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Factors Associated with Teachers' Motivation and Commitment to Teach in Tanzania

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Abstract

This study examined the level of teachers' motivation and commitment to the teaching profession in Tanzania. The results show that the majority of teachers were motivated to join and stay in the teaching profession due to intrinsic, rather than extrinsic, factors such as intellectual curiosity and feelings of belongingness to learning community. The results also show that the majority of teachers have very low level of commitment to the teaching profession. For example, just about a third of the teachers surveyed reported that they would choose teaching profession if they were to consider choosing it again. The level of commitment to the teaching profession is associated with the school ownership category, whether a school is privately or publicly owned, and the level teaching qualification.

Keywords: teachers' commitment; teachers' motivation; teaching profession;Tanzania

1. Introduction

Provision of quality education is essential for spearheading the socioeconomic development. Indeed, many writers have observed that quality education is the most effective way to shape the values, attitudes, behaviours and skills which are important for individuals to function productively in an integrated society. For example, Oukil (2012) notes that quality education plays an important role in fostering the culture of creativity and innovativeness.

In Tanzania, quality education is seen as a key driving force in realising the key milestones of the Development Vision 2025, including quality livelihood, good governance and rule of law and in fostering the culture of competitiveness (United Republic of Tanzania, 2000). Quality education has also been associated with positive HIV preventative behaviours. Research shows, for example, that quality education has a positive impact in reducing the number of new infections, and is generally regarded as a social vaccine (Kelly, 2000; Vandemoortele & Delamonica, 2002; UNAIDS/WHO, 2010).

There are several measures of quality of education. Two of these are critical and mostly used in many countries. The first one looks at students' performance in basic skills, namely reading, writing and arithmetic. A recent report in Tanzania (Uwezo, 2010) reveals that, though there has been a notable achievement in enrolment, construction of schools and teacher training, these improvements are not reflected in the learning outcomes. The report notes that children learn very little; by their final year of primary education, children in Tanzania do not have basic numeracy and literacy skills.

The second measure focuses on performance in public examinations. For Tanzania, these are the national examinations organised and administered by the National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA). Public examinations are one of the powerful indicators of standards of education that are used to make judgement about individuals and institutions on the basis of examination results. Examinations are also useful indicators of the extent to which children have learned and they are a useful

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