



## Teachers' Perceptions of Multiple Trade Unions in Promoting Professional Development among Teachers

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### Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perceptions of multiple trade unions in promoting professional development among teachers. The study objective specifically was; to examine teachers' perceptions of multiple trade unions in promoting professional development among Teachers. The study was in form of qualitative, it was a case study design involving ten public secondary school (A-J) in Dodoma city council. The population were Trade Unions' Members, Trade Unions' Leaders and Tanzania Registrar of Trade Unions. The sampling procedure used was purposive only, the sample size of 44 participants was employed. Two research instruments were used (focused group discussion and interview). Data was analyzed by using six stages of thematic analysis. The findings revealed teachers' perceptions of multiple trade unions to promote professional development such as; reformation of the law of labour relation and education policy, collaboration between trade unions and the government in educational issues. Also to establish some programs such as trainings, workshops and seminars to promote teachers' professionalism. The government recommended to change the law of labour relation so as to reboots trade unions activities. Thus leaders of multiple trade unions were advised to re-examining the leadership and make restorations where necessary to make sure that unions' activities are revived once again..

## Introduction

Worldwide social, economic and political advancements affected labours and society in case of quality and quantity. The first trade unions were established in 1700s and their major tasks were to manage the price of skilled workers, proper utilization of outputs and equal rates. During the industrial revolution in 1850s and 1860s the major aim of many trade unions was formed to protect workers' rights. Previous labour unions also were after salaries determination of the workers but currently unions advanced to some extent instead of demanding salaries only, today they are discussing about holiday's payments, promotions, working hours, pensions and sick payments. In Eastern and Western Europe countries like UK, Canada, Japan and the rest states teachers' unions are faced with a lot of challenges like; de-recognition, withdraw of members from the unions, political exploitation of unions and many others. In Kenya KNUT and other unions were facing also with some challenges such as innovative and focused leaders, poor management of funds, mentality changes of unions members, decline of membership and political interference (Anyango et al., 2019).

In Japan during prewar and war period teachers' association was normally after education reform in teaching methods that aims to improve the quality of man power. Also, this union

was against military regime which changed education policy and the role of education to meet the war needs were military activities covered almost everything in schools. In 1944 teachers' association was abandoned by the government with the reason that is one of the facts that ignites the opposition of the existing power. After the abolition of teachers' association, Great Japan Education Association replaced it and this association was ruined by the government prominent figures like retired minister of education and others. In that time no other association was allowed to operate rather than that, teachers' autonomy, political rights and freedom of association scamped due to the government threats and captured of the protestants of the ongoing regime (Duke, 2019).

In America racial segregation was the major problems to black American especially in labour associations were white people isolates Africans by thinking that they will benefits more with psychological wage from those unions as suggested by W.E.B. Du Bois in 1935. During the reign of barrack Obama the issue of racisms in labour unions' policies improved ,but during the time of Donald Trump the racism also revived to the extent were blacks and American immigrants intensively were humiliated and raised blacks angriness due to the suppressions experienced from white men in their daily routes (Frymer & Grumbach., 2021).

In India, Mexico and Ecuador before 2009 teachers' unions were after employment security, dealing with salaries increments and others but, not accountable on teachers' career development. In Africa, Middle East and other countries like United States of America, Chile and others countries where labour unions collapsed suggested that teachers are easily to organize than any other working group because of homogeneity features such as same employment conditions, same salary scale which depends on the years of service and single centralize employer. In Ecuador and Mexico teachers' unions are aligned with political parties preaching about hiring and salaries increments to capture teachers' attention through their leaders in electoral campaigns and the rest political tasks. The main reason for unions leaders to support political parties is to gain ruling positions such as in education ministries (Brunts et al., 2019).

In America there was no democracy in NEA (National Education Association) up to 1950s because of the absence of equality in payments between white men and white women, no equal participation especially in positions women are isolated to hold some positions such as top positions were held by men only and no freedom of express among women in association. During 1970s is when women aimed to regain their rights and to overturn all passed tortures and attained their lost democracy engulfed by men for long time like, right to continue with jobs after birth due to the actions taken by being fired after conceiving, right to associate and equal salary payment between men and women (Dyke & Muckian., 2019).

Migrant labours in UK, Australia and Poland affects local workers collective bargains with Employers both positive and negative, because of being cheap compared to the local workers. The migrants from other countries due to social, political, economic and cultural aspects which fostered them to move outside their countries to search for green pastures debased local workers' rights struggle because of being paid low salaries, and be able to survive in any uncouth environment which normally detested by local workers. Also, these workers hindered the real meaning of workers unions due to survive in absence of no any association to stand for their rights. The second impact business owners sometimes raised salaries so as to attain the best skilled people from migrants something which is leads to unemployment to the natives and members of the unions and lead to minimize the number of members in the respective trade unions (Žuk & Žuk, 2018).

In England, schools have many workers unions such as ATL (Association of Teachers and Lecturers), NASUWT (the National Association of Schoolmasters and Union of Women Teachers), NUT (National Union of Teachers) and many other small unions which formed with few members. In 2017 ATL and NUT succeeded to establish the National Education Union so as to deal with teachers' affairs. In English schools' trade unions faced with some challenges like; obtaining members who are not willingly to join, but they joined because teaching profession is full of stresses and they need to protect their jobs and even others joined after things going wrong for their sides so as to acquire legal vindication (Maguire & Ball., 2018).

In united states of America there is confusion in employees' collective bargaining between conservatives and liberalists .The conservatives believe that employees' collective bargaining increases the size of the government by increasing the expenditures such as the number of employees(teachers),salaries and high utilization of other resources to the states in US which has allowed such law to exist compared to the states which do not have such law and they have little expenditures .The liberalists believe that sto allow such law to exist is not to expand the government expenditures but modifies and improves workers affairs (Paula., 2018).

In Britain at the end of Second World War the existing government in 1979, trade unions were very powerful and famous. During that time were involved in different national affairs such as income policies, taxation, public expenditures, industrial policies, the state welfare and many others. In 1980s trade unions peculiarity changed ,and unions encountered two forms of challenges that paved the way of its roles, first the raise of strong managers who supervised workers in workplaces whereas each and every thing remain in their controls .Second ,the legislation range relating to trade unions and employments which established in1980s where managers were give extraordinary mandate in workplaces to decide the future of the organizations in all working issues such as working hours ,payments and many others (Joshi & Bhaskar., 2020).

It has noticed that, in Tanzania many trade unions are sided with employers and forgotten the interests of their members, for instance Tanzania Teachers Union (TTU) members failed to trust it due to the delay of acting to their chaos, also some trade unions have never attained their objectives such as improving working conditions, job security and many more. Apart from that, trade unions lacking supportive document when dealing with workers claims (Butiye., 2018).

In Tanzania many of the teachers joined TTU automatically without their wills and few of them joining willingly because of TTU slogan of advocating teachers who are scrutinized because of their mistakes in working areas .Also 2% from the basic salary which deducted monthly from the worker's salary seems not benefiting more workers during their retirements, something which causing the movement of some teachers to join to other union (CHAKAMWATA) which seems to utilize properly 1% taken monthly from basic salary of the worker and benefiting More the workers during stepping down period (Godian., 2019).

The research findings done by Rätzzel (2018), showing that TTU is faced with a lot of problems as follows; 10% of the respondents said that are not satisfied with union performance, 10% of the respondents agreed that the union has poor communication system ,12% of the informants showing that the union has financial challenge ,also 14% of the respondents assented that union members are unwillingly to participate in union affairs , lack of transparency and administrative skills are also challenges shown by 22% of the informants,14% of the respondents agreed that TTU faced with political interference and 18 %of the informants assented that Corruption is taking part within the union.

The research done by Bolton & Laaser (2018), on the Organize or die: exploring the political and organizational activities of the Tanzania teacher union, showing that TTU has still some challenges like to advance the quality life of its members, and to develop teachers professionally. The researcher showing that, TTU has to balance both legs (quality life and professional development) and not clinging on one side of quality life of workers so as to work smoothly. The study also reveals some problems the unions encountered with like lack of skilled leaders, political affiliation, communication barrier, lack of advanced equipment e.g., internet and E-mail, lack of tangible investment, missing of strategic planning and direction, power mongers, lack of transportation means, lack of supportive documents, too much dependency of members contributions.

According to the registrar of Tanzania trade unions, Tanzania has 33 trade unions. Three of the trade unions are teachers unions such as Teachers Trade Union (TTU), Chama cha Kulinda Haki na Maslahi ya Walimu Tanzania (CHAKUHAWATA), and Tanzania private teacher's union (TPTU). Previous was four before deregistration of CHAKAMWATA.

Trade unions were established and continuing established in different parts of the world so as to protect workers affairs; such as the increase of salaries, job security, promotions and many others alike. Very few teachers' trade unions in the world going beyond the expectations dealing with other issues like professional development. Many world teachers' trade unions including Tanzania teachers' unions seems to pass through needle's hole due to the social, political and economic hardships which sometimes causing the unions to backslide or scampered for good and directing workers dreams in a black box. Today the same cries heard in different parts of the world insolation of Tanzania, teachers intended their unions to promote professional development, while the law and education policy is not supportive to the unions to perform such activity. So due to this fact, this study aimed to examine teachers' perceptions of multiple trade unions in promoting professional development among teachers in public secondary schools in Tanzania.

## Methods

The study was in form of qualitative, it was a case study design involving ten public secondary school (A-J) in Dodoma city council. The population were Trade Unions' Members, Trade Unions' Leaders and Tanzania Registrar of Trade Unions. The sampling procedure used was purposive only, the sample size of 44 participants was employed. Two research instruments were used (focused group discussion and interview). Data was analyzed by using six stages of thematic analysis. The confidentiality was observed in data collection and analysis where by anonymity applied by using numerals and words instead of mentioning peoples' names and institutions. The clearance forms were given from the responsible authorities to allow the research continuity, informed consent forms were used to the interviewees and in case of focused group discussion, ethical issues was attached on top of the first page before the questions.

## Results and Discussion

The study was analyzed qualitatively and used two major instruments (single interview and focused group discussion) to collect data from 44 participant. The results was as follows;

### **Reformation of Tanzania law of labour relation**

Thirty-five participants out of forty claimed that the labour relation law does not support trade unions to promote teachers' professional development. The primary task mandated by the unions is to protect workers' welfare, such as job security, proper working condition,

negotiating on the increase of salary, promotions, allowances and no other business. So the members suggested that in order for the unions to practice such a crucial exercise that is of great importance to teachers, they must seduce the government to reform the mother law to assist unions in offering such service to teachers. Teachers' professional development work is the government's duty to train more in-service teachers to be updated with the current society. Still, the government alone is not satisfying the need of teachers and everything about teachers. So the government should open other doors to the unions and other education stakeholders to assist teachers in developing their professions through training, workshops and seminars.

One interviewee from school **J**, during the focused group discussion of thirty minutes, suggested that:

*The labour relations law in our country is outdated and has to change. Instead of clinging to old ways of bargaining, salary must go beyond that and support other issues like teachers' professional development, which is hygienic in educational matters.* (Focused group discussion, September 2022)

Besides that, the district chairperson of trade union **B**, during the single interview done in the office face to face in thirty minutes, had the same idea:

*...trade unions must ask the government to adjust its labour relations law to support other responsibilities, such as teachers' professional development* (Interview, June 2022).

Likewise, the great government officer dealing with labour unions in Tanzania, during a single interview conducted in the office face to face in thirty minutes, suggested that;

*Worker's professional development, including teachers, is not the work of trade unions. The major task to be performed by unions is to protect workers' rights. Once the union(s) engages in workers' protections and rights, it has to be deregistered because that is the work of the government. The law requires the union to consult the government if there is the necessity to to engage in workers' rights and reform the law to have the authority to do so* (Interview, June 2022).

Therefore, it has been noticed from the data presented above that the law of labour relations in Tanzania is not supporting teachers' multiple trade unions to promote professional development. Their great task is to protect workers' rights and no other issues. Also, it has realized that it is illegal for the unions to practice government responsibility and is abusing the law guide. Such an attempt may cause the union(s) to be deregistered after abusing the law, but unions are advised to seduce the government to do so if necessary, and the law must change to support it. All trade unions must sit together and form a powerful voice to seduce the government to change the law, because unions are working to better their members and their members need the unions to perform such responsibility due to its advantage.

### **Reformation of educational policy**

Concerning education policy reformation, participants believed that Tanzania must be reformed to allow partnership in education matters. For instance, the policy is made by the ministry of education only without involving trade unions and sent to the respective areas for implementation. Another issue is a lack policy issue, which focus on teaching and learning affairs. The most discussed policy issue is teachers' professional development, which lacks direct procedures to develop teachers' professions. Besides, the guideline given to teachers on

what to do in education matter and the necessity of teachers in education matters are missing. Teachers' trade unions are given an important role to play in protecting teachers' rights. Still, they are not given the authority to practice other education affairs while dealing with a significant agent of education like teachers. So the government must allow partnership in education by involving other stakeholders like teacher's trade unions in educational matters for the best education. Once the unions are involved in educational matters, they will have even power to support things like teachers' professional development. Through that, assistance from different education stakeholders will assist the government in successfully attaining education objectives and the goal.

One participant from school G, during the focused group discussion held in thirty minutes, claimed that:

*...teachers trade unions are essential in education grounds but are left only dealing with promotions and salaries. While a lot has to be done on professional development and supervising curriculum activities, much has been left behind, deducting a lot of money from every worker's monthly salary, and their work given is small of protecting workers' affairs. There are not doing so all the time. (Focused group discussion, September 2022)*

One district chairperson of trade union B has closely related views to other participants during the single interview done in the office face to face in thirty minutes:

*...no direct and specific written document showing how trade unions participate in educational matters like professional development, but what I know, unions are authorized only to protect workers' rights. Maybe for the unions to have such responsibilities better, the policy to change and include them in such issues (Interview, June 2022).*

Besides that, the great government officer in charge of trade unions, during the single interview done in the office face to face in thirty minutes, proposed that;

*... we aren't usually the ones that handle policy matters. That is the work of ministry and other assigned boards, but for all these to come into being, maybe to change the law, and the rest will be... (Interview, June 2022).*

As presented in the data presented above, it has been noted that the education policy in Tanzania is not supportive of other education-related issues. For instance, the involvement of other stakeholders in planning education policy is not shown. Besides that, the participants suggested that unions have a little task to deal with and need the unions to go beyond and deal with other issues like professional development. Therefore, trade unions, as one of the education stakeholders, must seduce the government to change the law and automatically change the policy and other issues to allow unions to practice multiple issues rather than solely basing on salaries and promotions.

### **Collaboration between government and trade unions in educational matters.**

Participants have suggested that teachers in multiple trade unions must be assigned enough obligations to perform beside the protection of labour rights only. Participants reiterated that the government should collaborate with unions to promote teachers' professional development and supervise curriculum activities. On the other hand, the government must work closely with teachers, as they implement curriculum activities at the school level and not the teachers' unions. So instead of unions waiting for cases from teachers and blaming an employer, it is

better for the government to give room to trade unions to exercise such responsibilities. The close supervision of trade unions will enable them to identify teachers' weakness in teaching and learning processes and take measures to develop them professionally. In curriculum designing, the unions are not involved while dealing with teachers' affairs. The government should involve unions to decrease conflict between workers and employer because the unions are steadily defending misbehaving teachers in courts. They will understand what is missing from teachers and assist them in developing their professions. Promoting teachers' professional development is the task of the government, but there is no written strategic plan showing how teachers are developed professionally.

The district chairperson of trade union **A**, during the single interview done in the office face to face in thirty minutes, claimed that:

*Our members regularly question teachers' professional development to be supported by trade unions. I wonder because it is the work of the government to do so. Still, sometimes the government relaxes on this because of the limited budget, so if the budget is limited, how can trade unions handle this? In me, the government should change the law and policy, cooperate with trade unions, and develop a clear strategic plan for handling the responsibility. It is essential to teachers and the rest of society of Tanzania...* (Focused group discussion, September 2022).

The government leader in charge of trade unions affairs, during the single interview conducted in the office face to face in thirty minutes, argued that;

*...the work of trade unions is to negotiate with the government on workers' affairs and no other issues. We are not here to restrict or block unions of not performing their responsibilities to teachers, but we are here working to make sure that the law of labour relation is maintained correctly and not being abused by any union ...* (Interview, June 2022)

Thus, it had identified from the data presented above that the collaboration between the government and multiple trade unions in educational matters is important and will improve the quality of education in Tanzania. Still, the major hindrance is on affairs divisions. Others belong to the government, and one to trade unions (protection of rights). These divisions delay the fulfilment of other affairs like proper modality of teachers' professional development and critical question on how unions are isolated in other matters and given one. Besides that, cooperation is much insisted to improve the quality of education, including teachers' professional development. Also, participants have suggested that for all issues to happen better, change the law of labour relation in Tanzania and the education policy. The rest things will be met automatically. Therefore, the unions must find the correct channel to cooperate with the government and seduce the employer to reform the law and policy to have mutual performance in educational affairs.

### **Establishment of professional development programs**

The participant claimed that the government, in collaboration with the trade unions, must develop a strategic plan for these programs, such as training, seminars and workshops. The plan must show the program's beneficiaries by giving the modality of offering programs. The issue of where and when the supervisors of the programs will be hired and the source of money to be used need to be clarified. In addition, the condition of offering such programs and the criteria of the beneficiaries to be supported in such programs need to be properly outlined. The participants proposed that teachers' professional development is not well known by members

because no clear guideline shows how it operates, nor are trade unions involved in this because once unions are asked for professional development, they always pointed government. If it is government, why are they not asking or submitting members' doubts on this? Their work is based on salary increases, job security, and promotions; they termed these as workers' rights, while professional development is the right of workers. So the duty of professional development is termed the duty of the government only. While unions deal with teachers' affairs, why are they limited to defending workers' rights in courts and having the chance to assist workers in growing professionally? The support given by the government to attend training is minimal and given annually to few people because of the limited funds, seminars and workshops conducted in rare cases and mainly based on school leaders only. So the unions and government must develop a clear modality of supporting teachers professionally.

One of the participants from school **J**, during the focused group discussion held in thirty minutes, suggested that:

*... developing teachers professionally is a paradox between the government and multiple trade unions. The unions are normally isolated from this, but the unions generally deal with cases related to this. The amount of money unions use in courts dealing with cases is enough to conduct seminars and workshops to develop teachers' professions (Focused group discussion, September 2022).*

The participant from school **G**, during the group discussion conducted in thirty minutes, proposed that:

*Multiple trade unions have little work to perform better to conduct professional seminars, workshops and supporting training to update the majority of teachers than using our money in the minority cases, which is not productive to the majority of teachers... (Focused group discussion, September 2022).*

Thus, educators are expected to take part in and graduate from a variety of professional development opportunities such as courses, seminars, and workshops. It has also been recommended that the government and different trade unions collaborate to advance teachers' professional development and produce a unique strategic plan that details all the steps that must be taken for such programs to be successful and useful to teachers. The study suggested this as a possible course of action. Evidence suggests that unions are on their own when it comes to lobbying for educators and funding their professional development.

## **Conclusion**

Therefore, as reviewed by different researchers of the world teachers in in different countries of the world are belonging to more than one trade union. On top of that, the findings obtained in this study showing that teachers in public secondary schools in Tanzania are belonging in TTU, CHAKUHAWATA in public secondary schools, while in private secondary schools are belonging to TPTU. The study participants need the unions to promote professional development among teachers, while the law and education policy are not supportive to the unions to carry out such responsibility. Thus, the study appealing the employer (government) to revise again the law of labour relation and education policy in Tanzania so as to fulfill the demands of workers. Apart from that, unions' leaders have to make reformation and examining their leadership so as to fulfil their responsibilities well and capture their members' attention.

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