Progress of the implementation of the learner centered approach in Tanzania

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Abstract

Many developing countries have adopted the learner centered approach to be employed during the teaching and learning process. The purpose was to implement the educational practices guided by the learner centered approach to improve teaching, learning, and performance of students. This paper discusses the development of various educational programs that are guiding educational practices in Tanzania. It describes the aims of these programs in supporting the educational provision. The execution of the learner centered approach encounters various challenges. The observation indicates challenges that have been affecting teachers, students, and the system of education. In addition, this paper explains the educational transfer and borrowing of educational programs from overseas. It describes the instructions and suggestions on how to make a quality curriculum and its implementation. It ends by presenting the suggestions of educators on how to improve the implementation of the learner centered approach in the Tanzanian context.

Key words: *Implementation, Constructivist theory, Learner centered approach, Educational provision Educational practices, Educational transfer*

Introduction

Education provision in Tanzania in the early years after independence was still rooted in the colonial education system. The practices include more theory than practical and the process of providing education was based on racial and socioeconomic stratification. Due to the foregoing challenges, the first President of Tanzania the late Julius Nyerere founded the Education for Self Reliance (ESR) in 1967 as a philosophy and policy that would guide the provision of education. Tanzania like other African countries has been reforming the historically common teacher centered approach which applied traditional methods of teaching and learning and adopted the learner centered approach. This new approach seeks to promote creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving skills in the students. Many countries have been applying this approach and are demonstrating various experiences and reflections in the change and implementation processes (Kawishe, 2016).

In the teacher centered approach the teacher is the master and is respected to a high degree and believed to know the information/ideas best for students. The students are regarded as passive and empty vessels that always wait for an expert (ie teacher) to fill them with knowledge. Students are expected to follow all the information from the teacher to learn the content of the subject matter. This approach is characterized by the traditional methods of teaching such as formal lectures, seminars, and examinations. In general, students in the classroom normally sit quietly and neatly (de la Sablonnie`re, Taylor, Sadykova, 2009, Jabbour, 2013). The experience showed that students do not learn much just by sitting in class listening to teachers and memorizing information presented by teachers. Students should talk about what they are learning

and interact effectively in the classrooms as it is guided by the learner centered approach. This approach requires teachers and students to modify their thinking and actions towards the provision of education. Teachers should put emphasis on students prior knowledge and use them to orient, guide, and activate students learning. The teachers role in the learner centered approach is that of acting as a facilitator of the learning process. Thorpe (2010) provided reasons to make use of student centered approach. It builds student-teacher relationships, it promotes peer communication and active learning, it strengthens student motivation, it is responsible for student own learning.

The development of learner centered approach is founded on the characteristics of constructivist theory. According to Ebanks (2010), the constructivist theory is said to have a direct connection to the learner centered practices. It is surely a learner centered theory. Henson (2003) supports this point when he asserted, "the constructivist theory is also called a learner centered educational theory" (p.8). This theory emphasizes that learning is an active and constructive process. Students individually or socially are constructing meaning and understanding through active participation and interaction during the lesson. Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde (1993) attempted to have the constructivist theory integrated into the operating curriculum to help teachers create an environment for students to construct knowledge and meaning. According to Fosnot (1989), when the constructivist theory is applied in the classroom, the students become self-directed and curious in investigating and reasoning. Schreurs and Dumbraveanu (2014) consider knowledge construction as the interpretation of new information using knowledge, experience, and examples students already know. They are actively involved in making meaning and building knowledge during the teaching and learning process.

This paper builds interest in the learner centered approach. It has been impressed by the suggestions made by various educational programs as well as the competence based curriculum. The implementation of the foregoing curriculum suggested for educational stakeholders and teachers to focus on the learner centered approach. The educational practices guided by this approach have been considered suitable and effective for improving teaching and learning as well as the students performance. This fact has been supported by scholars who comprehended that learner centered approach is productive as it causes a positive influence in teaching, learning, knowledge retention, and students performance (Froyd & Simpson, 2008). In addition to the same perspective, some of the principles of the learner centered approach presented by the American Psychological Association (APA, 1997, pp.3-5) have been supporting this educational approach.

The development of various educational programs that are guiding educational practices in Tanzania

The Ujamaa Philosophy of Julius Nyerere, the Arusha Declaration, and the Education for Self Reliance policy had a great impact on the Tanzania education system. The Education for Self Reliance policy was launched in 1967 in conformity with the Arusha Declaration. The philosophy and policy adopted to guide the provision of education in Tanzania. It brought about a big educational reform that made a great impact on the planning and implementation of education processes. It emphasized more adjustment in the curriculum to enable students to learn practical skills that after graduation, they become useful to themselves, society, and the nation as a whole. Education for Self Reliance policy asserted that education must not be separated from

day to day life of society, but should reflect the problems and challenges facing the citizens. It should instill in students social values, prepare them for responsible life in society, make them critical thinkers and empower them to be able to face the challenges of life. It aimed at proving that success in life is not passing cognitive examinations and getting academic papers, but one must have practical knowledge, creativity, and productivity (Mayawu, 2016).

Education for Self Reliance policy highlighted the meagerness of the inherited education system and suggested several necessary reforms (Mushi, 2009). The policy focused on the development of a democratic society characterized by high-minded individuals who are creative, problem solvers, who can adapt to different environmental and socioeconomic contexts. The policy proposed education that promoted students critical and independent thinking. It needed the curriculum transformation in both content and pedagogical approaches. There was a need for a curriculum to be modified on the teachers and students daily life. Teachers needed to engage students actively during the teaching and learning process (Kawishe, 2016).

One of the largest reform attempts of Education for Self Reliance was the 1974 Musoma resolution which put forward three strategy reforms that were intended to correct the prominent problems of Education for Self Reliance. These were the Universalization of Primary Education (UPE), reformed requirements for university admission, a stronger emphasis on the integration of vocational training with academics to better prepare graduates at all levels for both employment and further education (Block, 1984). The Musoma resolution was a replication of Education for Self Reliance values and philosophy and its major reforms were designed to increase the prevalence of ESR activities and the vocational element in diversified secondary education. During the implementation of UPE, primary education was made compulsory to all who had reached seven years hence there was a massive enrolment of students along with the establishment and expansion of schools.

Another step to revamp the provision of education in Tanzania was done by the Presidential Commission on Education (Makweta Commission) in 1982. The commission intended to investigate the education system and come up with recommendations on curriculum, subject structures, assessment criteria, and curriculum reforms (URT, 1982). The recommendations together with the goals of the World Declaration on Education for All (EFA) and other international conventions necessitated the government to take initiatives to improve policies and programs of education. One of them was the Education and Training Policy (ETP). The policy outlined a vision of education to enable students to develop self-confidence, inquiring mind, and the skills necessary for improving the quality of life (URT, 1995). The ETP policy has later updated and elaborated in a new phase of a government policy called the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP). This program has five main objectives such as (i) expand access to primary education (ii) improve education quality at the primary level (iii) increase pupils retention and completion (iv) improve institutional arrangements (v) enhance capacity building for efficient and effective delivery of education services. It aimed among others to transform the education system into outcome based education (URT, 1997). This program emphasized student centered instruction. It focuses on measuring student performance through the outcomes which include knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

To achieve the international goals of educational reforms, the government of Tanzania initiated the Development Vision 2025 (URT, 1999). The vision is intended to equip peoples with knowledge, attitudes, skills of improving productivity and competitiveness. It proposes to have people with higher and better levels of knowledge and expertise who can respond and

adjust well to the challenges and opportunities of the world of work (URT, 1999). The vision sees education as a tactical change agent so "education should be treated as a strategic agent for mindset transformation and the creation of a well-educated nation, sufficiently equipped with the knowledge needed to competently and competitively solve the development challenges which face the nation" (p.19). The vision insisted on the structuring of the education system and curriculum. It influenced the competence based curriculum. The curriculum insisted on the application of the learner centered approach in the classrooms. Students should be engaged actively in their learning. They should be given opportunities to demonstrate their abilities to perform what they have learned. To achieve implementation of the learning approach and improve students performance, the curriculum should incorporate some pedagogical changes in teaching and learning to accommodate outcome based learning. It emphasizes what students should be able to do by the end of the lesson (Sumra & Katabaro, 2014; TIE, 2009).

This is to confirm that competence based curriculum and learner centered approach put emphasis on the outputs. In order to consider an individual to be competent, we consider: What the individual is able to do (these are the technical skills that the individual possesses) and How the individual approaches his/her practice (this includes attitudes, ethical issues, responsibilities, decision-making skills, etc). Therefore, educators wanted to see the outputs from schools and universities have the appropriate knowledge, attitudes, skills, and experiences applying for socioeconomic development. In general, the competence based curriculum and the learner centered approach have been introduced for responding to societal needs, advances in technology, and globalization. Furthermore, the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) started in 2001. It has four major components such as enrolment expansion, quality improvement, capacity building and optimizing human and financial resources, and institutional arrangements. From the outset, PEDP recognizes that all four components are important, that they are inter-dependent, and that they need to be pursued together. Likewise, in the year 2003, the Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP) has established. It had five program areas such as improvement of access, equity improvement, quality improvement, management reforms, and management system improvement. SEDP has thus been drawn up to serve as the framework for supporting the development of secondary education (URT, 2004; URT, 2006).

In the year 2005, Tanzania officially introduced a competence based curriculum that guides the development of competences during the teaching and learning process. The new curriculum attempted to improve the quality of education that enabling students to develop competences relevant to life (Komba & Mwandanji, 2015). To achieve that the education sector has been addressing issues such as teaching approaches and the emphasis was on the learner rather than the teacher (Salema, 2015). Learner centered approach is linked to educational characteristics of inquiry-based science teaching, students intrinsic motivations in science learning, and students engagement in critical thinking skills. These aspects support students being involved in active learning. Teachers are required to respect the authorities and engaging students effectively in critical thinking skills. The classroom context needs to be less restrictive and allows students to engage in various ways using resources from the surroundings (Mkimbili, 2018).

Learner centered approach which follows a constructivist theory has been embraced by most educational policies implemented in Africa. The theory and approach emphasize the students participation and interactions during the teaching and learning process. According to the curriculum in Tanzania, the teaching and learning methods include the following methods: classroom based problem solving and inquiry, demonstration, posing problems as well as solving

those set by the teacher, practice of technical or laboratory skills, debates, group discussions, and analyzing case studies (MoEVT, 2005, p.30). These teaching and learning methods are learner centered and customarily insist on students active participation during learning. It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure students are facilitated successfully.

In Tanzania, teachers have been implementing the curriculum that supported the learner centered approach. In this case, it was stated clearly by the ministry responsible for education that the implementation of the curriculum should emphasize practices guided by the learner centered approach. This is to say that, teachers in the classrooms have been instructed to facilitate classroom practices promoting this approach. It was mentioned to be appropriate because it can assure effective teaching and learning practices. This shall enable students to acquire the requisite knowledge and skills and hence improve their performance in the national examinations (Inter-agency Commission, 1990; Doyle, 2008). Nevertheless, Schweisfurth (2013) showed that learner centered teaching has not thus far proved to be a simple approach applying in teaching. It has been confirmed by previous studies which report problems encountered during the implementation of this paradigm in various national and cultural contexts. Several characteristics linked to the education environment have been stated as the cause of these problems.

To ensure effective implementation of the learner centered approach in the secondary schools in Tanzania, the Ministry and other agencies responsible for the provision of education support, guide, and monitor the process by providing instructions to stakeholders to help perform their duties well. The stakeholders make sure schools have fitting resources and infrastructures to translate and transfer the curriculum goals into real educational practices (MoEVT, 2005, 2009). In addition, the ministry of education employs qualified teachers for teaching purposes. Teachers typically trained in different areas of education to impart them with theories and principles of education, foundations of school curriculum and psychology, knowledge, and skills in teaching, mastery of the subject matter, and classroom management (URT, 1995). The curriculum implementation process considers teachers as the main agents who are required to do and follow some guidelines to achieve the lesson objectives. They have an obligation to perform various functions everyday in the school and classrooms. These functions include: identify students learning needs, plan the lesson, design and use teaching and learning materials, prepare the subject matter, and apply proper teaching methods. Also, assess the progress of students learning, ask if students acquire the intended knowledge, skills, and attitudes, and reflect on how well they facilitate learning practices. Teachers are required to translate the curriculum into the teaching and learning experiences, select and decide the materials to teach, and help students achieve the learning outcomes (MoEVT, 2005, 2009).

Specifically in Tanzania, since it introduced an outcome based curriculum the national examination performance of form four students has been deteriorating for several years. Educational stakeholders have mentioned several reasons as the cause. Among them, is the misunderstanding of the new curriculum and syllabus, lack of enough materials such as books and science laboratory equipment, weakness in the school inspectorate department (HakiElimu, 2013). One of the reasons for poor understanding of the curriculum is the teachers did not participate in the curriculum development process. They directly received instructions from the experts (HakiElimu, 2013; Meena, 2009; Komba & Mwandanji, 2015). Teachers were not involved in the processes of curriculum change. Consultation for curriculum change was only made to school inspectors, district and regional education officers (Nyamtondo, 2012). Educators

cited in (Nihuka & Ambrosi, 2012) argued that the curriculum reform of teacher education applied mainly the top-down method and teachers were not fully involved. This paper concurs with the educators above because it is true that if teachers are not properly involved in new educational change and innovation, it might be difficult for them to build good knowledge as well as employ proper methods in the classrooms. Teachers as the primary implementers need effective orientation to gain an understanding of what they are required to execute. This problem is happening in many countries including Tanzania, and surely, it affects teaching, learning, and student performance.

The progress of implementation of learner centered teaching indicates that teachers encounter various challenges in the course. The educational approaches from abroad bring problems to teachers. In this regard, Paulo (2014) observed pre-service teachers did not execute competence based and learner centered teaching and assessment properly. The implementation of curriculum showed that classroom teaching, learning, and assessment remained traditional in many schools contrary to the demands of competence based curriculum. Also, lack of orientation to teachers on the reformed curriculum and poorly resourced learning environment are among the problems encountering the implementation process. A study indicated that teachers showed to have knowledge of competence based education and the most preferred teaching techniques are question and answer, problem solving, project development. However, it was revealed that no changes have been made in terms of assessments (Lukindo, 2016). Likewise, both teachers and students in public and private secondary schools had a positive attitude in the implementation of the learner centered approach. They understand that this approach is appropriate for teaching, learning, and students performance. However, observation showed that students and teachers in private secondary schools were more active in the implementation of this approach compared to their complements in public secondary schools. Despite teachers more positive attitude on learner centered teaching, they did not apply authentic assessment methods like a portfolio, classroom/field observation, oral presentations, projects, interviews, and self/peer assessment (Salema, 2015).

Hardman (2009) proved challenges happened and how they affected the implementation of the curriculum. The scholar advocated the new pedagogic approaches as learner centered, group work, role-play, project, and debate. However, there was little evidence on the real application of these practices in the classrooms. Concerning the field trip, it was revealed as worthwhile in schools. It can have a profound impact on both students and teachers as they can be exposed to new environments. It enhanced the learner centered approach in schools to increase interest, motivation, creativity in learning, and increased performance. However, teachers from the public schools were not conducting field trips due to a lack of funds (Ngailo, 2019). In addition to the same perspective, Kawishe (2016) showed that lack of funds is the main cause of poor implementation of these methods. In this case, projects and field trips are applied but they are very rare because of its expenses. Based on the foregoing situation teachers tried to use methods like group discussion, debate, and subject clubs and apply field trip when materials are within or close to the school. Teachers used to improvise the available materials and produce suitable educational materials. Therefore, the methods used by teachers are working to improve students' success. The methods are more learner centered and thus there should be serious improvements to help the learning approach facilitate learning as it should be.

HakiElimu (2011) and Kafyulilo et al. (2012) discovered the curriculum changes to learner centered teaching did not match or cope with changes in teaching materials and resources. This

deficiency affected the utilization of this approach. Jidamva (2012) reported about the teachers lack of innovative/creative skills in improvising the teaching materials. Teachers added that they do not know how to gain these skills. Kalinga (2008) revealed that many schools lacked essential information resources like libraries. In this case, school libraries were found to be deficient in local textbooks reflecting the Tanzanian context for teachers and students to update their knowledge (Nihuka & Ambrosi, 2012). This is to say that, many of the textbooks have been ordered from overseas. They did not explain clearly, what will be the circumstances in the case of the Tanzanian environment. As a result, knowledge connecting to the Tanzanian context has been missing. Other findings reveal that teachers have positive perceptions of the use of learner centered teaching approach. Challenges include the large class sizes, limited time, overloaded syllabi, lack of relevant teaching and learning resources, sporadic in-service professional development of teachers/tutors, and incongruent assessment and inspectorate policies. All these hinder the use of learner centered teaching approach in classrooms (Nyamtondo, 2012; Lukindo, 2016; Suleiman, 2016; Collin, 2019). Another study presented some predicaments against the implementation of learner centered teaching. They include language barrier, curriculum design, teacher shortage, lack of both in-service training for learner centered teaching and cultural context-specific curriculum relevance (Mtitu, 2014).

Another study found that teachers largely used the teacher centered approach because they encountered challenges such as insufficient instructional materials, overcrowded classes, and poor proficiency of French which seemed to prevent them from effectively applying learner centered approach. Although many teachers had received training in the learner centered approach, their actual understanding of the approach was questionable (Iddy & Chiwanga, 2017). In the same view, most of the mathematics teachers prefer teacher centered approach in mathematics teaching and learning compared to learner centered approach. Reasons for that preference are time, insufficient classroom space, and shortage of mathematics teachers which lead to the heavy workload to mathematics teachers, pressure from the National Examination Council of Tanzania to put much emphasis on completing the syllabus than teaching methodology, perception of mathematics teachers to learners, shortage of mathematics teaching and learning resources, teachers level of education and the use of English as a language of communication (Cosmas, 2019).

Vavrus et al. (2011) argued that teachers teach the way they were taught. Therefore without proper initial training, it might be difficult for them to change and apply learner centered teaching. The foregoing problems affected many teachers and further observations indicated that there are little efforts to assist teachers to gain correct teaching methods. On the same token, Meena (2009) found teachers who agreed to use learner centered teaching practices, but in the classrooms, they performed differently. In interviews, they claimed to employ learner centered practices though the observations from the real practices showed that the teacher centered approach still dominated teaching. Nihuka & Ambrosi (2012) discovered that teachers normally like to apply learner centered teaching. For example, they agreed to ask questions, employ jigsaw and discussion methods. However, real classroom observation showed teaching is mostly chalk and talk methods. Wangeleja (2003) clarified that although teachers were trained to use learner centered teaching, they still apply traditional practices (Kafyulilo et al., 2012).

The findings by Mkimbili (2018) revealed that students rarely engaged the higher levels of inquiry. The contextual challenges constraining include limited resources, language barriers, facts-based examinations, teachers knowledge and beliefs with regard to inquiry-based science

teaching, and hazardous chemicals used for experimentation. Furthermore, it was difficult for students to be engaged in critical thinking skills, such as problem solving, open-mindedness, backing claims with evidence, and asking questions for clarification, due to contextual cultural challenges, particularly the distance between education authorities and teachers and between teachers and students. Teachers are more authoritative, they can hardly share power with students. This expectation creates a classroom setting that cannot adequately facilitate students engagement in critical thinking skills. With all the above research and efforts, scholars have confirmed that teaching in Tanzania has generally characterized by didactic and teacher centered methods that use rote memorization as the main method (Barrett, 2007; Vavrus, 2009; Kawishe, 2016). The education system has been continuing to emphasize that schools and teachers should employ learner centered teaching practices as stated in the syllabus. The learning environment needs to be organized to boost the use of these practices.

Paulo (2014) conducted a study of pre-service preparedness to implement learner centered teaching methods. The educator indicated that despite pre-service teachers awareness of the teaching methods applied in the implementation of competence based curriculum, the majority of them were not able to employ most of the prescribed learner centered teaching methods. Kafyulilo et al (2012) found that despite the high level of awareness on the competence based teaching approaches, pre-service and diploma teachers were unable to facilitate teaching using the approaches they aware with (Salema, 2015). Such behavior of teachers failing to apply the suggested learner centered teaching methods has occurred to many teachers in several countries. It might be caused by various reasons among them include lack of deep understanding of these methods, teachers are not ready to use new methods, lack of resources and facilities, students prefer traditional methods, in general, the learning environment does not favor/support the learner centered teaching methods.

Other scholars showed their reactions to what is going on in Tanzania regarding the policy transformation towards learner centered teaching. It is as if nothing much has been improving in the education system as it had presumed. Based on this situation, Vavrus and Bartlett (2013) stated that "Tanzania, like many countries, appears to be strong on policy development and weaker on policy implementation" (p.24). This fact is to perceive that countries adopt policies and practices from abroad but the problems happen during the actual implementation. The learning environment showed failing to support programs from overseas. In some areas, teachers and students were observed to be not ready to apply learner centered teaching. In this case, Jidamva (2012) emphasized that to attain quality education there are circumstances, situations, and challenges that need improvement. A good method is to share information from various researchers that describe appropriate learner centered practices to improve teaching, learning, and student performance. Thus, research should have considered as one way of dealing with educational challenges and difficulties.

As part of its industrialization and development goals, the Government of Tanzania on November 27, 2015, issued circular 5 which implements the Education and Training Policy 2014 that introduced the fee-free basic education policy which provides free basic education from primary up to secondary school level. Fee-free education refers to education that is funded through taxation or charitable organizations rather than tuition funding. The circular is stating that: Provision of free education means pupils or students will not pay any fee or other contributions that were being provided by parents or guardians before the release of a new circular (MoEVT, 2014). Fee-free education is one strategy to eliminate the problem of

exclusion and marginalization of the children, youths, and adults to have access to education. The strategy responds to the global declaration of human rights and opportunities to have access to education. For example, the strategy is one of the 2000 Dakar's objectives to achieve universal primary education and the development and education strategy reforms of Millennium Development Goal focus on poverty alleviation.

Educational transfer and borrowing of educational programs

The concept of transnational educational transfer can be defined as the movement of educational ideas, policies, and practices across international borders. It is the umbrella term designs for ways in which ideas, policies, and practices move from one national setting to another (Schweisfurth, 2015). It includes the movements of scholars across national boundaries to research the foreign national educational systems. It makes more educational research activities among educators from various countries. These activities make the established borders between comparative education and other educational disciplines to become much more permeable (Little, 2010). In connection to educational transfer, educators have been borrowing programs to improve the education system at home. The process of borrowing refers to policy and practice relocation from one nation to another. It is uttered as an intention to adopt a way of doing things as it was observed abroad and normally occurs at any level (local, institutional, regional, national) (Phillips & Ochs, 2004).

The educational research explained the transfers were taking place on the global, national, local, and institutional scale. They might occur in all the expected research contexts. Scholars confirmed that the European educational structures and practices of schooling have transferred and implemented in many societies (Edwards et al., 1973). This is to clarify that many countries borrowed educational programs from Europe because they discovered to be effective for the teaching and learning process. Education systems that aim to students achievement have been implementing programs from overseas. The successful implementation enables education systems to impart to students appropriate knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Students possessing these characteristics are needed for socioeconomic development. Schriewer (2012) stated that educational policies and practices could be transferred from one nation to another, but it needs first to be scrutinized in more detail. The examination is a proper method because borrowing is not copying (p.170). It means that the countries borrowing these policies or practices should conduct analysis and not just acquire every aspect/step as it is. This process helps to identify policies or practices and the existing situation and see how to fit in these aspects properly. It helps to avoid problems that might happen during the implementation. This is what various educators lack and thus they need knowledge so that to conduct borrowing successfully. For example, Cowen and Kazamias (2009) described the problem of transfer that occurred in South Africa and Namibia. The main problem was how to indigenize the constructivist theory and learner centered teaching. It involves confusion in the meaning, contents, and effects of the planned changes that do not reflect the local classroom cultures and realities.

Despite good intentions to improve the education systems, the reports in different countries revealed that there are many obstacles and challenges to transnational transfer and borrowing of policies and practices. Cobern (1996) observed the trend to adopt educational programs in science education caused confusion and controversy in many countries. Schweisfurth (2011) explained one of the reasons for bewilderment is the cultural assumption of learner centered

teaching which disagreed with the local context. Other barriers have affected different receiving countries but more for the so-called lower and middle-income countries (Schweisfurth, 2013). Other programs were misunderstood and badly implemented (Hughes & Urasa, 1997). These trends indicated the presence of complexities and challenges facing the transfer of knowledge and educational programs across international and national contexts and borders (Sears & Hughes, 2005).

Alexander (2000) admitted that borrowing educational programs from one country to another is effective but it encounters the problem of focusing a little on cultural matters. This view makes the process to import educational practices a temptation. Wolhuter (2015) said one of the problems of educational transfer is the immediate borrowing of educational practices without trying to think about the contextual differences between the countries. There might be several factors and components that need enough time to scrutinize and organize so that the educational practices from abroad could be executed smoothly. Lor (2015) added that if the context from which the borrowed policies or practices are very different from the context of the recipient country the borrowing might finally fail. The scholar gives an example of the failure of the outcome based education in South Africa. Educators reported similar results that show the poor implementation of the curriculum. For example, O'Sullivan (2004) thought the learner centered teaching as a Western approach which might not necessarily transfer to countries such as Tanzania where there limited resources and different learning cultures. Alam et al. (2013) perceived educational programs from abroad lack a link to the local contexts, values, teaching, and learning practices.

There are many educational contexts where the implementation of overseas programs, curricula, and practices showed to be unsuccessful. It was because educators in several national and cultural contexts lack the appropriate knowledge of transnational transfer and policy borrowing. They conducted these processes without comprehensive analysis on how programs transfer and work in the receiving context. It might be the reason causing poor policies and practices adoption as well as its implementation. Refer challenges occurring in several nations on how to implement policies or practices successfully. The abovementioned concepts have been connecting to the adoption of the learner centered approach which is initiated and introduced from abroad. This approach has been recommending by educators as being more effective to improve the educational provision. It was expected to improve teaching, learning, performance of students and also solving problems in an education system. However, Tanzania like other countries is experiencing problems in implementing practices guided by the learner centered approach. So educators need a correct understanding of transnational transfer and policy borrowing. They should adopt ideas, policies, and practices that have to be implemented smoothly and effectively. Overall, the analysis of transnational transfer and borrowing of ideas, policies, and practices reveals complexity. It shows the lack of agreement between the incoming programs and the existing learning environment. Programs from abroad were found to lack an appropriate educational environment to work successfully. This makes the implementation of learner centered educational practices meet obstacles in the course. This state of affairs needs educators to suggest methods that will help to improve the educational provision.

Instructions and suggestions on how to make quality curriculum and its implementation

The development of the implementation of educational practices guided by the learner centered approach demonstrated various challenges and problems in an education system. Therefore this paper found that it is better to consider some instructions and suggestions that have been explained by Stabback (2016) regarding the quality curriculum. The document tried to present some characteristics that might help to develop and implement the curriculum successfully. In this perspective, the curriculum is a description of what, why, how, and when students should learn. The curriculum seeks to achieve worthwhile and useful learning outcomes for students and to realize a range of societal demands and government policies. It is in and through the curriculum that key economic, political, technological, social, and cultural questions about the aims, purposes, content, and processes of education are resolved. The education policy statement and the curriculum reflect a broader political and social agreement about what society deems of most worth which is of sufficient importance to pass on to students. The main objective of a quality curriculum is to enable students to acquire and develop the knowledge, attitudes, and skills, and associated capabilities and competencies, to lead meaningful and productive lives. Key indicators of curriculum success include quality of the learning achieved by students and how effectively students use that learning for their personal, social, physical, cognitive, moral, psychological, and emotional development. A quality curriculum maximizes the potential for the effective enhancement of learning. Good teaching and learning are greatly enhanced by the quality, relevance, and effectiveness of the curriculum (Stabback, 2016).

To learn well, students need consciously making connections between previous knowledge and new knowledge and skills, to apply the newly acquired knowledge and skills to real or simulated situations, and to value what they have learned-being, all the while, active participants in the learning process. According to Stabback (2016) a good quality curriculum encourages and expects students to Understand the purpose of classroom activities and participate actively in them; Know what they will learn and why, what the expectations of them are, and how they will know that they have learned well; Be open to new ideas; Be curious and willing to ask questions; Raise what they take for granted to the level of conscious critical scrutiny; Engage in assessing their own and other students learning; As well as learning the content and associated skills, understand how they accomplished this and try to become better learners; Support and respect other students efforts to learn. The foregoing ideas have a connection to the attributes of the learner centered approach. So the education system needs to consider and apply appropriately during the development and implementation of the curriculum.

Concerning the curriculum implementation, it refers to the process showing how the written curriculum is presented to students and how teaching, learning, and assessment happen. Education systems, schools, and teachers make numerous decisions as they translate the requirements and advice of curriculum documents into meaningful and effective learning activities in the classroom. Delivery would thus include all the decisions taken into practice so that student learning outcomes might be most effectively enhanced. Some would say that teachers do not implement a curriculum; they have rather understand and realize the curriculum in their contexts with their students. So teachers are critical in the curriculum implementation. They decide and adapt the learning content, activities, and pace that children need to move through the curriculum in ways that ensure they learn effectively. They need relevant advice from the teacher guides on adapting the curriculum to meet all learners needs. Teachers should be provided with guidance on how to plan learning and progression and on the kinds of classroom learning activities that bring the curriculum to life. The content of any topic in the

curriculum can, after all, be presented to students in an almost endless variety of ways, and teachers should be helped to create situations and activities, both in the classroom and beyond, that will make learning most effective (Stabback, 2016).

Education systems and authorities should support teachers and schools in their efforts to understand and implement the curriculum. A good quality curriculum may require teaching approaches to be more innovative than they might typically be in a particular context. For example, to encourage students to question, discuss and debate. A good quality curriculum may require an education system to change its definition of what constitutes a good teacher which may, in turn, have consequences for recruitment criteria, teacher professional development, remuneration, incentive and promotion schemes, and the monitoring of teaching effectiveness through for example inspection systems. An education system should encourage principals and head teachers to create school cultures that reflect the principles and practices of a good quality curriculum. To be effective and successful, a good quality curriculum requires resources and equipment. Education authorities should ensure that these are available and that they are distributed or allocated equitably. Education systems need to maximize curriculum support budgets and to ensure that schools are provided with the best possible quality teachers and resources (Stabback, 2016).

Suggestions to improve the implementation of the learner centered approach in Tanzania

The competence based curriculum has instructed teachers to employ learner centered approach during the teaching and learning process. This approach has been promoted by educational scholars that it can improve the teaching, learning, and performance of students. In connection to that, various educators have been researching to evaluate how the learner centered approach is implemented in schools. The progress indicates various challenges, problems, hindrances that are affecting the implementation of the learner centered approach. This is to say that the approach is not producing the required results as it has been expected by scholars and education systems. In this situation, educators, practitioners and this paper (Msesa, 2015; Kulwa, 2014; Mkimbili, 2018; Iddy & Chiwanga, 2017; Suleiman, 2016; Nyamtondo, 2012; Mombo, 2018; Collin, 2019; Cosmas, 2019; Ngailo, 2019; Mtitu, 2014; Sanga, 2016; Kitta & Tilya, 2010) have presented suggestions/recommendations to improve the educational provision. The purpose is to create effective teaching, learning, interactions, and performance of students. This will result in the development of the appropriate knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competences of students.

The suggestions/recommendations can be summarized as follows:
- For the appropriate realization of learner centered approach in the Tanzanian context, background and contextual factors, such as language, culture, contemporary issues, and resources, need to be considered when planning and executing teaching and learning.
- Learner centered approach should give the student maximum opportunity to be involved in the planning of what will be learned (planning for the classroom is an important part of effective teaching and learning).
- Learner centered approach should simplify the teachers work when they act as facilitators, guiders and students should be more active and interested in the subject.

- The use of relevant learner centered teaching such as utilizing locally available materials, utilizing open-ended questions, and linking those questions to students daily lives and contemporary issues, can make students intrinsically motivated in science learning and contribute to scientific literacy in the country.

- The government/ministry of education should ensure effective training for its teachers and the availability of relevant instructional materials.

- Many language laboratories should be built to give chance for students to put into practice the language and thus improve students understanding (Note that language is the greatest tool for communicating and language and learning goes together).

- The teacher-student ratio should be restricted to 1:40. This is because a good ratio will allow teachers to focus more on the needs of individual students and assist them in learning.

- Researchers revealed that learner centered strategies should be used to improve students knowledge, skills, and attitudes. They can make students creative, critical thinkers, active, and problem-solvers of their problems and problems of the entire society.

- Teachers should be involved in decision-making regarding the curriculum change because they are the ones who interpret, plan, and implement the curriculum in the classrooms.

- Many teachers need to be upgraded from a Diploma education level to Bachelor's degree level. This process will work because teachers with Bachelor's degrees are expected to have more knowledge, skills, and competences in facilitating learning to students.

- There is a need to address predicaments in the implementation of learner centered teaching approaches. These include class sizes, curriculum design, shortage of teachers, shortage of instructional resources and facilities, and the medium of instruction.

- Teachers need in-service training regarding the conceptual and theoretical understanding of learner centered teaching, its approaches, and application in classrooms, teacher's use of an integrated-formative evaluation and assessment approaches.

- Assessment is intertwined with learning, whereby various methods are used to collect evidence concerning students learning. The feedback plays a substantial role in supporting students learning.

- Ongoing professional development programs should be conducted to provide an effective strategy for enabling teachers to implement learner centered approach and other programs.

- Teachers need to be committed, responsible, collaborative, confident, disciplined, facilitators, and well trained.

- Students need to be cooperative, hardworking, active, creative, confident, and independent. They should develop a culture of learning.

- Ministry of education should improve the learning environment, teaching and learning materials, and resources, motivating teachers through seminars-workshops, salary, houses, incentives.

- TIE, NECTA, INSPECTORATE should collaborate and work effectively to support the development and implementation of the curriculum.

- Educational programs borrowed from abroad have not worked appropriately in the receiving countries. There might be some challenges that cause the foregoing experience. Deep scrutinization of the programs from abroad is needed before they are agreed upon and adopted in other countries.

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