

**The contribution of heads of department to enhancing teaching and learning
in Ilala public primary schools, Tanzania**

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This study investigated the contribution of heads of subject department to enhancing teaching and learning in Tanzania public primary schools. Specifically, the study was aimed at investigating the roles performed by heads of subject department, the strategies they use in organising and coordinating teaching and learning activities as well as the challenges they face in enhancing the teaching and learning process. The study employed a mixed research approach in its case study design. The area of the study was Ilala district in Dar es Salaam region. Purposive and random sampling were used to select a sample of 120 respondents (42 heads of subject department, 30 teachers, 6 heads of school, 6 academic teachers and 36 students). Data were collected through interviews, questionnaires, focused group discussions, and documentary review. The qualitative data were analysed following the Miles and Huberman Model of Qualitative Data Analysis whereas the quantitative data were coded and analysed statistically using SPSS version 16. Subsequently, descriptive statistics was employed to obtain frequencies and percentages. The major findings of the study showed that roles performed by heads of subject department significantly enhanced the teaching and learning process. They ensure that all periods are taught as per timetable; monitor and evaluate teachers' schemes of work, lesson plans, logbooks and students' work; ensure the availability of relevant teaching and learning materials in the department for teachers and students; evaluate and moderate tests and examinations; and keep records of all students' continuous assessment of their respective subject. The strategies they employ in coordinating teaching and learning activities included team work; meetings; cooperative classroom observation, frequent communication; regular student evaluation; motivation; and remedial classes. The challenges they face include lack of clear job descriptions; limited time and heavy workload; lack of teachers' commitment; lack of teaching and learning materials; as well as lack of fund to run departmental activities. Based on these findings, the study recommends that the government, head teachers and other educational stakeholders should recognise the significant role and contribution performed by heads of department and give them strong support, guidance

and assistance to make them more effective. In addition, the government should organise frequent management and administrative seminars so as to equip heads of department with skills necessary for creating stable departments capable of enhancing teaching and learning process. Finally, the government should allocate enough funds together with relevant teaching and learning facilities to subject departments to help them run their departments smoothly for the realisation of desirable teaching and learning outcomes.