; for example, they have been complaining about delayed payments from their employers, housing, abuse of their rights in their workplaces, and workload. The situations may vary from one district to another

depending on the resources they have. The union plays an important role in settling teachers' problems, including asking the government to settle teachers' claims. But teachers still have a different attitude toward their union, which could be because of internal issues within the union.

Therefore, in deliberating the effectiveness of any teacher's Union in Tanzania, it is critical to focus on the attitude of members towards the union. If the union is perceived as being responsive towards its members, workers are more likely to think that they have something important to gain from the membership; and vice versa is true. It is from the above background that this study conceived to understand members' attitudes towards Tanzania teachers' union grounding on the effectiveness of TTU at Dodoma city council.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

In conducting this study, a thorough review of both theoretical and empirical literature review was done. Hence, to conduct this study, the social capital theory was adopted; its proponent was Bourdieu in 1984. Social capital can be defined as those tangible substances that count for most in the daily lives of people: namely goodwill, fellowship, sympathy, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make it a social unit (Kitungu, 2009). Social capital therefore refers to the benefits derived or can be obtained from civility.

The theory is instrumental since that; interactive relations create some values for individuals (members or workers) as they provide important resources which can be used for the accomplishment of desired outcomes. Bourdieu emphasises that social networks must be created and then competently maintained in order for the performer to utilise their resources effectively. From the literature review hereunder, the author reviews the social capital theory as applied in

different studies and critic other theories employed in the reviewed studies.

### Empirical Review

Attitude refers to a settled way of thinking or feeling about something (Webster, 2021). It can also mean the perceptions of someone on something. Members of the Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) have different attitudes towards their union due to the various issues within the union, including how the union conducts its mandate including responsibilities. Gibney et al. (2018) argue that individuals become aware of the actions of the union through experience, friends, media, etc. and form an overall attitude about the union. The union image is compared to the individual's self-attitude, which influences voting behaviour. This is supported by Hargreaves et al. (2007) as they analyse the impact of behaviours that are conducted not only in the union but also in the administrators, which leads members or teachers to have different attitudes.

Gibney et al. (2018) respondents also provide their attitudes regarding unions themselves as well as intentions for their future prospects and intentions of joining the union. However, the results of Osmond (2012) suggest that the union compactness decline in the private/public sector will continue due to many reasons including the wrong image of the union to members. The respondents gave their suggestions to both members and unions themselves that all labour unions must work together to create a positive image of labour and individual unions must work to maintain their own positive image.

Effectiveness means the capability of producing the desired result or the ability to produce desired outputs when an organ has something that is desired to be accomplished within a given time, and it achieves it, and then we say that the organ is effective. Oke (2009), on "the effectiveness and efficiency of trade unions in the labour market, aimed to analyse the situation of trade unions in the

labour market. Specifically, he targeted to elaborate on the capacity of trade unions and the underlying weaknesses and strengths of unions. He also explored the effectiveness and efficiency of unions, indicating how to destroy barriers in order to be more functional. He found that unions are the representatives of the workers to the government and in this case, the union was effective as they are representing their members as expected. Therefore, there is a very close link between representation and the existence and survival of the union. This study has some connections with my study since TTU is supposed to take the interests of teachers into account in order for the union to be effective.

Shulruf et al. (2010) conducted a study on perceptions of members' unions, conceptions, and misconceptions of organised employment. In their study, they identified implementers and barriers to unionisation among employees as well as identifying the effect of unionisation and collective bargaining on employers' and employees' attitudes toward workplace relations. The perceptions of workers on their trade union will create barriers for new members joining the union because workers have a tendency to share information. The findings of this study suggest that union membership is directly related to employees' perceptions of job safety, philosophy, and job satisfaction. Employees' perceptions of workplace relations were associated with union membership status. Employers' perceptions of the influence that unions yield in their businesses were associated with the type of interaction employers had with the trade unions. Suggestions for employees, employers, representatives, and policymakers were that they should view this trade union as the organ that will help them to increase their work status in the community (Chege, 2015). Hence, TTU should create a good conception about itself as a union so as to help in the creation of a good image for the members of the union and all other teachers who wish to be in the teacher's union.

Gjerde (2016) investigated the perceptions of teachers towards their union in terms of effectiveness through the activities that are done by the union. The study shows that most of the teachers in the Iowa district have good or positive perceptions towards their union as they believe that by joining the unions, their welfare will be improved and all their problems will be solved easily compared to those who are not in the union. Participants of this study gave suggestions that, in order for the union to reach its goals and vision, it must create a habit of communicating with its members effectively. Communication in the Union is what will make the TTU leaders up to date on what should be done to avoid the problems that teachers are facing and to improve the welfare of teachers easily.

Nchimbi (2018) on trade unions' performance in Tanzania, looking at the perceptions of school teachers' Unions in Singida municipality. Nchimbi explored the perceptions of teachers as members of trade unions on the effectiveness of the union that directly affects their performance at the working places. The results of this study show that members of TTU have positive attitudes toward the effectiveness of TTU as a workers' representation and do represent its members to their employers. Members of the Union had positive perceptions towards their union which is the result of the union performing its work effectively. But also, the respondents of his study were unhappy with the issues of communication and keeping the members up to date on what was really going on within the union. A union must have clear systems of communicating with its members so as to reduce the chances of them creating negative attitudes towards the union.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employed a mixed research approach in collecting, analysing data, and interpreting the results. Mixed research as an approach was used in collecting both qualitative and quantitative data,

integrating the two forms of data and using a distinct design that involves philosophical assumption and theoretical framework (John, 2011). The qualitative approach allowed the researcher to get deeper information and a clear understanding of respondents' perceptions of the effectiveness of TTU. A quantitative approach in this study was used in gathering numerical data. The study employed a convergent parallel research design, whereby in this design, quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analysed during the same phase of the research process in a parallel or a complementary manner (Cresswell & Pablo-Clark, 2011). The sample size of this study was 64, whereby 50 participants were teachers who are members of the union, and 14 participants were TTU administrators. The study employed both probability and non-probability sampling in the selection of the sample. The validity and reliability of the instruments were ensured through content validity and the test-retest method. The study was conducted in Dodoma City, which is found in the Dodoma region. Tanzania teachers' Union (TTU) recognises that there are

various problems that teachers are facing and complain about; for example, they have been complaining about: housing, abuse of their rights in their workplaces, and workload. The study employed primary data collection methods, whereby questionnaires and interview guides were employed to obtain information so as to accomplish the study objectives.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Teachers' Attitudes toward their Union

This study sought to determine the attitude of teachers towards their union in improving their welfare. In this case, teachers were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statements provided in a Likert scale format. The responses of teachers are summarised and presented in *Table 1* below. The scale is rated from the highest to the lowest degree of agreement in the following order: 5=Strongly Agree, 4= Agree, 3= undecided, 2= Disagree 1= Strongly Disagree.

**Table 1: Teachers' Attitudes toward their Union**

Statements	1	2	3	4	5
TTU fights for teachers' job security	19 (38.0%)	17 (34.0%)	2 (4.0%)	7 (14.0%)	5 (10.0%)
TTU is the members' representative	18 (36.0%)	17 (34.0%)	3 (6.0%)	5 (10.0%)	7 (14.0%)
TTU protects teachers' rights	20 (40.0%)	15 (30.0%)	5 (10.0%)	7 (14.0%)	3 (6.0%)
TTU is the teachers' disciplinary organ	8 (16.0%)	10 (20.0%)	5 (10.0%)	19 (38.0%)	8 (16.0%)
TTU is an organ for improving teachers' welfare	19 (38.0%)	17 (34.0%)	4 (8.0%)	7 (14.0%)	3 (6.0%)

**Source:** Field data (2021).

Table one above shows that the majority of the respondents who are members of the union do not have a positive image of their Union (Tanzania teachers union) as a high number of them disagreed with the statements provided as described below;

### *TTU is Teachers' Job Security*

In the data collected, the respondents were asked to give their suggestions concerning the union as the union itself is supposed to fight for the teacher's job security so as to measure its effectiveness in

improving the welfare of its members. The results obtained are indicated in *Table 1*.

From *Table 1*, the results show that out of a total of 50 respondents only 5 (10%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement that they believe or view the union as their job security, 7 respondents (14%) agreed with the statement concerning the union, 2 respondents remained undecided which is 4% of the total population. About 17 (34%) respondents disagreed with the statement that TTU guarantees job security to its members, while 19 respondents of the total population, which is 38%, strongly disagreed with the statement, so it is evident that a majority of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that TTU fights for teachers' job security.

This can be traced from Oke (2009), who states that most of the trade unions in the world are supposed to be their members' job security; they must protect members from any kind of harm like that by fighting against discrimination and help to ensure a healthy and safe working environment and make sure that all the members in the union are being secured health-wise.

On the same note, Khalfan et al. (2018) indicated that any trade union, especially teachers' trade unions have the responsibility of making sure that their members are in a safe place by ensuring job security both in the working areas and the place where they stay (school houses).

### ***Teachers/Members Representatives***

The respondents were also asked to give their suggestions by ranking this statement so that the researcher could measure the effectiveness of the union in improving members' welfare. TTU is supposed to represent its members in different things like governmental issues and to act as a bridge between them. From *Table 1*, the findings show that 7 (14%) respondents strongly agreed with the statement that TTU is the teachers' representative, those who agreed with the statement

were 5(10%), 3 (6%) of the respondents remained undecided, 17 (34%) participants agreed with the statement and those who strongly disagreed with the statement were 36%. In that manner, we see that majority of the participants strongly disagreed with the statement that TTU is doing enough the representing them or that they act as the bridge between them and the government. This has been supported by Butiye (2018) who says that although the union is doing their best in trying to act as members' representative, they do not do it satisfactorily. On the same view, Zammit et al. (2002) in their research 'The perception of trade unions by its members, found out that most trade unions do not have good relations with their members so they fail to understand what challenges their members are facing to solve them. This failure creates a negative attitude/perception of the members of their union.

### ***Teachers' Protection of their Rights***

The respondents were asked to indicate their view on the notion that TTU protects teachers' rights. TTU is supposed to protect the rights of its members as is one of its duties and responsibilities. *Table 1* indicates that 6.0% of the respondents strongly agreed that TTU is protecting their rights in their working places, and 14.0% of the respondents also agreed with the statement. From the study, it was found that the majority of the respondents strongly disagreed that the Tanzania Teachers Union (TTU) is protecting their rights. The union is supposed to protect its member's rights in any place that seems to be abused, as supported by Bakokor and Antwi (2020) in their research, where they found that the effectiveness of the union is a result of each side doing their responsibilities including protecting the interest of both, members and the organisation. The study participants' view shows that TTU does not protect members' rights accordingly.

This is also supported by Gibney et al. (2018), who found that for the good future of the union in the nation, the union must make sure that its members

can see a bright future with it so that they can be good ambassadors to the future generation of members joining it. Participants show that there is a huge gap between union administrators and their members to the extent that they fail to protect the rights of their members.

### ***Teachers' Disciplinary Organ***

One of the functions of TTU is to deal with teachers' discipline. The respondents were asked to give their views on the statement by rating statement. *Table 1* indicates that 16% of the participants strongly agreed with the statements that TTU is dealing with discipline matters effectively in their working places, and 38% of participants agreed with the statement too. Similarly, 10% of the participants remained neutral, 20% disagreed with the statement, and 16% participants strongly disagreed with the statement. According to participants' views, we see that majority of the respondents agreed that TTU is dealing with disciplinary issues of their members in their working places. Masoud (2018) shows that teachers union in Zanzibar play a big role in maintaining discipline among teachers at their working places. The union ensures that its members are disciplined at work. This can be traced from the social capital theory of Bourdieu (1984), where we see that the theory puts more emphasis on social interactions between workers in the organisation. They must maintain respect for each other and perform their activities in standard ways. TTU administrators are therefore doing well-concerning issues relating to disciplinary matters.

### ***TTU as Teachers' Organ for Improving their Welfare***

In this item, the researchers wanted to know the views of teachers who are members of the union on how TTU was effective in improving their welfare. The participants were given statements and asked to rate them, their responses are presented in *Table 1*. The table one indicates that 6% of the participants strongly agreed that TTU is effective in improving

their welfare, 14% also agreed with the statement, 8% remained undecided, 34% disagreed, and 38% strongly disagreed that TTU is an organ that helps teachers improve their welfare. According to the respondent's responses, we see that majority of them do not agree that their union plays any role in improving their welfare.

On the same point of view, Kingalu (2015) says that the welfare of trade union members is always improved by the union's effectiveness and commitment, but where the union is not performing their responsibilities effectively, this situation leads to the failure to improve members' welfare. These findings agreed with the study by Heystek and Lethoko (2001), where they found that the challenges faced by trade unions, like that of safety situations for teachers are to be solved by the union that teachers are aligned. Nchimbi (2018) in his research about trade union performance in Tanzania, says that many trade unions in Tanzania, especially TTU, do not fully carry out their responsibilities efficiently and effectively as expected because of the inability of many of the trade administrators bring their incompetence in the union and destroy the image of the union.

### ***Teachers Professional Development***

During the data collection, the respondents were asked to show and rate the extent to which they agree/disagree with the statement that Tanzania Teachers' Union is helping in teachers' professional development. The results obtained were as indicated in table one.

*Table 1* indicates that only 8% of the participants were in strong agreement with the statement that the union participates in their development as professionals; 14% also agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 42% of the respondents strongly disagreed with the statement and 28% disagreed with the statement that TTU contributes nothing to their professional development. From the views of the respondents, we see that majority of the

respondents who are members of the union do not agree that Tanzania Teachers' Union contributes to their professional development. Moeti-Lysson and Ongori (2011), on the relationships between members of the union and the organisation itself, found out that many of the unions do not have good or serious relations amongst themselves. This leads to the failure of the union to unite and organise on how to improve the professional development of its members. In the same vein, Mafisa (2017), in his research on 'the role of teacher unions in education with specific reference to South Africa', found out that teachers' unions have some roles to play in education of making sure that professional development of teachers is enhanced for the betterment of the education sector.

### ***Fair Treatment of their Members***

During the collection of data, respondents were supposed to give their opinion concerning the treatment they get from the administrators of TTU. They provided their views by ranking their choices, as shown in *Table 1*. *Table 1* indicates that 10% of the participants strongly agreed that Tanzania Teachers Union treats all their members equally, and 6% also agreed with the statement. However, 34% strongly disagreed with the statement that TTU treats its members equally and fairly, and a further 42% of the participants disagreed too with the statement. From the study, the majority of the respondents disagreed that TTU treats their members equally; therefore, going by this majority, TTU does not treat its members equally and fairly. In order for any trade union to be successful, it needs to be fair to all members so as to give them trust in their union. This would raise the spirits of those wishing to join the union to do so and be committed to their union.

Nchimbi (2018) supports this when he says that the performance of the trade union goes hand in hand with the treatment they provide to their members. If they treat all members equally, then the union would have no corruption or any ambiguity, but if the

union segregates some of their members, then the union would be considered ineffective in the service provisions, thus totally destroying the image or attitude of the members towards their union.

These findings differ from that of ETI (2010), where it was said that trade unions actively fight discrimination and help to promote equal opportunities at work. In every workplace, union representatives are well placed to recognise incidences of discrimination and on working with employers to ensure that anti-discrimination strategies are properly applied in their working places. This is probably what helps to keep workplaces more attractive to workers, improving staff retention, absenteeism, and productivity, as well as reducing management time spent addressing grievances.

The researcher found a different opinion on this matter as one of the interviewees said:

*In the Union, there is no one who is above the other, all of the members in the union are treated equally as all we are guided by the principles and rules. The treatments and services that all of the members in the union get are equal to all no one is above the rules (TTU administrator 9, September 2021).*

It is important for the union to treat all of its members equally so as to reduce the chances of different perceptions of members in the union occurring, something that reduces the effectiveness of the union and the trust of members in the union.

### **CONCLUSION**

The study concludes that TTU has not been effective in carrying out its various roles such as fighting for members' jobs security as per its mandate. This lack of effectiveness has made members develop a negative attitude towards the union.



**RECOMMENDATION**

The study recommends that for the union to be effective, TTU administrators should formulate some strategies that would help them to improve service provision to teachers so as to reduce negative attitudes by members towards the union. For example, they can conduct the meet-the-people tour and listen to the members' concerns and then implement strategies to resolve members' concerns.

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