

**Mathematics teachers' instructional competences in secondary schools in Dodoma  
municipality**

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The purpose of this study was to assess mathematics teachers' instructional competences in secondary schools. The study was guided by three research objectives. First, to explore mathematics teacher' instructional competences demonstrated during teaching and learning process. Secondly, to examine the instructional activities prepared by mathematics teachers that engage students in learning. Thirdly, to explore challenges that influence teachers' demonstration of instructional competences during teaching and learning of mathematics. The study employed a qualitative research approach and it was guided by multiple cases (holistic) research design. It included 42 participants from six secondary schools in Dodoma Municipality. The study employed purposive sampling technique. Data were gathered through classroom observation, semi-structured interview, focus group discussion and documentary review. The findings of the study were analysed through qualitative content analysis. Findings of the study revealed the following. First, mathematics teachers did not fully demonstrate the required instructional competences as recommended by Competence Based Curriculum (CBC) and as suggested in the literature. Secondly, findings revealed that mathematics teachers' instructional activities did not engage students in learning and therefore students' learning was not enhanced. Thirdly, the main challenges that influenced mathematics teachers' demonstration of instructional competences were found to be use of learner centred T/L methods, lack of lesson preparation time and absence of teaching and learning materials. Based on the findings, this study concludes the following: First, students did not acquire mathematics skills because mathematics teachers were not competent enough to demonstrate the expected mathematical competences. Secondly, students did not construct their own knowledge because they had limited opportunity to participate in instructional activities during T/L of mathematics. The study recommends that mathematics teachers should plan and prepare for each mathematics lesson and initiatives such as workshops and seminars should be developed to support mathematics teachers so that they are made aware that lesson preparation is very crucial for successful lesson.

Keywords: Instructional competences, mathematics teachers and instructional activities.