

The Challenges of the Implementation of In-service Training Programmes to teachers' practices in Public Secondary Schools in Tanzania

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Abstract

The study examined challenges of implementation of in-service training programmes in public secondary schools. The study employed a mixed approach with concurrent research design. The study involved 96 respondents, of whom 8 were heads of schools and 88 secondary school teachers, who were obtained through purposive sampling and simple random sampling techniques respectively. Data were collected by using questionnaire and interviews methods. Questionnaire data were analyzed descriptively by using Statistical Package for Social science version 20, and qualitative data were analyzed by using content analysis. The study findings revealed different challenges such as unaccommodated and inflexible scheduling of training, lack of enough resources, poor organization of programme, lack of support and guidance, poor commitment from school administration and biasness during practicing in-service training. It is recommended that policy-makers and education stakeholders should work together to ensure that these programmes are adequately funded and contextually relevant. By overcoming these challenges, in-service training can become a more powerful tool in enhancing the quality education and ultimately improving student outcomes in secondary schools.

Keywords: in-service training, teachers' practices, public secondary schools, teachers' practices, training programmes.

1.0 Introduction

In-service training programs are critical for enhancing the skills and professional development of teachers in public secondary schools (Doe, 2024). These programs aim to equip educators with new teaching methods, update them on curriculum changes, and improve their overall effectiveness in the classroom. However, the successful implementation of these programs in

many parts of Tanzania, including Iringa District, faces significant challenges. The employees include professional teachers whose competencies are important to make their teaching methods more effective and efficient. These in turn help the learners to improve their learning abilities, enhance their knowledge and polish their skills (Perkins, 2010).

In-service Education and training have long been one of the traditional functions of human resources management that helps to improve the employees' performance and achievement (Sutrisno, 2011). For an employee, in-service education and training is therefore expected to provide motivation for them in improving their skills and performance and subsequently achieve their set professional goals (Sutrisno, 2011).

Historically, in-service training started in the United States of America (Hord, 1997). The field of training development began to emerge in the 1940s when large numbers of men were serving in the World War II and women were replacing them in the factory floors. Teachers from vocational programs in secondary schools were recruited to teach the necessary job-related skills. The 'training director' title first began to appear on the organizational charts and major training areas included labor relations, time and motion studies, work simplification as well as supervision skills (Hord, 1997).

Professional development is thus crucial for educators. Of course; it does not only enhance skills and knowledge but also makes the classroom more effective. In-service training is particularly necessary in Africa where education systems are plagued with a catalogue of woes (Mwangi, 2018) In spite of its importance, the roll-out of in-service training programmes has been plagued with challenges across Africa (Mwangi, 2018)

In Ghana, in-service training is aimed at enhancing the teachers' skills and knowledge to meet the evolving demands of the educational sector (Ampofo, 2020). It is designed to provide them with opportunities to refine their instructional techniques, stay updated with new educational trends, and improve students' outcomes. Despite its importance, the implementation and effectiveness of in-service training programs has been a subject of concern among educators and policy-makers in Ghana. Research indicates that while these programmes are integral to improving the quality of education, their impact is often undermined by various factors which

require comprehensive evaluation and strategic improvement to ensure that they meet the intended objectives (Ampofo, 2020).

In Tanzania, the government notice No. 168 directs that all employers should be responsible for the training and development of their employees and this applies also to the public employees (URT, 2003). The training policy and programs were established in Tanzania after independence with the aim of managing changes and reforms in social-economic localization of civil services and public enterprises, nationalization, decentralization, liberalization, re-establishment of local government authorities and local government reform program. Despite all the efforts by the government to train its employees, the intended objectives are still not well reached in some cases (URT, 2003).

With regard to the challenges of the implementation of in-service training for teachers in Tanzania, Mosha and Milanzi (2020) conducted a study on the challenges of the implementation of employees' training programs in Tanzania. The study employed the qualitative research approach and used documentary review as a tool for data collection. The findings of this study showed that many public organizations face budget challenges in the implementation of training programs. The study concluded that training is very vital to public organizations such that proper implementation of training programs should be a priority. Hence, the study recommended that the public organizations in Tanzania have to invest enough resources on training and development in order to enhance the employees' knowledge and skills.

Thus, in-service training for educators often faces several challenges which can hinder the effectiveness of training programs, impacting the teachers' abilities to implement new teaching strategies and improve students' outcomes. It is of paramount importance therefore to address these challenges through enhancing the quality and accessibility of training resources, increasing investment in continuous professional development and fostering a supportive environment through institutional support and peer collaboration (Johnson, 2023).

While in-service training programs are recognized as essential for enhancing teacher practices and improving educational outcomes, there is limited research specifically addressing the

challenges faced in implementing these programs within the context of public secondary schools in Tanzania. Existing studies often focus on general teacher professional development or broader educational issues, but few provide in-depth analysis on the specific factors.

Moreover, much of the research tends to overlook how these challenges directly affect teachers' day-to-day practices in the classroom, which are crucial for improving student performance and educational quality. There is also a lack of localized studies that explore how regional and district-level differences, such as in Iringa District, impact the success of in-service training programs.

This study seeks to fill this gap by investigating the specific challenges of implementing in-service training programs in public secondary schools in Tanzania, with a focus on how these challenges influence teacher practices.

2.0 Theoretical Perspectives

This study was guided by the Human Capital theory that was developed by economist Gary Backer and Theodore Schultz. They independently contributed to the development of the theory in 1950s and 1960s. The main idea behind the Human Capital Theory is that individuals and societies can enhance their economic productivity and well-being through investments in education, training and health. The theory therefore highlights the importance of education and training in developing human capital.

The theory is relevant to this study on the the challenges of the implementation of in-service training programmes to teachers' practices in public secondary schools by considering that investment in staff training contributes to the development of the human capital within an educational institution. In this context, staff training serves as an investment in knowledge, and skills of educators hence enhancing their effectiveness in facilitating students' learning. The theory suggests that the improved human capital of the staff positively influences teachers' performance outcomes, emphasizing the importance of ongoing professional development for educators to optimize the educational environment.

3.0 Materials and Methods

3.1 Research Approach and Design

The study employed the mixed method research approach which involves both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The qualitative approach facilitated in-depth understanding of the problem through participation in open and flexible environment and the quantitative approach used to measure the variables and conduct statistical analysis in order to have a strong base for the conclusion. Also, the study adopted the concurrent research design that allows for the simultaneous collection and analysis of both qualitative and quantitative data hence providing a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. By collecting data from different methods at the same time, it reduces the risk of time-related biases and enables the researcher to triangulate findings for increased validity and reliability (Orodho & Kombo, 2016).

3.2 Participants

In this study heads of schools and teachers in eight (8) secondary schools were involved. The sample for the study involved 8 heads of school and 88 secondary school teachers. The sample was selected by using both the simple random and purposive sampling. The aim for using the simple random technique was to make generalizations about the population and leave out any bias. Purposive sampling was used to select participants who were knowledgeable on the issue of in-service training in secondary schools.

3.3 Data Analysis and Ethical Considerations

In this study, both the quantitative and qualitative research approaches to data analysis were used. Quantitative data were analyzed by descriptive statistics with the aid of a Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. On the other hand, qualitative data were analyzed through thematic analysis.

A researcher adhered to ethical guidelines by obtaining informed consent from all participants, ensuring they understood the purpose of the study, their rights, and the voluntary nature of their participation. Anonymity and confidentiality were prioritized, with data being collected and reported in a manner that does not identify individual participants or schools. Additionally, the research aimed to avoid any potential harm to participants by being sensitive to their

circumstances and experiences. The ethical approval from relevant institutional review boards to ensure compliance with ethical standards in educational research. This commitment to ethical conducted enhanced the reliability of the findings and promoted trust between the researchers and participants.

4.0 Findings and Discussion

4.1.1 Challenges of the Implementation of In-Service Training Programmes

Under this objective, the main focus was to examine and identify some challenges on implementing in-service training programs in secondary schools. Therefore, through questionnaires, the respondents were required to describe the challenges. The respondents revealed that there were numerous challenges as summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Challenges of Implementing In-service Training Programmes

CHALLENGE	RESPONSES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE %
The scheduling of in-service training programmes is not flexible and not accommodating	Strongly disagree	12	13.6%
	Disagree	15	17.0%
	Neutral	10	11.4%
	Agree	38	43.2%
	Strongly Agree	13	14.8%
	Total	88	100.0%
The resources for in-service training programmes in secondary schools are inadequate	Strongly Disagree	10	11.4%
	Disagree	19	21.6%
	Neutral	11	12.5%
	Agree	26	29.5%
	Strongly Agree	22	25.0%
	Total	88	100.0%
The in-service training programmes are not organized and managed in my school	Strongly Disagree	10	11.5%
	Disagree	12	13.8%
	Neutral	16	18.4%
	Agree	31	35.6%
	Strongly Agree	18	20.7%
	Total	87	100.0%
Lack of support and guidance during the in-service training progress	Strongly Disagree	6	6.8%
	Disagree	9	10.2%
	Neutral	15	17.0%
	Agree	41	46.6%
	Strongly Agree	17	19.3%
	Total	88	100.0%
Poor commitment from school administration	Strongly Disagree	7	8.0%
	Disagree	9	10.2%
	Neutral	18	20.5%
	Agree	29	33.0%
	Strongly Agree	25	28.4%
	Total	88	100.0%

Biasness during the practice of in-service training	Strongly Disagree	6	6.8%
	Disagree	6	6.8%
	Neutral	12	13.6%
	Agree	38	43.2%
	Strongly Agree	26	29.5%
	Total	88	100.0%

The responses from Table 1 show the challenges faced during the implementation of in-service training in secondary schools. This data from questionnaires implies that teachers in secondary schools are faced with such challenges.

4.1.2 The scheduling of in-service training being not flexible and accommodating

With regard to the poor timetable of in-service training, Table 1 indicates that 43% of teachers agreed that one of the challenges facing the implementation of in-service training is poor arrangement of timetable. This is because different in-service training programmes were scheduled during the working days so it was difficult for the teachers to leave the classes to attend the programmes.

This was further emphasized by one of the head of school during interview who had the following to share:

Certainly, in-service training is crucial for the professional development of educators and can significantly improve the effectiveness of assessing and evaluating students' progress. However, the implementation of in-service training in our school can be challenging due to several reasons. One of the main challenges is finding convenient time for training. Teachers often have busy schedules and fitting in professional development can be difficult...(Interview with Head of School "A", 24th June, 2024).

The findings concur with previous study by Smith and Brown (2022) on the challenges in the educators' professional development. The study found that the rigidity of training schedules often fails to consider the diverse needs and constraints of educators, thereby reducing the effectiveness of these programs. This issue underscores the importance of designing more

adaptable training frameworks that align with the varied schedules of educators to enhance the overall impact of professional development initiatives.

4.1.3 Lack of enough resources for in-service training programmes

The findings in Table 1 show that 29% of the respondents agreed with the statement and 11.4% of them believed that lack of enough resources for in-service training is not a challenge in the implementation of in-service training in public secondary schools.

During interview sessions with the head of school “G”, the findings revealed that lack of enough resources is indeed another challenge facing the implementation of in-service training. He quoted saying the following:

In our school we are facing some challenges during the implementation of in-service training. Some of them include Lack of funding for in-service training. Again, the administration makes efforts to allocate sufficient resources for professional development programs but they are still not enough to ensure that we are practicing quality training so as to ensure that both science and arts subjects teachers are involved in the trainings...
(Interview with Head of School “G”, 24th June, 2024).

The findings concur with the study conducted by UNESCO (2022) on teachers training and resources. The study revealed that it is essential to recognize the impact of insufficient resources allocated for in-service training. Indeed, studies have shown that lack of adequate resources for ongoing professional development hinders the capacity of educators to effectively engage themselves on practices. The shortage of resources for teacher training programmes therefore significantly limits the ability of educators to stay updated.

4.1.4 Poor organization of in-service training

Poor organization was identified as another challenge for the implementation of in-service training. Table 1 indicates that 35% of the respondents agreed with the statement however 11% of them believed that poor organization was not the challenge in the implementation of in-service training.

Further, during an interview session with the head of school “H”, the findings bolded that poor organization was really one of the challenges facing the implementation of in-service training in secondary schools. The head of school had the following to share:

One of the most significant challenges we face is poor organization. The planning and execution of in-service training sessions often lack coherence and structure. For instance, the scheduling is sometimes done without considering the teachers' existing workload leading to conflicts with their teaching responsibilities. This disorganization not only affects attendance but also the overall effectiveness of the training... (Interview with Head of School “H”, 25th June, 2024).

The findings concur with the study conducted by Guskey (2020) on professional development and teacher change. The study emphasizes that well-structured in-service training is crucial for teachers' professional development which in turn directly impacts student outcomes. Without proper organization and delivery of these training programmes, the potential benefits of educational policies on improving teachers' practices will remain unfulfilled.

4.1.5 Lack of support and guidance during the in-service training processes

The findings in Table 1 show that 46.6% of respondents agreed with the statement and 6.8% of them believed that lack of support and guidance during the in-service training processes was not a challenge during the implementation of in-service training in public secondary schools.

During an interview session with the head of school “D”, poor organization was again revealed as a challenge for the implementation of in-service training in secondary schools in Iringa District. The head of school precisely said the following:

One of the primary challenges we face in the effective implementation of in-service training is the lack of adequate support and guidance. While the training programs are well-intentioned and often cover important content, many teachers feel that they are left on their own when it comes to applying what they have learned in the classrooms. Without consistent follow-up, mentorship and a support system in place, it is difficult for

teachers to fully integrate new strategies or techniques into their daily practices. They may struggle with practical issues, such as how to adapt the training content to their specific classroom needs or how to manage time effectively to implement new methods...(Interview with Head of School “D”, 26th May, 2024).

The findings concur with the previous study conducted by Desimone and Garet (2022) on best practices in the teachers’ professional development as they revealed that lack of adequate support and guidance during in-service training significantly hamper the effectiveness of professional development programs for secondary school teachers. This often leads to the feelings of isolation and inadequacy among educators which in turn affects their abilities to implement new teaching strategies effectively. Teachers who do not receive ongoing support and feedback during in-service training are less likely to integrate new skills into their classroom practices thereby reducing the overall impact of the training programs.

4.1.6 Poor commitment from school administration

Table 1 indicates that 33% of the respondents agreed with the statement whereas 8% of them believed that poor commitment from school administration was not a challenge facing the implementation of in-service training.

During an interview session with the head of school B, the findings also revealed that poor commitment from school administration was one of the challenges in the implementation of in-service training in Iringa District. He was quoted saying the following:

The effectiveness of in-service training relies heavily on the support and engagement from the school management team. Unfortunately, if the administration is not fully committed, it becomes difficult to allocate the necessary resources, time, and attention to these training programs ...(Interview with Head of School “B”, 26th June, 2024).

On the same note, the head of school “C” shared the following:

When the administration is not fully committed, it often leads to a lack of prioritization of in-service training. This might result to inadequate

scheduling, insufficient budget allocation or even a lack of proper follow-up after the training sessions. Teachers may feel unsupported which can diminish their motivation to participate or apply what they've learned...

(Interview with Head of School "C", 27th June, 2024).

The findings concur with the previous study conducted by Smith (2024) on the challenges of implementing effective in-service training programmes. The study revealed that a significant challenge in the effectiveness of in-service training programmes for teachers is lack of commitment from school administration. This finding underscores a critical barrier to the successful implementation of professional development initiatives. The analysis indicates that when school leaders do not actively support or prioritize these training programs, it leads to insufficient allocation of resources, inadequate time for training and reduced motivation among teachers.

4.1.7 Biasness during the practicing of in-service training

The findings in Table 1 show that 43.2% of the respondents agreed with this statement while 6.8% of them believed that biasness was not one of the challenges of implementing in-service training.

During an interview session with one of the heads of schools, the findings also revealed that biasness was one of the challenges of the implementation of in-service training for teachers in Iringa District. He had the following to share:

One of the significant challenges we have faced is the biasness against arts subjects' teachers when it comes to in-service training opportunities. There is a prevailing perception that mathematics and other science subjects are more important than the arts one. This often leads to prioritizing teachers from these disciplines for training programs. This bias results in fewer opportunities for our arts subjects' teachers to engage in professional development which in turn affects their abilities to deliver high-quality education. When arts subjects' teachers are left out of these opportunities, it diminishes the value of arts subjects in the curriculum and

sends a message that these subjects are less important which is far from the reality... (Interview with Head of School “E”, 27th June, 2024).

The findings concur with the findings obtained in the study of Gaito, Asiimwe, Emurugat and Mugenyi (2023) on the influence of in-service training of teachers on teachers' motivation in public secondary school in Chato. The study identified biases and isolation in attending teachers' training whereby only sciences teachers especially of biology, ICT, chemistry and physics subjects attended seminars frequently.

5.0 Conclusions

It is therefore concluded that the challenges of implementing in-service training for secondary school teachers highlights several critical obstacles that undermine the effectiveness of these programs. Key challenges include inadequate funding which limits the availability and quality of training resources; insufficient time allocation which hampers teachers' abilities to participate fully and a lack of administrative support which affects the overall motivation and engagement of teachers. Additionally, the study reveals the absence of a structured and continuous professional development framework ultimately impacting the quality of education delivered in secondary schools.

6.0 Recommendations

Implementing in-service training for teachers can be significantly improved by establishing comprehensive support systems that address their specific professional development needs. A thorough needs assessment should be conducted to identify these needs, incorporating surveys, interviews, and focus groups with educators and administrators. Training programs should be tailored to suit the diverse requirements of teachers, offering differentiated sessions by subject, grade level, and skill. Furthermore, providing various formats—such as workshops, online courses, and peer coaching—can enhance accessibility and engagement. Continuous support post-training is crucial; establishing mentoring or collaborative learning communities allows teachers to apply new strategies effectively and fosters a culture of shared learning and improvement.

Administrators should prioritize professional development, allocating sufficient time and resources to training activities. Robust evaluation and feedback mechanisms should be implemented to assess the effectiveness of the training, using data on teacher performance and participant feedback to drive continuous improvement. Collaboration with educational organizations and experts can also enrich training content and provide valuable resources. By advocating for supportive policies at the district or national level, schools can create a sustainable framework for in-service training that empowers teachers and ultimately enhances student outcomes.

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