

The roles and functions of school committees in the context of reforms in the management of primary education, the case of Tabora municipal council in Tanzania

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The objectives of this study were to find out how school committees were performing their roles and functions in the context of implemented reforms in the management of the Primary Education Sector. The study was mainly qualitative but supported by some elements of quantitative data. Data collection instruments employed was interviews, questionnaires, and documentary reviews. The findings of the study showed that school committees did not have day - to - day roles and functions to perform, but were mostly concerned with management of Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) funds and purchasing of school materials. Also, while school committees were involved in planning, budgeting, and implementation of PEDP funded activities, yet were not involved in preparation of accountability and transparency mechanisms for using PEDP funds, they were just implementers.

It was also apparent that, school committees and school management were not aware of the presence of the Education Act No. 25 of 1978 (amended by the Education Act No. 10 of 1995) and its contents. The study also revealed that problems transport and high cost of materials were critical for rural primary schools. This had an adverse effect on the implementation of the functions of school committees. School committees were also facing problems such as lack of motivation and conflicts with village councils over the control of PEDP funds. Moreover, the disbursed capitation and investment grants were not adequate to meet the school's needs. It is recommended that there is a need for capacity building among school committees members so that they can perform effectively their roles assigned. In addition, the devolution of the implementation of PEDP activities has to be accompanied by transferring the responsibility of managing the implementation of academic affairs to the school committees in order to improve performance Recommendations for further research are also made in the light of the above key findings.