

**An investigation into the provision of staff development programme and perceived impact
on teaching in Tanzanian Universities**

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This study investigated the provision of staff development programmes and perceived impact on teaching in two Tanzania's universities, namely the University of Dar es Salaam Mwalimu Nyerere Campus (UDSM) and Saint Augustine University of Tanzania (SAUT)–Mwanza Campus. The study was guided by the following five research objectives: to examine staff development courses offered in the two universities; to analyse staff development needs and how they are addressed in the policy and practice; to explore involvement of stakeholders in different SDP activities; to assess perceptions of academic staff towards SDPs and to identify challenges facing provision of SDPs in the two universities. The study adopted a qualitative research approach. It used multiple sources of data collection and instruments, namely interview, non-participant observation and documentary review. The study involved 52 participants, 36 academic staff, 7 deans, 5 facilitators and 4 directors. The study revealed that the two universities have made considerable efforts to provide academic staff with SDPs. SD courses offered were established around teaching and research roles. However, academic members of staff expressed their dissatisfaction with the courses offered. The findings revealed that participating academic staff had varied SD needs yet some of the courses offered were irrelevant to their needs. Moreover, findings revealed a discrepancy between what is recommended in the policy and what was implemented on ground. It was further discovered that SDP stakeholders were not involved in various SDP activities (i.e. needs assessment, planning and follow-ups. Majority of academic staff felt that the SDPs currently offered in their universities were trivial to improve their teaching skills. In addition, the study revealed numerous challenges facing the provision of SDPs in the two universities such as out-dated courses, teaching not recognised for promotion, use of incompetent and less informed facilitators as well as communication breakdown. The study concludes that, unless universities are sincerely committed to offer SDPs, investing resources and time in SDPs may not be as effective as expected. Thus, the study recommends that universities should develop relevant staff development courses based on needs assessment.

University authorities should develop policies demonstrating clearly how staff development should be provided. Moreover, the study recommends that universities should budget for development programmes and recognise teaching for promotion. Finally, the study recommends that the two universities should make use of modern communication means to avoid communication breakdown. The study recommends future action research to examine the impact of SDPs on academic staff classroom practices. Another study could examine factors motivating or demotivating academic staff participating in SDPs. A similar study could involve more than two universities with a quantitative approach so as to compare SDPs in other universities. Another study should be conducted on the characteristics of SPD facilitators. Finally, a study should be conducted to compare SDP models in other countries and then design a best SDP model that can be employed in Tanzania's universities