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UNDERSTANDING THE EXTENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATIONAL PROJECTS IN ZANZIBAR, TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

Most of the projects initiated to solve community problems are reported to have been less sustainable and therefore fail to achieve community goals. Community involvement in project activities is seen to be one of the factors for project sustainability but it has not been considered in various project management phases. This study aimed at assessing the extent of community participation in educational projects in Zanzibar. Partnership model by Narayana (2002) was used in guiding this study. Cross-sectional design and mixed approach were employed. Purposeful, snowballing as well as simple random sampling techniques were employed to sample 123 respondents. Structured questionnaire, observation schedule and Focus Group Discussion was applied for data collection. Multiple linear regression and content analysis were used in data analysis. Findings show that, there is variation on the extent the community participates in various stages of the project phases. Demographic factors such as employment status, sex, and group were found to have different intensity of influence in different phases of project life cycle in relationship to community involvement in educational projects. It was therefore recommended that, strategies to be put in place for the community to be mobilized to participate fully in different stages of the project life cycle for better achievement of the project goals.

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INTRODUCTION

Community participation in school development has become a worldwide important phenomenon in formulating and implementing educational projects (Ngwano, 2010). From its essence, the contemporary development scholars and international agencies have been advocating for the inclusion of community in educational projects while the projects are initiated, prepared, appraised, implemented and evaluated (Mnaranara, 2010). For example, Sanders (2003) state that, community participation in designing and implementing projects help to bring effective social change and project sustainability. In addition, Mohammad (2010) in affirms that, the objectives of any project cannot be fully achieved unless the projected community meaningfully participates in its stages of development. It is therefore realized that the performance of any community depends on the shared efforts (Ejeh, 2005). In this respect, to bring quality development of any project established in school settings, the interactions among the elements school-community cannot be ignored.

For instance, UNESCO (2002) stresses that, a school which conducts projects like ICT needs to communicate effectively with the community members at every stage of the project development. Globally, shared conversation, negotiation, contribution and decision making between school authority and community on school concerns is believed to yield positive influence towards development of respective schools. The idea of effective school - community relationship is strengthened by many World Educational Forums, for example the Dakar agreement (2000), whereby, most countries had addressed their national interest to give local communities power in controlling and providing education, while donors use it as a factor of acceptance to finance educational projects. Hence, community is to be essential in supporting educational projects (Mbasha *et al.*, 2007). Moreover, the study conducted in China by Park and Wang (2006) revealed that, China's poor village investment program in education was based on participatory village planning between the China's government and households from poor villages including different groups, especially women groups. Daba *et al.*, (2010) state that, Ethiopian communities participated in construction of 87 additional classrooms and rehabilitated 98 old ones by contributing fund and labor. In case of South Africa, the

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situation was contrary, as Norman (2012) articulates that; community did not participate fully to make inputs and suggestions during the project initiation. In Tanzania, community involvement in educational practice is elaborated within national educational policy (TEP, 1995). The policy intends to decentralize education and training by empowering regions, districts, communities, and educational institutions to manage and administer education and training. The TEP statement on community participation has been interpreted in TEV (2025) which believes on favorable environment for community to participate in education delivery. In Zanzibar, community participation is viewed as a vital means to ensure efficiency and quality delivery of educational projects. Zanzibar Education Policy (2005) emphasizes the need for community consultation and ownership in educational projects.

To respond on this statement, every primary school in Zanzibar has a school committee which facilitates school – community relationship, local communities attempt in contributing essential education materials, building of new classrooms, and assisting in the management of schools. The ADF report (2011) states that, an alternative learning and skills development project in Tanzania, particularly in Zanzibar, intended to provide out of school youths with career skills. This study was established under the partnership model by Narayana Reddy (2002). The model is an alternative to Top–Down model of community participation in developmental projects. Through partnership approach, both, the government and community work together in planning and making decision that effect long lasting results. In this model, participation of community is viewed as a means and an end process. It is regarded as a means because of being a form of mobilizing people to get things done. And an end process since its outcomes is an increasingly meaningful participation in the development process. Hence, community participation in this model can be used to achieve material benefits from initiated projects or can lead to social development of the people such as empowerment, ownership, and independence.

Educational projects in Tanzania are reported to be ill-functioning because the key stake holders' interests, their utility and accountability are not fully presented in various stages of project development (Salim *et al*, 2007). Therefore, it establishes the need to study the extent of community participation in primary school development projects in Zanzibar. School administrators play minor role in encouraging and mobilizing the community in participating in school programs. For instance, they do not actively involve the community in fund raising and other school related projects (Erlendsdottir, 2010). There have been many educational projects in Zanzibar such as (ZEDP ,2007 -2012; ZSGRP I and II,2007 -2010, 2010 – 2015; respectively, TASAF I, II and III and TZ 21st project). However, the level and extent to which the community participate in these educational projects at a different phases of project life cycle has been less explored and not clearly stated. Specifically, this study, explored the extent to which community is involved in educational projects in Zanzibar.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed cross-sectional survey design, in which the subset of the population was selected and data were collected once without going back to the field. Both

quantitative and qualitative research approaches were employed. The target population for this study included T-Z 21 project's coordinator, TC Personnel, teachers, parents and students in five public primary schools within Mkoani District, in Pemba South region in Zanzibar. Therefore, the sample size of this study involved 123 respondents, including 5 School Heads, 50 parents, 40 teachers, 1 TC Personnel, 2 TZ 21 Project coordinators and 25 students. Purposive sampling procedure was applied in selecting five schools out of 20 primary schools available in Mkoani District, the project coordinators, head teachers and TC Personnel. Moreover, parents were sampled through snowballing sampling technique while students were randomly selected. In this study interview, structured questionnaires, observation and focused group discussion were applied for data collection. Data which were gathered through semi structured interviews, observation and focus group discussion from students, school's heads, project coordinators and TC Personnel were analyzed through content analysis.

A regression method was identified as an integral component for describing quantitative data in order to establish relationship between a response variable, and one or more explanatory variables. Since for the first part of the present study, the response variables associated with Community Participation in educational projects phases (i.e. community Participation in Project Identification, preparation, appraisal, implementation, and evaluation) were dichotomous, multiple logistic regression model was used to identify the risk factors associated with respondents' Participation in the Projects. The general multiple logistic regression model is given as:

$$\log it[\pi(x)] = \log \left(\frac{\pi(x)}{1-\pi(x)} \right) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \dots + \beta_p x_p$$

Where, $\pi(x)$ is the probability that the respondent participation in projects, x_i 's are covariates and β_i 's are their respective parameters. The *backward selection procedure* was used to build the model to identify the primary important risk factors. Eventually, variables with p-value < 0.05 were retained for further statistical analysis. Linear Regression model is a statistical method used for describing the relationship between a quantitative response variable, and one or more explanatory variables. In this study, multiple linear regression models were also used to study the relation between the quantitative response variable (perception) and indicated explanatory variables. The multiple linear regression model is given by the following formula;

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \dots + \beta_n X_n + \varepsilon_i$$

Where: Y_i is response variable for the i^{th} observation.

$\beta_0, \beta_1, \dots, \beta_{p-1}$ are constants and unknown regression coefficients whose values we seek to find.

$X_{i1}, X_{i2}, \dots, X_{ip-1}$ are known constants i.e. the values of the predictor variables of the i^{th} observation.

ε_i are random error terms which are assumed to be independent and normally distributed with the mean zero and constant variance. The SAS statistical package version 9.4 was used for data management and statistical analysis and SPSS for data entry. All the tests were done at the 5% level of significance.

RESULTS

Findings from appendix I show that, generally the community participates highly during project implementation (80%) and identification (73%) respectively. But it indicates less participation in projects appraisal (29%). Results from five separately performed logistic regression analysis identified the relationship between community participation in educational projects and project phases. The fitted logistic regression model for

Community Participation in Project Identification was

$$\log it(\pi) = \log it(p(\text{Identification}=1)) = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{Unemployed} + \beta_2 * \text{Self Employed}$$

The parameter estimates and standard error of the final model were presented in Appendix II. The results of the fitted model revealed that unemployed respondents (OR=0.134) were significantly less likely to participate in project identification as compared to employed people. Though not statistically significant ($p=0.5841$), self-employed people were also less likely to participate as compared to employed ones. Results from interviews with one of the coordinators show similar findings as one of them, reports:

"...at the initial stages of projects, you cannot conduct public meeting, but we used to meet with members of the community. However, there are those who created a notion that schools' call them for fund contribution and they have no money, hence school is not a better and a safe place." (C1, TZ 21, January 2015).

Community Participation in Project Preparation

On the other hand the fitted model indicates that there was a significant difference in project *preparation* phase with respect to "group" ($p=0.0008$) and "employment" status of respondents ($p=0.002$). The parameter estimates and standard error of the fitted model are displayed in appendix III. Therefore parents (OR= 8.827) were significantly more likely to participate in project preparation as compared to teachers. On the other hand, unemployed (OR= 0.067) and self-employed (OR=0.134) respondents were significantly less likely to participate in project preparation as compared to their employed counterpart.

Community Participation in Project Appraisal

With regard to Community Participation in Project Appraisal, "group" ($p=0.0003$) and employment status ($p=0.0067$) were significantly associated with participation in project appraisal phase. Appendix IV indicates these results. For the respondents with the same employment status, parents (OR= 9.429) were significantly having more chance to participate in project appraisal as compared to teachers. Also unemployed (OR=0.063) and self-employed (OR=0.6) were significantly less likely to participate in project appraisal as compared to employed individuals.

Community Participation in Project Implementation

In project implementation phase, the fitted model was not statistically significantly associated with community participation in project implementation. The parameter estimates and standard error of the fitted model are presented in appendix V. These findings were also revealed through

interview with one of the heads of school who informed that: *"Community participates in classroom building as well as TZ 21 projects for about 70% in fund contribution and labour support. But few parents attend in school' meetings that discuss and plan for the projects." (H3, TZ21, December, 2014).*

Pupil's response during focus group discussions proved that they were actively involved in educational project activities conducted within their schools. Two pupils from School D and School A expressed their views that: *"Our teachers teach us through computer and they make small books; this is my small book, it is about fish and cat, and I have used my sister's sewing machine to mend it. I told my sister that our teacher has instructed us to mend our books." (Student from school A, December 2014).*

Community Participation in Project Evaluation

Results for project evaluation indicated that, employment status ($p=0.6625$), sex ($p=0.4453$), and group ($p=0.1953$) were not statistically associated with the chance of participating in project evaluation. On the other hand education level ($p=0.0701$) and age of the respondents ($p=0.0145$) were significantly associated with participation in project evaluation as indicated in appendix VI. The results indicate that, controlling for age, the chance of the respondents to participate in project evaluation increase drastically with increase in level of education. The odds ratio of participating in project evaluation for respondents with Secondary school Level, Certificate and Diploma, and bachelor Degree against those respondents with no formal education and Primary Level are 4.352, 6.297 and 7.752 respectively. The odds ratio of participating in project evaluation for unit increase age was 1.071. Correspondingly, in discussing reading events that was organized by the TZ 21 projects during the evaluation phase, very few pupils (20%) out of 25 responded that, they had participated in the events. As one of them said:

"I participated in reading Kiswahili words and alphabets; I did not become the winner, but my father said "excellent!" and gave me a book, pencil and a ruler, the game was attended by students, parents and teachers."

In responding to such event one coordinator informed that: *"In Mkoani district we conducted the competition in Mizingani Teacher Center, the community participation was promising. In such gathering parents and students get opportunity to express their views and suggestions. For example, one parent provided his suggestion by saying: 'parents should not betray teachers in the process of educating our children; we should provide cooperation for our children to succeed.'"*

Generally, the findings have indicated a significant variation in community participation in educational projects in different phases of project life. Also, different categories of respondents have shown variation in the extent of participating in educational projects. Parents, teachers, employees and non employee show significant variation on the extent of community participation in educational projects.

DISCUSSION

The discussion of findings is based on the information presented in appendix I to VI under the project identification, preparation, appraisal, and implementation and evaluation

stages. The findings from interview, focus group discussion and questionnaire show that, Zanzibar community is highly participating in projects' implementation and identification but participate less in other project stages. This is contrary to the study conducted in South Africa by Norman (2012) which articulates that the community did not get enough chance to give inputs and suggestions during the project's initiation and implementation. Employed people were found not to participate significantly followed by the self employed. The unemployed were found to be the least group in participation. Real or popular participation (Daba, 2010) aims at involving people of all socio-economic status, cultures as well as different political and religious affiliations in all stages of the community project. Mohammed (2010) show similar findings by asserting that people with low economic conditions are not generally invited to participate in developmental projects; rich people avail the opportunities while the poor and disadvantaged remain outside the realm of participation in local development projects. Moreover, meetings aiming at project identification are usually conducted on weekends or late afternoon during working days. This implies that planners of the community educational projects do not consider involvement of the entire community; this might deliberately affect popular participation of different categories of people in the community and hence might affect project sustainability. Mbasha *et al.*, (2007) concurs with the findings by stating that the tendency does not provide true meaning of community participation because it ignores acting fairly on heterogeneity of Community structure. Despite the majority of community members to show desire on how they would participate in projects planning, for instance giving opinions, designing projects' activities, workmanship and monetary contribution, findings show that, the community in Mkoani district is less participating in projects' preparation.

This is because most educational projects use top – down approach from the Ministry to school level. This implies that, partnership model (Narayan, 2002) is not employed to empower community participation in projects' preparation or project feasibility study phase. Teachers were also reported to participate less significantly in projects' preparation as compared to parents. This is so due to small number of teachers in Zanzibar community schools as compared to parents. Parents have developed the desire to see how the projects' funds from donors and their contribution are utilized. This finding contrast with the finding of Owomoyela & Brannelley (2009) which comments that teachers, professionals, parents and other community stake holders voluntarily join together to plan for educational provision to their children. Both, unemployed and self employed are significantly less likely to participate in project preparation as compared to their employed counterpart. Therefore, educational projects' managers in Zanzibar pay little attention to involve people who have no official employment in public or private institutions during project feasibility study. This view is similar to Shareen (2012) who argue that, in urban development project planning, community participation has not been part of the planning process; most community members hesitate to participate because they lack information and time to take part in such initiatives owing to other responsibilities as well as having sense of powerlessness.

Evidence has proved the existence of less participation of the community in evaluation (appraisal) stage of the project. Similar findings were expressed in the study by Mickelson

(1999) that, in Texas educational projects development occurred with less community involvement. This tendency undermines the sense of community ownership towards educational projects because some evaluation (appraisal) reports from donors are attached with conditions that go against community's value and desire. For example, TZ 21 project coordinators claim that, their donors (USAID) had her interests which dominated the community's interest. For instance, they provided laptops and computer training to teachers for all 248 schools of Unguja and Pemba. Results for unemployed (OR=0.063) and self-employed (OR=0.6) were significantly less likely to participate in project appraisal as compared to employed individuals. The self employed people are more tied with their businesses, hence is difficult for them to get time to be involved in social activities. And unemployed people are always busy with life activities; they have not enough time for social activities. But those who are employed participate highly as their occupations are time specific. Thus, they are free to engage in other social activities. Based on the findings, the community was significantly participating in project implementation. The findings resemble with those of Mbasha *et al.*, (2007) who reported that, communities were getting involved in the construction of the classroom to the extent that at the time, there were about 760 which were about to be completed. Also, Mnararara (2010) who report that, the community in Morogoro participated through provision of money and material contributions like stones, sand and burnt bricks.

This entails that, the community which varies in different socio – economic characteristics are acts consistently in high scale during the implementation of projects. In classroom/ toilet building projects different categories of members participated as masons, laborers, gathering sand, stones, fetching water and paying money. A study of Ngwengwe (2007) is contrary to the present study, addressing the extent of Buguruni community to participate in implementation of urban infrastructure, upgrading project by indicating that the community was slow to contribute for the cost because majority had small income to sustain their daily living. Participation in projects' evaluation was found to increase drastically with increase of the level of education. This is possible because education has a significant contribution to people's awareness on the importance of participating in projects evaluation. Aged people were also found to have participated more in project evaluation. It means that elder people have free time to participate in the whole projects' cycle, for example making frequent follow-up to see how the projects' activities are going on, to attend in meetings and comment on the quality of projects completed. Again this concur with the findings of Norman (2012) which states; most of the community project's members were adult female between the ages of thirty six to forty years; only 17% of people worked in the community project were the youth.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The present study attempted to investigate the extent of community participation in educational projects in Tanzania. On the basis of the study findings, it is therefore concluded that, demographic factors show different levels of significance in relation with community participation in educational projects. Therefore, various plans and programs of educational projects would have been more effective if demographic factors such as sex, employment status, educational level and

sex were equally taken on board. Secondly, as far as the degree of participation is concerned, it is evident that community participation in educational projects is highly pronounced in initiation, implementation and evaluation stages and less involvement in preparation and appraisal phases. Thus, the community would have been involved in all project phases if a partnership approach by Narayan(2002) would be embraced as well as the bottom up approach in planning for community projects. Partnership model was seen to have a significant link with the community involvement.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix I: Percentage Distribution on the Extent of Community Participation in Educational Projects in Zanzibar

Projects' Stages	No. Respondents	Disagree	%	Agree	%
Identification	90	24	27%	66	73%
Preparation	90	56	62%	34	38%
Appraisal	90	64	71%	26	29%
Implementation	90	18	20%	72	80%
Evaluation	90	45	50%	45	50%

Appendix II: Parameter Estimates and standard errors of the logistic regression model for Participation in Project Identification (N = 90)

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	P-value
Intercept	2.9618	0.5921	25.023	<0.0001
Unemployed	-2.0063	0.7921	6.4149	0.0113
Self Employed	-0.6592	1.2044	0.2996	0.5841

Appendix III: Parameter Estimates and Standard Errors of the Logistic Regression Model for Participation in Project Preparation

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	P-value
Intercept	-0.7309	0.3376	4.6876	0.0304
Parents	2.1778	0.6502	11.218	0.0008
Unemployed	-2.6997	0.7939	11.5639	0.0007
Self Employed	-2.0065	0.8377	5.7378	0.0166

Appendix IV: Parameter Estimates and Standard Errors of the Logistic Regression Model for Participation in Project Appraisal (N = 90)

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi-Square	P-Value
Intercept	-1.5506	0.4161	13.8851	0.0002
Parents	2.2437	0.6225	12.9938	0.0003
Unemployed	-2.7726	0.8814	9.8962	0.0017
Self Employed	-0.5108	0.7622	0.4492	0.5027

APPENDIX V: Parameter Estimates and Standard Errors of the Logistic Regression Model for Participation in Project Implementation (N= 90)

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi Square	P-value
Intercept	-1.9405	1.8018	1.16	0.2815
Male	-1.1135	0.8829	1.5903	0.2073
Parents	-0.4551	1.2035	0.143	0.7053
Unemployed	0.7334	1.3214	0.3081	0.5789
Self Employed	0.2427	1.5097	0.0258	0.8723
Age	0.00191	0.0428	0.002	0.9644

APPENDIX VI: Parameter Estimates and Standard Errors of the Logistic Regression Model for Participation in Project Evaluation (N = 90)

Parameter	Estimate	Standard Error	Chi Square	P-Value
Intercept	-3.4285	1.3592	6.3628	0.0117
Secondary Level	1.4706	0.7825	3.5321	0.0602
Certificate and Diploma	1.8401	0.7054	6.8044	0.0091
Degree and Further	2.048	1.3179	2.4148	0.1202
Age	0.0685	0.028	5.9748	0.0145
