Participatory Approach in Public Policy Formulation:
A comparative analysis of Tanzania's 1995 and 2014 Education policies

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ABSTRACT

In Tanzania, prior studies have concentrated much on the nature of education policies in terms of their contents and challenges in their implementation, the learning environment, and performance of the students. However, not much has been done on the manner education policies are formulated and the manner and the extent by which stakeholders are involved in the entire process. Therefore, this paper offers a comparative analysis of the application of the participatory approach in the formulation of Tanzania's Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995 and 2014 so as to provide an insight of their differences in terms of the manner and extent to which stakeholders were involved in their formulation. The paper is based on qualitative data collected in the cities of Dar es Salaam and Dodoma, Tanzania. Generally, the data were collected using in-depth face-to-face interviews with key informants, a focus group discussion, and documentary review. The findings show that, both the 1995 and 2014 ETPs used the "representation" participatory approach. In addition, stakeholders' involvement was higher in the formulation of 2014 ETP compared to that of 1995. Nonetheless, the informative and consultative approaches of stakeholders' participation were effectively applied in the formulation of the 2014 ETP to the 1995 ETP. The findings show further that grassroots participation was only moderate in the 2014 ETP. It is hereby concluded that the extent of stakeholders' participation was higher in the formulation of the 2014 ETP compared to that of 1995. Therefore, it is recommended that, there is a need of expanding and improving participation mechanisms in order to widen and deepen the level of stakeholders' representation in the formulation of forthcoming education policies.

Key words*: Tanzania Education and Training Policy; participatory approach; comparative policy analysis*

1. INTRODUCTION

Modern discourses on public policy formulation emphasize much on participatory approaches in public policy formulation. Generally, the participatory policy approach is an effective way of finding the optimal solution to a complicated policy problem. Moreover, participatory policy formulation ensures policy legitimacy; and this has positive implications in policy implementation (Veit and Wolfire, 1998, p. 155). Advocacy of a participatory approach to public policy formulation in Africa always faces a challenge in terms of the extent of stakeholders' involvement in the policy process. The process is characteristically opaque with few opportunities created for public participation (Khan, 2016, p. 101). Normally, stakeholders who are involved in the process are not well known, and even if they are known the contribution of the minority and powerless stakeholders are often unacknowledged. Moreover, their perceptions regarding the policy formulation process often remain unknown. These anomalies, among others, seem to have prevailed even during the formulation of Tanzania's education policies.

In most cases, the policy formulation process in Tanzania is informed by the traditional/classical approaches that dominate many spheres of policy formulation (Sotarauta, 2015, p. 109). These approaches do not favour the idea of power sharing among different policy stakeholders, since it is only the powerful and prominent stakeholders who form the hub of policymaking process. Hence, policies, which are crafted under these approaches, have been viewed by some stakeholders as elite-state based policies, rather than multi-actors-based policies, although their objectives are targeted at the public. For instance, the existing literature on policy clearly establishes that the Tanzania's Education for Self-Reliance document (1967) was merely an outcome of them presidential reflections on the 1960's education situation (Buchert, 1997, p.34; Burton, 2020). Therefore, it can be argued that, the policy formulation process was not in favour of a participatory approach that advocates for the wide inclusion of citizens in the decision – process (Lewis, 2020, p. 116). Likewise, the idea of "majority building", that of stakeholders participation in policy construction was absolutely not considered in the design of Tanzania Education System for the 21 Century document (1993) (Buchert, 1997). Besides this policy paper, there was another document called the "Social Sector Strategy" (1995) which emphasized the interaction amongst government, international aid agencies, and households in the financing of the social sector. Similarly, the process of constructing the document was not in favour of the core tenets of participatory

policy formulation. Consequently, the document was considered as a product of only a few top officials in Tanzania and the World Bank (Buchert, 1997, p. 53-54).

For decades, the concept of participation in setting development priorities has received global attention; as it has been a part of philosophical discussions and world-views since the time of Plato (C.427- C.347B.C), and gained momentum in the 1960s (Carpentier, 2011, p. 165). However, despite such attention, the formulation of education policies in Tanzania has been dominated by a group of political and bureaucratic elite who have varied interests coupled with feelings of controlling the decision making process. Therefore, effective stakeholders' involvement in the formulation of education policies has so far been ignored (PMO - RALG[1], 2007). On the other hand, many existing studies concentrate much on the nature of education policies in terms of their contents, implementation challenges, education conditions, and students' performance, and not on the manner policies are formulated and the manner and the extent to which stakeholders are involved in the entire process. in this respect, the paper offers a comparative analysis of the application of the participatory approach in the formulation of Tanzania's 1995 and 2014 Education and Training Policies (ETPs). This was with a view of enriching our understanding on the differences in terms of the manner and the extent to which stakeholders were involved in the formulation of both two policies, and the kind of participatory approaches that were applied. The analysis focused on education policy formulation, because as compared to other sectors, the landscape of education sector in Tanzania has for a long time experienced a great deal of policy dynamism as a result of both internal and external socio-economic, political, and technological challenges.

Theoretical framework

The assessment of the manner and extent to which stakeholders participated in the formulation of 1995 and 2014 ETPs was guided by pluralist theoretical perspective of public policy process, championed by scholars such as James Madison, Alexis de Tocqueville, and Dahl Robert (Howes et al., 2004, p.4; Blockland, 2016, p.25). Pluralist theory is well acknowledged as one of the most dominant theoretical lenses, which appear to favour the adoption of a participatory approach in formulating public policy. In the education policymaking, pluralist model is especially helpful in emphasizing the inclusion of diverse participants and interests, and the importance of willingness to work on conflict resolution. It emphasizes on the distribution of

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[1] Prime Minister's Office – Regional and Local Government.

powers, among different stakeholders during the formulation of education policies. In the current study, pluralism theory was also useful in providing answers to our research questions, such as what are the types of stakeholders involved in formulating education policies in Tanzania? To what extent these stakeholders were involved in the process of policy formulation. Moreover, what were the participatory modalities adopted in formulating education policies in Tanzania?

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The nature and objectives of the study compelled the use of exploratory, descriptive, and comparative qualitative research designs. The designs were informed by philosophical underpinnings of social constructionism that conceive reality as a result of social construction (Berger and Luckmann, 1967, p.13) and therefore, the research designs were helpful in understanding the social context associated with the adoption of participatory approaches in formulating education policies in Tanzania. The target population constituted education stakeholders at different administrative levels of government including the central, regional, and District Education Officers; Headmasters; classroom teachers; academics; and stakeholders outside the public education system, such as national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), religious organizations, and Community Based Organizations (CBOs). Among the criteria, which were used to screen potential participants in the study include: awareness of the 1995 and 2014 Tanzania's education policies, holders of education based occupations in government and non-government administrative education agencies, and education provision institutions.

The formulation processes of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs were chosen to be empirical case studies. The aim was to compare the application of participatory approach in the formulation of both policies, as a means of enhancing understanding of the two different aspects namely, the extent of stakeholders' involvement in the formulation of each policy and the type of participatory approach, which was applied. Purposive sampling technique was used to recruit key informants who could articulate their perceptual experiences on the formulation processes of the education policies. The sample size was determined by qualitative method of saturation whereby the researcher established a stopping rule, and continued to sample until the rule was satisfied. In other words, until the additional research informants could not provide any new information on the issue under investigation (Daniel, 2011, p. 247). Thus, 20 research participants were interviewed through in –depth face-to-face individual

interviews. According to Creswell and colleagues (2007, p. 126-8) such a sample size is adequate for giving well-grounded empirical findings. Therefore, interviews involved participants from government and non-government institutions. Due to study limitations and the fact that with in-depth interviews, the point of saturation was well reached, we decided to conduct one (1) focus group discussion composed of four quality education officials from, the government and three representatives of education based civil society organizations in Dar es Salaam city. Such focus group discussion was instrumental in gaining diverse views of participants, as well as confirming information collected through in –depth face-to-face individual interviews. Moreover, research participants were asked to give out their opinions on the extent they participated in the formulation of the policy, whether high, moderate, or low. The collected data were transcribed and analyzed by using qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The extent of stakeholders' involvement in the formulation of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs

First, the study found that, the participatory approach, which was employed in the formulation of the 2014 ETP was mainly based on "representation," where a particular group of key stakeholders was invited to provide views on behalf of its members. This representation approach of stakeholders views is essentially pluralist (Rechtschaffen, and Gauna, 2002, p. 125). It involved two categories of stakeholders, the local and international stakeholders. The local stakeholders were the education officials from the central and local government levels, managers, and owners of private education institutions; heads of schools, colleges, and universities; students' representative from higher learning institutions ; and civil society education based organizations. The second type of education stakeholders is the International Development Partners (IDPs) which were represented by the organizations Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) and Plan International, which addressed gender issues and advocated for the education rights of female students. With respect to the 1995 ETP, it appears that, the applied participatory policy formulation approach was not equally representative of all key stakeholders as the policy was originally crafted by a few government officials from the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEVT), Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE), and the National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA). Others include the then Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education (MSTHE),

few academicians, and education based international aid agencies. For example, it was revealed that the involvement of a key actor such as Local Government was limited to giving comments on a paper, which they did not take part in its formulation.. Nonetheless, the policy-making task force did not reach below the level of headmasters neither did it include the wider public. (Buchert, 1997, p. 50)

In order to assess the extent of stakeholders' involvement in the formulation of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs, key informants from the education sector were asked to provide their opinions on the extent of involvement of stakeholders in the above-mentioned ETPs based on the following categories; "low, moderate, and high". The reasons for each of the categories were also probed. In addition, the interviewees were asked to provide their general perception on the nature of policy formulation regarding the manner in which stakeholders (including themselves) were involved in the policy formulation process. Observations generally show that, responses differed according to the kind of the stakeholder interviewed, the stage of policy formulation, and the level of participation whereby some were involved directly in policy designing and writing, while others were involved indirectly as opinion givers. The subsequent section presents different views of government officials on the extent of stakeholders' involvement in the formulation process of both two policies, starting with ETP (2014).

Government officials view on the extent of stakeholders' involvement in the formulation of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs

According to the interviewed government officials, the formulation of the 2014 ETP was participatory in nature whereby various stakeholders were involved. One official in the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Vocational Training (MoEVT) informed the researcher that,

> *"stakeholders were highly involved in the 2014 ETP formulation because initially, a stakeholders' analysis was conducted to identify all potential stakeholders[2] in the education sector. Thereafter, survey methods of data collection were designed and the task force which was commissioned by the then Ministry of Education and Culture, collected views and opinions from stakeholders of all levels in education sector in all the county's regions".*

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[2]   See section 4.1 for the types of stakeholders involved in the formulation of 2014 ETP. However, due to several limitations faced during data collection process, some stakeholders were not included in the classification list. We expect future studies may expand the list by uncovering other kinds of stakeholders who participated in the policy making process.

Besides that, he said, "there was a national dialogue held to discuss the findings of the policy assessment. Matters discussed in the national dialogue led to the formulation of the first policy draft, which was also shared by different stakeholders." The informant also confirmed that, "views and opinions of stakeholders were collected during all stages of policy formulation, and that, different participatory techniques and modalities such as meetings, deliberative conferences, and dialogues were effectively used to accomplish the task."

In comparing the extent and the level of stakeholders' involvement in the formulation of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs one of the interviewed government officials revealed that, the later had a higher stakeholder involvement than the former. The failure of the 1995 ETP to produce its intended outcomes is attributed to minimal involvement of education stakeholders hence, exclusion of their inputs into the process. Consequently, there were difficulties in its implementation. Therefore, this created a need for formulating the 2014 ETP, which was informed by diverse views of stakeholders." The assumption is that, consulting and engaging many stakeholders in policymaking process that allows governments to tap into wider sources of information, perspectives, and potential solutions, and improves the quality of the policy decisions reached (Michels and De Graaf, 2010, p. 482). In addition, it strengthens the civic capacity in policy implementation process.

Other reasons for the difference in stakeholders' involvement in the formulation of 1995 and 2014 ETPs were historical in nature. Moreover, the 1995 ETP was the first policy document in the history of education policy formulation in Tanzania. In this regard, one official from the Ministry of Education said, "during the formulation of the 1995 ETP, the notion of 'participatory policy formulation' and the importance of including a wider spectrum of stakeholders in the policy formulation process were quite new. Therefore, the 1995 ETP was only crafted by a few experts as opposed to the manner in which the 2014 ETP was formulated. In addition in 1990s, Tanzania was least influenced by the forces of globalization; and the level of democratization and the use of information communication technology (ICT) were low (Vanhanen, 2002, p.139; Haacker, 2010, p.22) thus, translating into low stakeholders' involvement in the 1995 ETP as opposed to the 2014 where globalization had almost reached its highest level. Moreover, through availability of ICT, it was possible for key stakeholders to be informed on the formulation of the 2014 ETP thus enabling them to participate directly or indirectly. In addition, ICT linked actors in the production and circulation of the policy draft to the public.

Participatory approaches/levels of stakeholders' participation in formulation of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs

In comparing the levels of stakeholders' participation in the formulation of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs, the interviewed government officials identified three approaches or levels of participation in policy making process, as proposed by Brodie et al. (2009, p. 17); these are informative, consultative, and empowerment. Subsequently, government officials were asked to indicate the level of participation of stakeholders and the reasons for the identified level of participation. Accordingly, most stakeholders were involved, to some extent, at the "informative level of policy formulation participation" during the making of the 1995 ETP. Specifically, they were asked to inform the policy review task force (the Makweta Appointed Presidential Commission of Education System-1981) on what were the pressing education challenges in the past 19 years, and propose recommendations for the next 20 years. In this regard, participation levels, such as stakeholders' consultative and empowerment, were not considered. The reasons behind the exclusion of these participation levels were, among others, low level of democratic movements, coupled with low application of science and technology in the national policy formulation and implementation processes.

Indeed, contrary to the 1995 ETP, the formulation of 2014 ETP considered the application of informative and consultative levels of participation. However, the government did embrace the traditional approach of being the final decision maker hence, inhibiting the empowerment process. Thus, implying that, non-government stakeholders were not given the opportunity to be in the team of making the final decisions. The informative level of participation is considered to be done at the initial stage of policymaking, where stakeholders' analysis is conducted and survey methods are designed for collecting views and opinions from all potential stakeholders. It also provides participants with additional information to assist in the decision-making process (McCracken and Narayan, 1998, p. 312).

Despite stakeholders being involved at the consultative level of participation, their responses differed according to how they were involved. The interviewed education stakeholders acknowledged to have been consulted by the government in obtaining feedback on the suggested policy alternatives, which consequently, were included in the first policy draft. This acknowledgement, notwithstanding, we found that, other stakeholders from the academia and lower levels of government were unsatisfied with the level of consultation in designing the ETP (2014). One of them had this to say,

> "*The nature of stakeholders' participation was not fair because I was consulted when the policy document had already been crafted. Therefore, how could we input our views given the document had already been crafted, and was nearly being launched? I am of the view that, it would have been better if all categories of stakeholders were to be engaged at all levels of participation during the formulation of the policy.*"

This informant's view is important; however, its implementation will be successful if stakeholders' representative participatory approach were applied at all stages of formulation, in addition to the availability and appropriate utilization of resources.

In the formulation of the 1995 ETP, only the informative approach of participation was applied whereby to some extent the involvement of lower level of non-government education stakeholders was realized. One of the Tanzania Institute of Education (TIE) and MoEVT officials said, "During the formulation of the 2014 ETP, both the informative and consultative approaches of stakeholders' participation were applied."

Several studies (e.g. Buchert et al., 1997, p. 50) observed lack of stakeholders' involvement, below the level of headmasters during the formulation of the 1995 ETP. This being the case, the consultative approach/level of participation was applicable only to government officials, international aid agencies, and few academicians from the University of Dar es Salaam. As observed above, the above-mentioned groups of stakeholders were the final decision makers in the formulation of the 1995 ETP. Therefore, the difference on the level of stakeholders' participation in the formulation of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs is that, the informative approach was highly applied in the formulation of the later than was the case for the former. Likewise, the consultative level of participation was broader in terms of involvement of government and non-government stakeholders, during the formulation process of the current policy, than was the case in the previous policy. However, the two policies did not apply the empowerment approach; therefore, the majority of stakeholders had no power over the decisions affecting their lives (Perez et al., 2009).

Furthermore, based on the consultative participation approach all interviewed education stakeholders, had a positive opinion on the government's initiative to consult them during the formulation process of the 2014 ETP. For example, an interviewee from one of the prominent local civil society from education advocacy organizations said, "there were several meetings organized by the government to collect views and opinions from various education stakeholders, and that there

were at least twelve Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) that were consulted during the policy formulation process." According to the informant, "the consultation was done by the government through stakeholders' invitation where education stakeholders were invited in groups to provide their viewpoints on behalf of their fellow members."

In addition, the government circulated the second policy draft to key education stakeholders. However, the interviewees from the education based CBOs and those from the lower levels of government cited short notifications for meetings coupled with tight timeframe, as limitation of making a comprehensive review of the policy draft and providing comments. With respect to the empowerment level of participation, one of the interviewees said, "the government had the final decision on what should be in the final policy. Hence, some of our inputs, including recommendations, were not incorporated in the new education policy (2014)".

It was observed further that, in the formulation of both the 1995 and 2014 ETPs, education stakeholders participated directly as opinion givers, through meetings, conferences, and face-to-face interviews. Others participated indirectly by giving their opinions through media, telephone interviews, and e-mails. In addition, some education stakeholders were key participants and participated directly in designing and conducting in county and cross-country policy surveys. Others were engaged in policy writing. One of the key questions wanted interviewees in the education based CBOs (Community Based Organizations) to identify stakeholders who were mostly involved in the formulation of the 2014 the ETP. In responding, one of the interviewees had this to say, "It is the government officials and giant and prominent education based NGOs in Dar es Salaam that were identified and given the opportunity of participating in the policy process. Therefore, the policy making process did not involve lower levels of society and NGOs that are not famous." Similar observation was made in the formulation of 1995 ETP (Buchert, 1997, p. 50). Hence, it is believed that many views and opinions from many categories of stakeholders were not collected.

Based on the foregoing observations, it can be argued that, there was a high level of involvement of stakeholders in the formulation of the 2014 ETP compared to the formulation of 1995. However, the majority of informants (fifteen out of twenty), and who are outside the government sector, especially those from the community and s civil society based-organizations at lower levels of society reported to have been moderately involved in the ETP (2014) formulation-process, whereas the

rest (five), admitted that their level of involvement was high. The former category of interviewees cited many factors in backing up their position. One of the interviewees said,

> "*Stakeholders were not much involved, meaning that many views and opinions were not collected because of resource constraints. Therefore, many stakeholders participated at the stage when situational analysis and the direction of policy formulation had been conducted. At this stage, they were to respond to the already identified policy issues.*" (Field data).

Although it is well recognized that inadequate resources circumscribes the quality of public policy formulation, literatures still acknowledge the preponderance of multi-stakeholders platforms at the stage of problem analysis, which involves problem search/identification and disaggregation of elements of the problem (Porche, 2017, p. 201). The involvement of a wide spectrum of stakeholders at the stage of problem identification is equally important, as is the case with the subsequent stages of policy formulation. The state as a premier actor of initiating policy-making process should set conducive environment of broadening participation of grass root stakeholders to support the process of problem identification. This practice builds consensus on the nature of problem, possible solutions, policymaking design, and policy formulation. In addition, it creates a sense of ownership of the policy (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2015; Migchelbrink et al, 2019, p. 4) as well as increasing the level of commitment of stakeholders to the implementation of policy measures.

The involvement of parents, teachers, and students in the policy formulation process

The manner and extent to which parents, teachers, and students (especially in primary and secondary schools) were involved in the formulation of both the 1995 and 2014 ETPs remains a big question. This is due to among others, lack of a sampling frame that this study could use to identify and interview such key informants. It seems that the government did not document well the policy formulation process in terms of the kind of stakeholders who were consulted during the process. Therefore, data and information regarding the involvement of parents, teachers, and students in the policy formulation process are based on the information given by government and non-government education officials who participated directly in the formulation of the above policy. Generally, it was revealed that, parents, teachers, and primary and secondary school students were overall not involved

in the formulation of the 1995 ETP, as they were either forgotten or less involved in formulation of the 2014 ETP. For example, despite that primary and secondary schools structures have school committees or parent boards it is not clear how the opinions from these organs were collected.

One of the interviewed stakeholders in the faith-based institutions argued,

> "*There is a doubt if parents were well involved in the formulation of the 2014 ETP because it is difficult to know the platforms they used to raise up their voices. Moreover, their structures are unstable and unpredictable; hence, it is difficult to get independent policy views from them as key education stakeholders. On top of that, despite their position being recognized in the schools' committee and boards, we are not sure, if schools have the tendency to organize meetings with parents, and if parents have been active in attending and participating in those meetings. Generally, there is a probability parents were not well involved in the policy formulation process.*"

In responding to the question of parents' participation, one of the education officials, in one of the Dar es Salaam municipalities, expressed doubts on the manner in which parents were involved in the formulation process, despite their representation in the schools' committees and boards. Their views and opinions should have been collected and included in the policy formulation process. According to the respondent, "there is a doubt in the effectiveness of parents' participation in policy development, because it is not clear how the policy making task force classified parents. There are three kinds of parents. One category of parents is highly educated, well informed, and knowledgeable about education issues and policy, another category has a moderate awareness of these issues, while the last group of parents is completely unaware of the education matters and policy issues. Therefore, it is doubtful whether the architects of the 2014 ETP considered the above categories when collecting views and opinions from stakeholders".

Other key informants argued that parents and students have been the forgotten stakeholders in the development of Tanzanian education policies. One of the reasons could be that policy makers consider this category of people as less conversant with policy issues hence they are assumed unable to provide constructive inputs. Furthermore, it was argued that, probably students are not involved in the formulation process of education policy because of the perception that they could raise demands that cannot easily be fulfilled by the government. Moreover, one of

the academicians from the University of Dar es Salaam commented, "education challenges had not been addressed effectively heretofore, and students at all levels were the victims" implying that the government had a lot to do in finding remedies.

The questioning of the involvement of schoolteachers in the policy formulation processes was also important. Schoolteachers below the level of headmasters were or not even given the opportunity of participating in the formulation of the 1995 ETP (Buchert, 1997, p. 50). This observation is similar to those gathered from the formulation of 2014 ETP. In fact we are aware that, Tanzania Teachers' Union (TTU) represented the views of teachers in the construction of the current policy. However, it is not clear how the union reached the lower levels to collect views, even from teachers. This concern was expressed by one of the government officials who participated, nearly at all stages of the policy formulation process. The interviewee was of the view that, "school teachers were not involved in the formulation of the 2014 ETP because no meetings were organized to collect views and opinions from these stakeholders, though they were supposed to be considered in the policy process"

Study findings show that schoolteachers are a forgotten group of education stakeholders, or deliberately omitted from ETP formulation on pretext that their major roles are teaching and curriculum development and review. Therefore, it is assumed that they may not be in a good position to produce constructive views that may positively influence education policy. Moreover, one of the educationists working at TTU argued that, "school teachers were not included in the education policy formulation process and that in most cases only headmasters/headmistresses were invited by the government either to contribute their views or to review a particular education policy, plan, or program." In this way, much views and opinions from the schoolteachers below the level of headmasters remained uncollected, but which could otherwise be used to guide rigorous analysis of education challenges and problems at the primary and secondary school levels. That being a case, stakeholders' invitations to participate in policymaking dialogues need to be more open and inclusive.

4.4 Stakeholders who were not fully involved in the policy formulation process

As alluded to in the previous section, the study faced several limitations during data collection process. These include lack of sampling frame, which could be used to identify, and access individuals who participated directly in the formulation of 1995

and 2014 ETPs; and unwillingness of some research informants to provide data. Hence, it was not possible to identify all stakeholders who were not involved in the formulation of 1995 and 2014 ETPs. However, the fact that research is an endless process of acquiring knowledge (Reid et al., 2013, p. 84), thus, future studies may expand the list by uncovering other kinds of stakeholders who did not participate in the formulation process of such policies. Therefore, the present study was able to identify the following groups, namely, people with disabilities, agriculturalists, and the mass media.

Unlike parents, who lacked well stable structures and platforms for raising their voices and wishes, people with disabilities have well recognized platforms, such as the Tanzania Federation of Disabled People's Organizations, where they advocate for their rights and other demands (Opini and Onditi, 2016, p. 69). Nonetheless, a key disabled informant said, "People with disabilities and their federation were not adequately involved in airing their viewpoints and opinions during the construction process of the two education policies." One of the key questions tasked one of the top education officials to comment on the extent of stakeholders' involvement in the 2014 ETP formulation process, the official replied, "the problem we noted is that, some views of some stakeholders, such as people with disabilities, were not included in the policy document".

Therefore, the official's response is a clear testimony to the fact that this key group of education stakeholders was barely consulted during the policy formulation process. One of the government's education experts, who participated in nearly at all the stages of policy formulation, made the following comment, "we were not able to consult individual agriculturalists to get their views on the policy to be crafted. But the ministry had the objective of creating the education system which will produce agricultural educationists who will empower famers by equipping them with knowledge and skills." With respect to mass media, we realized that, interviewees did not mention them as among the key education stakeholders, who were to be consulted during policy formulation process. Instead, the role played by the media, which is equally acknowledged by the government officials, is that of disseminating the policy document and creating platform for policy discussion and launching.

Stakeholders' views on the stages they were involved during the policy formulation process

First, what was noted from the interviewed education stakeholders and previous

findings of Buchert (1997, p. 46), is that, there was pressure from outside the government for reviewing the 1995 ETP education conditions. Hence, there was a need of having the 2014 ETP. Nevertheless, it was the government, which later initiated and engineered the entire process. It was claimed by one of the academicians who participated directly in the crafting of the 2014 ETP that, "it was not the government's priority to come up with the ETP, but rather, the pressure from the other stakeholders, especially the Non - Governmental Organizations (NGOs) that is why the process took a long time".

It was revealed that, during the formulation of the 1995 ETP and the 2014 ETP, many stakeholders outside government were involved in the initial stages of the formulation process. With respect to the formulation of the latter, it was particularly during the problem identification stage when, the country and cross country policy surveys were conducted, to identify the gaps and challenges in the 1995 ETP, coupled with the recommendations, which were to be incorporated in the formulation of the 2014 ETP. Despite acknowledging government's efforts of involving stakeholders in the 2014 ETP initial formulation stage, still some of the stakeholders seem to be unsatisfied with the process. For example, stakeholders from the academia claimed that, "the government came to us while it had already done a situational analysis. Therefore, certain issues had already been identified and the direction of the policy was known."

With regard to the foregoing observations, some academicians argue that, in order to increase the odds of success in tackling any public problem, it is essential for all key stakeholders to be engaged in the initial stages of policy formulation, the process called 'problem framing.' This h starts with the construction of a concise problem statement, outlining key details, proposed solutions, and the guidelines for stakeholder participation in the problem definitions, activities, and solutions (Pontius and McIntosh, 2020). Thus, if the government were to consider the involvement of all key stakeholders in such a process it could enable an open and interactive dialogue which is an important antecedent of understanding the problem, and arriving at fairness in policy decision – making process (Kim and Mauborgne, 1995; Simon, 2017, p.1).

Based on these discussions, it is apparent that, some of the stakeholders were not involved in the initial stages of policy formulation , that is, problem identification and setting of the agenda, rather they were involved in the subsequent stages after the policy draft had been crafted thus, they were only consulted for their views

on the draft. This modality of work was assumed as inappropriate by one of the academicians. According to this stakeholder, "all kinds of stakeholders, regardless of their levels and status, are important, and were supposed to be included at all stages of policy formulation, and not after the drafting of the policy or during the policy launching ceremony". The informant's response is a clear testimony to the fact that majority of stakeholders were barely consulted during the initial stages of policy formulation – problem definition and agenda setting. As Mattson (2003, p. 247) argues, if key stakeholders are not involved in problem definition and reform adoption, they may not know what problem a particular reform is attempting to address. Moreover, if they lack an appreciation of a problem, it should not be surprising if they lack commitment to the proposed solutions. Despite these important views, however, it should be noted that problems of inadequate resources that is, financial and labour force, cum logistics, among others, might circumscribe multiple involvements of stakeholders at the preliminary stages of policy formulation. Therefore, in this circumstance the policy making task force will be compelled to design the policy making process in accordance with the available budget resources.

On the other hand, non-government education stakeholders and several interviewees from the CBOs showed satisfaction on the techniques and modalities that were employed with regard to stakeholders' involvement in the formulation of the 2014 ETP. However, according to one of them, information and communication technology was not utilized effectively, may be because of maintaining confidentiality of government documents. This view is supported by Todress (1991) who argues that, confidentiality is one of the key issues that should be continually considered in policymaking process. Policymaking actors are expected not only to help develop policies but also to enforce the regulations that govern them. Such regulations may include maintaining secrecy and confidentiality on the category of confidential government information, which embraces a variety of classes of documents whose disclosure, while though may not be harmful to the policy decision-making process or the integrity of the state; they could injure a variety of individuals or sectional interests, including certain government interests (Robertson, 1978, p. 6).

Reasons for the moderate level of stakeholders' involvement in the formulation of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs

As alluded to in section 3.0, research participants were asked to give out their opinions on the manner and extent to which stakeholders were involved in the

formulation of the 1995 ETP and the current ETP (2014), and the reasons behind their responses. The findings on this particular theme have already been presented in the previous sections. However, just to recap, the findings revealed that, majority of informants outside the government, especially those from the community and some civil society based-organizations at the lower levels of society claimed to have been moderately involved in the ETP (2014) formulation-process. One of the reasons for such level of participation was shared by one of the interviewees from one of the prominent local education advocacy CSOs, who participated in the policy process. According to the interviewee, "the process was heavily dominated by stakeholders from the government, when vis-a-vis stakeholders from the non-government sector. This suggests that many recommendations from the government education stakeholders were more likely to have been incorporated in the policy document relative to those from the non-government sector."

Other reasons that were provided for the moderate level of involvement in the policy process were partial involvement (at one stage only) and differences in values and interests (what the government wanted and what the other stakeholders wanted hence, some views mostly from the non-government stakeholders were not taken). Others include limited period given to review and provide comments on the drafted policy, and the selective nature of who should be involved, in other words, the giants and the very prominent individuals and CBOs were involved. Furthermore, one of the education officials in one of the Dar es Salaam municipalities was of the opinion that, it was possible to have only one individual in the department normally the head of the institution invited. However, such an individual may not necessary collecting views of from his/her colleagues to enrich the consultative process. Therefore, it is believed that many views and opinions from the lower levels of stakeholders were not taken on board to inform the 2014 policy document. One of the reasons for non-incorporation of recommendations from some stakeholders into the policy document, according to one top government official was, "the large part of the views and opinions provided by the stakeholders during the formulation of the 2014 ETP were in the form of strategies and not policy options. Hence they were reserved for the implementation strategy."

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Based on the study findings the paper concludes that the formulation of the 2014 ETP was more participatory compared to the formulation of the 1995 ETP. In

addition, the 2014 ETP employed a 'representation approach' cum methodology. The paper concludes further that the grassroots were involved at a minimum level, although this was relatively better in the formulation of the 2014 ETP. Moreover, the formulations of the 1995 and the 2014 ETPs were biased towards government officials, prominent individuals, and influential CBOs who played a major role in the formulation of the 1995 and 2014 ETPs. Lastly, the paper concludes that the 1995 and 2014 ETPs were more influenced by the government officials who had the final decision on what should be included in the final versions of the policies.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings and conclusions the paper recommends that, the government should ensure that a broad spectrum of education stakeholders should be involved in the review or formulation of future education and training policies. In addition, enough time should be provided to allow effective participation of all stakeholders. Doing so would create a sense of policy ownership. In addition, stakeholders need to be educated on public policy related issues and key concepts, to enable them provide constructive inputs in the policy making process.

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