

Understanding the Policy Changes on Education System and its Implications: A Case of Tanzania Education Policy of 2014

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ABSTRACT

This paper aimed at analyzing stakeholders' understanding of the 2014 policy change in Tanzania and its reflection on the education system. A sequential explanatory design was employed, and a mixed-methods approach was used to collect data. The Southern Highland Zone was selected out of eight marked zones; within this zone, the survey involved three regions, namely Mbeya, Rukwa, and Katavi. A sample size of 192 participants was selected through cluster and purposive sampling to assess stakeholders' understanding of the education policy changes and their implications on the education system. Data collected through interviews and questionnaires were analyzed using content analysis and SPSS version 20, respectively. The findings revealed a limited understanding of the policy changes among respondents across various categories, whereas interview participants demonstrated a deeper grasp of the policy in place. Stakeholders exhibited a mixed and partial understanding, raising concerns about the extent of policy ownership among those affected. The paper recommends non-crony public education efforts on policy changes to foster broader ownership and more effective implementation of education reforms.

KEY WORDS: Policy Advocacy, Policy Changes, Policy Implications, Policy Implementation, Stakeholders' Understanding.

1 INTRODUCTION¹

Over the past six decades, Tanzania has undergone substantial reforms in the education policies to cope with social, economic, and political changes taking place globally (URT, 2014). The impetus behind education policy reforms is attributed to a belief that education is an asset that can turn the population into a blessing to its nation by enabling them to participate in economic opportunities (UNDP & URT, 2015). A good education system, however, is the product of a good policy because policy determines the education landscape in the country (Baker & Wiseman, 2009). The education policy cycle, from its inception to implementation and evaluation draws public attention inasmuch demands for education services are becoming a priority of every citizen (Haddad & Demsky, 1995).

Public understanding of education policy is imperative to drawing stakeholders' attention and

participation in the policy process (Stachowiak, 2013; Weible et al., 2011). Olssen, Codd, and O'Neill (2004) argue that policy ownership is a result of understanding texts about the policy in place from three actors: researchers, policy authors, and recipients or implementers. In the context of the cited argument, a thorough understanding of the policy is a key determinant of stakeholders' feelings about it, as such determines levels of collaboration in the implementation process. Nevertheless, during the implementation process, a policy is regarded as a vehicle of communication for power and resource sharing among different education stakeholders and actors in an attempt to meet social demands (Speldevinde, 2013).

Guided by the punctuated equilibrium and advocacy coalition framework theories which suggest that policy change typically unfolds over a decade or more, this paper evaluates stakeholders' understanding of the Tanzania Education and Training Policy (TETP) of 2014 and its implications for implementation. The TETP of

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2014 represents a key public policy designed to provide holistic education under a unified framework, serving as both a guiding instrument and a mechanism for allocating resources and power within the education system (URT, 2004, 2014). According to Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith, 1999, p. 119 as cited in Dziengel (2010), information and financial costs impact judgments when it comes to changing policy, thus it is important to take into account the involvement of individuals from various public and private institutions who are familiar with the issue. The theories take into account community change initiatives and make the case that the best way to view policy change is through the interactions of legislators, advocacy groups, administrative bodies, and interested parties who work together to create coalitions and constructive working relationships.

Broader literature highlights education policy implementation as a complex process that requires effective coordination among diverse stakeholders. Without clear targets and adequate institutional capacity, reforms risk stagnation or failure (Viennet & Pont, 2017). In Africa, education systems often face persistent challenges such as resource limitations, weak institutional capacity, and resistance to change, reflecting a long-standing tendency to emphasize policy formulation over implementation (Katherine, 2016). These barriers point to the need for a balanced approach that combines top-down directives with bottom-up, community-driven initiatives.

Participatory and community management interventions enabled through decentralisation, knowledge diffusion, and active stakeholder engagement have proven effective in improving educational outcomes. Evidence further shows that combining strategies, rather than relying on a single reform pathway, produces more sustainable improvements in education quality in developing countries (Masino & Niño-Zarazúa, 2015). Policy reforms should not only be advanced, well-designed reforms but also focus on strengthening inclusive review processes, governance structures, and capacity-building mechanisms to ensure effective implementation.

The paper highlights the essence of stakeholders' understanding and involvement in the policy process and the influence thereof in the implementation of TETP of 2014. Concerning the policy communicative roles, Bell and Stevenson (2006;2015) argue that a policy must be understood in three parameters: as a text, discourse, and trajectory. This implies that for TETP of 2014 to achieve goals, actors must understand the original meaning of the policy, the scope, and context of the policy, and the life span whether short or long-term policies. It may be regarded that stakeholders' understanding of the TETP of

2014 has profound implications in implementation.

The policy process in Tanzania is akin to the technocratic model, which is centralized and rests solely on rational prowess. The argument put forward by Buchert (1997) on account of education policy formulation in Tanzania has explicitly informed that the process excludes the majority of stakeholders because of the language used in the policy drafting as well as the technocentric approach to data collection, presentation, and soliciting improvement comments. While technocrats are important in the policy process, it is plausible to fall victim to undesirable policy or policy that does not meet social needs.

The tradition of policy review in Tanzania has been marked with multilevel stakeholders' participation and normally would occur at a considerable long time, on average seven years. TETP 2014 review process has been initiated in a very short time of policy implementation, but also the forces of reviews came from the government itself. Moreover, there was doubts about the policy within government implementation machinery cum the short life span of the policy and the one-sided directional force for review. This raise concern for a study to examine the quality of TETP 2014 and stakeholders' understanding of this policy (Ndalichako, 2018; HakiElimu, 2021). The key question to the study was what is the education stakeholders' understanding of TETP changes in the education system? The research paper aims at examining the empirical evidence on stakeholders' understanding of TETP of 2014 and the implications in the implementation process.

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Tanzania Mainland from three regions: Mbeya, Rukwa, and Katavi. Tanzania mainland is part of the United Republic of Tanzania; in East Africa. The study adopted an explanatory sequential design for fieldwork execution. Through a mixed approach and pragmatism philosophical paradigm, qualitative and quantitative data were collected from 191 participants in two phases. In the first phase, questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data from 150 respondents who were selected through the multi-stage cluster sampling technique.

During cluster sampling, a total of six district councils were sampled from three regions, in the first stage, followed by re-sampling five secondary schools from each district council which lead to a total of thirty secondary schools involved in the study. Finally, teachers and ward education officers were selected through simple random sampling from sampled schools and wards within which schools fell respectively. Moreover, heads of schools were selected purposefully when their

school fall in the sample pool. During the second phase, structured and unstructured interview methods were used to collect qualitative data from 42 participants who were selected to take part in the study through purposive sampling. According to the explanatory sequential design protocol, quantitative data are first collected and analysed followed by collection and analysis of qualitative data in which themes are developed (Bullock, 2017; Creswell, 2013; Hesse-Biber & Johnson, 2015).

2.1 Data Analysis

Open-ended questionnaires from 150 respondents were read thoroughly by a researcher to develop codes. Similar codes were put together into categories, whereas different codes were treated as unique cases worthy of consideration. The categories of concepts were later collated to form themes based on the differences and similarities. Codes and resulting themes were communicated to supervisors and experienced researchers at Mbeya University of science and technology for authenticity. Later, closed-ended questionnaire responses and themes developed from the open responses were coded into statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) software version 20 to run descriptive analysis to identify extreme themes. Themes were bases for the purposive sampling of cases to interview during phase two to gain a deep understanding of the quantitative findings that arrived from the first phase of data analysis.

2.2 Results

Stakeholders' Understanding of Tanzania Education Policy of 2014 Changes on the Education System

The main objective was to examine the stakeholders' understanding of Tanzania's Education and Training Policy (TETP) of 2014 changes in the education system. To arrive at dependable findings, five pertinent areas to elicit understanding from participants included; ascertaining the understanding of objectives of the TETP of 2014, means of acquiring information concerning TETP of 2014, good things from TETP of 2014, the doubtful issues from TETP of 2014, and uninteresting issues from TETP of 2014.

Views on the Objectives of the Tanzania Education and Training Policy Of 2014

Open-ended questionnaires were administered to 150 respondents to elicit views on the understanding of the objectives of TETP of 2014. Through content analysis by searching latent and manifesting meaning from codes, six themes were established as presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Thematic Statistics on Objectives of TETP of 2014 (n = 150)

Themes	N	Mini	Maxi	Sum	Percent (%)
Don't understand the objectives of the policy	150	0	1	25	8.80
Free education for primary and secondary education	150	0	1	55	19.37
Effective management of education	150	0	1	98	34.51
Sustainable funding of education	150	0	1	12	4.23
Education for lifelong learning	150	0	1	39	13.73
prepare sufficient human resources for development purposes	150	0	1	55	19.37
Valid N (listwise)	150			284	100

Source: Field Data (2021)

Table 1 shows that out of 284 (100%) response cumulative frequency; on one hand, the majority, 98 (34.51%) responses referred to effective management of education as an objective of TETP of 2014. On the other hand, sustainable funding of education was least referred by 12 (4.23%) responses regarding objectives of TETP of 2014. The remaining four themes were relatively referred to, falling in between 8.8% and 19.37% responses from a cumulative frequency.

The study further inquired the rationale for extreme thematic results to have a thorough understanding of the views on policy objectives. During phase two, interview findings disclosed that TETP of 2014 objectives intends to ensure that the education system operates as one complete system where each sector of education connects to the other. Interview findings further disclosed that the TETP of 2014 presents holistic education management to ensure smooth coordination among education leaders across different education sectors when compared to past education policies in Tanzania. Besides, interviewees perceived that the policy aimed at consolidating the private and public sectors to provide education in the country.

However, interviewees admitted that what is currently happening in the implementations process is contrary to the policy they anticipated. One interviewee from NGO argued:

The way I see from the ongoing implementation of TETP of 2014 is an attenuation of private sector investment in education provision. I was one of the task forces that spearheaded the formulation process. One of the key elements espoused from the policy concerning the model of education management was to establish

education regulatory authorities that could oversight education provision in both public and private sectors. This is not happening now. The government, which is also education provider is has been acting as a regulator. This is a threat to the survival of private sector investments in education provision (NGO national leader 1).

Moreover, from interview findings, the idea of effective education management as a major policy objective was attributed to expanding access to education opportunities, emphasis on equality in accessing education opportunities regardless of the socio-political, socio-economical classes as well as rural-urban differences. One interviewee elaborated:

There could be any language used depending on the class of people you visited. I can assure you; it is the policy attempting to uplift the poor families to have the education. Although the policy as a document is not accessible to the majority, explain well to them they will tell you it is a free education policy as if no other issues are being addressed in it (Region Education officer 3).

Interview findings concurred with the findings from respondents during phase one on the direction of improving education management as a major goal of TETP of 2014. However, the extent of education management is perceived differently between phase one and phase two findings. While phase one respondents were myopic on the management criteria, the interviewee seems to be conversant of the concept of education system management.

Source of Knowledge about the Education and Training Policy of 2014

Closed-ended questionnaires were administered to 150 respondents to ascertain the source of knowledge about TETP of 2014. The findings are presented in Figure 1.

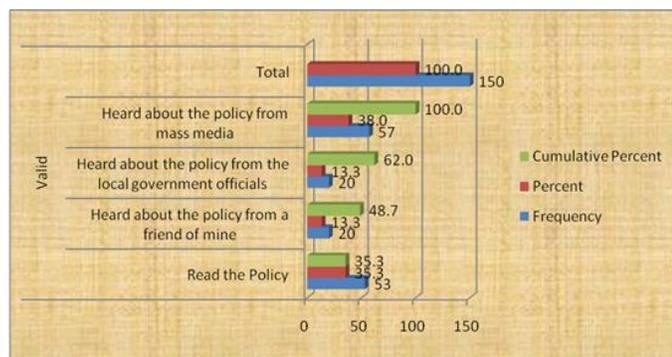


Figure 1: Sources of Knowledge concerning TETP of 2014
Source: Filed Data (2021)

Findings from Figure 1 show that out of 150 (100%) respondents; the majority 57 (38%) believed that mass

media was the popular source of knowledge about TETP of 2014. The Figure further reveals that about 53 (35.5%) respondents referred to reading the policy as the second major source of knowledge on TETP of 2014. Moreover, friends and local governments officials were the least referred sources of knowledge among respondents concerning the TETP of 2014.

The findings from the interview in the second phase also supported that there has not been enough effort to disseminate the policy content to stakeholders. Interview findings revealed that the TETP of 2014 document is available online on the ministry of education website but also hard copy policy document is available to some of the stakeholders, more especially government officers in local governments.

Among interviewees, the source of knowledge on the TETP of 2014 was through reading, through parliamentary proceedings, and in mass media, notably radio and TV broadcasts. In one account on whether the policy is available and accessible to the public one officer regrettably commented:

The policy is available in the ministry website and also for us education officers we have the hard copy which is our road map in delivering education. However, I must admit that reading is not our culture, as you may find that even our heads of schools might not be aware of the policy and if they do, very few of them are conversant of its content. So, if the situation is like that for us, who are implementing it, what will be the case for the public who are not dealing directly with education issues? I am quite sure that the public are not accessing the policy, and even what they know is through mass media and education forums when they visit schools in education weeks (district education officers 5).

Consequently, similar views concerning the lack of enough efforts to disseminate the policy contents among stakeholders were reported from other interviewees. Despite the local government leaders' and officers' involvements in the policy implementations process, it was found that the information shared with the public was favourable to political environments. It was conceded:

The main sources of knowledge on the policy being implemented are politicians and local government officers like education officers and councillors. Sincerely, they are giving information in part about the policy and that is why many citizens know that it is the policy of free education. Much of the policy content is not well known by the public even within officers in higher levels like regions and ministry (NGO national leader 3).

The findings from interviewees and questionnaires respondents inform that mass media, reading, and local government are notable avenues through which the public gets information on education policy issues.

Views on what is good about Tanzania education and training policy of 2014

Open-ended questionnaires were administered to 150 respondents to look into what is good about the TETP of 2014. Through the content analysis technique, five themes were produced as presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Thematic statistics on good things from TETP of 2014

Themes	N	Mini	Max	Sum	Percent (%)
Improved curriculum in primary and secondary education	150	0	1	60	25.32
Equal opportunities to access education by all groups in a society	150	0	1	88	37.13
Free basic education lower direct education costs to parents	150	0	1	51	21.52
Government and private sector collaboration in providing education and training	150	0	1	16	6.75
Nothing good	150	0	1	22	9.28
Valid N (listwise)	150			237	100

Source: Field Data (2021)

Findings in Table 2 reveal that about 237 (100%) cumulative frequency was recorded from five themes concerning good things from TETP of 2014. According to Table 2, the majority 88 (37.13%) responses pointed out those equal opportunities to access education by all groups in society were the best thing from the policy. Moreover, respondents referred to 60 (25.32%) responses, the improved curriculum in primary and secondary education as the second good thing from the policy. Other Issues of reduced direct education costs to parents, and government and private sector collaboration in providing education were acknowledged but least referred may be compared to the first two.

Unequivocally, the majority of responses pointing out that equal education opportunity among citizens is a good thing from TETP of 2014 was partly supported by the interviewee findings in phase two. According to interview responses, issues of economic, social, and political changes coupled with globalization, were inevitable forces to reform education policy that would consider widening access opportunities in all education sectors.

However, among interviewees, perception regards what is good about the TETP of 2014 was contentious. Some regarded policy of 2014 as good because of the scalable dimension in the education system from pre-primary to tertiary levels and improved curriculum. Others admitted that the TETP of 2014 has nothing good as it was haphazardly formulated, composed of too

general policy statements. For example, one officer strongly commended:

In the previous education policy, children from poor families and those in rural areas were deprived of educational opportunities. When you seek admission for your child in primary school or even in secondary school, you were supposed to be prepared to pay many contributions. This was a burden to parents of low income. But this policy has provided room even to the poor families; their children will get education up to form four. I congratulate the government for bringing to us this policy, even when your child passes to form one no worries again, it is a matter of buying school uniform and exercise books, then the rest our government has paid (Regional education officer 2).

Apart from expanding the threshold to access basic education by offering fee-free education, the interviewee commended the flexible education system as another good thing from the TETP of 2014. They argued that integrating middle colleges and Vocation Education and Training (VET) education as part of formal schooling and under the same ministry was credited as a good aspect of the policy. It was elaborated clearly that, "One good thing from the current education and training policy of 2014 is the including middle colleges as part of formal education which gives graduates multipurpose avenues when they graduate" (District education officer 7).

Views on doubts concerning the Tanzania education and training policy of 2014

Furthermore, the study inquired on stakeholders' doubts concerning the TETP of 2014. Respondents were required to respond on open-ended questionnaires to elicit doubts concerning the policy. Following the content analysis, the findings on seven themes were formed as presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Thematic statistics on respondents' doubts concerning TETP of 2014

Themes	N	Mini	Max	Sum	Percent (%)
Low quality graduates	150	0	1	86	23.76
Too cost full to implement it fully	150	0	1	91	25.14
Education structure supporting six years primary education	150	0	1	15	4.14
Ordeal in post-primary education opportunities	150	0	1	25	6.91
Threaten private educational institution survival	150	0	1	16	4.42
Not publicized to many education stakeholders	150	0	1	52	14.36
Too wordy lacking evidences	150	0	1	77	21.27
Valid N (listwise)	150			362	100

Source: Field Data (2021)

Table 3 reveals that about 362 (100%) cumulative frequencies were recorded for seven themes concerning respondents' doubts on TETP of 2014. On the one hand, the finding reveals that major doubts from respondents were concerning: the cost of implementing the policy 91 (25.14%); low-quality graduates, 86 (23.76%); too wordy policy lacking implementation evidence, 77 (21.27%) responses which represents 254 (70.16%) of the total thematic responses. On the other hand, the least doubts were on the education structure proposed in the policy, ordeal on post-secondary education, and threat to private sectors investing in providing education (Table 3). Moreover, findings reveal that the policy was not publicized.

Interviews findings on the cost of implementation as an extreme theme were divided; some supporting while others ignoring the cost factors. Interviewees doubting the costs argued that although education is one among three priority budget areas, the amount being allocated to education is insufficient to implement the fee-free education in the country and other many optimistic policy statements.

The outlook from the interviewee who ignored finance costs as limitations to the policy was supported by the decision-makers group during the interview. Decision-makers asserted that financing education is not an issue because it is in the state budget. They further reported that, by collaborating with local government authorities and various stakeholders including parents, infrastructures are being raised now and then. One interviewee argued:

We are very good at writing. Most of our policies are very good and well-formulated but lack implementation plans as such they fail in the implementation phase. I also doubt the implementation of the policy because most of the time we are driven by political ambition rather than professionalism. For example, we have a policy in place, and in just the middle way we are told to introduce a subject on the history of Tanzania: Under what curriculum and of which education policy? To my understanding, although I have not read it thoroughly, it is a good policy like other public policy only that it might not be implemented to meet the desired goals (Researcher 4).

Likewise, one interviewee challenged issues regarding costs as an impediment to the implementation of the TETP of 2014. According to an interviewee:

One of the doubts about implementability of the 2014 education policy is its generalized statements. Many if not all of the policy statements are too general to comprehend giving room for many interpretations. For example, the policy is not specific on the entry age into formal schooling, no specific statements on how the private sector will participate in the financing of education, no

specific explanation on the use of language in the teaching and learning process, no clear-cut criteria on qualifications needed to teach each sector of education, even the concept of education without payment, and so many areas. The policy is full of promises but in reality, they are far to be comprehended by those liaising the implementation process. At least the policy of 1995 was specific on its statements, not this one it is too ambitious in content (NGO national leader2).

Interviewees who regarded financial costs as non-limiting factors pointed out other factors that may impend policy implementation: regular changes on education policy imposed whenever there is a change in political regime, lack of implementation plan such as implementing the policy before the legal framework, political ambition over professionalism, and technocratic on the policy process, Policy ignorance among stakeholders and lack of policy focus and priorities.

Views on uninteresting issues concerning TETP of 2014

The study intended to find out what we're uninteresting issues from the policy. Through the content analysis technique on open-ended questionnaires, five themes were determined as presented in Figure 2.

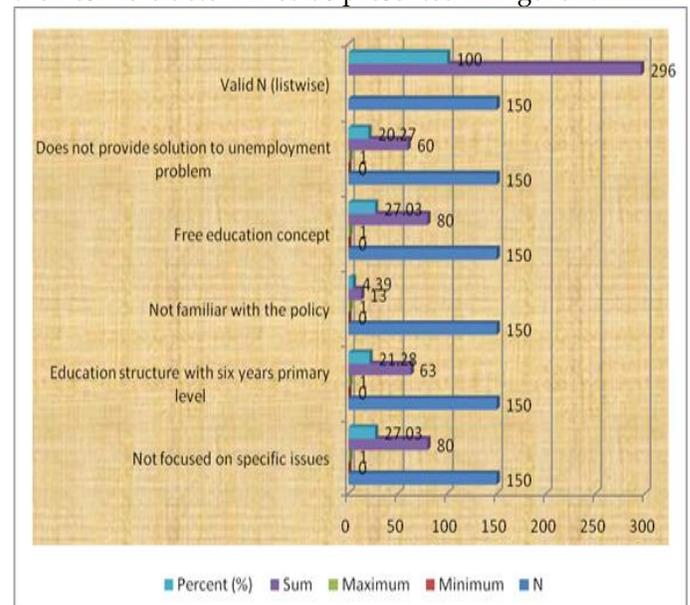


Figure 2: Uninteresting issues from TETP of 2014

Source: Field Data (2021)

Findings in Figure 2 reveal that about 196 (100%) cumulative frequencies were recorded from five themes regarding uninteresting issues from TETP of 2014. The findings further reveal that respondents were not interested with a policy lacking focus and a free education concept referred by 80 (27.03%) responses, followed by education structure with six years in primary level referred by 63 (21.28%) responses. Moreover, the findings reveal that no familiarity of the policy content 13 (4.39)

was referred least compared to other themes.

Nonetheless, findings from interviewees supported respondents' views not interested in the concept of fee-free education as espoused in the TETP of 2014. Experience from interviewees pointed out that fee-free education in the basic education cycle is ambiguous and less understood among stakeholders and implementers. One interviewee posited:

The policy has posed a loose pocket for parents' contribution in school development hoping the government can cater for every cost in running the school. I doubt that what is being remitted by the government is not sufficient to run the school effectively, while parents are so relaxed in the name of free education. In this context, policy implementation may not achieve the intended goals (Ministry level officer 2).

Despite policy position to reduce direct education costs to parents, the concept of fee-free education stated in the policy and ongoing implementation experience over the same concept was an attribute to the uninteresting attitudes among respondents.

3 DISCUSSION

In this study, volumes of the data were collected from the field in two consecutive phases in line with the explanatory sequence design. The first phase involved key policy implementers within the education system stemming from the school level and the second phase involved decision-makers within the education system as well as key and experienced education stakeholders invariably involved in the policy implementation process. Analysis and discussion fall within the views, opinions, and attitudes of participants concerning research question themes.

Tanzania Education and Training Policy Objectives

The findings supporting effective education management as a major policy objective concurred with the TETP of 2014 statements stipulating that effective supervision and management of education and training in the country are among the policy objectives. Supervision and management aimed at unifying supervision and management of education and training under one umbrella of the ministry responsible for local government and regional administration (URT, 2014). The findings of the study on major policy objectives were further supported by the recent report on education we want in Tanzania (HakiElimu (Tanzania), 2021), that among other issues, it is reported that the policy is commended by stressing the importance to have a national education framework entered on vision, missions, and objectives reflecting contemporary social, political, and economical issues.

Respondents understanding of the policy objectives was myopic and incomprehensive. When one looks at thematic responses, it is manifested that effective management of education was measured on the aspect of access to education opportunities, ignoring the quality and cost of education provision that must be explicitly stated in the policy. This was also the case from interview findings which revealed that effective management objective is encapsulated on the majority access to education and no other aspects relating to the educational provision in a country. The findings disclosed that there is no sufficient understanding of TETP of 2014 objectives, inhibiting understanding and awareness of policy changes on the education system among stakeholders.

Sources of Knowledge Concerning Education Policy in Tanzania

Although it was not in the scope of the study to analyze media responsible for disseminating policy content for advocacy purposes, findings from interviews informed that TV, radio, and websites have been used interchangeably on TETP of 2014 policy advocacy. The role of mass media on policy changes and implementation advocacy is one of the features explicated in ACF and punctuated equilibrium theories adopted in this study.

According to ACF theory, the media's role is to create heightened attention to individuals and subsystems on changes that need public understanding and support (Weible et al., 2011). Likewise, the punctuated equilibrium theory asserts that the roles of mass media are to heighten attention to the public on the perceived needful changes (Cerna, 2013; Stachowiak, 2013). Furthermore, Several works of literature report that mass media is a believable tool for sensitization, motivation, transformation, and shaping of the policy process (Fayoyin, 2017; Mangal, 2020). What is not clear in the findings is what type of information the sources have been sharing, as the findings contradict already established findings on understanding policy objectives. Overall, the study disclosed that findings on sources of information on understanding TETP of 2014 implied that those sources were crony, failing to play proper advocacy roles on policy process as the majority of participants were not able to explicitly perceive changes regarding policy objectives.

Good Things from the Policy

Equal opportunity aspects were explained in the context of a flexible education system purported in the policy on the following areas: a) extending basic education to compulsory ten years, b) incorporating pre-primary education into formal education, and c) statement of fee-free basic education cycle (URT, 2014). The TETP of 2014 position is that all children of school-

going age will have opportunities to go up to lower secondary education without any limitation provided that they are admitted in the public school system.

The findings on equal education opportunities for all as reflected in TETP of 2014 are aligned with education Agenda 2030 and SDGs 4. Goal four of SDGs refers to education for sustainable development, which among other things emphasizes for quality education to the majority is regarded as a strategy to prepare agents of change for sustainable global (Leicht, 2018). From the interviewee and content analysis, it was disclosed that one of the strengths of the policy change on the education system was to make the education system scalable through deliberate policy settlements on the provision and financing of basic education in Tanzania.

Doubts Concerning Tanzania Education and Training Policy Of 2014

The findings in support of non-financial limitations were further supported by the recent policy brief report on TETP of 2014. According to the report, limitations include the lack of policy consistency with the national philosophy, education, and training. Others include lack of involving adequate research evidence on policy formulation, more promises that are difficult to fulfil, providing questions in its introductory part but failing to provide answers or direction therein, lack of focus on education sectors, and implementation of the policy before the enactment or amendments of the relevant education Act to enforce its implementation (HakiElimu, 2021).

Generally, the findings on doubting issues from TETP of 2014 disclosed that costs relating to policy implementation were not major impediments to implementing the policy. The major doubt, however, relies on formulation of the policy, involvement of stakeholders, clarity, and focus on the policy statements. The findings disclosed that policy implementation under those foresighted doubting challenges may not achieve its anticipated goals.

Uninteresting Issues from the Tanzania Education and Training Policy of 2014

According to the TETP of 2014, basic education has to be provided without parents paying school fees, but that is the case for public schools only (URT, 2014, 2019). The governments' guidelines and regulations on the implementation of fee-free education seem to contradict the policy. One circular on implementation of fee-free education stated that the government has decided to provide basic education (from pre-primary to form four) without payment (URT, 2016) is not clear from the perspective of the policy in place which states that education to that level will be offered without paying fees. The policy statement seems to be contradicted by

government circular on delivery of education to the same level because without payment is not exactly without paying fees. Even among interviewees, they referred to the concept differently; some questioned whether it is fees-free, free education, or education without payment. Policy ambiguity is reported as one of the impediments to implementation. For policy to be successfully implemented, it should be well understood and owned by stakeholders (Bell & Stevenson, 2006; Viennet & Pont, 2017).

The doubt on the fee-free education concept is attributed to ongoing implementation practices which have resulted in an ordeal for implementers on the ground level. It has skyrocketed enrolment at the basic education levels leading to compromising education delivery milieu. The small amounts of money that do not meet the school budget and delayed disbursement have been reported as one of the impediments in implementing fee-free policy successfully (Khamati, 2013; Oketch et al., 2007; Twaweza, 2016). The findings, therefore, disclosed a mixture of understanding concerning the provision of basic education, which is the hub of any education system. However, findings inform that the policy the policy does not focus on content and context which might lead to a formidable situation for implementers and stakeholders.

4 CONCLUSION

The interpretation and discussion of the findings revealed that there is a perceptual variation on the understanding of the TETP of 2014 changes on the education system among participants. Little understanding is revealed among respondents of all categories as compared to interviewee counterpart who seems to have a deep understanding of the policy in place. A mixture and partial understanding revealed among stakeholders, in consideration of the quality and relevance of the participants that took part in the study information that there is little policy ownership among stakeholders. The implications of lacking a proper understanding of the policy among stakeholders which is one among factors leading to policy owners are likely to limit the successful implementation of TETP of 2014.

The study recommends that the government of Tanzania should ensure that stakeholders are well versed in the TETP of 2014 to make them owners of the policy. Furthermore, the study, in particular, recommends the following: a) The government should involve active participation from mass media, think tanks, activists, and researchers on policy formulation, right from the agenda-setting stage throughout the implementation stage, b) Mass media and other agents responsible for disseminating government information to the public

should play a non-crony role, to represent the public well on matters that need collaborative efforts and participation, c) Stakeholders who are aliasing policy at the grassroots should be given equal weight in the policy process, avoiding top-down policy models which centralize the decision-making process.

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Interview Guide for Decision-Makers

1. What is your opinion on the public understanding of the Education and Training policy of 2014?
2. Why do you think that it was necessary to formulate a new education policy for 2014 and not continue with the implementation of the ETP of 1995?
3. How will the ETP of 2014 improve the education system in a country?
4. How is the policy explaining ways of attaining quality education in a country?
5. What is the policy position on accommodating increased enrolments of students at primary and lower secondary levels?
6. How are the issues of sustainable education financing addressed in the policy?
7. What are your views on the successful implementation of TETP of 2014 and the stability of the education system under this policy?
8. What is missing in the policy that you think would be the potential to attain a better education system?
9. What are the strengths of the new policy that may be taped to emancipate the Tanzania

education system?

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for Teachers, Heads of Schools, Ward Education Officers

A. Introduction

My name is Enerico John Sumbizi, a Ph.D. student at the Open University of Tanzania. I am delighted to inform you that I am researching the Tanzania Education policy of 2014, titled: **Education and Training Policy of 2014 Implementation Implications on Education System in Tanzania: A Reflection from Selected Stakeholders in Mbeya, Rukwa, and Katavi Regions.**

To accomplish this task, I have considered you one of the useful personnel to voluntarily take part in the study. I, therefore, request you to go through this questionnaire and complete it according to how you believe and your experience with the topic under study. Kindly be assured that all the responses you will provide will be taken with maximum confidentiality. The responses will be used for academic purposes and not otherwise.

I appreciate your participation and express my gratitude in advance.

B. Questions for Responses (For option responses, cycle the answer and for blank space fill in the space provided in brief)

1. What are the objectives of the new Tanzania education and training policy of 2014?
2. How did you come to know about the Education and Training Policy of 2014? **(Tick the answer)**
 - a) I read it
 - b) I heard about the policy from a friend of mine
 - c) I heard about the policy from the local government officials
 - d) I heard about the policy from mass media
3. What is good about Tanzania education and training policy of 2014?
4. What is your doubt concerning the Tanzania education and training policy of 2014?
5. What are the issues that you are not interested concerning the new Tanzania education and training policy of 2014?

C. Likert Scale for Special Groups

Based on what you know today about Tanzania's Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 2014, what are your opinions on statements in column 1 in the tables below? (Rate the statement by putting a tick on the response that corresponds to your opinion whereby Definitely Yes=5, Yes=4, Not Sure=3, No=2, Definitely No=1)

1. There is a fair understanding of the Education and Training Policy of 2014

Statement
a. Objectives of Tanzania ETP of 2014 are well known to the public
b. Policy objectives are well understood by the public
c. The process of formulating ETP of 2014 was open to the public
d. ETP of 2014 has a good relationship with previous education policies in Tanzania
e. ETP of 2014 is better when compared to the previous education policies in Tanzania

f. ETP of 2014 is being used fully on daily operation in the education system
g. The policy is very clear on the entry age in the formal education system
h. The policy has put in priority Mathematics, science, and technology as strategic subjects throughout the system
i. The policy is open on the language of instructions
j. The policy has specified the roles of stakeholders in its implementation process
k. There is nothing new in the policy but just a paraphrase of the previous education policies in Tanzania
l. The policy has specified management and supervision of the education system from the ministry, region, district, ward, and school level