

STATUS OF THE SCHOOL INSPECTION IN MONITORING EDUCATION IN TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

The implementations of Primary Education Development Plan(PEDP) that articulates the vision of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Tanzania primary education system is probably a most important pedagogical move which requires a lot of resources to realize. This paper examines the status of the school inspection in monitoring primary school education in central zone in Tanzania. To achieve this, field report as well as findings of researches in literature, were explored. It was found that, although there were quantitative gains in terms of pupils' enrolment, insufficient inspection was still adverse as a result schools suffered from educational quality control. To improve the situation in the country, the government should seriously consider the adequate provision of financial resources and that school inspectors should be capacitated to manage the imposed changes.

Key words: Primary Education Development Program (PEDP), School Inspection, Quality Education.

1. Introduction

The Tanzania Development Vision 2025 prescribes the need for highly revolutionized teaching, purposeful learning, good governance and management of education. These huge behaviour changes in the education system can only be achieved through having an efficient and well versed quality assurance system.

School inspection is a vital means of monitoring the delivery of quality education, adherence to set policy laws and regulations. The department is empowered by a Parliamentary Act to oversee the implementation of the 1995 Educational and Training Policy (ETP) and currently the new ETP 2014. In doing so, it monitors and evaluates the provision of quality educational services in line with the laid down government educational standards, procedures and guidelines. It provides feedback to education stake holders on the status of implementation of the curriculum in basic education, oversee and recommend good governance practice in Pre Primary, Primary, Secondary Schools and teachers colleges both public and private.

Inspection as a component of the school system is essentially a quality control mechanism for ensuring standards in schools and the education they provide, (Galabawa, et al., 2000). Teaching in the schools is significantly affected by a powerful inspectorate that is mandated to ensure and maintain quality in resource allocation, curriculum delivery, and educational standards. (Kabunduguru, 2013), adds that over the years, inspection has been an activity which is geared towards the improvement of the quality of education in schools.

2. The Roles of School Inspectors

The main responsibilities of school inspectors are to supervise schools in order to maintain set standards for quality education, (URT, 2000). So School inspection is vital as a means of monitoring the delivery of quality education, adhering to the stipulated curriculum, setting standards and ensuring efficiency and quality in education. According to (National Audit Office, 2008), the purpose of the school inspection is to monitor the delivery of education and the adherence to the stipulated curriculum including lesson preparation and the standards set, in order to safeguard good quality in education. In order for the inspectors to achieve this, they should carry out supervisory visits to improve the quality of teaching in schools as one of their specific function.

Inspectors also judge whether or not the school has improved since the last inspectors evaluation and report on the quality of teaching in relation to the prepared documents , how well pupils learn, how well teachers assess pupils' work, and how they use the assessment of pupils' work to plan and set targets for meeting the needs of individual pupils and groups (Kabunduguru, 2013). This implies that inspection is essential for sustaining teaching and learning effectiveness, and maintenance of quality standards in the schools.

While the aim of inspection is to raise standards, the roles of inspectors differ in some of the countries. As noted by (OFSTED, 2009), in England they work as independent external evaluators, they do not have regulatory or executive functions. OFSTED adds that, their duties differ from those of inspectors in France, who carry out performance assessments of all teachers,

or in the Netherlands, whose inspectors are held responsible for school improvement. Thus, inspections in the Netherlands are expected to lead, both directly and indirectly, to an improvement in the quality of education provided. This is because the Netherlands' inspectorate follows up each school annually to check on progress and, if necessary, to intervene to ensure improvement.

3. Inspection in Tanzania's Context

In Tanzania, The MoEVT, through the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) developed two programs namely the Primary Education Development Program (PEDP), which focused on expanding school access by increasing enrolment and retention, increase of enrolment of school age children, improve equity and quality of primary education, capacity building, strengthen institutional arrangement and addressing cross cutting issues. Through this program, a transition rate of 67.4% from primary schools to secondary schools was attained in 2006. The transition rate necessitated the introduction of the second program namely the Secondary Education Development Program (SEDP) in 2004. As a result of these two programs, the number of secondary school students increased from 781 in 1998 to 4,675 in 2014 which in a increase of 489%.

Due to this great increase in enrolment the two programmes, namely PEDP and SEDP could not fulfill some of its objectives so as to attain the quality of education needed. School Inspectors were supposed to inspect schools and provide reports to education stake holders but it had various challenges which hampered them to fulfill its' objectives. For example, while it was earmarked that the School Inspectorate Department should inspect 50% of the institutions, it

could only inspect 34% of all primary schools and 26.4% of the secondary schools in the country (BEST, 2003-2007)

Table 1: The Status of School Inspections in 2012 and 2013.

Institution/ Category	No of Institution Available	2012/2013		
		No of institutions Targeted for Inspection	Actual Institution Inspected	%
Pre Primary Streams	14283	6166	2026	32.9
Primary Schools	16442	7165	2682	37.4
Special Education School/Unity	242	87	11	12.6
Secondary Schools	4576	1815	833	45.9

Source: URT- BEST 2012/2013

It is evident from this data that the number of schools targeted for inspection is below the 50% norm and thus this, has implications to quality teaching and learning.

4. The Challenges

4.1 Inadequate Budget

The inspectorate department has a challenge of acute budgetary shortages. As it was observed that many schools go uninspected for years, the inspectorate has been sending out much fewer

inspectors than planned every year. Budgetary constraints have always been cited to blame as it has dwarfed school inspection. It was further revealed that it is practically difficult for school inspectors to ensure monitoring quality of secondary education because they were not systematically co-ordinated in inspecting schools because of insufficient funds.

Mhando (2006), in conformity with this finding, asserts that resource shortages have often dwarfed the roles of inspectorate departments in many countries across the world. This implies that, school inspectors suffered a lot without been provided with enough funds in order to implement their daily activities and they have been forgotten. For example the shortage of offices, especially in rural areas, has been frustrated by the lack of essential facilities, such as office accommodation, clerical services and support staff for school inspectors, equipment, and stationery. Perennial shortage of stationery and inadequate secretarial services also make it difficult for the inspectors to prepare meaningful reports.

This is contrary to the inspection standard recommended by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) that schools should be inspected at least once a year and every school inspector is expected to inspect 30 schools per financial year (Education Sector Development Programme - ESDP, 2002).

Table 2: Status of Funds in the School Inspectorate Department 2009-2014

Year	Budget	Amount Allocated For The Department	Amount Allocated For School Inspection
2009/10	6,911,999,820.00	3,707,145,862.12	1,221,994,108.56
2010/11	4,170,885,000.00	973,735,043.84	673,058,495.00

2011/12	6,270,837,656.00	3,860,995,103.00	106,982,000.00
2012/13	4,599,756,400.00	3,134,703,433.00	339,673,500.00

Source: School Inspectorate Reports (2014)

The above table indicates, in the period between 2009/2010 to 2012/2013 the allocation of Other Charges (OC). The data clearly show that, amount of funds allocated for school inspection has been declining gradually through the years.

4.2 Lack of adequate Transport

Effective inspection requires adequate vehicles that will take school inspectors to and from schools. In Tanzania school inspectors are often faced with the problem of lack of transport, especially for those inspectors deployed in rural areas. This problem is aggravated by the fact that some schools are located in areas that are very remote to be reached by school inspectors. Further to this, there is a lack of sufficient funds, especially traveling and subsistence allowances, provided to inspectors to meet expenses associated with transport and accommodation. The problem of lack of transport had affected regular and efficient inspection of schools in different parts of the country (Mmbando, 2010).

4.3 Shortage of School Inspectors

The increasing number of primary schools under PEDP I (2002 – 2007), PEDP II (2007 – 2011) and PEDP III (2012-2016) is a challenge to the few number of school inspectors. Most of the primary schools have been established and registered under this program without matching with increase of school inspectors. For this reason, inspectors are always overwhelmed by the many

schools. As a result, many schools go through out years uninspected. These findings are in line with the ministry's statistics (MoVET, 2014), which prove that school inspectorate department is under-resourced and this has an implication on school visits, for instance, currently there is shortage of 619 school inspectors in Tanzania.

4.4 Lack of Authority to Enforce Inspectorate Recommendations

Another challenge facing the schools inspectorate department is that of lack of authority. The department does not have the authority to enforce the advices they give after inspection. Even if the school does not act to implement the inspectors' recommendations, the inspectorate cannot hold them accountable. They have to wait for the Ministry to act. This usually takes years to happen, if it does. It was, for instance, cited that sometimes inspectors pile new recommendations over a heap of many past un-worked upon recommendations. Such piles of recommendations heaped over years make some teachers think the inspectorate is wasting time and finance.

The worthlessness of the inspectorate bears its roots in the legislation that established it. According to the Education Act No.25 of 1978 section 42, the duties of the inspectorate are limited to inspection and provision of feedback to managers, agencies and administrators at district, regional and ministry levels. This is in line with inspection guidelines (URT, 2006) which states that school inspectors inspect, educate, and advice owners, managers, school boards, committees and teachers on good implementation of school's development plans.

4.5 Centralization of School Inspection

School inspection is currently at zonal level. One zonal office is responsible for inspection in the whole zone, which usually comprises of three to five regions. This adds another burden to

inspectors. They have to leave offices for weeks, for instance, to inspect schools throughout the zone. Inspection would have been much easier if the inspectorate offices were decentralized to the district level. Both inspection and consultation by schools would have been easier. Similarly, follow up visits to monitor the implementation of recommendations would have been possible. Some of school inspectors in Singida argued that zonal inspectorate offices were too far and that schools inspections is done over vast areas.

The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (2011), conformity with this finding, asserts that, to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the inspectorate department, decentralization measures were taken. This ended up in dividing the country into eleven zone inspectorate offices namely; Central zone, Eastern zone, Western zone, Western- Lake Zone, Highlands zone, Highland- southern zone, North- eastern zone, North- western zone, Southern zone, Lake Zone and Dar es Salaam zone. All these zones are responsible to the Commissioner for education at the ministry of education and vocational training. Each zone has regional and district offices with inspectors performing their duties according to the guideline of the ministry.

4. 6 Inadequate Support from Teachers

This is when inspectors lack cooperation from teachers during inspection. For example some teachers do not like inspection. When inspectors come to their schools, teachers do not give cooperation which hinders inspectors from conducting thorough and successful inspection. This makes inspectors write weak reports. Poor report writing also emanate from school supervisors like head teachers, headmasters and college principals.

4.7 Lack of Experience for Some of Inspectors

There is a problem of incompetence of some of school inspectors. Findings suggest that some inspectors have never attended any seminar or training on how to conduct the inspection since their employment. As a result, they inspect aspects they don't know and can thus not make workable suggestions. Their inspection also is not far reaching. It is limited to few easy aspects like teacher attendance in class and school environment.

Dean, (1995) reported that, there was a tendency for inspectors to provide inappropriate pieces of advice to teachers due to lack of expertise involved in the field. On his part, Lillis (1990) remarked that inspectors were often taken from schools and thrust into the deep end of inspection with little or no introduction or training on key issues and procedures.

In the context of reforms and expansion taking place within and outside the education system, the school inspector of the 21st century is facing challenges to deliver quality assurance services in an increasing more demanding and complex content and scope. In view of this, school inspectors must continuously search for knowledge so as to assist schools to reach higher standards of excellence to meet the diverse needs of the individual learner (MoEVT, 2014). Training for inspectors will keep them abreast of developments in education, to improve their professional skills, and to enjoy the respect and esteem of the teaching profession are highly lacking. Where and when school inspectors are untrained for the job, they are unable to monitor and to evaluate educational programs effectively.

5. Suggested Solutions

The main goal of school inspection is to maintain good education standards. Nevertheless, the inspectors face a lot of challenges which need urgent solutions which include:-

5.1 Allocate Adequate Funds for Inspectorate

The sustainable funding for the inspectorate should be a major concern. The government should provide enough funds to the inspectorate to empower them towards effective execute of their duties.

5.2 Ensure Frequent Inspection

Inspection should be frequent to both urban and rural schools: there is a tendency of visiting schools in urban schools and paying either fewer or no visits for school in rural areas in a year. The inspectorate should recognise that the most marginalised schools are in rural areas. These schools therefore, deserve the most attention.

5.3 Training of Inspectors

Inspectors should update their knowledge through seminars and other trainings so as to be competent. This is because it was learned that some inspectors fail to demonstrate the modes of teaching they suggest.

5.4 Decentralisation of the inspectorate department to the district level

The government through the ministry of education and vocational training should decentralise the inspectorate so that it operates from the district level. This will reduce the burden to inspectors, but also will reduce transport costs. Important however, is that inspection will be more frequent and follow-up for the inspectorates' recommendations to school will be easier.

5.5 Provision of Authority to Enforce its Recommendations

This will increase accountability of school heads and teachers in general. Similarly, such powers will reduce hierarchies in decision making. Inspectors will take steps upon recognition that their past recommendations have not been considered by a school. This will produce positive, but also quick results unlike now when all powers are vested within the ministry.

6. Conclusion

The government of Tanzania recognizes the central role of quality education in its, social, economic and cultural development. The Education for Self Reliance (1967) document emphasized the need for education which will enable learners to practice in the field what they have learned in the classrooms. The 1978 Education Act No. 25 which was amended by Education Act No.10 of 1995 emphasized amongst others, the roles to be played by each education player including the School Inspectors. However, this paper presents factors affecting the effectiveness of school inspection in Tanzania. The paper suggested solutions to improve school inspection.

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