The Preparation and Development of Secondary School Leaders on Implementing the Big Results Now Programme in Tabora Municipality, Tanzania

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Abstract

The Tanzanian education sector from 1980s has not been performing well particularly on the side of quality and one of the main contributing factors is the economic crisis the country experienced from the early 1980s. At primary school level, for instance, some pupils complete the primary cycle without being able to read and write and lack basic numeracy skills. At secondary school level many students finish the cycle with fourth and zero division in their national Form IV results. Different programmes have been put in place to transform the situation including: the Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) and the Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDP), and the recently introduced programme, the Big Results Now (BRN).Therefore, the present research project aimed to investigate the preparation and development of secondary school leaders as key implementers of the BRN programme in Tabora Municipality. The study used a mixed research paradigm. The sample included: heads of school, deputy heads, classroom teachers, non-teaching staff, members of School Governing Board (SGB) and the District Secondary Education Officer. Data were collected using focus group, questionnaire and documents. Findings revealed majority of the school heads understood the BRN programme and what is expected from them. However, results showed that many of deputy heads, the teaching and non-teaching staff and members of SGB had little knowledge about the BRN and the School Improvement Toolkit (SIT). Findings indicated further that the majority of school heads, deputy heads, teachers, non-teaching staff and members of the SGB had no training about the BRN. For those who had attended training, results indicated the following areas covered in the training: school accounting procedures; school inspection; procurement procedures; school leadership; mentoring; and staff evaluation. Findings likewise showed that several deputy heads were trained in: Competency Based Teaching (CBT) and methodology of   teaching students with visual impairments. Respondents suggested the following essential areas to be focused by the BRN for the successful implementation and sustainability of the programme: capacity building; provision of incentives to the implementers and leaders; adopting the bottom-up approach of planning; and observing professional autonomy. It was generally concluded that, the implementation and sustainability of the BRN programme depends on equipping the implementers with necessary knowledge and skills.

Keywords: Staff evaluation, pre-school education, distributed leadership, School Management Team (SMT).

Background information

The Tanzanian education sector since the 1980s has not been performing well, particularly on the side of quality. One of the main factors that led to the deterioration of the education sector was the economic crisis the country experienced from the early 1980s (Mushi, 2009: 186). For instance, at different levels of education, the sector has been facing an acute shortage of essential instructional materials, inadequate and incompetent teachers and inadequate school buildings. At primary school level for example, the literature indicates that some pupils complete the primary cycle without being able to read and write; they also lack basic numeracy skills (UWEZO, 2010:1-3). At secondary school level, the quality of education is not promising either, for instance, many students complete secondary education with low levels of knowledge and skills; this can be substantiated by the national Form IV results in different years (MOEVT, 2010: iv) where most students fail or score division IV.

At pre-school level, the phase at which a child is supposed to be given basic skills that s/he will build on to higher levels of education, the situation is not encouraging either. For instance, many children particularly from rural areas never attend pre-schools, despite the fact that it is mandatory as per the pre-primary school curriculum. Examining   areas where children get a chance to attend pre-school, many of the centres lack qualified teachers and appropriate teaching and learning materials. As regards pre-primary education enrolment, the Primary Education Development Programme ((PEDP III) phase three document, for instance acknowledges:

"...the pre-primary Net Enrolment Rate (NER) increased from 33.1% in 2007 to 42.4% in 2011 though not at the rate desired by PEDP II" (MOEVT, 2012: 10). Thus, statistics substantiate that many children do not get pre-school education.

Poor performance in the education sector led the Tanzanian government to embark on different programmes, for example at primary level, PEDP was initiated in 2002 aiming to improve the quality and children accessibility to primary education (Mbelle, 2008: vii). Since its introduction in 2002, PEDP has passed a number of phases, that is, PEDP I (2002-2006), PEDP II (2007-2011) and PEDP III (2011-2016) (MOEVT, 2012: iii), however, issues to do with accessibility and quality of education are still the focus of the recent PEDP programme (ibid: iv) because they are not at the acceptable level and standard.

The Tanzanian government also implemented the Secondary Education Development programme phase one (SEDP I) from 2004 to 2009. The programme had following aims: to improve access, quality and equity (MOEVT, 2010: vi-vii). The following shortcomings of SEDP I are listed by (MOEVT, 2010: i) as: "(i) shortage of teachers, and low capitation grant (ii) low quality of teaching and learning (iii) inadequate empowerment (iv) accountability measures at school level....". As a result, SEDP II to a large extent aims to remove the shortcomings listed by SEDP I, that is, to improve learning outcomes in secondary schools and increase the completion rate of secondary school leavers (MOEVT, 2010: i).

In a move to transform unsatisfactory performance of various social and economic sectors including the education sector, the Tanzanian government made a number of consultations with the Malaysian government to find out what is behind its rapid economic development. Through a number of discussions and learning what the Malaysian government is doing, the Tanzanian government adopted the Big Fast Results model, the programme developed by the Malaysia's Performance Management and Delivery Unit (PEMANDU) so as to transform the performance of various sectors in Malaysia. As a result, a similar programme to PEMANDU, namely the Big Results Now (BRN) programme, was launched   in Tanzania in July, 2013. The BRN, a parallel programme to the PEDP and SEDP, was introduced to accelerate the achievement of National Vision 2025; the programme covers six sectors in the country including the education sector. "The Big Results Now (BRN) is predicated on the concept that by implementing some key innovations at critical points in the way government does business; the existing system can be made to deliver more effectively and efficiently" (https://projects .dfid.gov.uk/).

The BRN model adopted from Malaysia is also practiced in Rwanda and Nigeria to fast track the implementation of development plans. It is a tested model that has worked in these countries with which Tanzania shares a parallel development pathway (https://projects .dfid.gov.uk/). For example, the economic growth rate of Rwanda stands at 7.1% annually and it has been stable for about ten years, likewise that of Nigeria; the second biggest economy country in Africa, is 6.7% annually, and its economic growth rate has been stable for the past ten years (http://www.africaneconomicoutlook.org/en/statistics/).

In the education sector, the objectives of the BRN as given by MOEVT (2013: 6) include: "...primary and secondary education (improve students' mastering of 3R; Reading, Writing and Arithmetic in standard I and II by implementing skills assessment and training teachers and increasing the pass rate to 80% for primary and secondary school students". Thus, the introduction of the BRN programme aims at uplifting the education sector performance, because educational statistics in the country show that despite the increase in the quantity of student enrolment, the quality is still poor. For example, BEST statistics from MOEVT (2009-2013) indicate that while enrolment has increased, the pass rate in primary schools is 53%, 10% lower in secondary schools; girls performing worse than boys (see www.pmoralg.go.tz/).

To ensure effective implementation of the goals of the BRN programme, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training produced a document known as the School Improvement Toolkit (SIT) for heads of school (HOS) to guide them in administering and managing schools towards the achievement of the BRN programme. SIT aims at empowering school heads to manage schools effectively and efficiently (MOEVT, 2013). The MOEVT stipulates the following aims regards SIT:

- Clarify roles and core functions of heads of schools
- Update on the latest changes in policies, teaching, and learning information
- Provide practical guidance to heads of schools for school improvement.

In terms of management of schools, SIT requires the HOS use participatory methods to ensure that every member of staff feels part of the school. This entails the HOS sharing responsibilities with staff so as to perform their duties effectively and efficiently (MOEVT, 2013).

Furthermore, in the education sector the BRN programme aims at n improving the quality of education at primary and secondary levels. Two ministries are involved: the MOEVT, for policy issues and the Prime Minister's Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PMO-RALG) as key implementers of the programme. The BRN programme has identified the following initiatives as the means of improving the quality of education: "School Improvement Toolkit, School Incentive Scheme, Official School Ranking, National 3R Assessment, 3R Teacher Training, STEP (Student Teacher Enrichment Program), basic facilities construction, capitation grants and teacher motivation" (MOEVT, 2013:2).

One of the initiatives already put in place by the MOEVT regarding the BRN programme is provision of education and training for implementers of the programme. For example, according to MOEVT (2013:1) between September 23rd and October, 9th 2013 about 3000 heads of schools from the Tanzanian mainland were trained on how to implement the BRN programme. Training mainly focused on how to use the School Improvement Toolkit (SIT). From the Toolkit, the following are expected from the heads of school (MOEVT, 2013:1-3):

- Managing instructional activities

- Management of teachers and non-teaching staff

- Managing resources

- Managing students

- Managing school-community relationship

- Managing extra-curricular activities

Furthermore, a total number of 4,064 secondary teachers received capacity building training in the year 2013 on the Student Teacher Enrichment Program (STEP) initiative (MOEVT, 2013:3) so as to be able to assist effectively learners facing challenges in some subjects namely Kiswahili, Mathematics, Biology and English.

The MOEVT (2013: 1-3) statistics shows that 3,001 (66.3%) school heads and 4,064 (6.2%) secondary teachers have been trained, thus, it is assumed that these have received information about the BRN programme. However, the BEST statistics for the year 2012 from MOEVT indicate a total number of 180,987 primary school teachers and 65,086 secondary school teachers. Furthermore, the BEST statistics from the MOEVT for the year 2012 indicate a total number of 4,528 secondary school heads. Therefore, according to the BEST statistics, 33.7% of heads and 93.8% of secondary school teachers lack training about how to implement the BRN. Thus, it is likely that many primary school heads and teachers lack the correct information from relevant authorities about the BRN and the modalities of its implementation.

Different studies in educational leadership indicate that, effective school leadership results from preparation and development (Van der Westhuizen et al, 2004:705, Rhodes et al., 2008: 331, and Wildy and Clarke, 2008: 484). In addition to preparing and developing school leaders, distributed leadership could as well enhance the achievement of the BRN objectives at school level as advocated by the Tanzanian president. This research project therefore, attempts to investigate the preparation and development of secondary school leadership as key implementers of the BRN programme grounding in the theory of distributed leadership.

Statement of the problem

Findings from various studies in educational leadership reveal that training of school leaders enhances their performance; that is, training has a positive correlation to leadership effectiveness (Nguni et al., 2006: 172; Pheko, 2008: 71; Rhodes et al., 2008: 331;   Wildy and Clarke, 2008: 484; and Bush et al., 2011: 31). However, if we are to argue that training carried out with secondary school leaders makes them effective implementers of the BRN programme, then there is a need for empirical research about this subject in Tanzania. This study takes Tabora Municipality as representative of other areas of Tanzania in order to get empirical evidence regarding the extent to which secondary school leaders are prepared and developed to implement the BRN programme. This research project therefore, aims to investigate the preparation and development of secondary school leadership as key implementers of the BRN programme grounded in the theory of distributed leadership.

Goal and Objectives of Research Project

The goal of this research project was to examine the extent to which secondary school leadership is prepared and developed to implement the BRN programme. This research project aimed to:

 i.   Appraise school leaders' knowledge about the BRN programme.

 ii. Identify key areas in which school leaders are trained to implement the BRN programme.

 iii. Assess the extent to which teachers and non-teaching staff are trained on the BRN programme.

 iv. Suggest ways in which the implementation of the BRN programme could be improved.

Rationale of the Research Project

The project aimed to meet AMUCTA's core roles, which are research, community outreach and consultancy. That is, through this project, researchers who are lecturers at AMUCTA attempted to find solutions to various challenges facing secondary schools' leadership in Tabora Municipality in particular and Tanzania in general. Specifically, the study aimed to find out the extent to which school leadership is prepared and developed so as to implement the recently introduced BRN education programme. This study further aimed to inform and give insight to district educational leaders in Tabora Municipality and elsewhere in Tanzania, policy makers and educational stake-holders about the needs and merits of training secondary school leaders for effective implementation of the BRN programme.

Methodological approach

This research used a mixed method design;   a combination of quantitative and qualitative research approaches, so as to get strength of both and to lessen their weaknesses (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004:18) and enrich the data gathered. The study used design triangulation in its mixed method design. The purpose of using design triangulation in educational research brings to the following benefits:

The purpose of the triangulation design is to obtain complementary quantitative and qualitative data on the same topic, bringing together the different strengths of the two methods. It is one-phase design, where the two types of data are collected in the same time frame, and are given equal weight (Punch 2009:296).

Multiple triangulations, that is, data triangulation, investigator triangulation and methodological triangulation as explained by Denzin (1978:291) and Green (2007) were used in study so as to improve the validity; depth/richness of data; quality of data; and comparison of results across methods that is:

 a) Data triangulation (i.e., use of a variety of sources in a study).

 b) Investigator triangulation (i.e., use of several different researchers).

 c) Methodological triangulation (i.e. use of multiple methods to study a research problem).

To meet data triangulation various respondents were involved including school heads; teachers; non-teaching staff; members of school Governing Board; and an education officer to get a variety of data. Regards investigator triangulation, three researchers were involved in data collection, and meeting methodological triangulation, the research used questionnaires, face-to-face interview, group interviews and documentary schedules as research tools. Thus, multiple triangulations improved the reliability and validity of the present research.

Objectives-Activity Schedule

Table 7.Objective-Activity schedule

Objectives	Activities done	Respondents involved	Resources used
To appraise school leaders' knowledge about the BRN programme. To identify key areas in which school leaders were trained to implement the BRN programme. To assess to what extent teachers and non-teaching staff are trained on the BRN programme. To suggest ways in which the implementation of the BRN programme could be improved.	• Conducting Group interview to teachers and non-teaching staff. • Conducting face-to-face Semi-structured interview to heads of schools, their deputy heads, members of School Governing Board (SGB) and District Secondary Education Officer (DSEO) • Distributing questionnaires to non-teaching staff • Follow up of questionnaires • Gathering documents • Data analysis and interpretation • Dissemination of research findings • Evaluation of activities	• 14 heads of schools • 18 deputy heads • 35 classroom teachers • 5 members of School Governing Board (SGB) • 16 non-teaching staff • The DEO	• Interview guide • Focus group guide • Questionnaires • Documentary schedule • Papers • Tape recorders • Pens • CDs • DVDs • Note books • Laptops • Modems • In-kind contributions • Finance • Researcher's vehicle • Files

Participants

Researchers informed the participants from different schools shown in Table 1 prior to the actual exercise of collecting data, first the aim of the BRN research was explained, and secondly researchers asked them to participate voluntarily. All participants accepted without condition to participate in the exercise also agreed to be tape recorded in both face-to-face interview and focus group. Besides, researchers secured permission to conduct research about the BRN from AMUCTA authority and the Tabora Municipality Secondary Education Officer (DEO).

Statistics on the participants is given in Table 1. Actual participation in the study was as follows: 14 out of 19 school heads (73.68%), 18 out of 19 deputy heads (94.74%), 36 out 38 teachers (94.74%), 14 out of 38 non-teaching staff (36.84%), and just 5 out of 38 members of the SGB (13.16%) participated in the present study. The small percentage of non-teaching staff is because many community schools had not employed non-teaching staff, on the other hand, the study constituted a very small per cent of members SGB because it was very

difficult to find them as many of do not always come to school; often they came to school for attending meetings. As a result, the few participants of both non-teaching staff and members of SGB in overall affected the number of potential respondents. In overall, 58 per cent of planned respondents participated in the present study.

Table 8. Schools and type respondents participated in the study

School visited	School heads	Deputy heads	Teachers	Non-teaching staff	Member of SGB
Ally Hassan Mwinyi	1	1	2	2	-
Kaze Hill	1	1	2	-	1
Unyanyembe	1	1	2	1	-
Lwanzali	1	1	2	-	-
Kariakoo	1	1	-	-	-
Tabora Boys	1	1	2	2	-
Kanyenye	1	1	2	-	-
Uyui	1	-	2	-	-
Kazima	1	1	2	1	-
Tabora Girls	1	1	2	2	-
Mihayo	1	1	2	2	-
Bombamzinga	1	1	2	1	-
Fundikira	-	1	2	1	-
Cheyo	1	1	2	-	1
New Era	-	1	2	2	-
Issevya	-	1	2	-	1
St Peters	-	1	2	-	1
Ipuli	1	1	2	-	1
Skanda	-	1	2	-	-
Total	**14**	**18**	**36**	**14**	**5**
Grand Total					**87**

Source: Research data, 2015

Method of Analysing Data

Tape-recorded interviews were transcribed verbatim and then analysed thematically, that is using Thematic Analysis (TA) approach (Braun and Clarke, 2006:82). Content analysis was used for analysis of gathered documents (Denscombe, 2008: 236 and Wilkinson, 2000 quoted by Braun and Clarke, 2006). The Nvivo computer package was used in the analysis of all qualitative data, and descriptive statistics were used to analyse quantitative data, whereas the SPSS computer package enabled the generation of frequencies, frequency distributions, standard deviation, and table and figures.

Results

The results section presents and describes research findings from various respondents. It comprises four main sections, namely:

- School leaders' knowledge about BRN,

- Key areas in which school leaders are trained to implement BRN,

- The extent to which teachers and non-teaching staff are trained to implement the BRN and,

- Alternative ways to improve the implementation of the BRN.

School leaders' knowledge about the BRN programme

i.   The school heads

The school leaders who responded about their understanding of the programme and its supporting tool (SIT) were schools heads, deputy heads and members of the School Governing Board (SGB). Results from 9 out of 14 school heads regarding the understanding of the BRN programme was of mixed kind. Findings showed that many of the school heads understood the newly introduced education programme (BRN), this was mentioned seven times, but their degree of understanding differed. The following quotations indicate what the heads of schools understood about the BRN:

…it… focuses on a certain issues for example on how to enrich programmes on students…also, to make the schools' environment attractive, …it is on improving teaching and learning by ensuring that different facilities are available at the school… it is on motivating the teachers and other non-teaching staff. (School head 11)

Not exactly formal training/seminar   as such on the BRN, rather the issue have been introduced and somehow explained in TAHOSSA meetings by DEO… it was like information giving to school heads…I think about nine issues were explained on how to improve all issues related to education at primary and secondary level. The DEO talked about teachers' welfare…he also said that in primary level emphasis was on the 3R, improving performance in national exams… (School head 3)

These findings from the school heads 3 and   11 revealed that the BRN is about improving academic delivery, creating a favourable school environment that could support learning; ensuring the availability of teaching and learning facilities, also motivating the teachers so as make them work hard in teaching students.

An investigation was similarly done regards school heads' understanding of the School Improvement Toolkit (SIT), a document meant to guide heads of schools to lead the implementation of the BRN programme in their respective schools. Knowledge about the SIT was mentioned 6 times. The findings on understanding about the SIT revealed that many of school heads possessed the guideline (SIT) for implementing the programme. However, of the 14 heads of schools who participated in this study, one was not aware about the SIT and one head from a private school said that those from non-government schools were not provided with the guide, they were simply asked to go and make copies from their fellows working in government schools.

ii.   The deputy heads

Findings revealed that deputy school heads understood a range of issues about the BRN including: conducting extra teaching (remedial classes); putting much emphasis on academic issues; the BRN not emphasising discipline or sports; teachers to work hard so as to meet set objectives; teachers to prepare schemes of work, lessons plans, using teaching aids; making sure teachers attend classes, give enough assignments, and tests. A variety of knowledge possessed by these deputy school heads about the BRN is substantiated by the following quotes:

…yes, but it was not so formal, the issue about BRN was explained in the TAHOSSA meetings by the REO, DEO. At different levels of the TAHOSSA meetings, for instance at district level, the DEO explained about the BRN and what it is expected, this also happened at the TAHOSSA regional meetings where the REO also emphasises the BRN programme. (Deputy head 13)

We got some briefing from the head of school…and I think the head of school got information from higher authorities…he said now we should conduct extra teaching…we should not only use normal hours but we should also have remedial courses…he also said that the emphasis is to some subjects these include Kiswahili, Biology English and Maths. (Deputy head 7)

 But, results revealed that majority of deputy heads were not aware of the SIT and had not seen the document. Out of the 18 Deputy School heads who responded to the question on the SIT, just one knew what the document was and what is in it, the other 17 deputies had never even seen the document. It appears that many deputy heads got knowledge about the BRN programme and its demands from their respective school heads, although they had little information about the SIT.

iii.   Members of the SGB

Mixed findings appeared from face-to-face interviews conducted with the members of the SGB: one member from Ipuli secondary school acknowledged to have attended a one day seminar about the BRN that took place at his school, where, issues concerning teachers' responsibilities were explained. However, the member said: "the skills that I got in that short seminar wasn't enough, but, on the part of employer s/he has started some strategies

to send employee on training…" Results further showed that BRN issues were not discussed in the board meetings held at school level. Results from a different member of the SGB, a member from St Peters secondary school revealed that members of that SGB were not informed about the BRN. Another board member from Kariakoo secondary school responded that he had never attended any course or seminar on capacity building about the BRN: "you know Mr. researcher even school heads were just given pamphlets…teachers keep on asking…what is the BRN?…what does BRN intends?…"

These findings highlight the extent to which members of the SGB understand the BRN programme. It can be argued that their understanding of SGB about the BRN programme and what the programme expects from them is minimal. Taking into account that the SGB is the highest supervisory body at school level, low understanding of the BRN and its aims could result in low supervision of the implementation of the programme.

iv.   The DEO

Findings revealed the DEO knowledge about the BRN, which include capacity building of school leaders, friendly working with implementers of the BRN, proper use of money allocated in schools, availability of teaching and learning materials in schools, rehabilitation of teachers' houses and building labs in schools. The following quote verifies what the DEO responded about the aims of the BRN programme:

The focus is to value our customers, i.e. the teachers. We were urged to use polite language when attending them. Also, we were asked to make sure that we use our budget to solve some claims. For example, I had 18 teachers who are now retired; I have managed to pay them almost 54 million from my other charges account (OC). I also paid some transferred teachers and those who have attended treatment I pay them in lump sum from my OC. We were directed to ensure that we provide teaching and learning materials to schools. We make sure that school fees and capitation are used well. Another thing is that we were asked to make rehabilitation of teachers' houses. We are also constructing labs. (DEO, Tabora Municipality)

Key areas in which school leaders are trained to implement the BRN

i.   School heads

Results revealed the following training of school heads: background of the BRN; Bursaries/accounting; educational inspection; procurements/ procedures for purchasing; school leadership; mentoring; the use of OPRAS to evaluate the implementation of BRN; and implementation of BRN in Mathematics, English, Kiswahili and Biology subjects. These findings from face-to-face interview about the type of training are also supported by the findings from the documents from MOEVT showing various types of training conducted in different parts of the country in 2013 (MOEVT, 2013: 2). The pertinent issue that can be argued is the number of those who attended training and the depth of training. Of the 14 school heads who participated in the study, findings revealed that just three (21.4%) had actual/formal training and the number of days for training ranged from three to five. Thus, it can be argued that majority of school heads did not have actual/formal training and therefore lack knowledge about the BRN.

ii.   Deputy heads

A different category of leaders that were interviewed regarding the key areas in which school leaders are trained to implement the BRN were deputy school heads. Findings revealed that out of 18 interviewed deputy heads, only three got formal training, and the training areas identified were: Competency Based Teaching (CBT); preparation of English subject schemes of work and preparing lesson plans; science practical; and methodology of teaching students with visual impairments. It can be argue further that few deputy heads had capacities to implement the BRN.

iii.   Members of SGB

Through a face-to-face interview with the SGB, findings revealed that three out of five requested for training as they have never attended the formal training about the BRN. Two members had attended a one day seminar on issues to do with teachers' responsibilities and increasing learners' performance. Still, it can be argued that, it is more likely all members needed enriched training so as to be effective supervisors, even those who had the one day seminar probably could not get all the necessary information for the implementation of the BRN.

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The extent to which teachers and non-teaching staff are trained to implement the BRN

    i.   Training of teachers

Results from questionnaires regarding the training of teachers are shown in Table 3. Statistics indicated that 71.4% of teachers did not agree to have been sent to training to implement the SIT either through seminars or short courses on the BRN. These results confirmed findings from a focus group that much of the knowledge about the BRN was from information giving and /or sharing from their heads or deputies.

Table 9. Training of teachers

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
Valid	strongly agree	2	5.7	5.9	5.9
	Agree	7	20.0	20.6	26.5
	Disagree	16	45.7	47.1	73.5
	strongly disagree	9	25.7	26.5	100.0
	Total	34	97.1	100.0	
Missing	9	1	2.9		
Total		35	100.0		

Source: Questionnaires to teachers, 2015

The findings about capacity building of teachers are further demonstrated by Figure 1. The majority of teachers disagreed to have participated in the Student Teacher Enrichment Programme (STEP), a programme under the BRN aiming to improve teachers' competence on   teaching.
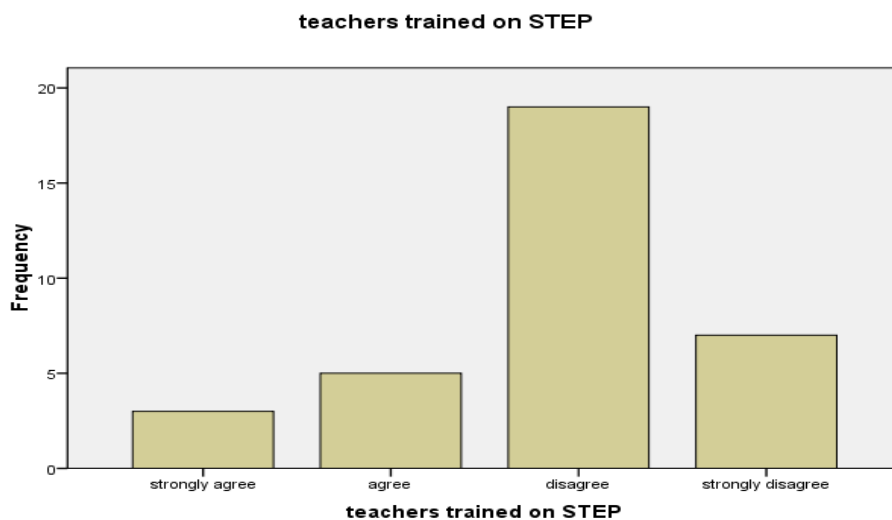

Figure 1. Training about the STEP

Source: Research data, 2015

 Despite the fact that majority of the teachers have not trained on various issues regarding the implementation of the BRN, evaluation g of learner progress took place. However, findings shown in Table 4 show that 60% of teachers did not understand the mechanisms for evaluating the BRN programme. Documents reviewed too indicated that evaluation was conducted in some of the schools visited.

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Table 10. Evaluation mechanism for the BRN known

		Frequency	Per cent	Valid Per cent	Cumulative per cent
Valid	strongly agree	4	11.4	11.8	11.8
	Agree	9	25.7	26.5	38.2
	Disagree	9	25.7	26.5	64.7
	strongly disagree	12	34.3	35.3	100.0
	Total	34	97.1	100.0	
Missing	9	1	2.9		
Total		35	100.0		

Source: Questionnaires to teachers, 2015

ii.   Training of non-teaching staff

Results indicated that the majority of non-teaching staff had not been given any type of training concerning the implementation of the BRN programme. Of all 16 non-teaching staff who participated in the focus group no one had got training on how to implement the BRN programme. But, despite the fact that they had never attended any training, many had responsibilities and participated in meetings where some major decisions were made.

Alternative ways to improve the implementation of the BRN

Findings on alternative ways of improving the BRN implementation are as follows:

i.   Further training

Various respondents suggested further training about the BRN. Further training was mentioned 20 times by different respondents. Some teachers recommended training in various issues including teachers   frequently to be sent to seminars, teachers to be given short courses on the new teaching approaches and teachers to be given adequate information about the BRN. School heads as well recommended further training as a way to make the BRN sustainable. The DEO likewise suggested the training of school heads at a specialised leadership training institute; The Agency for the Development of Educational Management (ADEM) so as to provide them with competencies in various skills in school leadership matters.

Deputy school heads as well proposed training as a measure for sustainable implementation of the BRN. For example, a   deputy school head 9 demanded: "…when the BRN was introduced… only the school head was told…we need more education…" Deputy school head 13 recommended: "education about BRN is highly needed...many of us here we know it through mass media...teachers highly need to be informed about BRN".

ii.   Motivation

Motivating school leaders and members of staff, also students, was mentioned by different respondents 8 times. Issues suggested by respondents about motivation included: timely promotion of the teachers; increase teachers' salary; teachers to be paid all salary arrears; motivate both teachers and students; the need for hardship/extra duty responsibility allowance to both teachers and school heads.

iii.   Meeting various school needs

Meeting various school needs' for a sustainable implementation of the BRN programme was mentioned 36 times and matters raised include: government needs to work on adequate funding; employing adequate science teachers; availability of teaching and learning materials; rehabilitation of various school buildings and/or construction of teachers' houses; construction of students' hostels; employment of laboratory teachers; installation of electricity in schools; and provision of food to students in day/community secondary schools. Figure 2, 3 demonstrate various needs school needs, particularly associated curbing truancy of students.
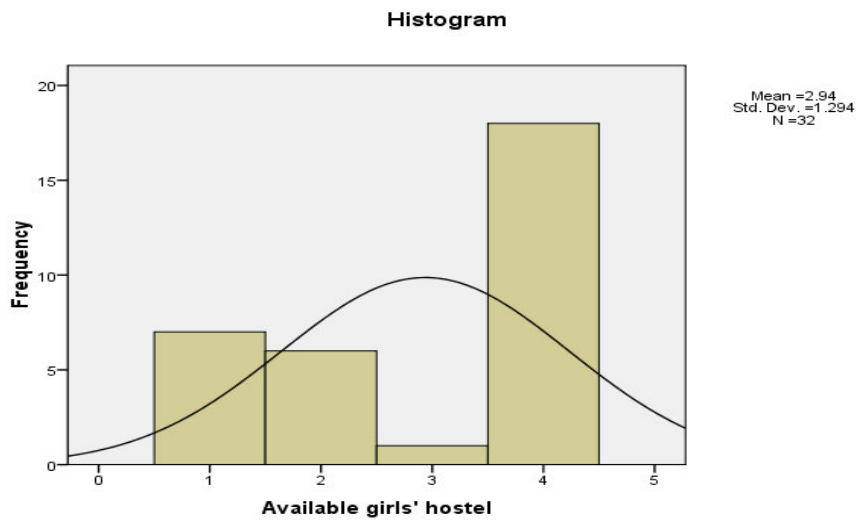
Availability of girls' hostels

Figure 2. Need for Girls hostels

Source: Research data, 2015

Data in Figures 2 and 3 shows negatively skewed normal curves, which verifies that many respondents did not agree that schools possess students' hostels. Therefore, these two figures substantiate information from both the focus group and interviews about demands for student hostels as a necessity for better outcome of the BRN and the sustainability of the programme.
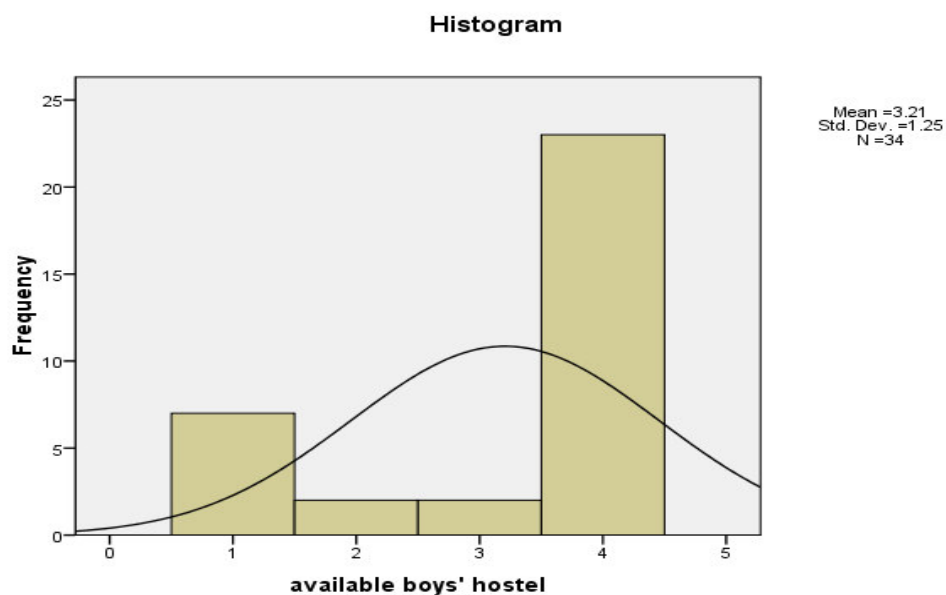
Availability of boys' hostels

Figure 3. Need for boys' hostels

Source: Research data, 2015

iv.   Involvement/ bottom-up approach

 The involvement of people at the bottom was mentioned 10 times. Some respondents observed:

I think in leadership, it is a better ideas to come from the bottom to top, but, when the ideas comes from the top to the bottom problems must occur. Just like how the BRN is, it is the programme that is top-down, hence difficult to be implemented. (Deputy head 11)

v.   Professional autonomy

Professionalism was mentioned 5 times. Various respondents demanded professional autonomy so as to make the BRN programme successful and sustainable. The following was raised in the focus group and in the face-to-face interviews: teachers to be given full authority; professionals should be left alone to implement BRN; and avoid political intervention. For example, one respondent said:

Teachers should be given full authority on dealing with students' …disciplinary issues…but students should be heard, and if possible could appeal if not satisfied…You know Mr. researcher, before giving a student punishment, for example to be expelled from school the case passes different organs, e.g. disciplinary committee, then I do not see the possibility of not taking care or listening the student…sioni ambapo mwanafunzi anaweza kuonewa/ I do not see the possibility of a student not to be given right. (Deputy head 6)

But, one school head had different idea about the role of politicians. She/he saw politicians having a role to play on furthering BRN objectives:

Involvement of political leaders…I wish we had a meeting with academicians and political leaders so that we can discuss how we can support each other on various plans for implementing the BRN. (School head 8)

Discussion

School leaders' knowledge about the BRN programme

Results on school leaders' knowledge about the BRN revealed that heads of schools, deputy heads and members of the school had a certain degree of understanding about the programme. Various school heads understood the BRN as the programme aiming to: improve academic performance; creating a favourable school's environment for learning; ensuring the availability of teaching and learning materials; and motivating teachers. Further, the BRN required schools to use money properly when making various purchases. Also, the BRN aimed at mentoring newly employed teachers in order to reduce the negative attitude of the teaching profession. The programme was also understood as focusing at making a close supervision of the teaching and learning process in schools and adhering to various guidelines brought by the Ministry of Education.

The project as well investigated the knowledge about the SIT. Findings about the SIT revealed that many of school heads owned the guideline (SIT) for implementing the programme. However, significant results from two school heads about school heads' understanding of the SIT revealed that in principle the document did not bring in new things, as things in the SIT were not different from those the schools used to implement before the introduction of the BRN.

The results suggest that school heads had general knowledge about the programme. Various heads of schools got knowledge from seminars and/or short courses. These findings are verified by the document from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MOEVT, 2013:1-3). However, a large number of school heads got information about the programme from the meetings where they were briefed by the DEO or REO. Thus, it could be argued that school heads had a general understanding about the BRN issues that needed to be implemented. But, many did not agree that the knowledge they had was enough and that they could act as trainers to their deputies and other members of staff in their schools. A different subject that could be raised is about their understanding about all issues in the SIT, as only a few of them had attended formal training about the BRN, merely 66.3% of school heads from all secondary schools in Tanzania had formal training about the BRN (MOEVT, 2013: 1-3). Therefore, it is more likely that many were working with little understanding about the main guide for implementing the BRN programme.

Findings also showed that many deputy heads had general understanding about the BRN. Many understood that the BRN aims at increasing performance: conducting extra teaching /remedial classes; teachers working hard so as to meet set objectives; teachers to prepare schemes of work, lessons plans, using teaching aids; making sure

teachers attend classes, give enough assignments, and tests. Unfortunately, results revealed that majority of deputy heads did not understand what the SIT looked like and were not aware of the details of it. Therefore, these findings might imply that deputy heads as key supervisors of the day-to-day activities of the schools' implementation of the programme failed to effectively supervise the implementation of the programme.

Unexpectedly, the majority of members of the SGB had no detailed knowledge about the programme, besides, to understanding of the SIT. Findings indicated that no one had seen the document and no one knew what was in that guide. The main reason for the lack of the understanding of the programme and its associated document is because majority members of the SGB were neither trained nor attended any course and/ or seminar about the programme. The implication of these findings is similar to that of deputy heads, as supervision of the school activities were most likely be ineffective because they were just relying on their previous experiences.

Key areas in which school leaders are trained to implement the BRN

Areas in which school heads were trained consist of: general information about the BRN; school bursaries; school inspection; procurement procedures; school leadership; mentoring; staff evaluation using OPRAS forms, cross cutting issues and subjects covered under the BRN [Mathematics, English, Kiswahili and Biology]. However, findings from the MOEVT document showed a big difference from that mentioned these were: School Improvement Toolkit (SIT); School Incentive Scheme; Official School Ranking; National 3R Assessment; 3R Teacher Training; Student Teacher Enrichment Program (STEP); Basic Facilities Construction; Capacity Grants; and Teacher Motivation (MOEVT, 2013:2). One possible explanation about the difference of findings between the face-to-face interview and the documents regarding what was actually trained could be that what was planned to be trained and what actually heads were trained differed.

The investigation from the deputy heads indicated subsequent areas in which they were trained to implement the BRN: Competency Based Teaching (CBT); preparation of English schemes of work and preparing lesson plans; science practicals; and methodology of teaching students with visual impairments. However, it of interest to note that the majority of the deputy heads had never attended any the BRN seminar or short the BRN course. Therefore, it appears that many deputy heads possibly relied on information from their school heads to understand and / or lead the implementation of the BRN requirements.

Regarding the SGB, results revealed few members of SGB attended a seminar where issues to do with teachers' responsibilities and increasing learners' performance was taught. It is most likely that only a few demands of the BRN were known by the members of the SGB, as only few issues were covered in the seminar: besides, only a few members had an opportunity to attend that seminar. Consequently, these results imply that majority of members of the SGB would be very ineffective in leading the implementation of the BRN; otherwise leading the implementation of the programme will be backed much by the experiences they possess.

The extent to which teachers and non-teaching staff are trained

Findings from questionnaires showed that 68.6 per cent of teachers understood what the BRN programme is. Besides, results from the focus group showed that many teachers obtained information about the BRN mostly from their school heads or from their deputy heads. But, the majority of teachers had no formal training about the BRN either from short courses or seminars. This supports the findings from the MOEVT document whereby just 4,064 (6.2%) secondary teachers in Tanzania had been trained (MOEVT). Nevertheless, it is of interest to note that many teachers were involved in planning; discussion of new ideas in meetings; discussing issues to be sent to school board meetings; monitoring learners' progress; and evaluation of learners' performance. Therefore, it can be argued that many teachers' participation in a variety of school matters concerning the BRN was not effective as they had limited competencies due to lack of training, otherwise, their effectiveness relied on earlier experiences.

Results from questionnaires also indicated that among the non-teaching staff, 14 out of the 14 (100%) who participated in the focus group had had no training on how to implement the BRN programme. However, findings further showed that several of non-teaching staff were members of School management Team (SMT); some held some positions like librarianship, accountants and store keepers. Also, they were also involved in planning. Examining the results, it can be said that lack of training to the majority of non-teaching staff limited their competencies in implementing the BRN, or possibly used their previous experiences in the process of the implementation of the programme. Thus, it can be argued further that their participation in different planning and decisions activities was inadequate as they lacked concrete knowledge about the BRN programme, possibly the planning competence. But, if they had learned before, they participated effectively.

Limitations of the study

The following were some of the limitations of the study. One of them is the small number of the non- teaching staff involved in this research project; the reason was that many community secondary schools did not have non-teaching staff. Consequently, the small number of non-teaching staff limited the availability of much data sought from this category of the BRN implementers. Furthermore, inaccessibility to members of SGB (who are key persons and leaders in schools) limited data collection about their knowledge, understanding and skills they possessed about the BRN programme. Another limitation of this study was lack of prior studies about the BRN programme in Tanzania. To the best of our knowledge we could not find similar research on the issue we investigated.   Not having similar studies limited the comparison of results to earlier studies and the conclusions reached in the present study.

Conclusions

Generally it can be concluded that both the implementation and sustainability of the BRN programme could be full of uncertainties, due to the incompetence of many of the leaders and implementers. The sustainability of the programme might also be uncertain whilst it is implemented in a top-down manner, as many of the leaders and implementers believe in the bottom-up approach to planning. However, the present research was worthwhile doing and the findings are interesting, as they illustrate well the difficulties of a country trying to implement education reform in a system which lacks the capacity for effective development and improvement. Yet, reforms such as this are needed, and the lack of capacity should not stop the endeavour as the implementation might to a certain degree base of earlier experiences and expertise possessed by the implementers, although capacity building of both the leaders and implementers is inescapable.

Recommendations

The following recommendations may be for improvement of the current practice:

- Capacity building of school leaders and other members of staff is needed, in order to make them competent to lead and implement the BRN programme.

- Involvement of the programme-implementers right from the beginning of the programme could enhance the implementation of the programme, because implementers will see the programme as theirs. As the country is so diverse; the programme could have been introduced as a pilot project in some areas in Tanzania.

Reference for further research

It is most likely that this study is the first in Tabora Municipality since the BRN introduction in the country in 2013. Thus, recommendations for further work are as follows:

- A qualitative research about the necessity of building capacity of school leaders regards the BRN programme to be conducted whereby interviews, observation and documents to be used.

- The effect of support staff involvement in school leadership for successful and sustainability of the BRN programme could be investigated.

- The effect of professional autonomy regarding successful implementation of the BRN programme could be researched.

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