

Effectiveness of the Foundation for Tomorrow Programme on Improving Teaching in Primary Schools in Meru District

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Abstract

This study was conducted to evaluate the Effectiveness of the Foundation for Tomorrow Program on Improving Teaching and learning strategies in Primary Schools in Meru District, Arusha, Tanzania. TFFT is a non-governmental organization originated from the United States of America (USA) with the aim of providing teachers with in-service training in order to improve teaching and learning strategies. The study was guided by context, input, reaction and outcome (CIRO) evaluation model. The current study evaluated one objective namely; improving teaching and learning process in primary schools in Meru District. The study adopted convergent design to collect qualitative and quantitative data. The target population included 5 Head teachers, 160 primary teachers, 500 primary pupils, 1 project implementers and 1 primary district education officer in Meru District which gave a total number of 667 populations. Stratified, purposeful and simple random sampling procedures were used to select the study sample which consisted of 4 primary schools 4 head teachers, 48 teachers, 100 standard seven pupils, 1 project facilitator and 1 district primary education officer making a total number of 158 samples. Questionnaires, interview guides and document analysis guides were used for data collection. Quantitative data was analyzed in tables and charts. One way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to test the study hypothesis at the significance level of 0.05. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically and presented in words being supported by direct quotations. The study found out that the project has greatly contributed to the improvement of teaching in primary schools through training teachers on the participatory methods of teaching. Results from hypothesis testing indicated that the programme is perceived to be of much importance by degree holders ($P=0.032$). The study therefore recommended the extension of the programme to other districts in Arusha region and thereafter to the other regions.

Keywords: Evaluation, effectiveness, teaching strategies, Programme

1. Introduction

Education has played a paramount role in all modern sectors in the world as the development of science and technology needs education (Ivanov&Ivanova, 2017). This is attributed to the fact that any educated individual should be qualified adequately to perform various tasks effectively due to the skills gained through education. Thus, makes a role of education to become an important for services in all sectors in life. Education is an important tool that is applied in the contemporary world to succeed, as it mitigates the challenges, which are faced in life. It is important for the development of individuals as well as the development of the society in any given environment (Gezahegn, 2007). The knowledge and various skills gained through education process enable individuals' potential to be optimally utilized owing to training of the human mind. This opens doors of opportunities, which enables individual to achieve better prospects in career growth (Musset &Kurekova, 2018).

Tanzania as other countries in the world has also prioritized the education as the key of all sectors (Ouma et al, 2017). The sector has been considered as a priority due to the importance of education to both national and personal development (Shetstakova et al, 2017). By understanding the importance of education to both personal and national development, several initiatives have been undertaken by the government of Tanzania to ensure the provision of quality education to the citizens. These initiatives include; establishment and implementation of primary and secondary education development programs and implementation of the education and training policy of 2014, which among other things has declared the provision of fee free basic education (URT, 2005). Along with other effects, the introduction of this policy has resulted into an increase of enrolment rates in both primary and secondary schools (Yusuph, 2019). This is a good achievement towards ensuring access to primary education in Tanzania whereas almost every school-aged child is registered for primary education (URT, 2014).

As the country is achieving the objective of ensuring access to basic education to its citizens, the issue of whether the education offered in primary schools has the desired quality is still a point of discussion among education stakeholders and scholars (Mosha, 2018). Some scholars have criticized the primary education curriculum that it focuses more on imparting content knowledge to the pupils rather than developing skills and competences to apply the leaned knowledge. These

critiques have led to the paradigm shift from content based to competence-based curriculum (Nyoni, 2018). In the year 2015, the Ministry of Education through the Institute of Education (TIE) initiated the curriculum review process. The curriculum was reviewed to meet the demands of the Education Act of 1978, education and training policy of 2014 and the Tanzania development vision 2025 (URT, 2020). The main purpose of reviewing the curriculum and making it competence based was to ensure that the primary school education produces competent individuals who can use the skills acquired in schools to solve the day-to-day problems. One of the national goals of education is to produce competent individuals with skills, knowledge and attitudes and who are self-reliant (URT, 2014).

In order to achieve the purposes of shifting from content-based curriculum to competence-based curriculum there is need to have quality teachers as curriculum implementers with various skills needed to implement competency-based curriculum effectively (URT, 2014). The skills required are assessment and evaluation skills, classroom instruction skills, counseling and guidance skills, rewarding and motivation skills and participatory teaching and learning skills among others. The skills should be obtained in Teachers Training Colleges and Universities. Thus, in Tanzania teachers are trained in either Teacher Education Colleges or higher education institutions in both government and private colleges. Teachers' education colleges provide non-degree teacher education programmes while universities provide non-degree, degree and postgraduate programmes in teacher education (URT, 1995).

The Foundation for tomorrow (TFFT) is one of the programmes being conducted by non-governmental organizations focusing on improving the teaching and learning strategies of teachers in primary schools in Arusha region. It originated from the United States of America that is registered with a US 501(c) (3) and it is non-profit organization that provides teachers with training. In Tanzania, The Foundation for Tomorrow (TFFT) in-service Teachers training program started in Meru District in Arusha. The teacher-training project started in 2010 with Meru District Council and then later in 2018 expanded to other districts Arusha City and Arusha District Council. TFFT recognizes that teachers are very important in education sectors and without an investment in teachers, we are failing our children. Teachers are the most significant determinant of student success both inside and outside of the classroom. TFFT's Teacher

Training Program works to ensure schools are better placed to provide quality instruction to learners. TFFT seeks to improve the quality in schools by training excellent educators, providing access to quality resources, and training of local partners and school management teams to ensure widespread sustainable impact. The program aims at providing teachers with pedagogical training, enhancing head teachers managerial skills and cooperates with the schools to create conducive environment for the students to learn and teachers to facilitate teaching instructions.

1.1 Purpose of Evaluation

The government of Tanzania aspires to build the nation with educated individuals having competencies and skills to solve the day-to-day problems (URT, 2014). Therefore, there is a need for the government of Tanzania to have quality schools. The schools needs quality teachers as the curriculum implementer with various skills needed to implement competency-based curriculum effectively (URT, 2014). The skills should be obtained in Teachers Training Colleges and Universities. Teachers' education colleges provide non-degree teacher education programmes while universities provide non-degree, degree and postgraduate programmes in teacher education (URT, 1995).

However, the aspect of quality of education offered in these schools remains a problem (Mosha, 2018). Some teachers in Meru district and other places in the country still use the ordinary methods of content based teaching, (Kapinga, 2017). In responding to these challenges, the foundation for tomorrow (TFFT) in-service teachers program is being implemented in primary and secondary schools in Meru district and other districts of Arusha region. The program aims at providing teachers with pedagogical training, enhancing head teachers managerial skills and providing teaching and learning resources. Since it was started, no evaluation has been done. Therefore, purpose of this study was to conduct a formative evaluation of the implementation of TFFT project in primary schools in Meru district in order to find whether its objectives have been achieved.

1.2 Evaluation Question

How has the TFFT in-service teacher-training program improved teachers teaching and learning strategies in primary schools in Meru district?

1.3 Hypotheses of the Evaluation

There is a statistical significant difference in the perceptions means scores of certificate, diploma, degree and masters teachers on the importance of improving teaching and learning strategies training by the TFFTprogramme.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This study provides useful information to the program managers on how to improve its implementation in Meru district. The study determined the extent to which the programme improves teachers' teaching and learning strategies. This information should enable programme managers to determine whether the needs of the teachers are being met by the project and thus find out discrepancies and corrective measures. The evaluation study also determined whether the program equips teachers with appropriate pedagogical skills needed to implement the contemporary curriculum. This information should help program implementers to reflect on how the program is meeting the goals and thus improve its implementation. In addition to that this evaluation study contributed to the field of knowledge for those readers who passed through this study.

1.5 Evaluation Model

This study was anchored on the CIRO evaluation model. This is an evaluation model used to determine the effectiveness of training courses developed by Warr, Bird and Rackham in 1970. The name CIRO is an acronym for the suggested four levels of evaluation in this model. These levels are context, inputs, reactions and outcomes. Context evaluation is concerned about the environment in which the project is to take place. Needs assessment is conducted at this stage to determine whether the project is needed in the society. In the current study, the evaluator determined which training needs primary school teachers in Meru district require. Collecting data at this stage enable the evaluator to determine the suitability of the project to the target population. Evaluative data in this stage also enable the evaluator to find whether the project is suitable and it meets the needs of teachers in Meru district.

Inputs evaluation is conducted to determine whether all the necessary resources needed to effectively implement the project are available. In the current study, the evaluator was interested in determining whether physical, financial and human resources were available for the program

to conduct its activities effectively. The evaluator determined whether teacher trainers were available to offer training to teachers for improving the classroom instructions in primary schools in Meru district. Additionally, the evaluator assessed the extent to which the programme managers set an adequate budget to facilitate its activities in Meru district. **Reaction** evaluation is concerned with determining the feelings and attitudes of the participants about the project being implemented. In this study, the evaluator assessed the attitudes and feelings of teachers about TFFT program. Evaluative data at this stage enabled the evaluator to determine from the teachers whether the project was relevant, the methods used were appropriate and whether the project had benefits to their teaching effectiveness. **Outcome** evaluation is the final stage of CIRO evaluation model. This is conducted to determine whether the project objectives have been well achieved. The CIRO is an evaluation model used to determine the effectiveness of training courses. This model helps to monitor context, inputs, reaction and outcome of evaluation. Since this current study is concerned with training, the CIRO evaluation model is directly used. It helped the evaluator to see if there were the needs assessment and situational analysis for conducting this project of in-service teachers training in Meru district. The mode used to help evaluator to assess how input used to create a proper implementation of the training. The evaluator evaluates the feelings of the participants about training that ended to the outcomes. Therefore, the CIRO evaluation model were used in this study because it help to evaluate all elements in the training courses such as the teachers who needs training, resources which used in the training, the whole process of training and the feedback of the teachers after training.

CIRO is an evaluation model used to determine the effectiveness of training courses. This model helps to monitor context, inputs, reaction and outcome of evaluation. Since this current study is concerned with training, the CIRO evaluation model is directly used. It helped the evaluator to carry out if there were the needs assessment and situational analysis in conducting the project of in-service teachers training in Meru district. The model was used to help evaluator to assess how input was used to create a proper implementation of the training. The evaluator assessed the feelings of the participants about training that ended in the outcomes. Therefore, the CIRO evaluation model was used in this study because it helped to evaluate all elements in the training courses such as the teachers who need training, resources which were used in the training, the whole process of training and the feedback of the teachers after training.

2. Literature Review

In the Philippines, a study was conducted by Cardino & Ortega (2020). The aim of their study was to describe the influence of learning styles and teaching strategies on academic performance in Laguna. Descriptive correlation design was employed whereby data was collected from 277 respondents through questionnaires. The findings revealed that the use of cooperative learning, inductive approach, deductive approach and integrative approach were found to positively influence the learning among students. The study therefore, recommended for teachers to undergo various training and workshops for updating their pedagogical skills. Having knowledge on different methods of teaching enabled teachers use appropriate methods as recommended to enhance the performance of their learners. However, the study has not given details on how well teachers are equipped with such skills therefore, leaves a gap for the current study to be conducted.

Another study was conducted by Mantra (2017) who examined the effectiveness of promoting primary school teachers' competences through dynamic interactive workshops and partnership in Bali, Indonesia. This was an experimental study whereby data were collected from teachers before and after undergoing the training. The findings found out that dynamic interactive workshops are a very effective strategy towards improving the primary school teachers' teaching competence. The study therefore recommended for primary school teachers to be continually developed to ensure that they are equipped with the required knowledge and skills needed for them to be effective teachers. Though the study has shown the importance of workshops on equipping primary school teachers with skills and knowledge required for them to be effective teachers, the study has not provided evaluative data to indicate the extent to which such projects are implemented in primary schools.

In the United Kingdom (UK) Seaton (2018) conducted a study to evaluate the implementation of growth mindset program in Aberdeen shire council teachers in-service program. This program was designed to change teachers' mindsets on the teaching profession. This was a quasi-experimental study involving 54 teachers whereby data were collected before and after the implementation of the program. The evaluation results indicated an increase in teachers' knowledge and confidence in the teaching profession. Therefore, teachers' engagement in in-

service training was recommended for changing teachers' mindset and practice. Though the study has indicated a positive relationship between teachers' participation in in-service training programs and their teaching competence, the study has not indicate how the program perform its activities for changing teachers mindset and practice.

In Tanzanian context, Mayala (2017) assessed the contribution of primary education development program to access and quality of primary education in Arusha city. The study employed a qualitative approach whereby data were collected from 236 respondents from eight primary schools in Arusha city through interview, questionnaires, observation and documentary review. The finding found that the program had positive impacts included the sufficient numbers of qualified teachers and improvement of academic performance. The study has shown a positive impact of the program to the quality of education in the city. However, it was limited to the number of qualified teachers but did not provide evidence to indicate the extent to which these teachers are equipped with knowledge and skills required for them to effectively implement competence based teaching and learning.

The reviewed empirical studies show the importance of teachers to be equipped with pedagogical and content knowledge for them to use effective teaching strategies. However, most teachers are lacking some skills as long as they were not provided with some essential skills making them to be ineffective teachers. Literature also suggests that effective teaching and learning is expected to take place in conducive learning environment. However, no study has been conducted to evaluate the existence of such necessary components in primary schools in Meru district. Nevertheless, since its implementation, no study has been conducted to determine the extent to which TFFT is achieving these objectives. Therefore, this study was conducted to evaluate the implementation of TFFT program in primary schools in Meru district.

3. Research Methodology

This evaluation study was working with convergent design under mixed methods paradigm. This was appropriate to this study because it matches the strengths of a single design and overcome the weaknesses. The target population of this current study included 5 primary schools, 160 primary school teachers, 500 primary school pupils, 5 head teachers and 1 district primary education officer which gave a total number of 672 populations. Stratified, purposeful and simple

random sampling procedures were used to select the study sample which consisted of 4 primary school 4 head teachers, 48 teachers, 100 standard seven pupils, 1 project facilitator and 1 district primary education officer making a total number of 158 samples. Instruments used for data collection included questionnaires; interview guides and document analysis guides. The instruments were piloted in one school among the five primary schools in Meru district, which have experienced the activities of The Foundation for Tomorrow in-service teachers training. The school involved in the pilot study was not involved in the sample.

The validity and reliability of the research instruments were carefully determined by the researcher and the experts. In determining the validity of Questionnaires, Interview guide, and document analysis guide the evaluator consulted experts in Mwenge Catholic University to determine the relevance of the phrasing, language ambiguity and arrangement of the items. This ensured content validity of the instruments. In addition, it facilitated the necessary revision and modification of the research instrument thereby enhancing validity. To test the internal consistency or reliability of the questionnaires, Cronbach-alpha was used for Likert scale items that are within pupils and teachers questionnaires.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the collected data. Quantitative data were analyzed using mean scores, percentages and frequencies and the hypothesis was tested using ANOVA. Thematic analysis on the other hand was used to analyze qualitative data.

4. Findings

The study aimed at finding out the extent to which the project has improved primary school teachers' teaching strategies in the district. In their questionnaire, teachers were provided with ten statements indicating teaching strategies and requested to either agree or disagree on each. This was a five-point scale whereby one stands for strongly disagrees and 5 represented strongly agree whereas 3 was the neutral point. Then after, the mean score for each statement was calculated and interpretation based on the calculated means. The mean score above 3 indicates that the project has improved the specific aspect and mean score below 3 indicates that the project has not improved the particular aspect. If the mean score is exactly three, it implies that teachers have no

opinion on whether the project as improved or not improved the particular aspect. The analysis of the responses and mean scores has been presented in table 1.

Table 1. Teachers’ Response on the Extent the Project has Improved Teaching Strategies

Statements	SD%	D%	U%	A%	SA%	Mean score
i. The TFFT project has trained teachers participatory approaches of teaching	0	0	0	16.7	83.3	4.83
ii. The TFFT project has equipped teachers at this school with higher knowledge of assessing pupils understanding.	0	0	0	16.7	83.3	4.83
iii. Teachers have been trained how to use different teaching aids by the TFFT project.	0	0	0	14.3	85.7	4.86
iv. The project has trained teachers on different methods of classroom management	7.1	0	0	16.7	76.2	4.55
v. The TFFT project did not train teachers on how to assess pupil understanding during teaching and learning process.	85.7	11.9	0	0	2.4	4.79
vi. Teachers trained how to apply non-participatory approaches in teaching and learning process.	81	11.9	2.4	2.4	2.4	4.67
vii. The seminar was conducted by using participatory approaches	7.1	0	2.4	19	71.4	4.48
viii. Teachers at this school did not use different teaching aids in the process of teaching	76.2	16.7	7.1	0	0	4.69
ix. All teachers in this school participated in the seminar.	2.4	9.5	78.6	4.8	4.8	3
x. The TFFT project award all participants a certificate after completing the seminar.	0	0	0	47.6	52.4	4.52
Average mean score						4.52

Source Field Data (2021)

Data in table 1 show that the mean score for teachers on the statement “teachers have been trained how to use different teaching aids” was 4.86. This implies that majority of the teachers strongly agreed that they are being trained on how to use different teaching aids. This mean score

also suggest that the TFFT project has succeeded in providing teachers with skills and knowledge on how to use teaching aids in their lessons. Equipping teachers with knowledge and skills on using teaching aids makes their lessons to be learner centered and hence students are likely to understand the taught concepts in detail. Alshatri et al (2019) who argued that the application of teaching aids is an effective means towards enhancing understanding of the taught concepts also support this.

Results in table 1 also show that the mean score of teachers on the statement “the project has trained teachers on participatory approaches of teaching” was 4.83. This implies that most of the teachers strongly agreed to be trained by the project on participatory methods of teaching. The mean score is high indicating that the project does well on this aspect. Providing teachers with skills and strategies on participatory teaching methods makes the teaching process to be less tiresome and improves students learning of what is being taught. Equipping teachers with participatory methods of teaching improves the teaching process by shifting from the traditional view of the teaching process whereby a teacher was seen as the sole source of knowledge into engagement of students. Engaging students in the learning process enhancing understanding as opposed to memorization of facts when teachers use the traditional teacher centered teaching as supported by Nyoni (2018) who saw the application of teacher centered teaching as one of the reasons for the observed poor mastery of basic skills (counting, reading and writing) among primary school pupils in Tanzania.

The same mean score (4.83) was observed from teachers on the statement “the project has equipped teachers with knowledge and skills on assessing students understanding”. This also implies that majority of the teachers strongly agreed to be provided with training on how to assess their students by the project. Having this high mean score, it is an indication that the TFFT project has succeeded in training many teachers in Meru district on assessment techniques. It is important for teachers to be skilled on assessing students’ achievement for them to be able to make meaningful decisions as suggested by Ayvaz-Tuncel et al (2018) who recommended teachers to attend in-service training so as to update their pedagogical and assessment knowledge. It is important for teachers to be updated on assessment strategies so as to enable them to make

use of effective strategies as well as being in a position of recognizing inappropriate assessment methods (Kitula & Koda, 2018).

Generally, the mean scores across most of the statements were higher than 3 meaning that teachers agreed on most of the aspects related to the extent to which the project has improved their teaching strategies. The average mean score for all the ten statements was 4.52 which implies that teachers had a positive view on whether the project has improved the teaching and learning process. Based on the CIRO evaluation model, it can be inferred that the reactions of teachers on whether the project has equipped them with pedagogical skills were positive. Positive reactions imply that teachers enjoy being trained and the project is seemed to be responding to the needs of teachers. During interview with heads of schools and the District primary Education Office, their responses indicated that the project has improved the teaching in primary schools through equipping teachers with the necessary and appropriate teaching methods.

During interviews with the head of schools and the district education officer, their verbal responses generally showed acceptance of the programme towards improving the teaching and learning in primary schools in Meru district. For instance, a head teacher from school “1” had the following to say;

Teaching and learning strategies have been improved by the TFFT project by providing teachers different workshops to manage larger classes as well as small classes in the process of teaching and learning. It helps teachers to use effective teaching aids in order to raise pupils understanding. TFFT also train teachers on classroom management as well as assessment of student understanding (HOS1, personal interview June, 14th 2021).

Equipping teachers with novelty teaching strategies makes them to be better adapted to the teaching process and hence they can effectively implement the primary school curriculum. This argument is in agreement to Cloes, (2017) who put forward that the schools have a role of teaching students the acceptable values. The teaching of such values depends on the application of appropriate teaching strategies. Therefore, as TFFT programme equips teachers with teaching strategies needed in the 21st century, the teaching and learning in primary schools in Meru district is likely to be improved.

To get more information from head teachers, on whether the programme improves the teaching and learning in primary schools in Meru district, the evaluator further interviewed the head teacher of school “3” and this is what was said;

The TFFT project manages to unite teachers in Meru district by conducting training of learner-centered approaches. The learner centered approaches enable teachers to facilitate teaching in the classroom and the sources of knowledge should come from the pupils first before teacher. In the classroom, the teacher acts as a facilitator (HOS3, personal interview June, 16th 2021).

Responses from the head teacher suggest that most of TFFT programme focuses more on training teachers about learner-centered methods of teaching. As Tanzania has shifted from content based to competence based curriculum, the use of learner centred teaching methods is recommended for effective implementation of competence-based teaching. This is in agreement to Monari (2018) who indicated that the use of learner centred methods improves the teaching and learning, makes students to understand more and can apply the learned knowledge. Hence, TFFT programme is doing the right thing by equipping teachers with skills on learner centered teaching techniques.

On the other side the District primary educational officer was interviewed by the evaluator on how the TFFT project manages to improve teachers teaching strategies in primary schools in Meru district and he said;

TFFT has trained several schools especially in ward schools in Meru district since 2010 on pupil-centered method of teaching. In addition, TFFT trains the teachers how to use different teaching aids which is relevant to make the pupils to understand. The project trains the teachers how to assess pupils continuously if they understand the subject matter during the teaching and learning process (DPEO, personal interview June, 18th 2021).

Generally, the teachers, head teachers, district educational officer indicated to be satisfied with the training offered by the project on equipping teachers with necessary teaching methods that are directly to competence based syllabus as introduced by Tanzania education policy of 2011. To the side of teachers the average mean score was higher than the neutral point indicating that the project adds new knowledge to the teachers. This means that the project is perceived to improve the teaching in primary schools in Meru district by equipping teachers with knowledge and skills on methods of teaching, assessment techniques and the use of teaching aids. Based on Kirkpatrick’s evaluation model, evaluation at the learning level aims at finding out whether the

trainees have acquired new knowledge and skills. Responses from teachers signify that the project has achieved the objective of equipping teachers with new skills required to improve the teaching process in primary schools in Meru district.

The evaluator wanted to determine whether teachers of different professional qualifications perceive the project to be useful and different levels. To achieve this, the average mean scores for certificate, diploma, degree and masters teachers were computed.

5. Hypothesis Testing

The following hypothesis was tested:

H₀₁: There is no statistical significant difference in the perceptions mean scores of certificate, diploma, degree and masters teachers on the importance of improving teaching and learning strategies training by the TFFT.

The evaluator sought to look how teacher-training programme conducted by TFFT benefits some groups in terms of academic qualification as well as groups of teachers with different teaching experiences by using one way ANOVA. The computed mean scores for teachers with different professional qualifications are summarized in table 3.

Table 3: Mean scores of teachers' perceptions on the importance of TFFT project

Level of education	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error
Certificate	20	4.333	.24254	.05717
Diploma	15	4.617	.30049	.07288
Degree	12	4.733	.13027	.03761
Masters	1	4.300		
Total	48	4.533	.29197	.04214

As indicated in table 3, the mean score of Degree teachers (4.733) was higher than the mean scores of other teachers (certificate = 4.333; diploma = 4.617; masters = 4.300). Therefore, there was a difference in the perception mean scores of teachers on the importance of TFFT project towards equipping them with teaching strategies. To find whether the observed difference in the

means was significant, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was run at the confidence level of 95% and the results of analysis are presented in table 4.

Table 4: ANOVA summary table for hypothesis one

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.375	3	.458	7.67	.032
Within Groups	2.631	44	.060		
Total	4.007	47			

Analysis data show that $F(3, 44) = 7.66$ and $p\text{-value} = 0.032$. Since the $p\text{-value} (0.032)$ is less than the significance level (0.05), the null hypothesis: There is no statistical significant difference in the perceptions means scores of certificate, diploma, degree and masters teachers on the importance of improving teaching and learning strategies training by the TFFT was rejected. This implies that there is a statistical significant difference in the perceptions means scores of certificate, diploma, degree and masters teachers on the importance of the training by TFFT. Therefore, degree teachers perceive the training to be of more value than the certificate teachers who are majority in the primary schools perceive it.

This difference could be attributed by the fact that degree teachers were trained to teach in secondary schools. Therefore, they lacked some important teaching methods required to teach in primary schools. The government of Tanzania in 2016, shifted some teachers from secondary schools into primary schools without offering them adequate training on primary school teaching methods. Therefore, the training by TFFT was considered to be of much importance to the degree teachers who had no skills on teaching in primary schools. These findings are in agreement to what was observed earlier by Baruani (2020), who found out that some teachers who were shifted from secondary to primary school fell not to be much competent in teaching primary school subjects as long as they were not trained on pedagogical methods needed to teach in primary schools.

To confirm the responses by teachers, students in their questionnaire were asked to either agree or disagree on ten statements concerning teachers' application of teaching strategies. Students were asked this question because they are the ones who interact with teachers in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, they were expected to provide relevant information to determine

whether teachers have been equipped with teaching strategies by the project and whether they make application of such strategies. Similar analysis methods applied in the teachers data were used to the information provided by students on this question as summarized in table 5.

Table 5: Students’ responses on Improved Teaching and Learning Strategies

Statements	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean score
	%	%	%	%	%	
i. Participatory approach is mostly used by the teachers in facilitating teaching and learning process	1	0	0	11.2	87.8	4.85
ii. Teachers give you classroom test, quizzes, exercise and homework most frequently after teaching	1	0	0	12.2	86.7	4.84
iii. Teaching aids are used by our teachers in teaching and learning process	2	0	0	14.3	83.7	4.78
iv. Punishment is mostly provided to pupils who fail to answer questions from our teacher during teaching and learning process	81.6	10.2	0	5.1	3.1	4.62
v. Students always understand the subject matter when the teacher teaching	2	1	3.1	17.3	76.5	4.65
vi. Non participatory approach is mostly used by the teachers in the process of teaching and learning	84.7	5.1	1	5.1	4.1	4.61
vii. All students in the class know how to write and read correctly.	12.2	8.2	44.9	11.2	23.5	3.26
viii. Usually students did not understand the subject matter when teachers are teaching	66.3	12.2	9.2	4.1	8.2	4.24
ix. Our teacher wrote notes for us on the blackboard after teaching for our references	0	0	2	41.8	56.1	4.54
x. Teachers do not punish pupils who fail to answer questions in the classroom	2	3.1	2	37.8	55.1	4.41
Average Mean Score						4.48

Source; Field data (2021)

As displayed in table 5, the mean scores for students on the statements concerning how the teachers apply teaching and learning strategies that involve students’ engagement in the teaching and learning process were high. For instance, the mean score on the statement that “participatory approach is mostly used by teachers in facilitating teaching and learning process” was 4.85. This mean score is high indicating that most of the students strongly agreed that the teachers do apply participatory approaches in facilitating their lessons. Therefore, there is an agreement between the responses of teachers and students on the issue of participatory methods. Teachers on their

side acknowledged to be trained on participatory methods of teaching and students on the other side acknowledged their teachers to be using the methods. This means that the project has succeeded to train teachers on participatory methods of teaching and these teachers make use of such methods.

Concerning the application of different assessment techniques and the use of teaching aids, the mean scores from students were 4.84 and 4.78 respectively. This implies that most of the students strongly agreed that their teachers do use a variety of assessment techniques and they do use teaching aids when presenting their lessons. These findings also agree to what was responded by teachers. This agreement implies that the project has trained teachers on important issues, which are applicable in the teaching and learning process. This can be inferred that the knowledge and skills which teachers are provided by the FFT project are of significant application in the teaching and learning process. The average mean score for students across all the 10 items was 4.48. This also implies that teachers highly make use of teaching methods, which are learned from the project.

The general responses from teachers and students imply that the project has succeeded to train teachers on methods of teaching, assessment techniques and application of teaching aids. Also, the responses imply that the teachers make use of the techniques they were trained by the project. Application of such methods by teachers is an indication that the project meets the needs of teachers by training them on aspects, which have direct application in the teaching and learning process. According to the CIRO evaluation model, context evaluation collects data to determine the extent to which the people to whom it is being implemented, therefore, need the project based on the findings, TFFT project is highly needed by the teachers.

6. Conclusions

The project has improved the teaching and learning approaches in primary schools in Meru district. Most of the teachers have been equipped with skills on different participatory teaching techniques, preparation and use of teaching aids and effective methods of assessing students learning. Similarly, students acknowledged that their teachers make use of learner centered teaching by allowing them to ask questions and involving them in the lesson activities. Improving the teaching strategies in the schools is a good move towards improving the quality of education

offered in these schools. As teachers involve the students in lesson activities, the students acquire a considerable amount of knowledge and skills rather than just memorizing the concepts if teachers were to use teacher centered methods of teaching.

7. Recommendations

The project should be expanded to other districts so as to equip more teachers with skills on teaching strategies. As the teachers indicated that the training offered to them was of great value, it is important then for a large number of teachers in the region and country at large to be involved in the project so as to improve their pedagogical knowledge.

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