Empowerment of School Committees and Parents in Tanzania

Delineating Existence of Opportunity, Its Use and Impact on School Decisions

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Ellipses

ACSE: Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education

CEO: Chief Executive Officer

CSCC: Communication for Social Change Consortium

CSE: Certificate of Secondary Education

CSOs: Civil Society Organisations

D-by-D: Decentralization by Devolution

DEO: Degree of Existence of Opportunity

DOE: Degree Of Empowerment

DOI: Degree Of Impact/Influence

DUO: Degree of Use of the Opportunity

EDSP: Education Sector Development Programme

EFA: Education For   All

ESR: Education for Self Reliance

FGD: Focus Group Discussion

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

HDI: Human Development Index

HRM: Human Resources Management

IDS: Institute of Development Studies

IMF: International Monetary Fund

LGAs: Local Government Authorities

LGRP: Local Government Reform Programme

MoEVT: Ministry of Education and Vocational Training

MPA: Master of Public Administration

NACTE: National Council for Technical Education

NECTA: National Examinations Council of Tanzania

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

NQF: National Qualifications Framework

NSGRP: National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty

OPHI: Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative

PEDP: Primary Education Development Plan

PMO – RALG: Prime Minister's Office – Regional Administration and Local Government

PMO: Prime Minister's Office

PSLC: Primary School Leaving Certificate

PSs: Permanent Secretaries

PTA: Parents Teachers Association

REO: Regional Education Officer

RPL: Recognition of Prior Learning

SAP: Structural Adjustment Programme

SBM: School-Based Management

SGBs: School Governing Bodies

Sida: Swedish International Cooperation Agency

SPSS: Statistical Package for Social Sciences

TCU: Tanzania Commission for Universities

TQM: Total Quality Management

UN: United Nations

UNDP: United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UPE: Universal Primary Education

UQF: University Qualifications Framework

URT: United Republic of Tanzania

USA: United States of America

VETA: Vocational Education and Training Authority

WB: World Bank

WDC: Ward Development Committee

WECs: Ward Education Coordinators

Abstract

Since the end of the twentieth century, public administration systems in developing countries have undergone significant transformation. This comes as a result of the global shift from centralized to decentralized political, fiscal and administrative systems. Through such transformation, governments seek to empower people at the grassroots level and to improve service delivery in all sectors.

This dissertation examines the empowerment of school committees and parents in school governance, focusing on the sub-sector of primary education in Tanzania. In particular, it accomplishes three key goals: First, it delineates the empowerment of school committees and parents using Alsop and Heinsohn's (2005) and Alsop et al.s' (2006) three-level framework for measuring empowerment. The three levels are the Degree of Existence of Opportunity (DEO) for people at the grassroots level to participate in decision making, the Degree of Use of the Opportunity (DUO) and the Degree Of Impact (DOI) that the use of opportunity has on the decisions made by a school. Second, the dissertation determines factors affecting the empowerment of school committees in Tanzania. As for the third goal, the dissertation suggests important policy issues to be addressed for increasing the empowerment of people at the grassroots level in school governance.

The study from which this work is written was carried out in 2012 and 2013 in seven purposefully selected districts/municipalities in Tanzania. The study employed a mixed methods approach. 214 members of school committees and 96 non-members from 101 schools answered a survey questionnaire. Additionally, 17 in-depth interviews with education officials, teachers and parents were conducted. As a follow-up to the emerging issues from the survey, the study also involved two focus-group discussions (one each) with parents and members of school committees. The survey data were analysed quantitatively through the comparison of means, independent sample t-tests, correlation analysis and multiple-linear regression analysis, all of which are presented in the dissertation mainly through tabulation. The data from interviews and focus groups were analysed through content analysis and are presented here in narrative form.

The results show interesting trends for the three levels of empowerment, that is, DEO, DUO and DOI. Measured on an index scale of 10 (the lowest) – 60 (the highest), DEO had the highest mean index (42), followed by DUO (39) and DOI as the lowest (37). These trends suggest that people at the grassroots level often are unable to use existing decision-making opportunities. There are various reasons for this. Even when they are able to use the opportunity to participate, their priorities may not be taken into consideration when the final decisions are made. This explains the phenomenon of the perceived degree of empowerment declining along the continuum from DEO to DOI.

The findings also indicate that gender, access to information and being a member of a school committee are significant for determining the degree of empowerment in decision making, not only for the members of school committees but for parents more generally. Respondents who reported a high degree of access to information also indicated a high degree of empowerment. This finding suggests that in order to play an active role in local education-development initiatives, parents and school committee members, in addition to being aware of their own local community interests, need to be well informed about issues of national interest – for instance policy intentions, education priorities and curriculum content and direction. Regarding gender, the study reveals that men dominate the decision making process in school governance, and that this is due to constraints posed by the opportunity structure, especially the patriarchal culture of formal and informal institutions in society. The study therefore suggests the need for multi-sector efforts, not only to create awareness of educational issues amongst men and women at the grassroots level, but to address gender inequality in decision making, particularly regarding the control of schools and how children's schooling should proceed.

The findings of this study also indicate that being a member of a school committee is an important factor for individual empowerment. This confirms the proposition that people at the grassroots level become more powerful and capable of exerting influence in decision making if they are well organized in groups. In accordance with the 'local organization capacity thesis', this study suggests that the empowerment of individuals at the local level can be feasibly achieved through self-organized neighbourhood groups, and that such groups can play a significant role in school governance.

In light of the findings, the study concludes, first, that while the empowerment of parents and school committees in Tanzania has convincingly been achieved, especially with regard to local people taking adequate responsibility in the construction and maintenance of school buildings, resource contribution and other fundamental aspects, there is insufficient progress in increasing their influence on critical issues such as the national education policy, the curriculum and pedagogy. Secondly, little attention has been paid to the important enablers of local empowerment. The study provides evidence of the insufficient training of school committee members at the local level. There is also inadequate information on the government's education policy and the curriculum. Financial matters pose another barrier for local empowerment. There is a lack of transparency about bank transactions on behalf of schools, and the schools are plagued by inadequate funding. This is due to the low income base of the population, insufficient allocation and delays in the disbursement of grants from the central government.

Based on the findings and the identified challenges, it is hereby suggested that the current empowerment efforts – that is, the efforts to empower people at the grassroots level to be involved in school-related decision-making processes – need to advance *from* the establishment of institutional frameworks for people's engagement *to* building those people's capabilities. In order for this to happen, the people need to receive adequate resources and training as well as increase their level of public awareness. Such goals could be obtained through a multi-actor/network approach involving the state, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and the local communities. This approach, in my view, can work better in addressing the currently identified resource and training gaps, and it could also improve accountability.

Acknowledgements

This research project and dissertation could not have been realized without the generous support of many people and organizations. It is impossible to list all those who have contributed in different ways to this dissertation, but I am deeply grateful for their invaluable and diverse inputs. All the contributions to this work will endure through my spreading of the knowledge and experience I gained. I would like to mention by name a few organizations and people who made this undertaking a success, particularly through funding, training, supervision and logistical support.

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leave of absence made it possible for me to concentrate on my studies and to complete both the training component and the research project within the planned time frame.

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Dedication

This work is dedicated to Eric and Elisia.

CHAPTER ONE
Fundamentals, Study Context and Issues of Governance for Primary Education in Tanzania

1.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a general footing for the study as a whole and is organized into three main parts. Part one presents the fundamental aspects of the study: the basic problem which the study seeks to elucidate, main objectives and the research question. Part two provides a description of the study area by presenting a country profile, focusing on the education system and the National Qualifications Framework (NQF). Part three highlights key trends in the governance of primary education in Tanzania, in particular state control, market regulation and pluralist modes of governance. In the concluding part of the chapter, I focus principally on the issue of governance, arguing that there is evidence to suggest that a shift has occurred in the overall 'architecture' of education governance, from state-control to a network approach. This can be seen particularly when taking into account the recent trend of including more non-state actors in decision making. This has never happened to the same extent as it is now in the history of education governance in Tanzania.

1.1 Fundamentals

1.1.1 Background to the study

Since the end of the twentieth century, public administration systems in developing countries have undergone significant transformation by shifting from a traditional centralized administrative system to more devolved political, fiscal and administrative variants. The underlying aim for this has been to empower people at the grassroots level and to improve service delivery (Boex, 2013; Hankla & Downs, 2010). Education is one sector which has undergone transformation in management. School systems across the world no longer seek to operate under centralized management schemes where decisions about educational expansion, financing and service delivery to and through schools are made at the ministerial level. Rather, they strive to transfer the centralized functions to sub-national education offices (de-concentration), or to move resources and decision making authority from the centre to elected bodies at the periphery (devolution). Such transference enhances local participation and

facilitates broader locally-based decision making processes (Mollel & Tollenaar, 2013). This approach responds to citizens' local needs and nurtures their commitment to educational development (Nielsen, 2007; Therkildsen, 2000; World Bank, 2003).

To empower people at the grassroots level of education governance involves creating favourable conditions for their active participation in decision making. These local human resources are just as crucial as material and financial resources for improving education service delivery (De Grauwe et al, 2005). In Tanzania, significant educational reforms were implemented under the Decentralization-by-Devolution (D-by-D) policy. These reforms were guided by the Education and Training Policy of 1995 and implemented under the general framework ofthe Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) (URT, 1996, 1998, 2009). Accordingly, several service-provision sectors, amongst them education, were decentralized to the Local Government Authorities (LGAs) under the coordination of the Prime Minister's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government (PMO-RALG). As stated, the purpose of the reforms was to empower local communities and educational institutions in managing and administering education service delivery (Kamugisha & Mateng'e, 2014; Mafuru, 2011). This reorganization enabled the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) to concentrate on formulating policies, to develop curricula and to monitor and evaluate education outcomes. In other words, the PMO-RALG now administers and generally supervises education delivery, while the LGAs take charge of supervising education delivery and coordinate the subordinate administrative units (wards, villages and/or *mitaa*) and schools in their areas of jurisdiction. Each of these subordinate administrative units has the responsibility to supervise the implementation of the respective LGA's educational development targets, which are translated from the broader national development goals. At the village/*mtaa* level, there is at least one public primary school. Each primary school has a committee elected by the local community members. Each school committee has the overall responsibility of overseeing day-to-day operations and pursuing the long-term strategic goals for the school, with the ultimate aim of ensuring that those closest to the point at which decisions are implemented largely become the source of those decisions (Norman & Massoi, 2010)**.**

1.1.2 Statement of the problem

Since the early twenty-first century, the concept of *empowerment* has gained substantial popularity in public administration, being included on the agenda of many developing countries. Governance through user committees/stakeholder committees has become a common phenomenon in the reformed public sector in these countries, even as early as the mid-1990s (Manor, 2004a.). Through the reforms, these committees have either been introduced or strengthened (school committees in Tanzania already existed before devolution reforms were introduced) in order to enable ordinary people at the local level to implement and at times even design the development programmes and/or specific projects of individual government ministries (Manor, 2004a.:192). Some examples of user committees include school governing bodies in South Africa (Mafora, 2013; Mncube & Mafora, 2013); joint forest-management committees in India (Springate-Baginski et al, 2013) and also in Tanzania (Mbwambo et al., 2012; Nielsen, 2012); river basin committees in Brazil (Ribeiro et al, Brannstrom, 2004; 2012); school committees in Tanzania (Masue, 2010, 2011) and school management committees in Ethiopia and Ghana (Essuman & Akyeampong, 2011; Yamada, 2014). Despite the proliferation of these committees as tools to enable grassroots empowerment, few researchers (see Manor, 2004a) have studied whether or not they are adequately empowered to accomplish the tasks they were meant to achieve, or whether they have an acceptable degree of autonomy. The present study was conducted based on two main premises:

First, there is a systematic gap between, on one side, the significance attached to the formation of school committees as tools for local empowerment, and on the other side, the attempt to examine how they function, their capacity to plan and implement decisions, and efforts to make them more effective in accomplishing their goals and in instilling confidence. A precondition for effective local-level empowerment through decentralization by devolution (D-by-D) is that there are competent people at the local level who are capable of managing the decentralized functions. The requisite competences include relevant skills and knowledge on decision making, monitoring and evaluation, planning and implementation (Naidoo & Kong, 2003). These management capabilities are vital, particularly at the school level where actors are responsible for translating decentralization policies into concrete actions through preparing and implementing school development plans. It is therefore imprudent to ignore the need to

examine whether or not proper strategies are in place to strengthen the capacity of the committees and parents in school governance.

Second, various critics have had mixed feelings about the relevance of trying to empower local-level school committees and parents in Tanzania. While some support the view that the conferment of decision-making authority to the local committees and parents empowers them to fulfil their role effectively, to participate locally and to be accountable, others are sceptical about the capacity of school committees and local communities to assume the devolved responsibilities in an adequate way. This scepticism is based on the view that when devolution was first implemented, no adequate preparatory arrangements were made for training school committees in the basic aspects of school management. Nor was the general public made aware of why participation in school decision making was important. In addition, the government was insufficiently committed to helping people see themselves as active participants rather than as passive recipients. With no changed mind-set, no significant changes in the status quo could be expected, especially in terms of school committees and parents taking full responsibility for the devolved roles and delivering desired outcomes.

1.1.3 Objectives of the study
General objective

In the study, I seek to assess the degree of empowerment of school committees and parents in Tanzania, and to identify factors associated with the manifestation of empowerment.

Specific objectives

i. To examine the degree or level of empowerment of school committees and parents in terms of the following:
   - The extent to which opportunity exists for school committee members and parents to participate in decision making in their respective schools.
   - The extent to which they make use of the opportunity to participate in decision making.
   - The extent to which their participation in school decision making truly impacts the schools' decisions.

ii. To examine factors which influence the existence of decision making opportunities and their use and impact on school governance.

iii. To identify challenges facing school committees and parents in school decision making in Tanzania.

1.1.4 Research questions

The study seeks to answer the key question:

To what extent do members of school committees and parents in Tanzania have a voice in school decision making processes?

The study addressed five research questions which are a bit more specific:

(1) To what extent are people at the grassroots level – particularly the members of school committees and parents – able to make decisions on various aspects of school governance?

(2) How much do they actually participate in those aspects?

(3) Does their participation have any impact on the final decisions made by the schools?

(4) What factors influence the opportunities of people at the grassroots level to have access to and participate in and influence school decision-making processes?

(5) What are the challenges that people at the grassroots level face when trying to participate in and influence educational decision making in Tanzania?

1.1.5 Rationale for the study

Thus far there has been insufficient study of the outcome of the reforms in the primary education sub-sector at the grassroots level in Tanzania. Most of the key evaluative studies have not addressed specific local settings where the impact of the reforms can be felt most realistically. For example, URT(2004), URT(2007), URT(2008) and Galabawa (2001) focus on the overall outcome of reforms at the macro level. The study I conducted was therefore an attempt to bridge the knowledge gap by examining how the reforms have made an impact on the grassroots level in terms of empowering people, their accountability and service delivery.

Another justification for conducting the study in the primary education sub-sector instead of the secondary and tertiary sub-sectors is the fact that in at least every village and hamlet in Tanzania, there is at least one primary school. In other words, primary education is the level of education which is closest to the people. Therefore, if we want to assess the level of community

participation and empowerment in education, we can best do so at this level. By focusing on the primary education level, the study can add to the rather thin body of knowledge in the existing literature on grassroots empowerment. In addition, the findings of the study might stimulate more studies in the area, both in Tanzania and elsewhere in the developing world.

1.1.6 Methodological overview

The study applies a mixed methods approach, with an explanatory sequential design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Creswell et al, 2003; Ivankova et al, 2006). This permits a more in-depth exploration of the quantitative results and addresses emerging issues. The use of mixed methods enables data triangulation and increases the trustworthiness of findings (Marsland et al, 2000; Masue et al, 2013).
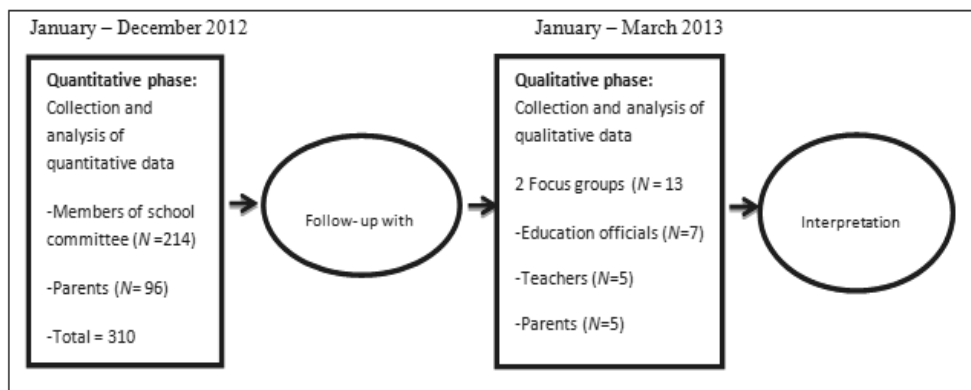
Figure 1: Study Approach & Design
Source: Developed from Creswell & Plano Clark (2011:69)

By mixing methods, I aim to integrate the benefits of quantitative and qualitative research traditions into my work while attempting to curb the weaknesses of both. For example, the quantitative approach permits me to include a substantial sample of cases, to increase analytical rigour and the possibility for statistical generalization. The qualitative approach allows me to enrich the results of the survey and to thicken the explanation of the observed phenomena. A detailed explanation of the study's methodology is provided in chapter three.

1.1.7 Organization of the dissertation

This dissertation is organized into eight chapters (Fig. 2). As already stated, this present chapter is the basis for the subsequent chapters. Chapter 2 provides the theoretical underpinnings for the study and a review of relevant literature. It constitutes a frame of reference for the findings presented in chapters 4-7 and for the conclusions drawn in chapter 8. Chapter 3 elucidates the methodological aspects employed in the study, such as the research approach, selection of the study participants, data collection methods and analysis techniques. Empirical evidence for the three dimensions of empowerment (DEO, DUO and DOI) are presented in chapters 5, 6 and 7 respectively, and chapter 8 addresses the Degree Of Empowerment (DEO) as a combination of the three. Chapter 8 closes with a summary of the study, drawing conclusions in light of the initial research questions and providing theoretical and policy implications and suggestions for s areas that need further research.
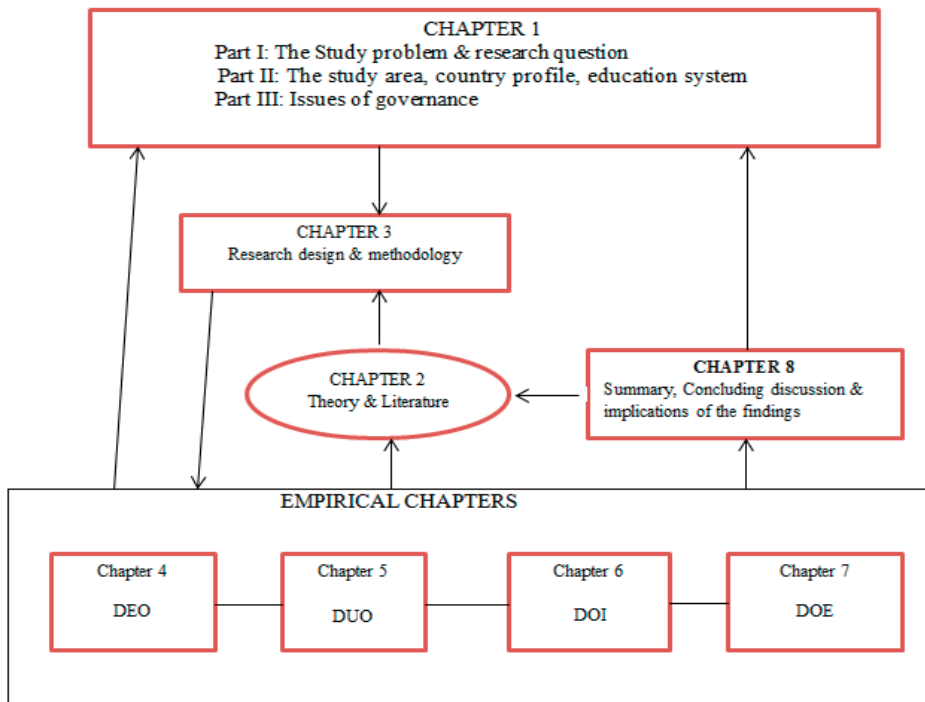
Figure 2: Organization of the Dissertation and Linkage between Chapters

1.2 The study context

1.2.1 Study setting

The study was conducted in Tanzania in two phases of field work (Fig. 1). The first phase, which involved a survey questionnaire administered to 214 members of school committees and 96 parents, was conducted from January to September 2012. The next three months were spent analysing the data. Phase two lasted from January to March 2013 and largely concerned qualitative analysis. With regard to units of analysis; the study involved seven local government authorities (LGAs) from four administrative regions (*mikoa*): Dodoma, Morogoro, Pwani and Kilimanjaro (see Table 1 below). Of the seven LGAs, three (Morogoro Municipal Council, Dodoma Municipal Council and Kibaha Town Council) represented the urban context while four (Mvomero District Council, Siha District Council, Kibaha District Council and Kondoa District Council) represented the rural contexts. Further details about how the units were selected and the reasons for their selection are provided in chapter 3.
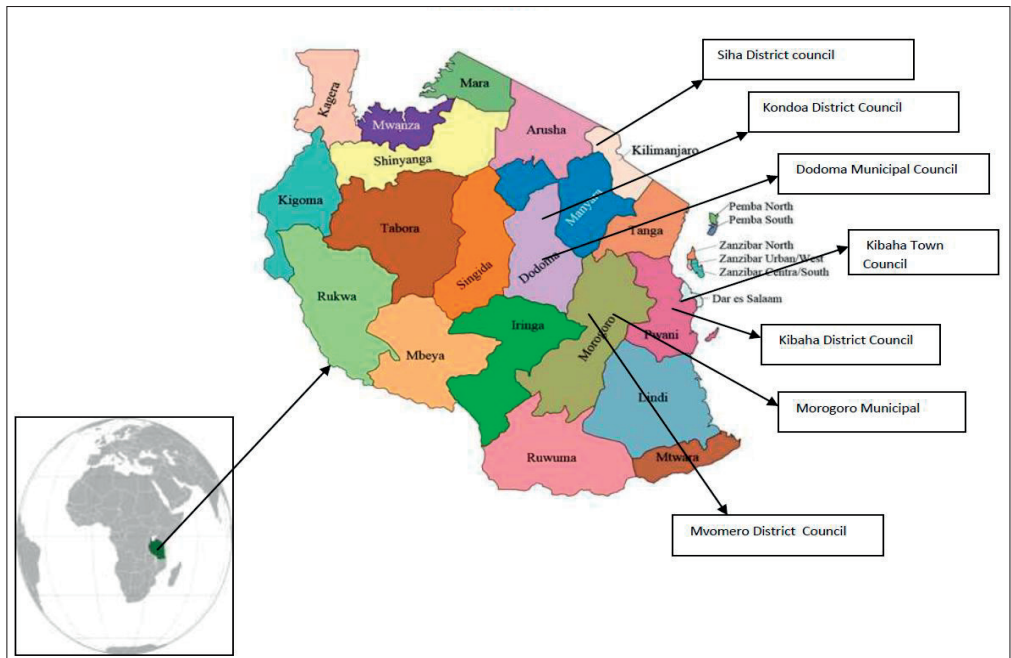
Figure 3: Map of the Study Area

Table 1: Characteristics of the District, Town and Municipal Councils Involved

	Name of LGA	Location		Population (2012 census)					
		Zone	Region	Male	Female	Total	N 1	N 2	N 3
1	Morogoro Municipal	Eastern	Morogoro	151,700	164,166	315,866	29	172 'mitaa'	59
2	Mvomero District Council	Eastern	Morogoro	154,843	157,266	312,109	19	115 villages	142
3	Siha District Council	Northern	Kilimanjaro	56,500	59,813	116,313	12	39 villages	53
4	Kondoa District Council	Central	Dodoma	136,515	133,518	269,704	32	77 villages	110
5	Dodoma Municipal Council	Central	Dodoma	199,487	211,469	410,956	37	38 'mitaa'	92
6	Kibaha Town Council	Eastern	Pwani	62,653	65,835	128,488	11	53 'mitaa'	67
7	Kibaha District Council	Eastern	Pwani	34,515	35,694	70,209	11	25 villages	

Key: N1: number of wards; N2: number of villages; N3: number of public primary schools

1.2.2 Country profile

Origin, size and geographical location

The United Republic of Tanzania is made up of two formerly independent countries; Tanganyika and Zanzibar. On 26 April 1964, they joined to form one nation. Tanganyika gained independence from the United Kingdom on 9 December 1961 and became a republic the following year. Zanzibar became independent on 10 December 1963, and the People's Republic of Zanzibar was established after the revolution of 12 January 1964.

Of the five countries in the East Africa Community, Tanzania is the largest, with a total area of 945,000 km^2. The mainland covers 881,000 km^2, Zanzibar 2000 km^2 and the rest of the area (62,000 km$^{2)}$) is covered by water. The country is geographically located between latitudes 1^0 and 12^0 south of the equator; and its longitudes are 29^0 and 41^0 east of Greenwich. The country shares borders with Kenya and Uganda to the north, Rwanda, Burundi and the Democratic Republic of Congo to the west, and Zambia, Malawi and Mozambique to the south. The country's eastern border is the Indian Ocean.

Population

Tanzania has a population of 44,928,923; 43,625,354 live on the mainland and 1,303,569 live on Zanzibar. Of the total population, 51% are female and 49% are male, with an average sex ratio of

95 males per 100 females. The average household size is 4.8, almost the same as that of 2002, which was 4.9. These figures are in accordance with the fifth Population and Housing Census (PHC) for the United Republic of Tanzania, carried out on 26 August 2012 (URT, 2012b.). Earlier censuses were carried out in 1967, 1978, 1988 and 2002, and the current population data show that the population size of Tanzania has increased to more than three times that of 1967, which at the time was 12.3 million. Despite its population size, Tanzania is a sparsely populated country with an average population density of 51 persons per square kilometre. According to the country's 2012 census report, however, there are large variations in population density across regions. For example, while the population densities of Dar-es-Salaam (in the mainland) and Mjini Magharibi (in Zanzibar) are 3,133 and 2,581 persons per km^2 respectively; those for Linndi and Katavi are as low as 13 and 15 persons per km^2 respectively.
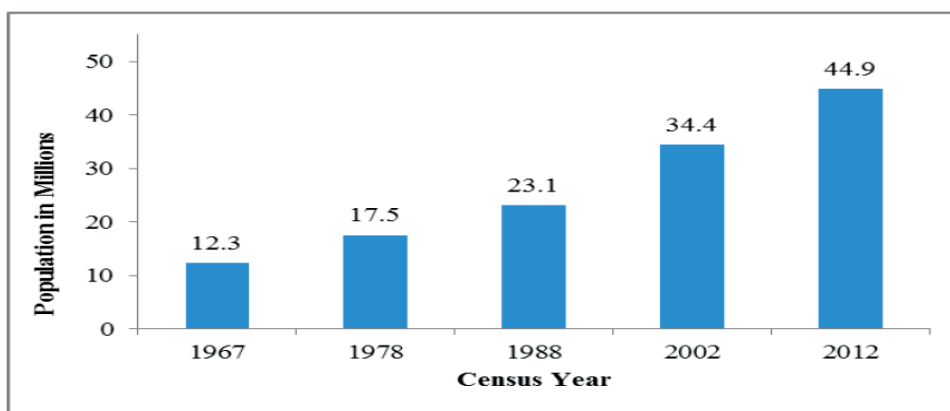
Figure 4: Population Trends in Tanzania based on the 1967- 2012 Census Reports
     Source: URT (2012b:1)

Political system and administrative units

Tanzania is a unitary republic pursuing a multi-party parliamentary democracy. All state authority is exercised by the *Government of the United Republic of Tanzania* and the *Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar*, each having three organs – the executive, the judiciary, and the legislature – with power over the conduct of public administration (UN, 2004). Tanzania is governed through decentralization, meaning that local government authorities assist each

central government in administration and service delivery. The two governments have specific but mutually reinforcing authority. While the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has authority over all matters concerning the united republic and the mainland, the Revolutionary Government of Zanzibar has authority in the island itself as well as overall non-union matters. The ongoing constitutional reforms have proposed a three-government system where, upon approval, both member states would have their own governments, and then there would be a union government in addition.

Under the decentralized governance, Tanzania is divided into 30 administrative regions known as *mikoa*. 25 are in the mainland and 5 are in Zanzibar (URT, 2012b). The regions are further divided into 169 districts. Each district is governed by a council that is mainly composed of elected and non-elected councillors. Out of the 169 districts, 34 are urban units and 135 are rural units. The former are further classified as 5 city councils (Dar es Salaam, Arusha, Mbeya, Mwanza and Tanga), 19 municipal councils, and 12 town councils. The urban units are governed by an autonomous city, municipal, or town council and are subdivided into wards and *mitaa*. The non-urban units have an autonomous district council but are subdivided into village councils or first-level township authorities and then into *vitongoji,* which are the lowest administrative units.

Economy

Tanzania is one of the poorest countries in Sub-Saharan Africa (Munga, 2011). Its initially socialist economic structure (that is, after independence) has largely been transformed into a liberalized market economy However, the government still plays an important role in some key economic sectors such as telecommunications, banking, energy and mining.

Tanzania's economy depends on agriculture, which constitutes more than 25% of the GDP. It is reported that although agriculture accounts for 85% of the country's exports and employs about 80% of the citizens, the spending on agriculture is only 7% of its budget. The country's economy has been growing steadily for the last ten years despite the recent world economic turbulence. It is believed that the country has recently achieved high overall economic growth rates based on gold mining, tourism and the expansion of the communications sector. The country's current economic growth is 6.9%. Nevertheless, Tanzania is still a 'Low Human Development' country

and is currently ranked 152nd out of the 182 countries on the Human Development Index – HDI (UN, 2013). Poverty is still pervasive, especially in the rural areas where about 75% of the population live. Rural poverty in Tanzania is estimated to account for 80% of the poor. Since the year 2001, the level of poverty in rural areas has been estimated to be 37% to 40%.[1]

Education and training system

The Education and training system in Tanzania basically consists of formal and non-formal components. Formal education is carried out in primary and secondary schools and in colleges and universities. While these offer organized teaching by means of well-structured syllabuses and timetables, the non-formal education and training entail all forms of educational activities that are organized and sustained outside the formal system. Non-formal education, which may take place both within and outside educational institutions, caters to persons of all ages, depending on the context. It is not necessarily structured in terms of syllabuses and timetables (URT, 2012a.). The following paragraphs describe the configuration of the formal system and explain how the formal and non-formal education systems are linked through the National Qualifications Framework.

The configuration of the formal education and training system in Tanzania

Tanzania uses a 2 – 7 – 4 – 2 – 3+ system of formal education and training (URT, 1995, 2012c.). This means 2 years for pre-school, 7 years for primary education, 4 years for junior-level secondary education, 2 years for senior-level secondary education and 3 years or more for higher/university education.

At the age of four or five, a child will start pre-school. This lasts for 2 years and ends with no formal examination. The child then attends primary school for 7 years and finishes at about thirteen or fourteen years of age. Primary education in Tanzania is universal and compulsory for all children from six or seven years of age (it depends on the child's growth rate and completion of pre-school. The primary school cycle begins with Standard I and ends with Standard VII. Unlike pre-school, primary education involves formal examinations. Standard IV pupils sit for an intermediate national exam, and those who perform poorly are recommended to take remedial classes before continuing to Standard V. At the end of Standard VII, pupils sit for the National

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[1]http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tanzania/overview(accessed on 3rd January 2014)

Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE), which is a tool for selecting pupils who will continue on to the secondary level. Upon completion of primary education, a Primary School Leaving Certificate (PSLC) is awarded (URT 2006).

Tanzania's secondary education is divided into a 'junior' 4-year program and a 'senior' 2-year program. Students sit for an intermediate national exam at the end of the second year, which is called Form II. The objectives for this exam are somewhat similar to that of Standard IV's exam. However, students who fail the Form II exam must repeat the class. At the end of junior-level secondary education (Form IV), a new examination is held and, if successful, the student receives a Certificate of Secondary Education (CSE). Students who satisfy certain specified criteria are selected to pursue senior-level secondary education (Forms V and VI). If they pass the final exams, they are awarded the Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education (ACSE). Students who meet set criteria are then selected for higher education and training, which lasts 3-5 years. This is a general outline of formal education in Tanzania, and it is elucidated further in the description of the national qualifications framework in the later sections of this chapter.
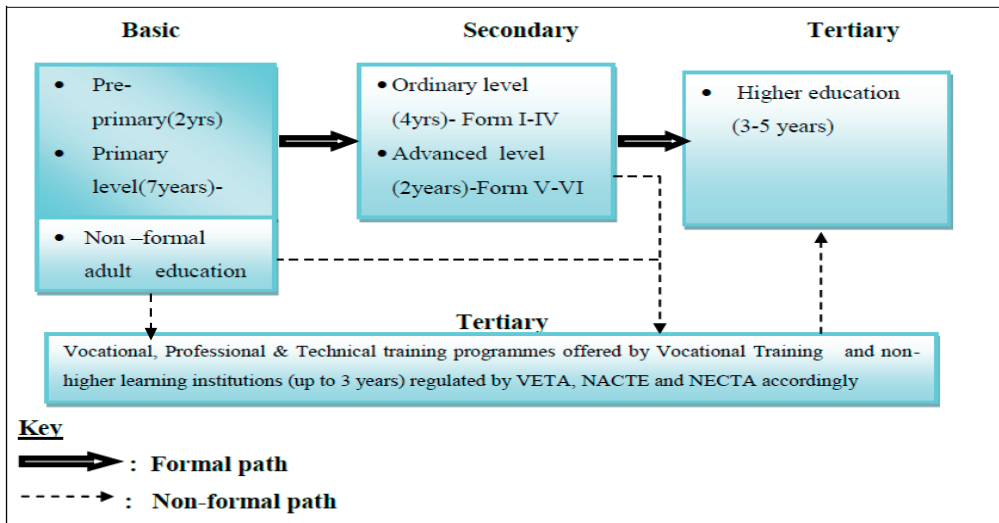
Figure 5: The Education and Training System in Tanzania
Source: Adapted from Masue (2011:16).

Linkage between formal and non-formal education and training

Tanzania is committed to promoting and strengthening linkage between formal and non-formal education and training. To this end, the two forms of education and training have been designed to complement each other. For example, at some stage of one of these two systems, input from the other system may be necessary in order for a student to complete his or her course work. Several government ministries are responsible for providing formal and non-formal education and training in Tanzania, but the most important government organs are the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training and the Prime Minister's Office (Regional Administration and Local Government). Other government departments are responsible for sector-specific professional education and training, for instance in such fields as agriculture and natural resources, business management, engineering, health and allied sciences, planning and welfare. Formal and non-formal education and training are also provided by organized communities, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and individuals.

Languages of instruction

Tanzania has a bilingual education and training system, which requires children to learn both Kiswahili and English. English is essential for linking Tanzania with the rest of the world through technology, commerce and administration. On the other hand, the Kiswahili language enables Tanzanians to keep in touch with their cultural values and heritage. It is important to note that while basic education and training are conducted in Kiswahili, English is taught as a compulsory subject in primary school, and it becomes the main medium of instruction at the secondary and tertiary-level. There is, however, an exception for the certificate-level teachers' training, where the medium of instruction is Kiswahili (URT, 1995). Kiswahili is also a compulsory subject in junior-level secondary education and thereafter becomes an optional subject.

Literacy level

During the 1980s, Tanzania was reckoned to have achieved a high literacy level. In 1986 for example, the literacy level was reported to be 89.4% (Mashasi, 2012). This achievement is believed to be the result of the implementation of the Adult Education Policy of 1970. Its further

outcome was reported to be manifest in increased agricultural production and reduced disease rates. The literacy level, however, has dropped significantly in the recent years. According to estimations made in 2009, the adult literacy rates for men and women in Tanzania were 79% and 67% respectively (UNESCO, 2012b.). This implies that about 21% of men and 33% of women lack basic literacy skills. The drop in Tanzania's literacy level is associated with many factors, one of which is a lack of emphasis on adult education, particularly basic literacy. Other factors include the inadequate number of well-qualified teachers, poor resources for teacher training and low motivation amongst teachers. The low literacy level particularly amongst women has a huge impact on the country's development. It is worth noting that the UNDP Human Development Report of 2011 shows that women who have never attended school have an average of 4.5 children, while those who attended secondary school for at least one or two years have an average of 1.9 children. Furthermore, because women's education is known to have a crucial positive influence on health and the social and economic spheres, this indicates that more efforts to increase girls' and women's access to education are worth pursuing.

1.2.3 The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Tanzania's education and training system is divided into four distinct categories, namely, basic education, vocational education and training, technical training and university education. Each of these has a qualifications framework, and together, they constitute the National Qualifications Framework, NQF (TCU,2012). The NQF is a tool for developing and classifying qualifications according to a set of criteria for levels of learning and skills achieved (TCU, 2010). It is used to integrate a person's education and training into a unified structure of recognized qualifications. It ensures the effective comparability of qualifications and credit across the national education training systems and facilitates the recognition of those qualifications awarded by institutions outside the country. As such, the NQF harmonizes different qualifications and specifies them in terms of standards, levels and outcomes. Another of its aims is to guide the development of the national education and training system, so as to integrate it with the structures and processes through which individuals acquire knowledge, understanding and skills necessary for appreciating and coping with their environment (TCU, 2010; 2012).

As Figure 6 shows, Tanzania's NQF has ten distinct levels of competence, level 1 being the lowest (Certificate of Primary Education) and level 10 being the highest (Doctorate degree).

Lifelong Learning	Level	School Pathway	Technical, Vocational and Occupational/ professional Education and Training (TVET) Pathway*	University Academic and Professional Pathway	Level	Lifelong Learning
Horizontal Articulation	10		Doctorate Degree in ()	Doctorate Degree, Professional Doctorate Degree	10	Horizontal Articulation
	9		Master Degree in (Specified Area of Technical Education or Profession) Post graduate Diploma in (Specified Area of Technical Education or Profession) Professional Level IV Certificate	Masters Degree, Professional Master's Degree Postgraduate Certificate, Postgraduate Diploma	9	
	8		Bachelor Degree (Specified Area of Technical Education or Profession) Professional Level III Certificate	Bachelors Degree	8	
	7		Higher Diploma Professional Level II Certificate	Higher Diploma	7	
	6		Ordinary Diploma (NTA Level 6) Professional Level I Certificate	Ordinary Diploma Certificate	6	
Horizontal Articulation	5	Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education	Technician Certificate (NTA Level 5) Professional Technician Level II Certificate	Certificate	5	Horizontal Articulation
	4	Certificate of Secondary Education	Basic Technician Certificate (NTA Level 4) National Vocational Certificate III Professional Technician Level I Certificate		4	
	3		National Vocational Certificate II		3	
	2		National Vocational Certificate I		2	
	1	Certificate of Primary Education			1	

Vertical Articulation Horizontal Articulation

Figure 6: The National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
Source:Tanzania Commission for Universities (2012:5-6)
Note: NTA means 'National Technical Award'

The qualifications recognized in the NQF are categorized into three groups: the schools sector, vocational and technical sector, university education sector and professions. Within the three groups, the levels of qualification (e.g., certificate, diploma and bachelor's degree) are distinguished based on the breadth, depth and complexity of knowledge and skills that are meant to be learned through the various curricula. Every qualification in the NQF has a purpose and is interrelated to others within the framework, providing articulation from one qualification to the other by recognition of prior learning. The NQF's horizontal and vertical articulations are means for enabling students to progress along different educational and career paths. (i.e.the schools on the one hand, and professions or technical training on the other). The rationale for horizontal and vertical articulation is to facilitate efficient learner mobility and advancement through the NQF hierarchy. It is also used as a means to admit into the system those learners who do not meet the direct entry requirements for the study programmes they wish to participate in, through the recognition of the prior learning (RPL) criterion (TCU, 2010; 2012).

1.3 Issues of governance

1.3.1 Trends in the governance of primary education

Introduction

Governance of the primary education sector in Tanzania has undergone substantial transformation, along with the major administrative, economic and political reforms that took place in the country from the 1970s onwards.

In this part of the chapter, I examine important trends in the governance of primary education delivery in Tanzania from the 1970s to today. In the course of doing so, I explain the trends in governance and the involvement of citizens and other actors in the delivery of primary education in three different eras (Table 2): First, the era of the expansionary collective (1974-1985); second, the era of economic growth (1986-1994) and third, the era in which income and non-income poverty are being addressed through national ideology and policy (1995 to today) (Galabawa, 2001:18).

Table 2: A Summary of the Trends: Features and Challenges

Trend	Mode	Key features	Challenges
The era of the 'expansionary collective thought' (1974- 1985)	State control	-Centralized institutions, no participation of private actors, NGOs/CSOs & citizens at large -Big government with excessively high spending -High enrolment rates -The state was the key player in education delivery	- Poor implementation capability due to limited resources - Poor education infrastructure -Internal inefficiency
The era of economic growth (1986 - 1994)	Market- regulated	- Rolling back of state -Cost-sharing -Expansion of non-public (private, religious) schools -Hierarchical control by multi-laterals (WB, IMF) conditionality	- Exclusion of the poor - Serious drop in enrolment - High dropout rates - Poor infrastructure
The era of addressing income and non-income poverty (1995 to date)	Pluralist / network	-Multilevel governance: implementation of international development targets(IDTs) -Implementation of PEDP which was mainly funded by WB and donors -Abolition of school fees -More public schools were built and old schools renovated -Strengthening of school committees	-Aid dependency -Inadequate and delayed disbursement of funds, especially after the end of PEDP I in 2006 - Decrease in quality of education

Central state control/hierarchical governance (1974 – 1985)

Centrally-controlled hierarchical governance consists of formalized relationships between the central government and the periphery. One way of putting this is that government is based on the creation of 'collectively binding prescriptions and proscriptions' (Lavenex & Schimmelfennig, 2009:797; Tengku-Hamzah & Adeline, 2011). This mode governance ischaracterized by top-down control and formalized procedures, where governing entities determine howpolicy should be conducted and implemented to achieve centrally determined goals (Bell & Hindmoor, 2011; Kooiman, 2003). In this mode of governance, the behaviour of participating actors – that is, primarily organizations – is influenced by governing authorities in a formal andvertical bureaucratic structure, often in combination with sanctions (Sørensen & Torfing, 2005). The hierarchical governance of society by the state is based on a 'substantial' rationality (Sørensen

&Torfing, 2004). The three main characteristics of this mode of governance are hierarchy, sovereignty of the state and enforceable legislation. Hence, this form of governance has been criticized for being too bureaucratic and a cause of unnecessary delays and corruption. When all power is centrally localized, this translates into a bloated government with high operating costs and inefficiency in service delivery.

The type of governing I have just outlined was prominent in Tanzania during the era when national thought was focused on 'the expansionary collective' (1970s-1985). The state was the key player in all socio-economic development initiatives. This model shaped all service provision sectors including primary education (Kuder, 2005). Primary schools were centrally controlled and managed by the Ministry of Education through appointed regional and district education officers. The place of non-state actors in governing education was extremely minimal. This state-centric developmental ideology (developmentalism) led to the weakening of local government institutions in favour of the central ones. In 1972, the government embarked on a deconcentration programme that however abolished local governments. This meant that councils on the grassroots level were shut down. Although they were re-established in 1982, they became mere agents, that is, field offices, of the central government. One major consequence was that people at the grassroots level were disempowered. The local communities were completely left out of the decision-making processes for determining important issues such as school expenditure, the procurement of supplies, management and the general development of the schooling environment of local primary schools. In the end, this led to a lack of local ownership and accountability (Mushi, 2006).

In 1974, Tanzania launched an ambitious plan for achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 1977 (Kuder, 2005). The UPE plan was part and parcel of the collective national philosophy; it was therefore necessary to connect it with the national ideology and other socio-economic policies. Thus, the 1970s and '80s were largely associated with the implementation of the Socialism and Self-Reliance (ESR) policy. It was launched in 1967 under the country's central ideology of *Ujamaa* (African socialism), and the UPE initiative was seen as the key vehicle that would take the country to its destination of social economic transformation. The ESR policy was launched as a follow-up to the aspirations articulated in the Arusha[2] Declaration, and it

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[2]A municipality in the northern part of the country

underscored the weaknesses of the educational system that was in place at the time (Baganda, 2008). The ESR stressed the need for curriculum reform in order to foster practical life skills, but also the need to link education plans and practices with national socio-economic development and the general world of work (Nyerere, 1967). Under the principles of the Arusha Declaration, access to resources and social services such as primary education was to be regulated and controlled in a way that would allow equitable access by all Tanzanians, regardless of their socio-economic status, ethnicity, religion or gender (Baganda, 2008; Galabawa, 2001; Masue et al, 2013; Mbilinyi, 2003).

The centralization programme of 1972 and the Education Act of 1978 (which in the same year led to abolishing local government authorities), and the UPE target were enshrined in the Musoma[3] Resolution of 1974 and led to considerable success, particularly in raising primary school enrolment rates to over 90% by the early1980s. The corresponding net enrolment rates indicated that the number of children who were actually attending school at the time was between 65 and 70% (Davidson, 2004). This clearly indicates that poor people's access to education was consistent with the national policy's intention, namely, to ensure that all citizens had equitable and fair access to education.

However, this 'success story' was immediately frustrated by internal problems such as weak and inappropriate policies and poor governance (Davidson, 2004). The UPE plan was implemented without a proper strategy for how to allocate funds. The process of transferring funds and managing primary education at the local level were not taken seriously. The traditional system of central management and the implementation of the UPE were hierarchical (top-down), and did not provide democratic avenues of governance where parents and teachers could participate fully in the decisions that affected their children. In addition, external factors such as oil price shocks and the deterioration of trade agreements (Baganda, 2008;Galabawa, 2001) hindered the successful realization of UPE goals. During this period, the government was the sole provider of social services, and there was very little support from international donors and agencies for assisting in implementing UPE. The economic crisis of the 1970s-1980s became the main challenge to sustaining the UPE project (Mmari, 2005). Although significant access to primary

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[3]A municipality in the Lake Victoria zone in northern Tanzania

education was evident through high enrolment rates, the project was marked by the low efficiency and efficacy of those who actually carried out the UPE project.

The era of economic growth through market regulated governance (1986 – 1994)

Market regulated (*multicentric*) governance involves competition between formally autonomous actors. It is the antithesis of hierarchical control or networked co-ordination. This mode of governance operates according to the neo-liberal principle of 'less state and more market', to ensure an optimal allocation of private goods and help regulate the production of public goods and services in a more proficient manner (Sørensen & Torfing, 2004:5). Governance through anarchic market regulation builds on the principles of profit maximization and procedural rationality. As such, the common good is redefined as a Pareto-optimal allocation of values obtained through adherence to market procedures that safeguard free rivalry between producers and consumers (Sørensen & Torfing, 2005;Netter & Megginson, 2001). However, the increased reliance on market-regulated governance has been criticized as being pronouncedly weak, to the extent of failing to ensure stability. For instance, the economic crisis of 2008-2009 in the United States financial institutions was not restricted to the USA; it spread throughout much of the world's financial systems. It was a result of allowing market forces to operate without sufficient state control (Kotz, 2009).

Market regulated governance started operating in Tanzania during the era when collective national thought was centred on economic growth (1986-1994). During this period, the Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs) were adopted and implemented. The SAPs period came about through pressure from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and donors who compelled Tanzania to accept the SAPs as a means of addressing the country's various crises (Msambichaka et al 1995). SAPs were intended to restore balance in the functioning of the then-deteriorating economy and to rationalize resource utilization through domestic activities. It is evident that the SAPs have negatively affected social services provision in many developing countries, not merely in Tanzania. There was a substantial reduction of public educational services in Africa as a result of the SAPs because public expenditure on social services was curtailed (Kiwara, 1994). A cost-sharing policy in the service provision sectors was introduced in order to cut public spending on these services. The primary education fee, which was re-

introduced in 1984, excluded large segments of the population, the poor in particular, from gaining access to education. This resulted in a considerable decline in the enrolment rate in primary schools throughout the country.

Structural adjustment policies and programmes during 1986-1994 adversely effected the ongoing efforts to implement the Universal Primary Education (UPE) policy (Galabawa, 2001). This was evident from the falling enrolment rates and high inefficiency amongst those carrying out the UPE. This era has been described as a move towards a 'minimal state' (Rhodes 1996:653). The concept of a minimal state redefines the extent and form of public intervention, capitalizing on the use of markets and quasi-markets to deliver public services whilst cutting public spending (Rhodes 1996). It could be seen as somewhat ironic that the policies of this period – that is, a time when the government hierarchy was downgraded – were hierarchically imposed by the World Bank and the IMF. By and large, the approach to governance drastically changed into a market-regulated mode embedded with concepts such as *free choice*, *market-oriented schooling* and *cost efficiency*. During this period, the size of government was reduced through the extensive privatization of state-owned enterprises and layoffs of civil servants. In sum, in addition to government control being loosened to the extent where the pace of the UPE agenda was jeopardized, the market mode of governance is also blamed for promoting socio-economic inequality in the country, as well as interference from external, that is, non-Tanzanian governing bodies..

Pluralistic network governance (1995 to today)
Governance networks are conceptualized as *pluricentric* modes of governance, as opposed to the multicentric (market) and unicentric/hierarchical (state) forms of governance. According to Rhodes (2000), since networks are considered to be self-organizing and free from much government steering, they represent a more autonomous approach to governance. Characterized by an exchange of resources and negotiations, their game-like interactions are based on 'trust and regulated by rules of the game negotiated and agreed by network participants' (Rhodes 2000:61). Rhodes continues by stressing that the importance of governance networks is connected to the fact that they provide 'a specific kind of weak institutional ties between institutions that are established on strong ties'. Governance networks are commended for their ability to provide

flexible coordination between different actors in the present era of 'fragmented political systems' (Sørensen, 2011:3). They are argued to be highly flexible in terms of order, more open in terms of entry and exit, and participatory in terms of actor involvement in decision making and network activities. However, due to the fact that decision making processes in governance networks take the form of deliberation and bargaining and that decisions are based on consensus, this slows the pace of decision making and often results in poor decisions (Peters, 2011). In addition, democratic control and actor accountability can be weak and problematic due to the fact that networks develop by default and that network participants are not elected but self-appointed (Sørensen & Torfing, 2009).

Pluralist network governance in Tanzanian primary education began during the period spanning 1995 to today. Throughout this period of about two decades, the government of Tanzania has emphasized the introduction of reforms aimed at increasing the effectiveness and efficiency in the way public services are provided (Galabawa, 2001; Mushi, 2006). With these reforms, the creation of true collaboration between the state and other education providers has become the key feature of the era. The education providers now include private persons and organizations who are encouraged to establish and manage schools and other training institutions. Thus there is increased co-operation with the private sector, NGOs and individual citizens in the provision of education, including such proactive initiatives as the training of teachers and land allocation for building schools (URT, 2001). Citizen participation in administrative, deliberative processes has become a cornerstone to better public service delivery.

In this era from 1995 to today, collective national thinking has been focused on income and non-income poverty. Efforts are now geared towards addressing both types of poverty so as to build better social services (Galabawa, 2001). During the pluralist era in the mid-1990s, Tanzania started to implement extensive educational reforms under the Decentralization-by-Devolution (D-by-D) strategy. This was embedded in the general government decentralization framework called the Local Government Reform Programme (URT 2007). The framework aims to promote community participation for the sustained effective provision of quality education. Delivery of primary education has been the most important responsibility of local governments. However, there are still some deficits in the 'external' governance, meaning that the implementation of

national development targets is being hierarchically determined by multi-lateral organizations and donors. Furthermore, networks of local institutions and citizen organizations are largely controlled by the state, which means they have lost the element of autonomy.

1.3.2 Key actors in the management and coordination of primary education

The recent government reforms in Tanzania have brought about significant changes in how primary education is managed and coordinated by institutions (which I call actors). Of particular interest here is the number of actors involved: more are involved now than ever before in the history of primary education governance in the country. This creates a complex system of administration and management.

Two government bodies are now in charge of administering and managing primary education, namely, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT) and the Prime Minister's Office- Regional Administration and Local Government (PMO-RLG). These have different but mutually reinforcing roles: the delivery of education is the key role of the PMO-RALG under the Local Government Authorities (LGAs), whereas policy and curriculum development and the monitoring and evaluation of education outcomes are done by the MoEVT. In the proceeding paragraphs, I highlight the roles of six major actors at different levels, all of whom are involved in primary education governance as outlined in the Basic Education Master Plan (URT 2001).

Prime Minister's Office – Regional Administration and Local Government

The Decentralization by Devolution (D-by-D) policy gives the PMO-RALG the responsibility of delivering primary and secondary education (URT 1998). This is done through D-by-D, which involves the transfer of power, functional responsibilities and resources from the central government to local government authorities. PMO-RALG has the following roles in primary education:

- To guide and oversee the delivery of primary education by local government authorities (LGAs)
- To provide strategic leadership and technical support to council education offices
- To support and build the capacity of regional secretariat and local government authorities
- To ensure that councils prepare consolidated education development plans that conform to government development goals, education policy and assurance standards

- To consolidate council plans and budgets into national plans of action which will provide the basis for the approval and transfer of school development funds
- To collaborate with the MoEVT in order to monitor, review and evaluate education development programme outputs and outcomes
- To communicate education information to all system levels and interested stakeholders
- To produce regular financial and physical report to the Ministry of Finance
- To collaborate with other agencies in the education sector in planning and specifying national service delivery standards for primary education
- To technically support local government authorities in planning and implementing primary education programmes in accordance with the national service delivery standards

Ministry of Education and Vocational Training (MoEVT)

MoEVT is the parent ministry responsible for education in the country. Its principal responsibilities under the D-by-D system are mainly limited to policy and curriculum development, monitoring and evaluation of education outcomes. Specifically, the MoEVT is responsible for accomplishing the following tasks:

- To set sound policies promoting quality education for all
- To monitor, review and evaluate progress, outcomes and the impact of the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) for quality assurance
- To prepare, in a collaborative manner, detailed plans for PEDP implementation
- To support and build the technical capacity of local government authority education offices
- To carry out school inspection and monitor the delivery of services. Promote compliance with curriculum and ensure that school committees govern and manage schools in a democratic manner
- To evaluate the implementation of the PEDP and provide feedback to LGA, PMO-RLG, development partners, NGOs and community based organizations

Regional Secretariats

The regional secretariats are advisory entities. They are under the jurisdiction of the office of the regional commissioner, who is responsible for providing technical support and advisory services to the districts, to enable them to implement the developmental activities of different sectors. The responsibilities of the Regional Education Officer (REO) with respect to primary education are as follows:

- To carry out periodic internal audits in the LGAs and schools to ensure that performance targets are being met

- To guide, co-ordinate and monitor the delivery of primary education
- To provide technical support to council education offices

Local Government Authorities (LGAs)

The LGAs include both district (district councils) and urban (town, municipal and city council) authorities. They assume full responsibility for the management and delivery of all primary school services within boundaries. At the council level; planning, management and monitoring capacity have been strengthened to enhance autonomy at the local level (URT 2001). The key tasks of LGAs with respect to education are as follows:

- To prepare, in a participatory and inclusive way, development plans for primary schools
- To promote meaningful participation of communities and other stakeholders in planning and implementation
- To account for the PEDP funds used by the school committees
- To produce and submit regular financial reports to PMO-RLG and MOEVT through the Regional Secretariats
- To provide technical support to school and village committees, especially in procurement, funds utilization and reporting
- To regularly monitor, review and evaluate the progress of education development activities at the school level

The Wards

A ward is an administrative area. It is at this level that the LGAs' development programmes are supervised and implemented. Service delivery activities in the villages and neighbourhoods *(mitaa)* are coordinated at the ward level. The responsible minister for local government has the power to subdivide the area of every district, town, municipal or city council into wards. Councillors are elected by each ward, and they represent the ward in the LGA's council. There is, however, no elected council at the ward level. Instead, each ward has a Ward Development Committee (WDC), which consists of the councillor representing the ward in the district or urban council (who is normally the chairperson of the WDC), chairpersons of all villages/neighbourhoods within the ward, women councillors who occupy special seats reserved for women in the relevant district or urban authority resident in the ward, and invited members. This latter group must include persons from NGOs and other civic groups involved in the promotion and development of the ward. Invited members have no voting rights. The responsibilities of the ward WEC with regard to primary education are as follows:

- To share information with and facilitate the participation of all parents and the community at large
- To help identify priorities for school development plans and to assist in the planning process
- To ensure that the implementation of PEDP-funded activities is transparent
- To co-ordinate the formulation of Whole School Development Plans

The Village and/or Mtaa

The village and /or *mtaa* is the level at which citizen empowerment, democratic participation and accountability can be demonstrated. For each village or mtaa, there is at least one primary school. If a primary school is under the jurisdiction of the district authority, it is accountable to the village council. If the primary school is under the jurisdiction of an urban authority, it reports to the mtaa committee. Since the launching of PEDP in 2002, more responsibilities and powers have been conferred on the school committees to enable them to accomplish the following key tasks (Masue, 2010; URT 2001):

- To mobilize voluntary community contributions to projects, in the form of labour, money or building materials such as timber, sand and so forth
- To facilitate planning, budgeting and implementation at the school level
- To inform the community on implementation and to indicate the progress achieved, problems encountered and how funds have been used
- To manage funds received for project implementation while ensuring maximum transparency and accountability
- To prepare and submit regular project progress report to the LGAs through Council Education Officers.
- To prepare and submit accurate and timely progress and financial reports to the village council or mtaa committee and the LGA
- to effectively communicate educational information to all parents, pupils, community stakeholders, to the village, ward/ mtaa and LGA
- General overseeing of the school's day-to-day affairs
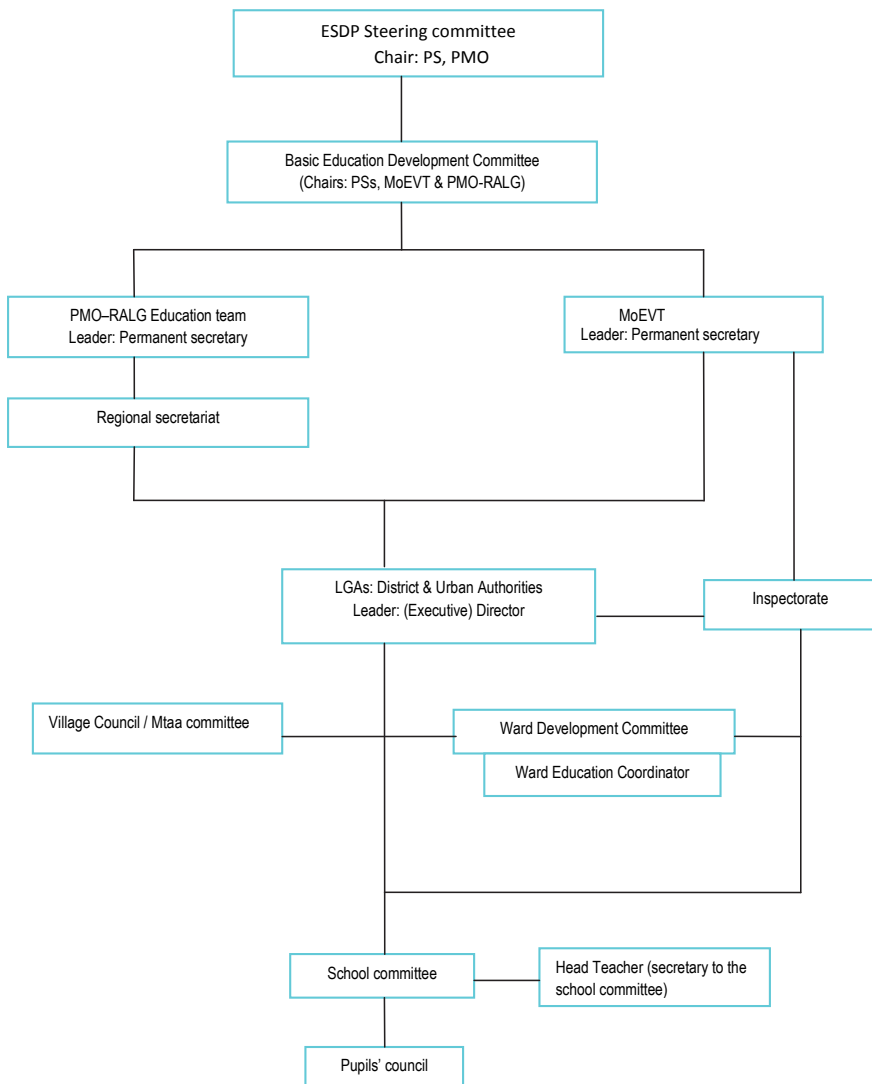
Figure 7: Arrangement of Institutions for Governing Primary Education in Tanzania

1.3.3 Concluding remarks

This chapter has introduced the study by providing basic descriptions. It has outlined the study problem, objectives and research questions, and described the research context by presenting a general profile of Tanzania. To this end, the country's key socio-demographic characteristics, education system and the National Qualifications Framework have been cursorily explained. The

final section highlighted the key trends in the governance of primary education in Tanzania through the three modes of governance: state control, market regulation and pluralist networks. In light of this review of the trends in how primary education has been and currently is governed, I argue that there is some impressive evidence to indicate a shift from state-control to network approaches in the overall governance architecture. This can particularly be noticed when taking into consideration the trend of including more non-state actors now than ever before, both at the national and the grassroots levels. However, it can still be argued that state control has remained dominant, especially when it comes to issues of staffing, curriculum development and policy making. Non-state actors, who are largely people and organizations at the grassroots level, have a negligible voice on these important issues.

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Framework

2.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present the guiding theory and articulate relevant literature for the study. The chapter seeks to establish an analytical framework that serves as the basis for analysing, discussing, and interpreting the findings. The review of literature provides insights on (i) empowerment and power, (ii) educational decentralization and school-based management (SBM) and (iii) the emerging literature on user-committees. This latter aspect positions the present study within the literature. The study is informed in a broader perspective by the theory of empowerment (Alsop et al, 2006; Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005; Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007; Kabeer, 1999; Spreitzer, 1995; 1996). Under this framework, the concept of empowerment entails the ability to make effective choices. Empowerment is influenced by two sets of conditions: agency and opportunity structure. Agency refers to the ability of an actor – here 'actor' is understood as an individual, group or organization – to make meaningful choices. Opportunity structure refers to the actors' operating environment, which includes the formal and informal institutions that enable and/or constrain actors' behaviours and actions. The interaction between these two sets of conditions – agency and opportunity structure – give rise to different degrees of empowerment.

2. 1 Empowerment construct: history, usage and issues

Empowerment is a construct shared by various fields such as community development, health promotion, psychology, education, economics and social work. Recently, the concept of empowerment has also become popular in political science and public administration (e.g. Humphreys & Weinstein, 2012; LaVeist, 1992). It has consequently become a working concept in contemporary public policy formulation and implementation. Many developing countries have embarked upon strategies such as participatory governance, participatory democracy and decentralization in order to overcome the inefficiencies of the traditional, centralized approaches to governance, and to enhance the empowerment of people at the local level. Due to its multidisciplinary use, the concept of empowerment is often controversially understood and hotly debated. According to Rappaport (1984), while it is easy to define empowerment by its absence, it is difficult to operationalize. There are also various dilemmas about how to measure empowerment properly. For example, researchers in various disciplines have always questioned

whether to use an individual (micro/psychological) approach or a collective (macro/group/community) approach. Later in this chapter, I will discuss some of the key challenges often faced in trying to measure empowerment. In the subsequent discussions, I highlight the origin of empowerment, discuss its different conceptions, analyse some of the underlying debates and synthesize a conceptual framework for this present work.

The concept of empowerment has existed for many years. Wilkinson, however, argues that many researchers write as if empowerment is 'entirely a product of the times and do not see it in a historical context' (Wilkinson, 1998:44). Furthermore, despite the current emphasis on the importance of promoting people's empowerment in policy making process and in implementing development programmes, little attention is paid to the core conditions necessary for empowerment. It was during the 1990s that empowerment started to gain popularity, simultaneously as the concept of participation began to lose its reputation due to a lack of authenticity. Unauthentic participation is a situation where people participate in a project or an issue without having adequate power to decide on the key issues pertaining to the project or issue in question (Gergis, 1999:3). Empowerment, as often argued attempts to address this inadequacy by ensuring that those who must bear the consequences of the decisions are able to participate in making them. This is authentic, meaningful participation (McArdle, 1989). The implication of empowerment is that 'it is not the achievement of goals, as much as the process of deciding that is important' (Gergis, 1999:6). The distinction between empowerment and participation is that the former goes a step further than the latter by focusing on the strong forms of participation. To empower thus means to strive to increase people's influence at every stage of decision making. (Onyx & Benton, 1996). This conceptualization of empowerment leads us to the thesis that empowerment and participation are essentially related and inseparable concepts. It can be argued that while, on one hand, participation in decision making can increase people's empowerment in terms of opportunities to influence planning and implementing local development programmes, on the other hand, they must also be empowered in order to fully engage in all the programmes meant for enhancing their development in the economic, social and political spheres (Sidorenko, 2007). Thus empowerment pertains not only to the individual and family level but also to the level of the local community and the wider society.

The concept of empowerment is said to be rooted in Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy theory. Freire's theory has been explained as an attempt toempower the oppressed by entering into the experience of oppression and assisting the oppressed in transforming oppressors through reflection and action(Demmitt & Oldenski, 1999:234). The theory helped transform the way educators viewed those who were poor and marginalized. Building on the work of Freire, empowerment can be analysed at three levels: the personal level (Zimmerman, 1995), the community or organizational level (Peterson & Zimmerman, 2004), and the socio-political level (Moreau, 1990). In workplaces, the concept of empowerment is often linked with popular management movements such as Human Resources Management (HRM) and Total Quality Management (TQM). These movements, which emerged in the 1980s, attempt to address the chronic problems of Taylorism and bureaucracy in workplaces (Wilkinson 1998). Although F.W. Taylor's scientific management theory was very successful in terms of increasing productivity, workers' dissatisfaction was immense and came to expression through high labour turnover, absenteeism and conflict. It was Elton Mayo and the Human relations school that started to build on worker's participation in decision making, to promote business success and motivation amongst employees. From this brief overview, it can be suggested that the concept of empowerment is construed from various disciplines. It is thus a multidisciplinary concept that, when studied, requires the application of multi-disciplinary approaches.

2.2 Meaning of empowerment

From the perspective of organization theory, empowerment means power sharing, that is, to delegate power or authority to subordinates in the organization so that they can act more freely in the course of accomplishing their jobs (Daft, 1995). Therefore, the action verb 'to empower'means 'to give power to' (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990; Daft, 1995). This is a top-down passive attribution of empowerment which considers the individual being empowered as a mere recipient rather than an agent of his or her own change. Despite this shortfall, this view of empowerment underscores that empowerment and power are closely related concepts, so much so that to understand the former requires an understanding of the latter.

A further exploration of conceptions on empowerment indicates that the concept can also be described as *a process to acquire power individually and collectively*. This is an active view that considers individuals, groups or communities as agents who are able to act independently in

making decisions about their life and society. I will come back to this when discussing the concept of power.

In the development context, Narayan conceives of empowerment as the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable the institutions that affect their lives (Narayan, 2002; 2005). This is an institutional/structural approach to empowering men and women through the removal of formal and informal institutional barriers that prevent them from taking action to improve their wellbeing, both individually and collectively. It is a transformational process through which individuals and groups are enabled to take greater control of their lives and the environment. According to this conception, empowerment means people can pursue their goals successfully through positive integration at the micro (individual) and macro (community) levels. Here again, the subjects being empowered are considered to be active agents who are able to challenge the socio-economic and political structures hindering their advancement. According to Astley and Sachdeva (1984), empowerment entails granting power and decision making authority, where power is regarded as the ability to affect organizational outcomes (Mintzberg, 1983). According to Astley and Sachdeva (1984:105-106), power in organizations emanates from three major sources, namely, hierarchical authority, control of resources and network centrality. From this perspective, citizen empowerment would involve changing structures by flattening governmental hierarchy through decentralization by devolution, thus shifting decision making authority to the local levels. This is consistent with the transformational view that considers empowerment as 'the process of transforming existing power relations and of gaining greater control over the sources of power' (Pritchett & Woolcock, 2004:12). The definition views empowerment as an attempt to create an environment where people can develop their full potential, making them creative in improving their lives according to their needs and interests; it enables them to participate actively in the development process. This view concurs with Page and Czuba's (1999) conception of empowerment as a multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. Empowerment according to this perspective involves fostering power in people for use in their own lives, their communities and in their society, to enable them to act on issues they deem necessary and of mutual interest.

Empowerment can also be defined as a 'developmental process that promotes an active approach to problem solving, increased political understanding, and an increased ability to exercise control in the environment' (Kaminski, et al 2000:1359). A person is said to move through stages of empowerment in a relatively linear and progressive way, by increasing his or her 'commanding heights' in terms of skills, understanding and resources. As a developmental process, empowerment has been theorized as involving four stages: entry, advancement, incorporation and commitment (Kieffer, 1984). In most cases, the entry stage appears to be provoked by an experience of an event or situation threatening to one's self or one's family. Kieffer refers to this as an act of 'provocation'. In the advancement stage, three major aspects are important for the continued empowerment process: a mentoring relationship, a supportive peer relationship with a collective organization, and the development of a more critical understanding of social and political relations. The third stage, incorporation, focuses mainly on the development of a growing political consciousness, while the fourth stage, commitment, is concerned with the person's ability to apply the new participatory competence to ever-expanding areas of his or her life. This outline of the four stages of empowerment can of course be extended from the personal to the group level.

When viewed from the perspective of social action, empowerment promotes people's participation at the individual, organization and community levels to achieve increased individual and community control, political efficacy, improved quality of community life and social justice (Wallerstein, 1992). This perspective takes into consideration two important assumptions: First, individuals are assumed to understand their own needs better than anyone else and should therefore have the power both to define their needs and act upon them. Second, all people possess strengths such as personal knowledge and experience, confidence/self-efficacy and determination. These qualities are valid and useful in coping effectively with the challenges people face in their environment (Whitmore & Kerans, 1988).

From the reviewed definitions, it is clear that no single definition of empowerment can explain the concept in full. It is very fuzzy in meaning, usage context and dimensions. But despite its fuzziness, the concept of empowerment can be defined in a manner that suits its context of use. In this dissertation, therefore, I define empowerment as *a process through which people acquire*

and exercise power to make choices that suit their interests and bring about change. This definition departs slightly from organization theory's conception of empowerment insofar as it pays more attention to people themselves as agents of their own empowerment. The thesis for which I argue here is that when people use their own capabilities (agency) and opportunity structure, they can make effective choices to achieve their social, political and economic goals.

2.3 Challenges in measuring the concept of empowerment

As pointed out earlier, empowerment is a broad concept that refers to the expansion of freedom of choice and action to shape one's life (Narayan-Parker, 2005:4). It is about asking how much people can exercise control over resources and decisions. This is why the concept is popular in organizations and developmental contexts. However, researchers and practitioners admit that in addition to the challenges of conceptualizing empowerment, there are also significant challenges in measuring it (Alsop et al, 2006; Kabeer, 1999; Spreitzer, 1996; Zimmerman et al, 1992). These challenges arise from the multidimensional nature of the concept itself, the dynamic processes and the relational changes that are less predictable, less tangible, more contextual than universal, and more difficult to quantify, both in the collection and analysis of data (Malhotra et al, 2002; Uphoff, 2005). For example, researchers ask whether to conceptualize empowerment as an end in itself or a means to some other ends, and whether it is to be examined at the individual or collective level (Malhotra, 2002; Narayan-Parker, 2005). The problem of establishing causality (Alsop et al., 2006; Khwaja, 2005) complicates the issue of measurement even more. In this work, I specifically focus on the following key methodological questions, all of which pose challenges and dilemmas: (1) Can empowerment be conceptualized and measured as an end (intrinsic view) or a means to an end (instrumental view), or both? (2) What exactly is measured? (3) How can a quality defined via an abstract concept be measured: quantitatively, qualitatively or both (mixed methods)? (4) What is the unit of analysis: individual or collective? (5) Who measures: self or others? (6) How can causality be established?

This list of questions, however, presents only a fraction of the many challenges a researcher may face. Hence, when measuring empowerment, the researcher needs to make some delimiting choices simply in order to make the measurement project feasible. In the subsequent sub-

sections, I will provide some details on each of these challenges in relation to the choices I have made with respect to this work.

2.3.1 Should empowerment be measured as an outcome, a process, or both?

This is one of the key questions raised when designing studies on empowerment. The key question here is whether empowerment is intrinsically appreciated or instrumentally appreciated (Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007; Narayan-Parker, 2005). Can it be viewed as an end in itself or as a means for achieving other goals? When scholars view empowerment as an end in itself, they regard it as an outcome of other factors (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Some specific factors related to agency (capability) and structural changes serve as preconditions for empowerment. In a causal perspective, the factors become independent variables and empowerment becomes the dependent variable (Alsop et al., 2006 & Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007). The present study applies this analytical approach.

Alternatively, empowerment can be considered as a means to some specific ends (Khwaja, 2005; Petesch, Smulovitz, & Walton, 2005). This an instrumental view where empowerment is examined beyond its intrinsic value. Taking this approach, the researcher would seek to demonstrate, for example, the causal link between empowerment and development outcomes such as reduced poverty, reduced maternal and child mortality, increased democratic governance, increased welfare and so on. When studying empowerment as a means to an end – in the present case, the end would be a development outcome – the key question that must be addressed in the research design is 'How much of a given outcome can be attributed to empowerment rather than to the many other influences on the development been analysed?' (Petesch et al., 2005:53) The results obtained can suggest the kind of empowerment-based development interventions needed for addressing a particular development issue (Khwaja, 2005; Narayan-Parker, 2002; Petesch et al, 2005).

A third way of viewing empowerment is by considering it as both an outcome (an end) and a process (means) to an end. The thesis argued here is that empowerment needs to be explained as both an outcome and a process. This is first of all because as an outcome, empowerment can at least (though not accurately enough) be measured against expected outcomes based on certain

indicators. In the case of school governance, the indicators could be individual school committee members' sense of control, confidence, active participation in decision making, sense of ownership, access to resources and autonomy. Second, as a process, it is not a start-stop event, hence it cannot be realized once and for all; it can only be realized through a continuous process involving struggle over time and place, through attempts to increase one's capabilities in relation to other actors in the ever-changing environment.

Designing a study on empowerment as both an outcome and a means to other goals requires one to raise two types of hypotheses (Petesch et al., 2005): The first type are hypotheses about the processes affecting empowerment. These hypotheses concern effects on agency and on opportunity structure as the main factors for empowerment. The second type concerns the influence of empowerment on other ends. Examples of development outcomes may include improved school governance, improved school infrastructure, improved education outcomes and so on. A study examining empowerment as both an outcome and a means to development goals will be very demanding in terms of resources, time and skills, for it requires a combination of quantitative (with large-N analysis) and qualitative methods (with in-depth case inquiries). However, sometimes it may not be possible to conduct large-scale studies on empowerment owing to resource constraints. This is why another alternative is suggested, one which involves carrying out comparative, small-N studies concerning policy or institutional changes across sub-national units or regions within countries (Petesch et al., 2005).

2.3.2 What is measured?
The second question I have considered important has to do with identifying the cluster of dynamic processes and relational changes related to empowerment and to measure them clearly. Empowerment is complex due to being multidimensional, context-dependent and in lack of a single clear definition (Trommlerova et al, 2013). Due to these attributes, it is often a challenge to capture its dynamic processes and relational changes, all of which are usually less predictable, less tangible and more difficult to quantify during the stages of both field work and analysis (Malhotra et al, 2002; Uphoff, 2005). To clarify and accurately measure the processes and changes, it is crucial to capture precisely the essence of these dimensions of empowerment. For example, is it that we want to measure people's perceptions about how much opportunity they

have to participate in school decision making, or do we want to measure their actual participation in the process and their impact on the decisions? Given that empowerment can be explained by a diversity of intrinsic factors (e.g., self-efficacy, confidence and the ability to envision outcomes) and extrinsic factors (e.g., encouragement from others, institutional climate, training and physical resources), it is important to start by specifying the relevant aspects of empowerment that are to be measured (Narayan-Parker, 2005). Thereafter, the researcher can choose measures that are closely connected with those relevant aspects and the specified causal direction. This requires one to construct scales that can demonstrate variations in the measures (e.g., low – high measures) of a perceived phenomenon such as participation. The scale should be able to demonstrate what can be classified as high, moderate and low empowerment.

2.3.3 Whether to employ quantitative or qualitative methods, or both

There has been much debate concerning the appropriate methods and tools for collecting data on empowerment. Some scholars – Spreitzer (1995), Trommlerová et al. (2013) and Khwaja (2005) – use quantitative methods. The quantitative approach to measuring empowerment has become popular particularly because it is more rigorous and able to establish causality and generalizability. It is also argued that the quantification of empowerment enables a more concrete presentation of the phenomenon and can provide objectively verifiable evidence of it. For example, through quantification, one could demonstrate the impact of women's empowerment interventions and/or evaluate the relevance of empowerment on desired policy objectives (Kabeer, 1999).

On the other hand, qualitative scholars suggest using in-depth interviews and focus group discussions because they can provide in-depth accounts of a phenomenon or a particular case. In addition, the qualitative methods enable the researcher to hear the voices and opinions of the subjects; they are, after all, the ones who know what empowerment means to them, and they can best assess and interpret change in empowerment and development in their own context. Jupp and colleagues put it succinctly:

> There is no other way to start than with the voices and opinions of the people living in poverty, who know what empowerment means to them and who have developed their own way of assessing change (Jupp et al, 2010:21).

However, the scholars do admit that qualitative empowerment studies have several limitations; they are costly in terms of resources and are criticised for being more subjective and less rigorous.

Table 3: Examples of Empowerment Studies and Methods Used

Author	Title	Methods used
1. Trommlerová et al. (2013)	Determinants of empowerment in a capability-based poverty approach: evidence from the Gambia	Quantitative
2. Subramaniam (2012)	Grassroots groups and poor women's empowerment in rural India	Mixed
3. Jupp et al. (2010)	Measuring empowerment? Ask them: Quantifying qualitative outcomes from people's own analysis. Insights for results-based management from the experience of a social movement in Bangladesh	Qualitative
4. Baiocchi et al. (2006)	Evaluating empowerment: Participatory budgeting in Brazilian municipalities	Mixed
5. Legovini (2006)	Measuring women's empowerment in Ethiopia: The women's development initiatives project	Mixed
6. Bennett & Gajurel (2005)	Negotiating Social Change in Rural Nepal: Crosscutting Gender, Caste and Ethnic Dimensions of Empowerment and Social Inclusion	Mixed
7. Brown (2005)	Applying Q methodology to empowerment	Mixed (Q methodology)
8. Grootaert (2005)	Assessing empowerment at the national level in Eastern Europe and Central Asia	Quantitative
9. Khwaja (2005)	Measuring empowerment at the community level: An economist's perspective	Quantitative
10. Rao & Woolccock (2005)	Mixing Qualitative and Econometric Methods: Community-Level Applications	Mixed
11. Gropello & Heinsohn (2004)	School-Based Management in Central America: what are the Effects on Community Empowerment?	Mixed
12. Parveen & Leonhäuser (2004)	Empowerment of Rural Women in Bangladesh: A Household Level Analysis	Quantitative
13. Kabeer (2001)	Conflicts over credit: Re-evaluating the empowerment potential of loans to women in rural Bangladesh	Mixed

The trend observed from most of the literature reviewed in this study indicates that scholars recognize the limitations of both approaches and the complexity of empowerment. This would suggest that the best solution is to integrate the two. For example, although Ibrahim & Alkire (2007), in their attempt to establish internationally comparable indicators of agency and

empowerment, propose the use of a survey questionnaire to obtain quantitative data, they also acknowledge the necessity of using qualitative and participatory methods for triangulating the data and deepening the analysis in various contexts. Table 3 summarises a few selected studies and their respective methodological approaches (quantitative, qualitative or mixed). As the table shows, nine out of the thirteen listed works used and /or suggested mixed methods. Drawing on the methodological insights from the literature, I use a mixed methods approach to examine the empowerment of school committee members and parents in Tanzania. In particular, I have drawn on Creswell & Plano Clark's (2011) explanatory sequential design. This is a survey followed up by qualitative interviews with focus groups. More of the methodological details for this study are provided in the methodology chapter.

2.3.4 Unit of analysis: individual or collective?

As already intimated, empowerment studies face serious methodological challenges and dilemmas when it comes to making choices about the level and units of analysis, that is, whether empowerment can be measured using individual-level or group-level data. Ibrahim & Alkire (2007) suggest measuring individual aspects of empowerment by asking interviewees about their perceptions of the extent to which 'people like themselves' can influence change in some aspects of community life (Ibid:387). Most social science studies on poverty focus on individuals, despite the long tradition of the concept of social groups and group identity in the field of sociology (Narayan-Parker, 2005). The reason for this orientation is probably due to the challenges of measuring empowerment and related phenomena such as poverty and inequality.

It is argued, from academic and practical points of view, that measuring empowerment at the group level may be very demanding in terms of instrumentation. This dissertation focuses largely on the individual as the unit of analysis. At this level, key sources of data are individual members of school committees, parents, teachers and education officials. Some of the questions use the formulation: *'To what extent do you feel that you have opportunity to participate in……?'* (e.g., planning and budgeting, construction and repair of school buildings and other school decision-making areas). This type of formulation can help in measuring the degree of the existence of opportunity at the individual level.

2.3.5 Who measures, one's self or others?

One of the most common concerns about measurement and evaluation is the need to maximize objectivity and to minimize subjectivity. In order to adhere to this principle, it is suggested that the interviewees should not measure or evaluate their own situation (Narayan-Parker, 2005). The question here is whether to use data that draw on the subjects' own perceptions and, when this is practiced, what steps should be taken to ensure rigorous analysis (Holland & Brook, 2004). Even so, most of empowerment studies have used data from self-reported measurements. These studies include, but are not limited to, Zimmerman et al. (1992), Trommlerová et al. (2013), Schulz et al. (1995) and Spreitzer (1995, 1996).

The use of self-reported measurements of empowerment involves capturing individuals' perceptions about how empowered they feel. Although perceptions of empowerment are likely to be somewhat related to these people's actual experiences of exerting influence, they remain individual perceptions and hence cannot be fully objective (Schulz et al, 1995). To minimize this shortfall, data triangulation with in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and observations may be necessary to more completely capture the concept of empowerment at the grassroots level. The present study uses self-reported measurements to obtain the whole of the quantitative data. These data are backed up by qualitative data from in-depth interviews and focus groups, as a safeguard against social desirability bias (halo effect). This type of bias results from the desire to give others a favourable impression of oneself. Social desirability bias can result from questionnaire items with response options that involve qualities which the respondents consider to be necessary to have, actions considered desirable to get involved in, or items considered desirable to own. This type of question cannot be completely avoided in empowerment studies. Questions like '*How often do you attend school meetings?*' or, '*How often do you participate in school development activities?*' are valid, but they can result in some respondents inflating their responses to 'very often' while in actual fact their actions/behaviour in such areas are inconsistent with the responses given. To overcome this challenge, this dissertation includes a qualitative component consisting of in-depth interviews, focus group discussions and a document review, all of which help triangulate data and enhance the trustworthiness of the findings.

2.3.6 Establishing causality

Causality is a theoretical concept independent of the data used to learn about it (King et al., 1994:76). It is the relation between an event – the cause – and a second event – the effect – where the latter is interpreted as a consequence of the former. According to King, et al. (1994:85), causality can be defined in terms of 'the mean causal effect'; this is usually the difference between the systematic component of an outcome variable when the explanatory causal variable takes on two different values. In the development research context, establishing causality implies linking development intervention, that is, empowerment, with the outcomes or desired impact (Alsop et al., 2006). However, owing to the complexity of empowerment, attributing the cause and effect can be relatively challenging.

When studying empowerment as a means to an end and as an end in itself, establishing causality is argued to be one of the key challenges researchers encounter (Khwaja, 2005). More complications arise due to the fact that empowerment cuts across various sectors; it can manifest itself in many ways in various domains and at different levels. Hence, in order to establish causality in the study of empowerment as a means to development outcomes, it is important that it be measured in a framework that defines the value of empowerment in achieving positive development outcomes (Narayan-Parker, 2005). In order to establish causality empirically by measuring a desired outcome (e.g., empowerment or a development outcome), it is important to take seriously the problem of 'endogeneity' (Khwaja, 2005:279; King et al, 1994:185). This problem arises in situations where values acquired by an explanatory variable are consequences rather than causes of a dependent variable. In other words, a 'backward' causal relationship arises, where the outcome itself also affects the explanatory factor. There are instances where the actual relationship between two variables may be entirely or partly the reverse of what the researcher assumes to be the case. For example, in empowerment, the causal factors of competence and participation, which are often regarded as explanatory variables, may just as easily be affected by the outcome variable (empowerment). Due to this problem, it is imprudent to infer the causal direction simply by looking at correlations between the explanatory and outcome variables; to do so might result in a wrong estimation of the measure of interest and the outcome. This is because the explanatory variable is being correlated to the part of the outcome variable that remains unexplained.

Accordingly, it has been suggested that using quantitative and qualitative methods in combination with randomized or experimental design and instrumental and fixed effects estimations might substantially minimise endogeneity (Khwaja, 2005).

2.4 Concepts related to empowerment

Many concepts are related to empowerment, for example, participation, power, agency, opportunity structure, autonomy, self-direction, self-determination, self-liberation, mobilization and self-confidence. In this part of the chapter, I restrict the discussion to three major concepts: agency, opportunity structure and power. I do so in order to clarify connections between them. My ultimate aim is to draw out some important theoretical insights on how they are linked to the concept of empowerment.

2.4.1 Agency

Agency, as Samman and Santos (2009:3) put it, is one of the two 'building blocks' of empowerment. The other one is opportunity structure, which is discussed in 2.4.2. Agency, according to Sen, is what a person is free to do in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important (Sen, 1985:203). On this view, it can be argued that agency constitutes a process of freedom (Sen, 1999), that is to say, the freedom to choose to pursue desired goals or aspirations. However, Sen's definition provides a more individualistic rather than collectivist view of agency, which I interpret as a weakness. Other researchers argue that agency can be exercised both at the individual and group levels (Alsop et al., 2006; Narayan-Parker, 2005; Petesch et al., 2005). Agency can thus be defined as an individual's or group's ability to make purposeful choices (Alsop et al, 2006). Agency could also imply that an actor is able to predict and make desired choices from available alternatives (Kabeer, 1999). Individuals act as agents – that is, with agency – when they are capable of envisioning and pursuing purposeful courses of action to realize goals that may relate not only to their individual benefit but also to a wide range of goals deemed worthwhile to pursue (Petesch et al, 2005). Effective agency thus implies that people have the capacity to act as agents by envisioning alternative courses of action, analysing them, making choices from among the alternatives and taking action to implement the chosen course of action individually or collectively.

Based on both the measurement of empowerment and the action to enhance it, an individual's or group's agency can by and large be predicted through their 'asset endowments' (Alsop et al, 2006:11; Narayan-Parker, 2005:10). Assets can be categorized in terms of physical possessions or other material wealth, examples being land, housing, livestock, savings and valuables such as gold. The possession of assets increases people's agency by widening the scope of alternatives from which to choose. Conversely, a lack of sufficient physical and financial resources denies people the possibility to make choices and in turn lowers their agency (Narayan-Parker, 2005). Apart from physical and financial assets, other types of assets are also necessary for the expansion of agency. These include but are not limited to psychological, informational, organizational, social and human assets.

Some scholars see agency as being related to or linked with empowerment. As pointed out earlier in this chapter, empowerment can be understood as an actor's capacity to make *effective* choices. Agency, on the other hand, is conceptualized as the actor's ability to make *purposeful* choices (Alsop et al, 2006). The phrase 'effective choices' entails not just the capacity of an actor to make choices but to transform them into desired actions and outcomes. This is what distinguishes empowerment from agency. Thus, agency is not equivalent to empowerment. Why? Because people may have agency – the ability to make purposeful choices – but they may be unable to exercise it effectively. This is because their agency can be constrained by the opportunity structure, that is, the institutional context within which they interact and which influences their ability to transform agency into action.

2.4.2 Opportunity structure

Opportunity structure refers to the broader context of institutions and social and political environments. It encompasses the context of formal and informal rules and norms within which actors, individually or collectively, pursue their interests (Alsop et al, 2006; Narayan-Parker, 2005; Petesch et al., 2005). Formal and informal institutional norms and rules, which are put in place by a particular society, shape and constrain human interaction and the individual's possibility to make choices (North, 1990; Petesch et al., 2005). An actor may be able to make a choice, but then the effectiveness of the choice, whether or not it can be realized, depends largely on the institutional context in which the actor operates. Institutions and the dynamics of politics

can significantly influence the degree to which people, especially the poor, can influence government policy in their favour (Petesch et al., 2005). This forms the basis for the theoretical proposition that empowerment is influenced by two major factors: agency and opportunity structure. The interaction between agency and opportunity structure results in varying degrees of empowerment ranging from the lowest (existence of choice/opportunity), to the intermediate (making use of choice/opportunity), to the highest (influence/impact) (Alsop et al, 2006; Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005) This is illustrated in Figure 8.

In order to understand opportunity structure, it is necessary to understand the significance of formal and informal institutions. Some examples of formal institutions include sets of official rules, laws and regulatory frameworks governing the conduct of political processes, the delivery of public services, activities of private organizations, and the relationship between the public and private sector and markets. Informal institutions, by contrast, are unofficial rules that prescribe incentive systems and govern the manner in which relationships within organizations in a society are to be conducted. Other examples of informal institutions are informal cultural practices, value systems and behavioural norms that operate in social groups and communities in the society. They are unwritten rules of behaviour and choice that stem from morality rather than law (Hyden, 2006). Informal institutions take different forms depending on whether they are open or closed, exclusive or inclusive.

Practically any change such as a shift in power relations will involve interaction between formal and informal institutions, and this in turn will inevitably involve tensions or conflicts before the change comes into effect (Alsop et al, 2006).

Agency
-ability to make purposeful choices

Iterative Relationship

Opportunity structure
-formal and informal institutions (rules, norms, values and practices)

Degree of empowerment (DOE)
-Degree of existence of opportunity
- Degree of use of opportunity
- Degree of influence/impact
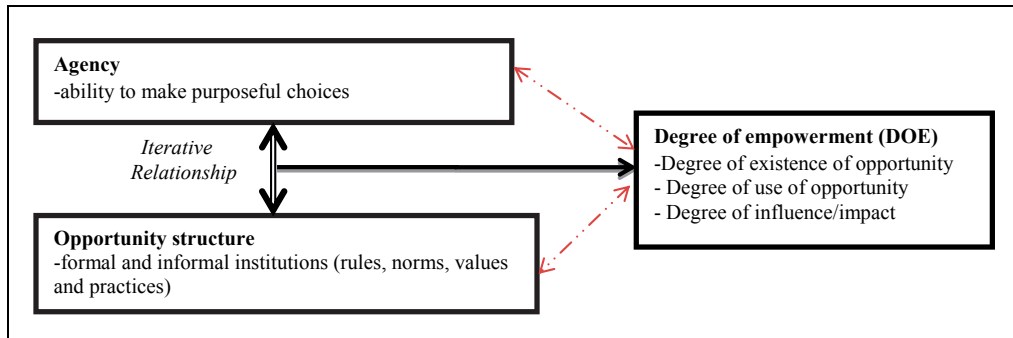
Figure 8: Agency, Opportunity Structure and Empowerment: A Conceptual Framework
Source: Modified from Alsop, et al. (2006:10).

As Figure 8 shows, the effectiveness of agency is influenced by the institutional context in which an individual or group operates. Institutions and politics have a significant influence on whether or not people at the grassroots level are able to influence public policy consistently with their local interests and priorities. Things like rules and regulations and socio-political structures like political parties and community-based activist groups have a lot of influence on the effectiveness of agency. In this model, empowerment is dependent on the interaction of agency and opportunity structure. The opportunity structure includes both the *institutional climate* and *socio-political factors*. While the former may include aspects such as access to information, the degree of inclusion and participation in the socio-economic activities, the public sector's degree of accountability and the capacity of local organizations, the latter refer to the degree of openness that poor people have to exploit opportunities and services in the society (Narayan-Parker, 2002; 2005). Formal and informal institutional contexts may act as enabling or constraining opportunity structures that can influence the amount of resources or assets to be accessed, thus affecting the final outcome (Narayan-Parker, 2005). Resources include economic assets such as land, housing and savings, but also human capabilities such as good health and education; social assets can also be resources, for instance a sense of belonging, a sense of identity and leadership. On a personal psychological level, resources can include self-esteem, self-confidence and assertiveness (Kabeer, 1999; Trommlerova et al, 2013;). An enabling opportunity structure will thus create more room for exercising agency (i.e., the ability to make purposeful choices) and result in a high degree of empowerment, while a dis-enabling opportunity structure will result in the opposite result. This

implies that empowered actors seek to increase their agency through an enabling opportunity structure. This could, for instance, be through decentralized decision-making structures such as elected multipurpose councils and single-sector user-committees. Such is at least the case for the school committees discussed in this work.

2.4.3 Power

As pointed out in the introductory part of the chapter, any attempt to understand the concept of empowerment requires an understanding of the concept of power. What is power? How can we gain it? Does it come about spontaneously or do we have to struggle for it? What does empowerment have to do with power in individuals, groups and communities? These questions are important for understanding the concept of power and how it is linked to empowerment.

What is power?

Power is a complex and contested concept. It entails the capacity to achieve the result one wants (Lukes, 1974). There are of course different views of power put forward by social and political theorists (Clegg, 1989, 1994). According to Foucault, power is conceived of as a technique for achieving a strategic goal through a disciplinary character (Foucault, 1977). Foucault attempts to depart from the mechanistic and sovereign view of power and to establish a new regime, one where power is exercised from *within* a social body rather than from *above* it (Foucault, 1980). Max Weber, meanwhile, describes power as the ability of an actor to realize his or her will through a social action, even against the will of other actors (Weber, 1946.). According to Weber, power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to exert influence and realize his or her will over the other actors, even despite resistance. Power gives people the ability to command resources in a particular setting and/or context. For instance, economic power gives one the ability to control capital resources, to direct production, to monopolize, accumulate and even prescribe the manner in which consumption should proceed. What with economic power, social power, legal power, political power and so on, one can see that power in societies is broad and occurs in all spheres. Power is not the same as dominance. While power is a sociological concept, dominance is a psychological concept (Bierstedt, 1950). Power is centred in groups and expresses itself in inter-group relations. The locus of dominance, by contrast, is in the individual, and it manifests itself in interpersonal relations.

Attribution of power: Psychological or Relational?

Whether power should be explained as an individual psychological attribute or a collective attribute has always been hotly debated. While in the individual-psychological perspective, power is regarded as an attribute *of* or *within* the individual,the collectivist perspective explains power as a social relationship operating *between* individuals(Berle, 1969; Dahl, 1957).

Dahl (1957) proposed one of the earliest definitions of power, and it is still today one of the most cited definitions: 'A has power over B to the extent that he can get B to do something that B would not otherwise do'(Dahl, 1957:203).However, despite its popularity, this definition does not provide adequate substance for analysing power because it focuses more on the actual power of the individuals and ignores the latent, potential type of power (discussed below). Even so, Dahl's definition appears to go beyond the individual or psychological perspective and to recognize that power operates in relationships. Examples of such relations of power would be between group members, between the roles people play, within offices, governments, nation-states or other human aggregates such as user groups and school committees.

Regarding the question of possessing potential power versus actually exercising power; some scholars, for instance Dahl, prefer equating power with its actual exercise in an episodic sense, rather than with when it is not exercised and remains merely a disposition. On Dahl's view, power can only be recognized when it has been seen to be exercised (Dahl, 1957, 1968). However, other scholars (e.g. Clegg, 1989; Lukes, 1974; Ryle, 1949) regard power as a disposition, that is, a capacity to do something, regardless of whether one actually does it or not.

> To say that a person knows something, is not to say that he is at a particular moment in [the] process of doing or undergoing anything, but that he is able to do certain things, when the need arises, or that he is prone to do and feel certain things in situations of certain sorts (Ryle, 1949:116).

This argument is an important constitutive insight of my dissertation: empowerment can be examined as both a potential capacity and as an actual exercise. People might have abilities or resources – for instance certain skills, information and social and conventional capital – but only when the need arises will the skills or resources be used. The justification for this is linked to the metaphor of a 'storehouse of resources' which could involve things like saving money, going to

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school, gaining various qualifications and establishing social networks; not all these 'resources' will be used immediately. Some will serve as potential capabilities for future use, and they contribute to the empowerment of the individual or group.

2.5 The basis of power and how it is exercised

2.5.1 Power by virtue of authority: Max Weber

Some confusion has often been experienced in the political discourse on power and authority. Owing to failure in making distinctions, the two concepts have often been treated synonymously (Uphoff, 1989). Weber's distinctions are contrary to this inclination. He views power and authority as co-existing but different concepts. While power entails the ability to get another or others to have the desires you want them to have, to secure their compliance by controlling their thoughts and desires, authority legitimates the manner and scope in which power operates. According to Weber and the sociological perspective in general, power can be exercised without the use of force. This can only be possible if those without power in some way and to some extent legitimate the arrangements. Authority or legitimacy thus refers to the probability that particular kinds of orders will be obeyed. In other words, to have authority in a specific domain entails that one's directives will be followed. Weber identifies three types of legitimacy upon which authority may be based. These are charisma, tradition and rational-legal authority. Based on charisma, the leader is obeyed because he or she is trusted. The trust emanates from personal qualities possessed by the leader, such as being exemplary or heroic. Traditional authority is based on custom, that is, the way things have always been done. The key feature of this pattern of authority is paternalism, where the basis for obedience and loyalty is person or family-based as opposed to the impersonal office or position held (Jamil et al, 2013). Rational-legal authority, also called bureaucratic authority, is based on rational rules and procedures that are uniformly applied to all members of an organization. People give orders and expect obedience because their position in an authority structure entrusts them this power (Weber,1946). The subjects' compliance with their leader's orders depends on the extent to which the orders are relevant to the situation in which they are given. Accordingly, the power does not reside in the individual but in the position the individual occupies. This is, according to Weber, a characteristic of modern societies. In any actual society or institution, power may not be exercised on the basis of only one type of authority, but through combinations of the three types.

Power is usually a relational concept (Clegg, 1989; Dahl, 1994; Foucault, 1982). An important precondition put forth by Foucault is that power relations exist only when the subjects have freedom, in the sense of having different choices and the possibility to act in different ways:

> Power is exercised only over free subjects, and only insofar as they are free. By this we mean individual or collective subjects who are faced with a field of possibilities in which several ways of behaving, several reactions and diverse comportments, may be realized. Where the determining factors saturate the whole, there is no relationship of power; slavery is not a power relationship… (Foucault, 1982:790).

The central interest in understanding power in social settings is to elicit ways through which people exercise power to influence the behaviour of others through social interaction, where it entails not just the human ability to act, but to act in concert (Arendt, 1970). From this viewpoint, power can be analysed along the distinctions of *power over, power to, power with* and *power within*(Boulding, 1989; Chambers, 2006; Kabeer, 1999; Rowlands, 1997).

Power over comes to expression in a mutually exclusive relationship of control or subordination. This is the ability to dominate another person or group such that the power holder has the ability to make the other party do what the power holder wants. It usually stems from force and threat and can be considered coercive(French & Raven, 2001). Power-over is associated with negative connotations of oppression, domination, corruption, abuse and so on. If subordinates fail to do what is demanded, the power holder will use force to ensure compliance. Subordinates are obedient not because they accept the power holder's subordination of their interest, but because they fear the consequences of disobedience (Boulding, 1989). Power, according to this conception, is thus conceived as a 'zero-sum game' or a 'win-lose relationship'; that is, gaining power involves taking it from someone else, and then exercising it to prevent others from accessing it. Levels of power in any society are relatively constant, hence the increased power of an individual or group must be at the expense of others (Dahl, 1958; Weber, 1946.). This form of power relations is commonly associated with autocratic political systems and military organizations where power is usually concentrated at the centre and the flow of information is top-down.

Power to concerns the ability to make decisions. It entails authority, control and the ability to solve problems emanating from intellectual means, such as knowledge and skills, and economic assets (Kabeer, 1999). To be more precise, this type of power entailsthe ability to access and control resources, which are the means of development, and to benefit from them. These resources give some people *power to* accomplish things that others cannot. Such power is therefore regarded as 'people's capacity to define their own life choices/goals and pursue them even in the face of opposition, dissent and resistance from others' (Chambers, 2006:100; Kabeer, 1999:4).

Power with is the ability to cooperate with others to get something done. This is the power of consensus, the power of people working together to solve a common problem. It is a form of social or political power that seeks to realize a common purpose or mutual understanding. Examples here could be school committee members working together to mobilize local communities in building classrooms; or school committees working together with the local community to improve school infrastructure. *Power with* can be enhanced through empowerment processes and activities such group or community meetings and discussions, collective resistance, collective action through protest marches and demonstrations, lobbying and collective bargaining (Chambers, 2006).

Power within refers to self-awareness, self-esteem, identity and assertiveness (Chambers, 2006). It concerns how individuals, through self-efficacy and internal power, can influence their lives and make changes. This type of power focuses on the individual psychological level, implying a sense of self-confidence and capacity. Yet *power within* also applies to the relationships between groups and people at the community level. It therefore implies the ability to negotiate and influence relationships and decisions in a society (Zimmerman & Warschausky, Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995; Rowlands, 1997; 1998). The concept *power with* can be examined at both the micro and macro levels. On the micro level, one can explore how individual members of a school committee have the capacity and to engage in discussions with fellow committee members and to make their ideas count as the committee's final decision. On the macro level, one can explore the ability of individual school committees as collective entities to influence decisions at the village, ward and district council levels.

2.5.2 Agency, social integration and system integration: Stewart Clegg (1989)

Clegg's framework for analysing power is based on the philosophy that all social relations are essentially power relationships. According to his framework, which he labels 'circuits of power', power can be conceived logically as moving through three distinct circuits – *episodic, social integration* and *system integration* – and they are always carried by the organization of 'agencies' (Clegg, 1989:239). Clegg's 'agencies' (see Figure 9) are capabilities. The interdependent relationship existing between the three circuits generates three corresponding forms of power, namely *causal, dispositional* and *facilitative* power.

Causal power emanates from the episodic circuit, and it is the power exercised in day-to-day actions in which an agent seeks to get another to do what the latter would not do otherwise (Clegg, Courpasson, & Phillips, 2006). This power circuit includes interpersonal episodes such as managing conflict, communication and feelings. This level is therefore characterized by the 'intermittent exercise of power' (Clegg, 1989:187), which stems from the agent's capacities to control resources. Furthermore, because this type of power is always exercised *over* another person in an episodic, causal way, and because of the nature of the agent's agency (capabilities, knowledge and so forth), the responding person's attitude is characterized by resistance (Clegg, 1989:208).

The second circuit of power is *social integration*, and it corresponds with dispositional power. This form of power refers to the capacities that an individual agent has, regardless to whether or not they are used (Rodon, Trullén, & Sesé, 2010). While causal power in the episodic circuit is initiated by an agent, dispositional power configures the agent's actions. This is to say, dispositional power operates at a deeper level than that of the episodic circuit, and it takes into consideration that the agent's capacities exist in the rules of meaning and membership underlying the social relations that shape the way agent acts. It is in the dispositional circuit that rules socially construct meanings and membership relations. This circuit contains an *us* vs. *them* dynamic as well as mental maps (these could also be called schemas, blueprints or templates). The outcomes of the social integration circuit serve largely to transform or reproduce the rules fixing extant relations of meaning and membership in organizational fields. As these are reproduced or transformed, they fix or further entrench the 'obligatory passage points', as shown

in Fig. 9. This, in turn, affects the stability of the extant social relations that had attempted to stabilize their power in the previous episodes of power (Clegg et al. 2006:241). When agents reproduce dispositional rules and meanings, they become members of the given system, hence social integration results.

The third circuit, *system integration*, focuses on the empowerment and disempowerment of agents' capacities (what Clegg calls agencies). These capacities become more or less strategic, that is, geared towards facilitating a certain outcome, as transformations take place which are incumbent upon changes in the way people are disciplined and the techniques of production (Clegg, 1989:224). The transformation of the rules of meaning and membership, which is taking place at the social integration level, can influence (i.e., facilitate or restrict) innovation in the modalities of disciplinary and productive power, and in turn, have the potential to empower or disempower the existing social relations. It should be born in mind that questions of transformation emerge only in situations where rule-following practices and/or the current techniques of domination are being challenged. Under such situations, it may be necessary to reconfigure the 'relational field which constitutes agencies, means of control, and resources' (Clegg, 1989:220). The power emanating from the system-integration circuit is described as 'facilitative' because it is a source of empowerment or disempowerment of certain forms of agency through the recreation or creation of new ways of doing things in a particular social setting (Rodon et al., 2010). Clegg's model reflects an interesting puzzle about the configuration of organizational power. This is seen, for instance, when central government agents delegate authority in order to increase the power of peripheral agents. Supervening on the process of delegation, there are governing rules which involve discretion, an important dimension which constitutes the potential for the peripheral agents' empowerment. These governing rules have some kind of hidden power that is said to alter the opportunity structure created through the operation of the rules.
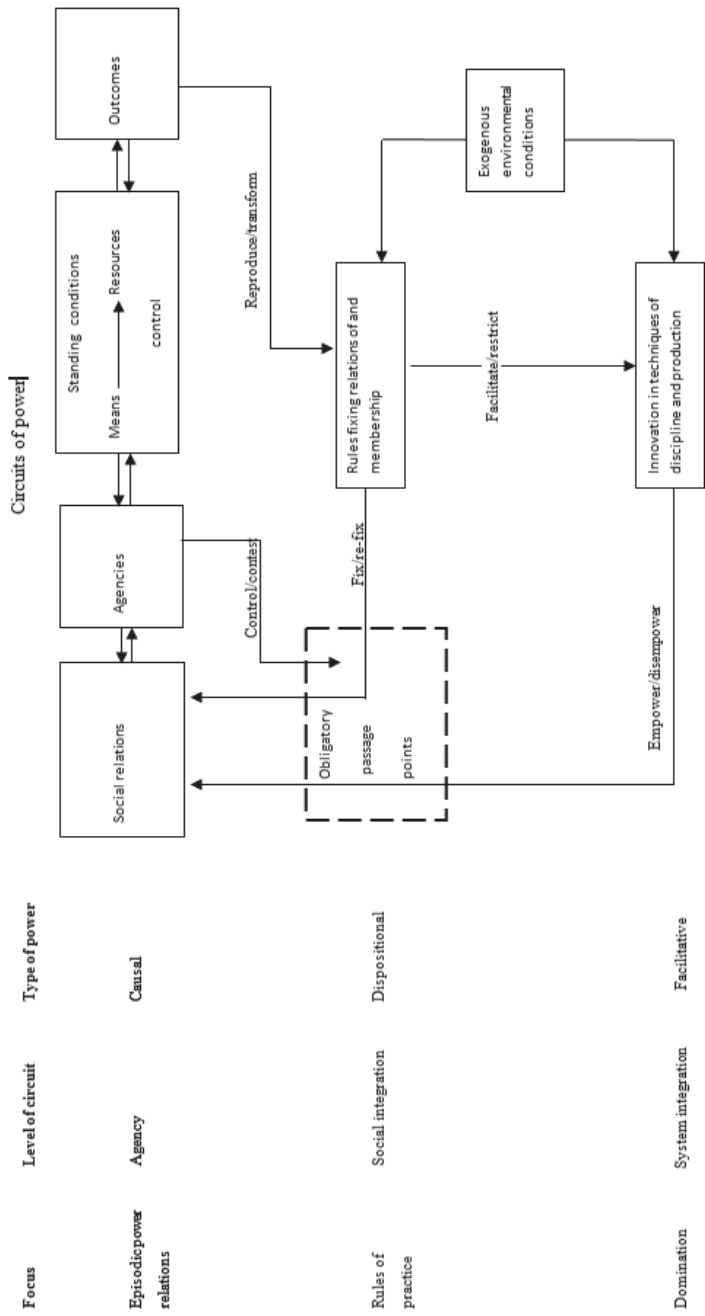
Figure 9: Circuits of Power

Source: Clegg (1989:214) - with permission from the author

Key: *Agencies* = capacities; *Outcomes* = positive (empowerment) and negative (disempowerment); *Episodic* = episodes of day to day interaction, work, and outcomes; *Dispositional* = socially constructed rules, membership groups (us/them), and mental maps or blueprints; *Facilitative* = systems of rewards and punishment (disciplinary mechanisms), the suitability/relevance of technology, job design & networks

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2.6 Measuring empowerment

Empowerment can be measured in two principal ways: directly and indirectly (Alkire et al, 2013). My discussion of these approaches will focus on the key indicators of empowerment and the limitations of each of the approaches.

2.6.1 Indirect measurement of empowerment

Using indirect measurement, empowerment is usually indicated through its actions or outcomes. Rather than measuring empowerment itself, the researcher measures indirectly by observing behaviours reflected through empowerment's proxies (Alkire et al., 2013; Alsop et al., 2006; Narayan-Parker, 2005). Examples of proxy indicators include ownership of resources and assets such as land and capital goods, the agents' level of education and literacy, their self-confidence and membership in groups (Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005). However, the use of proxies in measuring agency and empowerment is criticized for being unreliable, and for at least three reasons. First, there are often variations in the conversion of assets into agency among individuals. Second, variations in agency and empowerment may result from other assets than those captured by the proxies, or they might be completely unrelated to any asset at all. Lastly, the same assets used as proxies for agency or empowerment are often used as proxy indicators of development measures such as poverty. This complicates attempts to examine the relationship between proxy-determined agency and/or empowerment and poverty (Alkire, 2009; Trommlerová et al., 2013).

2.6.2 Direct measurement of empowerment

When doing direct measurement, a researcher can focus on the expansion of an individual's ability to willingly pursue his or her goals and achieve desired outcomes (Alkire et al., 2013). This approach, however, also faces considerable challenges, first, in relation to comparability across contexts, and secondly, as regards the quantification of the measurements (Narayan-Parker, 2005; Trommlerová et al., 2013). Despite these challenges, some scholars have tried to measure empowerment directly. For example, Ibrahim & Alkire (2007), for example, propose a set of direct measurements of agency and empowerment that can be compared across nations. Some examples of the direct measurement approach include measuring the extent to which an individual has control over daily activities and the degree to which decision making is genuinely autonomous.

Alsop & Heinsohn (2005) and Alsop et al. (2006) suggest three directly-measured degrees of empowerment emanating from the interaction between agency and opportunity structure. These are the Degree of Existence of Opportunity (DEO) for people's participation in decision making; the Degree to which they actually Use the Opportunity (DUO); and, after using the opportunity, the Degree Of their Influence on the decisions (DOI) (Alsop et al., 2006; Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005). Opportunity structure is an important prerequisite to people's empowerment. An enabling opportunity structure will make it possible for people to translate their assets into effective agency. For example, equitable access to quality education will provide access to formal education, which makes an individual knowledgeable, skilful and confident. The new knowledge, skills and confidence (assets) gained through formal education can bring about change. When opportunity exists for people to participate in planning and implementing local development projects, they can transform their asset-based agency into empowerment, that is, active participation and influence in local decision making. The same pattern applies in contexts governed by informal rules. For example, the effective agency of an educated woman will depend largely on the extent to which the beliefs and value systems of the society enable or constrain women to participate in decision making process.

Degree of existence of opportunity (DEO)

'Existence of opportunity' is similar to what is known as *structural empowerment* in work organizations and employee-involvement literature (Bowen & Lawler, 1992). Structural empowerment implies that specific actions, practices or bundles of initiatives are put in place in order to enable managers to delegate authority and responsibility to employees to increase their effectiveness (Spreitzer, 1996). When viewed from the angle of governance and politics, structural empowerment involves creating decentralized institutions to increase opportunities for participation in decision making at the grassroots level. In the education sector, local-level decision-making structures can provide people with adequate opportunities to participate in decision making. School committees and parent-teacher associations are examples of those structures.

The existence of choice (opportunity) can be considered as the lowest level of empowerment. At this level, the focus is on expanding people's opportunity to participate in making decisions about their own development. Opportunity for decision making can thus be increased through adjusting the formal and informal institutional frameworks. This results in removing barriers that prevent people at the grassroots level (individually or collectively) from taking effective

action to improve their socio-economic development (Narayan-Parker, 2005). Examples of formal institutional frameworks include legislation, rules, regulations and implementation processes supported by states, markets, society and multilateral organizations. On the other hand, examples of informal institutional frameworks include social norms of solidarity, domination, gender inequality, corruption, values and taboos. All such informal institutions can undermine the effectiveness of formal rules.

In the present study, the existence of opportunity for people at the grassroots level to participate in school decision making is examined through self-reported measures of the extent to which individual members of school committees and parents feel that they have the opportunity to take part in school decisions. Examples of areas where they could participate in decision making include the discipline of pupils, expenditures, the procurement of school materials and equipment, and building and maintaining classrooms, toilets and teachers' houses.

Degree of use of opportunity (DUO)

To discern the degree of use of opportunity or 'use of choice', as Alsop et al. (2006:17) put it, a researcher can measure whether a person or group makes use of an existing opportunity to participate in decision making. The use of opportunity can be through direct participation or through indirect participation via a legitimate representative body that acts on one's behalf (Alsop et al., 2006). When people at the grassroots level contribute directly in the decision making process, they are practicing direct participation. Again, to couch this in the context of the education sector; examples would be parents participating in open decision-making forums, particularly school meetings, where they could decide on issues such as school contributions, pupils' discipline, building construction and maintenance of school infrastructure. On the other hand, when parents are represented by their school committee in school decision making, they are practicing indirect, representative participation. The use of choice and opportunity can be regarded as an intermediate degree of empowerment where people participate in making and implementing decisions. It is superior to the measurement of the mere existence of opportunity. The degree to which people actually make use of an existing choice will depend on various factors and circumstances. These can include institutional contexts (Narayan-Parker, 2005), for instance the extent to which both the formal and informal institutions enable or constrain people's participation in the decision making process. As already stated, formal institutions include, but are not limited to, laws, rules, regulations and policy-implementation frameworks; whereas informal institutions could include norms, values and taboos. Because institutions are

important instruments for creating the necessary conditions for the poor and other people to engage in the whole process of making decisions about their own development, empowerment efforts often seek to increase people's opportunities for making decisions by creating a favourable institutional climate. To be more precise, efforts are made to change the unequal power relations between the state and the poor people in villages and suburbs through, for example, creating local-level institutional frameworks such as local elected councils and user committees (school committees, primary health care committees, community forest committees, and so on).

Degree of impact/influence (DOI)

Impact, as conceptualized in the context of work organizations, is the degree to which individuals view their behaviour as making a difference in the organization. This could also be described as the extent to which they feel they have influence on operating outcomes (Maynard et al, 2012; Spreitzer, 1995; Spreitzer et al, 1997; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990).Therefore, impact is about 'what happens' following the individual's actions (Cattaneo & Chapman, 2010). Analogously, in the development discourse, impact, which is also referred to as 'achievement of choice' or 'effectiveness of choice'(Alsop et al, 2006:18; Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005), is a measurement of how far a person or group is able to achieve a desired outcome after making use of the existing opportunity to participate in decision making. Thus, impact can be gauged in terms of the degree to which behaviour is seen as facilitating' the accomplishment of a purpose or task, or as producing intended changes in the individual's or group's task environment. Impact can be measured in many ways, all depending on the context and intentions of the people's actions. For example, if the intention is women's political empowerment, then the measurement of impact will focus on whether women actually vote. In the same way, studying the impact of people's participation in school governance will involve measuring the extent to which their priorities count in the school decisions, whether they actually elect school committee members, and so on.

It is worth noting that the framework of analysing empowerment based on Alsop et al. (2006) and Alsop & Heinsohn's (2005) 'degrees of empowerment' in terms of *opportunity, use of the opportunity* and *outcome* is related to Kabeer's (1999; 2001) *resources*, *agency* and *outcomes* framework, which identifies access to resources, agency and outcome (achievements) as three essential components of empowerment. Both frameworks are designed to compare the state of empowerment across countries and regions, and both are based on normative sets of indicators.

While these normative indicators may have significant value, they nonetheless assume a sequential path to empowerment and they are based on the assumption that there is a universal definition to what it means to be empowered (Jupp et al., 2010:36).

2.7 Decentralization as a mechanism for empowerment

Decentralization is frequently suggested as a means to enact and deepen democratic governance and improve effectiveness in administration and service delivery (Brinkerhoff & Omar, 2006). Many governments in the developing world have embarked on decentralization reforms as an attempt to do away with the centrist government systems, to improve governance and service delivery and to bring the government closer to the people (Faguet, 2013; Manor, 2004b.). It is argued that decentralization, particularly the democratic variety, when it works properly, strongly increases the transparency, accountability and responsiveness of government institutions to the needs of the citizens at the grassroots level. The increases are measured in terms of the degree to which outputs from a government conform to the preferences of ordinary people at the grassroots level (Manor, 2006:285). Democratic decentralization expands the room for popular participation in decision making and in implementing local development programmes. It is an attempt to help public organizations nurture the 'principle of affected parties'; that is, to include different social interest groups in the decision making process (Christensen et al, 2007:92). The principle of affected parties emphasizes that public goals and priorities should primarily reflect society's interests. Thus, the role of government officials is not only to be sensitive to society's signals, but also to influence the goals and interests of the society through negotiation, dialogue and exchange. Increasing people's participation in decision making through dialogue enhances their trust and commitment to the decisions taken; they feel they had a voice in what has been decided (Fjeldstad, 2005). Finally, whatever is implemented that emanates from such decisions gets full acceptance and support from the people.

What is decentralization? Traditionally, decentralization is explained as the process of authority conferment from the centre to sub-national and other lower-level political and administrative bodies. Decentralization can take the forms of de-concentration, delegation and devolution (McGinn & Welsh, 1999; Wekwete, 2007); its meaning can be extended further, as Cheema does, to embrace complete privatization and the transfer of responsibilities to non-governmental organizations through contracting out partial service delivery (Cheema, 2007). These views bring us to the school of thought that considers decentralization as a 'continuum' of power

shifting from the centre to the periphery of government. This continuum comes to expression in the forms of deconcentration, delegation and devolution (Brinkerhoff & Omar, 2006; De Grauwe et al., 2005).

2.7.1 De-concentration

De-concentration involves shifting authority and responsibility from the centre to lower level units. The peripheral or local units are accountable to the central government ministry or agency from which authority and responsibility emanates (Olsen, 2007). This form of decentralization involves the transfer of a few administrative dimensions of authority and responsibility to lower-level government institutions. Nevertheless, the local authorities have little ultimate power to make decision (Cheema and Rondinelli, 1983; Dyer & Rose, 2005). De-concentration is often considered as a *controlled form of decentralization* and is used most frequently in unitary states (Olsen, 2007), especially where decision-making authority and financial and managerial responsibilities are re-allocated amongst different levels of the central government. This re-allocation can take two different forms: either the central government can just transfer duties from its officials in the capital city to those working in the regional, provincial or district levels, or it can establish a strong field administration or local administrative capacity under the central ministerial control (Olsen 2007). A typical case of government de-concentration can be drawn from Tanzania's 1972 decentralization policy, which enabled the central government to retain more decision-making power through abolishing local government authorities at the district levels (Munga et al, 2009). Under this policy, the management of primary and secondary education was decentralized by transferring supervisory responsibility to the regions and districts. The regional and district authorities were thus responsible for managing all schools according to the central government's directives. The scope of discretion and autonomy at the peripheries was significantly low (Masue, 2010).

2.7.2 Delegation

Delegation involves redistributing authority and responsibility to local divisions of government, or to agencies that are not necessarily branches of the delegating authority. In this form of decentralization, accountability is still upwards, to the respective delegating unit. Decentralization by delegation is thus the transfer of managerial responsibility for specific functions to local units, Local Government Authorities (LGAs) or Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) that may not be under the control of the bureaucracy (Cheema & Rondinelli 1983; Bray 1987; Olsen, 2007). In this form of decentralization, the centre remains

accountable for the delegated activities. In spite of the fact that decision making power is conferred to lower levels, this does not mean the power cannot be withdrawn whenever the central government deems necessary. There is therefore little difference between de-concentration and delegation because the power to make decisions still rests with the central authorities. They have merely chosen to 'lend'power to the local agent (Bray, 1987:132). It can thus be argued that de-concentration and delegation are the weak forms of power at the local level.

2.7.3 Devolution

Decentralization by Devolution (D-by-D) or simply, 'devolution' is the form of decentralization whereby the state gives full decision making power and management authority to sub-national levels. In this form of decentralization, the centre allows decision making at local levels without the need for prior approval from higher up in the organization. In the context of schools in Tanzania, the scope of devolution entails that formal authority is transferred to the respective LGAs who can make decisions on issues ranging from finances and staffing to administrative functions (Cheema and Rondinelli, 1983; Dyer & Rose, 2005; Bray, 1987; Abu-Duhou, 1999). Through D-by-D, full autonomy is awarded to the LGAs, and the central government's authority consequently extends only to supervisory control (Abu-Duhou, 1999). Under D-by-D, justification for decentralization rests on its effectiveness and efficiency in resource utilization as well as responsiveness to local needs (Robinson, 2007). These two benefits have been argued to be triggered by openness in the policy process and the increased bottom-up influence from people at the grassroots level. Practical examples of D-by-D implementation include the creation or revival of the deteriorated multi-purpose councils and the establishment of single-purpose user committees (Manor, 2002; 2004b.).

Decentralization as a strategy to empowerment is, however, also noted to have a negative impact. Estache and Sinha (1995) have reported, through their data from a cross-sectional study of developed and developing countries, that decentralization leads to increased spending on public infrastructure. Similarly, Ravallion (1998) found that decentralization promoted substantial inequality in public spending in the poor areas of Argentina. In Uganda, Azfar and Livingstone (2002) found that decentralization made no significant positive impact on the efficiency and equity of local public service provision. In rural China, researchers found that decentralization resulted in lowering the level of public services in poorer regions (West & Wong, 1995). The Ugandan and Chinese experiences are seconded by those of South Africa

and Namibia, where it was also found that decentralization led to increased inequality or new forms of social exclusion in the settings where inequality and social exclusion previously existed (Sayed & Soudien, 2005).

2.8 School-Based Management (SBM)

The decentralized governance of education through SBM is one of the recent global reforms in educational development (Cranston, 2002). SBM is a concept that carries different names with slightly different meanings, examples being 'school based governance', 'school self-management' and 'school site management' (De Grauwe, 2005:2). Despite the different names and variations in the meanings carried by these concepts, they all refer to a similar governance trend: allowing more autonomy to the schools in decisions concerning their management and utilization of resources. SBM started in Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and New Zealand, then gradually spread to the developing countries. It was spread through agencies and governments that supported education development in those countries, but who were searching for 'alternatives for placing educational resources, decision-making and responsibilities "closer to the action" – and at a distance from the control of centralized authorities' (Caldwell, 2005:3). Therefore, SBM seeks to operationalize the concept of decentralization by conferring authority over decision making to the schools (teachers, parents and community members) to increase accountability, student performance, efficiency in administration and people's empowerment at the grassroots level (Cranston, 2002; De Grauwe et al., 2005; Lindberg & Vanyushyn, 2013). Thus, through SBM, the goal is to improve the process of decision making in schools by enabling the schools to make site-based policies and decisions that respond appropriately to the people's local needs.

2.8.1 Theoretical illustration of parent – teacher power relations in SBM

The essence of school governance reforms is to set up a new structure for achieving a balance of power between teachers and parents in school decision making. Bauch and Goldring (1998) use a double axes model which illustrates parent – teacher power relations as a continuum of low – high decision making power. As Figure 10 shows, the two axes constitute four quadrants of power-relation patterns or modes, namely, parent empowerment mode, partnership/communal mode, teacher professionalism mode and traditional/bureaucratic mode.

Parent empowerment mode (quadrant 1)

This quadrant is characterized by low-teacher, high-parent participation. This mode of power relations somewhat follows the scenario of a 'zero-sum game' or a 'win-lose relationship', where gaining power involves taking it from someone else (Dahl, 1958; Jo Rowlands, 1995; Weber, 1946). The mode suggests that levels of power in the context of school decision making are somewhat fixed, hence to increase the power of parents means reducing the power of teachers. This, however, is considered to be a deliberate act of teachers willingly withholding their influence in favour of the parents' preferences and priorities (Bauch & Goldring, 1998). School governance under the parent empowerment mode is characterized by parents' active involvement in their children's school, either individually or as members of elected school councils or committees. In the parent empowerment mode, parents become active actors capable of exerting influence in school processes and outcomes (Epstein, 1995, 2005). Oftentimes the parents can, individually or collectively, exert political influence to bring about change in the way the schools are managed. This also ensures that their interests prevail in the decisions taken by the school.
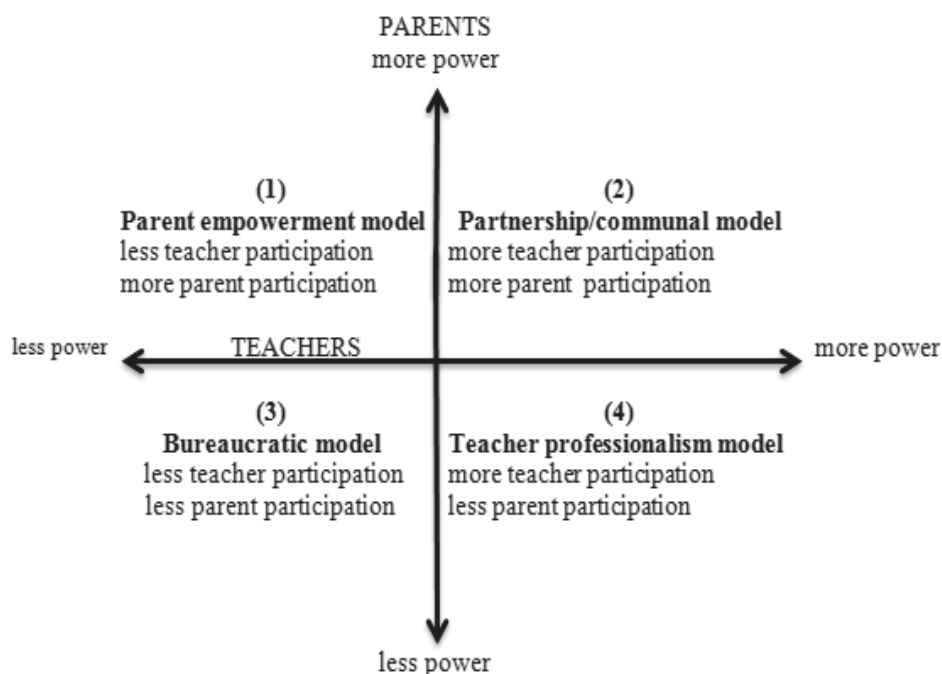
Figure 10: Power relations between teachers and parents in school decision making
Source: Bauch & Goldring (1998:25) – With permission from the first author

Partnership or communal mode (quadrant 2)

This is a high-teacher, high-parent participation quadrant, also referred to as the dual empowerment mode (Glatter & Woods, 1995). It suggests more or less equal decision-making power amongst teachers and parents. The concept of partnership in this mode of school governance is closely related to the concept of collaboration, which implies an act of sharing and working together in decision making, simultaneously as it emphasizes 'the constructive management of difference'(Gray, 1989:1). Collaborative decision making between teachers and parents is often implemented through the formal bodies of partnership such as parent-teacher associations and school management committees (Essuman & Akyeampong, 2011; Khanal, 2013; Yamada, 2014). What Bauch and Goldring (1998) try to illustrate in this quadrant is a situation where teachers and parents together exercise school decision-making power.

Traditional bureaucratic mode (quadrant 3)

As the name suggests, this is a bureaucratic or top-down style of school governance which is characterized by persistent hierarchical roles and relationships. This quadrant indicates low-teacher and low-parent participation, with deference to power. In this mode, it is neither the teachers nor the parents who have power over what is happening in the school. They are both passive recipients of instructions and guidelines on what should be done. This situation is worse for the parents because they are obliged to submit to the instructions given by the school leadership and the teachers, based on centrally formulated policies and priorities (Crowson, 1992). The bureaucratic mode of governance at the school level indicates the presence of a state-centric system of governance exercising top-down control and formalized procedures. In such a system, the governing entities determine how policy should be conducted and implemented to achieve centrally determined goals (Bell & Hindmoor, 2012; Kooiman, 2003; Sørensen & Torfing, 2005).

Teacher professionalism mode (quadrant 4)

In the teacher professionalism mode, teachers attempt to demonstrate their professional knowledge about teaching and learning practices. This quadrant is characterized by high-teacher, low-parent participation, with teachers' professional expertise prevailing over parents' preferences. Teachers are powerful because of their knowledge (Uphoff, 2005). This leads to parents becoming 'indirect clients' of the school. Because of the power of knowledge, the teachers become authoritative prescribers for they know what is best for children and

parents. Although parents as clients are consulted and considered in decision-making and may have some rights to informed consent, they are not full participants in the school decision-making process. As such, they are unable to exert significant influence on the decisions taken. This mode of school governance signifies unequal status and power among actors in the decision making process. It implies that teachers' professional autonomy and empowerment at the school level might conflict with the quest for active parent involvement in school decision making.

2.8.2 Critique of the model

Like any other model, Bauch & Goldring's (1998) model has some limitations and can therefore not be exempted from academic critique. Indeed, the four-quadrant model appears to be an over- simplification of the reality of power dynamics in the real school decision making environment. My argument is that power-relations are complex social phenomena that can hardly be partitioned in four quadrants as the authors have done. It is impractical to establish clear demarcations of the individual modes of governance, to stipulate where each starts and ends. This is because power is usually dynamic and more or less a probability, as Max Weber puts it.

Nevertheless, these limitations may not pre-empt the fact that the model offers an easy-to-conceptualize demonstration of how power relations in school governance can be categorized and explained. The pair of axes and the four quadrants provides an informative and clear means of deconstructing different modes of school decision making based on the degrees of participation and power of the teachers and parents. The model demonstrates sufficient theoretical strength in explaining the complex concept of relational power, and it does so in a way that makes the analysis and interpretation of school governance approaches more practical. Bauch and Goldring contribute to the empowerment theory and particularly to the school governance literature through their simple analytical approach. The model can enable a researcher to judge whether or not a particular school is practicing any of the four distinctive styles of school governance – parent empowerment, partnership, bureaucratic and teacher professionalism. However, it is necessary to note that what we often experience in school decision making is more of a combination of elements from the four modes rather than the pure forms of these modes.

2.9 User committees as devices for empowerment at the grassroots level

User committees are one of the many examples of organizational mechanisms that empower communities to engage with public agencies in service delivery partnerships and to undertake autonomous collective action (Brinkerhoff & Omar, 2006; Manor, 2004a.). Some specific examples from the education sector include parents' associations, parent-teacher associations, school governing bodies and school committees. These organizational mechanisms serve as means to incorporate the views and needs of communities into decisions related to their children's education.

The concept of school committees, which is the main focus of this dissertation, has its place in the mid-1990s emerging literature on user-committees or stakeholders' committees in developing countries (Manor, 2004a.; 2004b.) Many developing countries started establishing user committees during the early 1990s, yet this does not mean the concept was totally new to these countries. Some committees existed even before the 1990s. This was the case for school committees in Tanzania, which were legally established in 1969 under the country's first Education Act. The 1969 Act was later repealed by the new Act of 1978, which also emphasized the existence of school committees. The explainable differences between the committees of 1990s and the earlier committees concern, first of all, the number of committees. Compared to the earlier period, the committees of the 1990s burgeoned in more or less all sectors. Secondly, there are differences in the processes of formation, operation and control. Whereas the early committees were largely bureaucratically formed and funded by sectoral officials to implement centrally determined plans, the committees of the 1990s were formed under pressure from external donors for the purpose of ensuring that their support to Tanzania reached the poor at the grassroots level, and that sectoral development policies (health, education, natural resources and so on) would be responsive to the people's needs. The committees from the 1990s and onwards largely originate from the stakeholders, although very often, they do not rely on secret ballot elections in obtaining members.

2.9.1 Formation of user committees

According to Manor (2004b:195-198), there are three main methods by which people at the grassroots can become members of user-committees:

Firstly, people can become members automatically by belonging to a particular category. For example, all parents of school children in a particular school can be included in an education

committee or parent–teacher association. Similarly, all who use forest produce or who live in areas around a particular forest may be included as members of a joint forest management committee. Although it seems that the selection process in this category is neutral, some committees formed in this way tend to exclude the poor and instead serve the interests of wealthy groups. For example, water users' committees are often composed of those who use water for irrigation, rather than all people who drink water. Hence such committees are usually dominated by owners of plots of irrigated land.

Secondly, people can become members through appointment or nomination. In some cases, all the members of user committees are nominated from above, usually by low-level civil servants from line ministries. A good example of this is health committees that might consist of a small number of medical personnel working at a particular local area, and a larger number of residents selected by local health professionals and/or a bureaucrat from the health ministry who works at a higher level. Due to the top-down approach to obtaining members, these committees have a substantial likelihood of lacking autonomy, and there is often a danger of low-level bureaucrats and service providers (the professionals) colluding on the selection of members. This eventually leads to the committees functioning poorly and the low influence of local residents in the decisions taken. This often leads to inefficiency and poor service.

Thirdly, people can become members through some kind of 'democratic' process. According to this scenario, members of a particular community or users of a particular service elect the committee members from among themselves through democratic or semi-democratic processes. Although this kind of user committee is argued to promote bottom-up input into development programs and projects, questions remain about how free, fair and democratic the process of electing committee members actually is. How much power do the elected members of these user committees have on the decision making process? Experience shows that this category of user committee is not free from the influence of certain powerful people in the communities, politicians, state bureaucracy and local elites. For example, in Tanzania, primary school committees are part of the bureaucracy because the head teachers are secretaries to the committees (Masue, 2010). This leaves a number of issues unexplained, particularly the question of how much autonomy these committees have and the extent to which they are able to demand accountability from the head teachers.

2.10 Determinants of empowerment and hypotheses

Despite the inherent challenges in establishing causality, some analysts have attempted to do just that. Several studies on women's empowerment have attempted measuring it in different ways; for example, some researchers did comparisons between locations or over time, others tried to demonstrate the impact of specific interventions on women's empowerment, and yet others tried to demonstrate the implications of women's empowerment for desired policy objectives (Kabeer, 1999:436). The majority of empowerment studies identify correlatesrather than determinants or causes because of the previously mentioned challenge of establishing causality. In most cases, the studies use either the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) or logit/probit models, depending on the way the dependent variable is presented (Samman & Santos, 2009; Trommlerova et al, 2013).

2.10.1 Access to information

Information is an important determinant of empowerment. According to Uphoff (2005), when information is equated with knowledge, it is one of the key resources for power because it is productive and essential to other people. As such, knowledge *is* power when it is sought by others who do not have it. Hence, the forces of demand and supply remain the key determinants of the power that emanates from possessing knowledge. This makes knowledge-based power relative rather than absolute (Uphoff, 2005:225).

Arguments for the relationship between access to information and empowerment abound in both academic and practitioner literature (Spreitzer, 1996). Two-way information between the government and citizens enables the latter to make more informed decisions (Draper & Ramsey, 2012) that are consistent with their conceived expectations. Additionally, well-informed citizens are better off in making use of the existing opportunities for decision making, self-development and growth; they can access services, exercise their rights, influence institutions and demand accountability from state and non-state actors (Khwaja, 2005; Narayan-Parker, 2005; UNESCO, 2012a.).

In the context of work organizations, access to information might include making data available to employees about the organization's vision and mission, strategic plan, work flow, production, spending and the like. Such information can give workers a big, clear picture of what the organization seeks to achieve, and from this, they can have a better understanding of

what they ought to accomplish. It gives them a sense of purpose in the whole context of the organization's operations. Based on Kanter's (1989:5) suggestion that organizations must 'make more information more available to more people at more levels through more devices', empowerment in organizations occurs where there is readily available information that can be easily accessed by people at all levels in the organization. Therefore,

Hypothesis 1
Individuals who perceive that they have a high degree of access to information may report a higher degree of empowerment than those who perceive that they have a low degree of access to information.

2.10.2 Competence

Competence is a personal characteristic, implying that an individual believes in his or her ability to perform activities with skill (Gist, 1987). The concept is also referred to as self-efficacy and is similar to agency beliefs, personal mastery, or expectancy of effort-performance (Bandura, 1993).

In this dissertation, the term competence is used rather than self-efficacy because the study focuses specifically on efficacy as related to the ability to perform specified work role(s) rather than global efficacy. The concept of competence is also similar to what Narayan-Parker (2005:10) calls 'psychological capabilities', which entail self-esteem, self-confidence and an ability to envision and aspire to a better future. It is argued that individuals who hold themselves in high esteem have a greater chance than those who hold themselves in low esteem, to demonstrate, through their feelings of self-worth, a work-specific sense of competence (Bandura, 1977, 1980). High self-esteem enables people to perceive themselves as important resources with competencies worth contributing to the community or organization. They are therefore more likely to respond positively towards their roles and work places (Gist & Mitchell, 1992). Conversely, people with low self-esteem are less likely to express feelings of self-worthiness in their communities and workplaces. They usually feel incompetent to initiate action that can have a significant contribution to making a difference in both their work organizations and their future life. Thus,

Hypothesis 2
Individuals who perceive that they have a high level of competence may report a higher degree of empowerment than those who perceive that they have a low level of competence.

2.10.3 Level of education

Education has frequently appeared as a determinant of empowerment. For example, education was both predicted and shown to have a significant impact on the empowerment of women in

Nepal (Allendorf, 2007). Using the 2001 national survey data, Speizer et al. (2005), in their study on 'gender relations and reproductive decision making' in Honduras, found that having a primary education was only associated with male-centred decision-making attitudes and male-centred decisions amongst men and women. In work organizations, Spreitzer (1996) found that more educated workers perceived themselves as having a higher degree of psychological empowerment than less educated workers. Accordingly, the following hypothesis with regard to level of education and degree of empowerment are suggested:

> **Hypothesis 3**
> Individuals who have completed at least secondary education may report a higher degree of empowerment than individuals who have completed no more than primary education.

2.10.4 Gender

Scholars argue that within communities, certain groups of individuals are said to be more influential than others. Gender, socio-economic status, knowledge, experience, ethnic origin, and social standing are individual characteristics that are very likely to be relevant factors for the variations in levels of empowerment among different categories of individuals (Tommlerova et al, 2013; Samman & Santos, 2009).

Gender is one of the axes along which disempowerment is reported to occur. With regard to what men and women need and their entitlements, gender inequality has been increased by cultural norms of seclusion and segregation. Empirical evidence from developing countries indicates unequal allocation of resources and services such as food and medical care, even within households, and especially in poor households (Griffiths et al, 2002; Anju Malhotra & Mather, 1997). Inequality between men and women in decision making is also evident in many developing countries. The tendency of societies in these countries to give more educational opportunities to sons as compared to daughters has resulted in men having higher levels of education, occupational resources and skills when compared to women, hence limiting women's ability to make effective choices (Conn, 1990).

> **Hypothesis 4**
> Male respondents are more likely to report higher perceived degrees of empowerment than female respondents.

2.10.5 Membership in grassroots-level groups and/or committees

Membership and, of course, participation in formal or informal organizations increases people's awareness, exchange of ideas, information and togetherness. It strengthens the organizational capacity of the people at the grassroots level in planning, local problem solving, collective action, networking and resource accessibility (Brinkerhoff & Omar, 2006;

Narayan-Parker, 2005; Petesch et al 2005, ; Subramaniam, 2012). This argument is similar to Putnam's (1993) argument that a significant amount of 'social capital' is needed to sustain an effective democracy (Putnam, 1993:167). This is all about the strength of civil society and the complex network of human relationships, including families, kinship groupings, church groups, different voluntary associations aiming at different ends, labour unions, political parties and the like. Putnam argument – that strong associational life in civil society is essential to democracy – is in line with the civic-republican tradition in political theory. Similarly, Christensen et al. (2007) argue that organized and powerful social interest groups are more likely to be regular participants in the government decision making processes and to get their problems taken into consideration in joint solutions in various aspects of public policy.

In their study on psychological empowerment, Zimmerman et al. (1992) use empirical evidence when asserting that individuals who engaged in community organizations and activities were more psychologically empowered than the non-participants. Brinkerhoff & Omar (2006) provide some examples of organizational mechanisms that empower communities to engage with public agencies in service delivery partnerships and to undertake autonomous collective action in sectors such as education, agriculture, health, forestry and micro-finance. Of particular interest in this present study, however, are parents' associations and school committees in the education sector. These local organizations act as empowering mechanisms for the local communities in school governance by playing managerial and overseeing roles. To explain how these mechanisms empower people at the grassroots level, Brinkerhoff & Omar (2006) argue that it is through the long-term effects of learning: 'such mechanisms become, in effect, learning mechanisms [and] learning laboratories for participants, enhancing communities' organisational capabilities over time' (Ibid:12). But there are other explanations for how local community empowerment occurs. One explanation is that members of these organizations learn and disseminate knowledge and skills on school management practices to their fellow community members over time; another explanation focuses on rotational membership, where, after a specified period of time, new members are elected into these committees and learn in the same way as those who were previously elected. It is crucial never to have a committee consisting entirely of new members; admittance should be staggered so that the new members can learn from and share in the knowledge accrued over time from existing members.

This means that over time, all community members will have worked with these committees and gained knowledge and experience in school management. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated:

Hypothesis 5
Membership to the school committees is more likely to be positively related to the degree of empowerment.

2.10.6 Area of residence (rural urban distinctions)

The disparities between rural and urban communities, particularly in the developing world, are evident in all areas of socio-economic development. The magnitude of disparities, however, differs from one country to the next and from one geographical area to another within the same country (UN, 2001). The differences here in socio-economic development stem from socio-cultural conditions and policy decisions. Socio-cultural factors include, for example, values and traditions that encourage or discourage social and economic mobility, innovation and entrepreneurship.

Despite the fact that rural and urban areas form one system, they are not equally integrated in political and economic terms. Very often, policy decisions appear to favour urban areas at the expense of rural areas, hence generating negative consequences for rural communities. For example, it is argued that rural areas usually experience scattered settlement pattern and suffer from inadequate communication and transport networks, poor schools and health care facilities. As a result, they are disadvantaged when it comes to organization and the articulation of needs, priorities and preferences through political processes. Thus,

Hypothesis 6
Individuals who live in rural areas may report a significantly lower degree of empowerment than individuals who live in urban areas.

2.10.7 Type of employment

Employment is argued to influence people's psychological empowerment. Informal employment covers a wide range of earning activities and includes working for an employer as well as self-employment. Informally organized self-employment is the main characteristic of most of the developing economies. For example, in Sub-Saharan Africa, North Africa, Latin America and Asia, self-employment accounts for 70%, 62%, 60% and 59% of the informal employment respectively (ILO, 2002). People in this category are often low income earners and are deprived of stable and secure work, employment benefits, social protection and representation.

Hypothesis 7
Individuals who are formally employed may report a higher degree of empowerment than individuals who are informally employed.

2.10.8 Age group

Age is a socio-demographic factor that affects empowerment. According to Trommlerová et al. (2013), getting older is associated with feeling more empowered. The feeling of empowerment would thus be weaker for young people, grow stronger for young adults and those in the early middle-age category, and then subside as people become elderly (Kabeer et al, 2011). This is probably attributed to the declining mental and physical capacity to make one's decisions and work actively to implement the them; either because of infirmity or because of the younger generations' likely assumption that geriatrics are incapable of making decisions (Beales, 2012).

Hypothesis 8
Younger generation respondents (25-45) may report higher degrees of empowerment than the older generation respondents (46-70).

2.11 Concluding remarks on the chapter

From the theoretical review, I draw the conclusion that empowerment is a vague concept that can by no means be easily defined in universal terms. Yet despite its vagueness, scholars do agree on certain aspects about empowerment. One important and unanimously agreed-upon aspect is that the concept of empowerment is related to the concepts of agency and power. Although the concepts of agency and power are related, they are conceptually different in that while the former concerns an actor's (either an individual's or a group's) ability to make purposeful choices (Alsop et al., 2006), power reflects the capacity to pursue goals and achieve desired outcomes (Foucault, 1980; Lukes, 1974; Weber, 1946). The process of increasing people's capacity to set and pursue their goals effectively, thus to expand their agency and to acquire power, takes place in institutional, material and discursive contexts (Clegg, 1989, 1994; Clegg et al., 2006). This is what Alsop et al. (2006) refers to as opportunity structure. Through the interaction of agency and opportunity structure, varying degrees of empowerment – DEO, DUO and DOI – are realized.

CHAPTER THREE
Research Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter concerns the methods used in addressing the research problem. I describe the study setting, units and methods of inquiry. I also explain the systematic procedures through which data were gathered, analysed and interpreted. I then highlight some ethical issues taken into consideration both before and in the course of soliciting data from different sources. The chapter ends with a presentation of some of the lessons learned from the entire process of planning the study, doing fieldwork, analysing data and interpreting the findings.

3.1 Research approach and design

A research approach is a general orientation to how research should be conducted. It can be quantitative, qualitative or mixed (Creswell, 2009). The *qualitative* approach to social research seeks to explain social phenomena or cases in qualitative terms by employing methods that do not rely on numerical measurements (King et al, 1994:4). In this approach, the researcher uses qualitative methods to collect, analyse and interpret data (Long & Godfrey, 2004), mainly relying on visual and verbal (conceptual or thematic) data-handling techniques to draw out the subjects' knowledge and perceptions and explore the context in terms of social settings and culture (Long & Godfrey, 2004:83). In qualitative research, the 'why' and 'how' questions are important in seeking and providing an in-depth understanding of why things are the way they are in people's social surroundings, why people behave the way they do (Marshall & Rossman, 1999) and how society is thought to operate in relation to historical, cultural, social, and political contexts (Dharamsi & Scott, 2009).

The *quantitative* approach to social research involves applying natural science principles, particularly, a positivist/empiricist approach in explaining social phenomena (Bryman, 1984; Cormack, 1991; Ercikan & Roth, 2006). Examples of such principles include stipulating operational definitions to concepts, ensuring objectivity by detaching from the subjects, and striving for replication and establishing causality (Ercikan & Roth, 2006). Whereas qualitative research approaches the subjects in their natural settings, quantitative research does not. Instead, it employs a procedure similar to that of a controlled experiment (Masue et al, 2013). A survey questionnaire is considered to be one of the most appropriate instruments for

meeting the positivist criteria. For example, operationalization of concepts and objectivity can be clearly done through individual items in a self-administered questionnaire. Replication can then be carried out using the same instrument in other social settings where path analysis and regression techniques can help establish causality (Bryman, 1984). A quantitative approach usually employs a variable-oriented strategy to assess the relationship between aspects of cases across a large sample of observations, thus to specify general patterns that hold for a population (Ragin, 1987). Basically, quantitative research methods are useful when searching for laws and principles that can help predict how the world works (Dharamsi & Scott, 2009).

Both approaches, however, have limitations that leave them exposed to criticisms. Quantitative research is criticized for relying too much on directly observable quantitative indicators and establishing causal relationships, thus failing to capture the studied phenomena in their full complexity and contextual manifestation (Bryman, 1984). On the other hand, Qualitative research is criticized for being overly concerned with researcher-subject interactions, hence risking greater researcher bias. It is also criticized for lacking reproducibility, since there is no assurance that a different researcher would end up with the same conclusions (Mays & Pope, 1995). Owing to the limitations of qualitative and quantitative methods, researchers are increasingly resorting to mixing the methods. Mixed methods research is now becoming a popular paradigm in social and behavioural science (Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007). Johnson et al. define mixed methods research as 'the type of research in which a researcher or team of researchers combines elements of qualitative and quantitative research approaches (e.g., use of qualitative and quantitative viewpoints, data collection, analysis, inference techniques) for the broad purposes of breadth and depth of understanding and corroboration' (Johnson et al., 2007:123).

3.2 Research approach and design for this study

For the present study, I used a mixed methods approach and an explanatory sequential design (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Creswell et al, 2003; Ivankova et al, 2006). Fieldwork was done in two sequential yet distinct phases of quantitative and qualitative data collection. I started with the quantitative phase by collecting and analysing numerical data relevant for addressing my research questions. After that, I proceeded with the second phase, which involved conducting in-depth interviews of education officials, teachers and parents. I also organized and led focus group discussions. The focus group in Kondoa District included parents, and in Morogoro Municipal Council it included members of school committees.

The rationale for choosing the mixed methods approach and sequential design was to provide a general understanding of the research problem through combining quantitative and qualitative methods. The strategy of introducing qualitative research right after gathering quantitative data enhances complementarity, that is, it elaborates, enriches, illustrates and clarifies the quantitative results from the quantitative results (Wong et al, 2013). Mixed methods research using sequential design allows one to explore the quantitative results in more detail and to address emerging issues, particularly unexpected findings. In this study, the use of mixed methods was also meant for data triangulation and increasing the trustworthiness of the findings (Marsland et al, 2000).

3.3 Selection of units of analysis and sample size

Units of analysis for this study were selected through a combination of quantitative and qualitative criteria. The units of analysis were grouped according to individual, micro (local), intermediary and macro levels. According to Alsop et al. (2006), the micro level consists of a person's everyday- and immediate context, the intermediary level consists of a context the person is familiar with but does not have contact with on an everyday basis, and the macro level consists of the context that is farthest away from the individual, for example, the national level as represented by government ministries. In the context of this study, the micro level includes the *mtaa* (villages), local school committees and village schools; the intermediary level includes the district or municipal (town) council; and the macro level extends to the regional administration (Table 4).

Table 4: Units of Analysis and Sample Size for the Survey

Level	Category involved	Sample size			Technique for selecting the sample
		Planned	Actual	%	
Macro	Administrative Regions	3	3	100	Purposeful
Intermediary	District /Municipal Councils	7	7	100	Purposeful
Micro (Village)	Schools	112	101	90	Purposeful & convenience
	School committees	112	101	90	,,
Individual	Members of school committees	224	214	96	Convenience or simple random
	Parents	112	96	86	Convenience

To select the sample of research subjects, I used a combination of non-probability and probability techniques. I selected the seven Local Government Authorities (LGAs) based on

qualitative criteria, drawing on my substantive knowledge of them in terms of variations in levels of socio-economic development. For example, I chose Siha and Dodoma Municipality as LGAs with high socio-economic development, and Kibaha District Council and Kibaha Township in Pwani Region as LGAs with low socio-economic development. The latter were also chosen because the coastal region has been performing poorly in terms of community contribution to school development activities. Morogoro Municipality and Mvomero District Council were included in a prior study where I examined the empowerment and effectiveness of school committees. Some findings from that study needed further inquiry, in particular, the finding that there is a tendency for school committees to consist of members who have little education and low socio-economic status.

Selection of the schools

I started selecting the schools through purposeful sampling with the help of the district/municipal education officers. The grounds for selecting the schools to be included in the study were as follows: They should be chosen from different wards and be from remote locations as well as more central areas; the selected schools' academic ratings should range from high to moderate to low performance; and lastly, the selection should include the best and worst schools in terms of infrastructure development. Based on these criteria, I came up with a sample of 112 schools from 112 villages. After the selection process, the next step was to prepare a schedule for visiting the schools in order to collect data. I obtained mobile phone numbers for the head teachers and set up appointments (dates and times) for meetings with school committee members and parents. After this, my two enumerators and I went to these schools to collect data. Some of these appointments, however, were unsuccessful on account of lacking cooperation from a head teacher, failure to reach some of the schools due to roads being impassable in the rainy season; and respondents simply not turning up. I was only successful in reaching 90 of the 112 schools. To compensate for the schools we (my enumerators and I) could not reach, we decided to select schools from other villages that could be reached. We managed to add 11 schools, thus bringing the total number to 101 schools (Table 4).

Obtaining the respondents

The respondents in this study were members of school committees and parents; from each school, two members of the school committee (one male and one female) and one non-member (parent) were selected. The procedure for selecting participants from the school

committees was simple random selection for men, and either convenience or simple random selection for women. To select the parent from each school, a convenient sampling was employed. For each school community, the whole process proceeded as follows:

When arriving at a school, we first met with the school committee members as a group. I explained the goals for the study, who would be involved and how the questionnaire would be administered. The second step was to select the respondents. All male respondents from school committees were chosen through simple random sampling because in each committee, there were more men than women. The selection of women was mostly based on convenience. If a committee only had one female member, she was of course chosen, as long as she was willing to participate. There were, however, some cases where two or more women were in a committee. In these cases, we came to an agreement with them on which one would be included in the study. Sometimes we just did a simple random selection. This is why Table 4 indicates that members of school committee were selected by convenience or simple random sampling.

The third step was to select one parent to answer the questionnaire. There was no fixed procedure for this. One tactic was to ask the school committee members to suggest a non-member (parent) who could participate in answering our questionnaire. Alternatively, sometimes we asked the teachers to select a participant, or we simply walked around the village and asked anyone who was not a member of the school committee but was a parent of a pupil. To ensure equal distribution of men and women across the sample of parents, it was necessary to make sure that when a man was picked, the next respondent would be a woman. The same principle was applied until all the respondents were obtained.

Characteristics of the respondents

As indicated in Table 5, the survey involved 310 respondents, of whom, 69% were members of school committee and 31% were parents. With regard to gender, the study included 50% females and 50% males. The distribution of respondents according to their level of education indicates that 46% had secondary education, 37% had completed primary education, and 13% had not attended or completed primary education. The proportion of respondents who had a college diploma or university degree was very small, accounting for only 4% of the total sample.

Table 5: Basic Characteristics of the Respondents (N = 310)

Characteristic	% (*n*)
1. Membership to the school committee	
Members	69 (214)
Non- member (parents)	31 (96)
2. Gender	
Males	50 (155)
Females	50 (155)
3. Education	
Didn't attend or complete primary education	13 (41)
Completed primary education	37 (115)
Completed secondary education	46 (141)
Completed college diploma and/or university degree	04 (13)
4. Area of residence	
Rural	48(149)
Urban	52 (161)
5. Age group	
25-40	05 (16)
41-55	58 (181)
56-71	37 (113)
6. Marital status	
Married	87 (271)
Single	05 (15)
Divorced	01 (04)
Widowed	07 (20)
7. Type of employment	
Informal employment	65 (202)
Formal	35 (108)

The distribution of respondents with respect to rural and urban contexts was approximately equal, with representation proportions of 48% and 52% respectively. Respondents aged between 41 and 55 constituted 58% of the total number, whereas those aged between 56 and 71 constituted 37%. Only 5% were between 25 and 40 years of age. This trend provides a crucial insight that the younger generation was less involved in school decision making compared to the older generation. The descriptive statistics in Table 5 further indicate that married respondents were dominantly represented by 87%, while singles and widowed respondents accounted for very small proportions of 5% and 7% respectively. The proportion of divorced respondents in the sample was almost negligible, accounting for only 1% of the total respondents.

When it comes to type of employment, 65% of the respondents were informally[4] employed while 35% were formally employed. The informal, self-employment proportion (i.e., 65%) was obtained by adding together the proportions of various forms of informal self-employment computed from the respondents' questionnaires, namely 41% subsistence

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[4]Informal employment in this study includes all forms of employment outside the formal system.

farming, 14% small-scale retail business, 7% pastoralism, and 3% for various other forms of self-employment.

3.4 Data collection methods

The principal methods used in collecting primary data for this study were questionnaires, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The key source of secondary data was documentary reviews. As already intimated, the rationale for choosing a multi-method data collection strategy was to increase the reliability and validity of the findings and to capture some feelings and perceptions from the respondents.

3.4.1 Questionnaire

A questionnaire is a formalized set of questions for obtaining information from respondents (Malhotra, 2006). Two separate but similar sets of closed-ended questionnaires were used, one for the members of school committees and another for parents. The questionnaire for school committee members was administered to 214 respondents, while that for parents was administered to 96 respondents. The two questionnaires consisted of fact-oriented questions and questions about subjective experiences (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). Fact-oriented questions were used to elicit objective information on issues such as the interviewees' background (e.g., age, education and income), while questions related to subjective experiences were used to gain information on attitudes, feelings and opinions, for instance on the interviewees' perceived degree of empowerment, how much they feel motivated to participate in school development activities, and the amount of information they receive on the various issues in the school such as student performance, finances, daily operations and the curriculum.

As stated, both the questionnaire for school committee members and that for parents consisted of closed-ended questions measuring the dependent and independent variables. Closed-ended questions offer multiple choices of answers, and the respondent is asked to choose the option that most closely represents their views (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). In this study, the use of closed ended questions was meant to help the respondents answer the questions quickly and to help me, the researcher, do easy coding analysis of the answers. The languages used in preparing and administering the questionnaires were English and Swahili respectively. The two sets of questionnaires were first prepared in English and then translated

into Swahili to facilitate respondents' understanding of the questions. The reason for translating the questionnaires into Swahili was that people in both rural and urban areas of Tanzania can speak Swahili fluently. As the national language, it is the formal language used in all public offices and language of instruction in primary schools. To safeguard the original meaning of the questions, a professional translator translated the questions into Swahili and then translated the responses back into English.

One critical factor for administering the questionnaires – this counts a lot in determining the return rate – is the means through which respondents are approached, whether by telephone, face-to-face contact or by filling out the questionnaire on their own (self-administration).

Administration of the questionnaire through telephone contact involves calling respondents and asking the questions through the telephone and recording the answers. For face-to-face administration, respondents are guided by the enumerator, who reads the questions to the respondents and records their answers. This approach is common in a situation where respondents are illiterate or have impaired vision. Self-administration of questionnaires involves giving respondents the questionnaire to fill-in on their own and thereafter delivering the completed questionnaire to the enumerator. It can be done in the following ways: first, through either dispatching hard copies of the questionnaires physically or mailing them to the respective respondent's postal address (Evans et al, 2013; Janes, 2001). It may also be possible to send electronic copies of the questionnaire to respondents' e-mail addresses.

In this study, questionnaires were administered in two ways: we used face-to-face administration for respondents who were illiterate or who had impaired vision. Questions were read to the respondents and their answers were written down by the enumerator. The second strategy was self-administration. Here it was important to ensure that every single questionnaire dispatched to a respondent was filled in and collected as soon as it was completed. For this to be possible, it was necessary to make prior arrangements for respondents to have time and place to sit for half an hour or so to fill out the questionnaires. The two strategies were very successful and resulted in a return rate of 86% for parents and 96% for the members of school committees.

3.4.2 Interview

The literal meaning of the concept of an interview is very useful for understanding its significance and use in social science research. As Kvale and Brinkmann put it, '[a]n interview is literally an inter-view, an inter-change of views between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interest' (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009:2). According to this view, and interview is a way of exchanging views through conversation or interaction. However, the major distinction between a mere social conversation and a research interview is that while the former appears to be more of an end in itself, the latter is a means to some other ends related to the researcher's interest. A research interview serves as 'an instrumental dialogue' meant for providing the researcher with relevant information, either descriptive, narrative or textual, that can be interpreted and reported on pursuant to the researcher's interests (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2005:164).

Qualitative researchers use interviews to collect data of a qualitative nature. An interviewer attempts to understand the world from the subjects' perspective, to grasp the meaning of their experiences so as to uncover their lived world before providing scientific explanations (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). Qualitative interviews attempt to capture things that cannot be captured through other methods like observation. In this study, in-depth interviews were conducted with individual school committee members, parents, teachers and seven education officials (one from each of the district/ town /municipal councils involved in the study). Out of the17 in-depth interviews for the entire study, five were with teachers and five were with parents. All the school-committee and parent interviewees were selected from amongst the survey respondents, while the five teacher interviewees were not part of the survey sample. To reiterate: the reasons for including in-depth interviews in this study were two-fold: first, to enhance and deepen the completeness of the data, and second, to establish a basis for explaining the survey findings obtained earlier in the study.

3.4.3 Focus group discussions (FGDs)

A focus group is a small, homogenous group of people whose interactive discussion on a particular topic provides a researcher with data. Focus group discussion can be used in social science in three ways: first, as a self-contained method, a focus group can be the major source of data in a particular study; second, as a supplementary source of data, a focus group can augment other methods such as a survey questionnaire; and third, focus groups can be

included in multi-method studies that use two or more means of collecting qualitative data, where no one method pre-determines the use of the others (Morgan, 1997:2-3). Along with the other methods used in soliciting data for this study, two focus groups were included: one in Kondoa District Council and another in Morogoro Municipal Council. These focus groups were used as supplementary data sources to the qualitative element, and, in combination, the focus groups and qualitative interviews complemented the study's quantitative component. The focus group component was also a means for triangulating the qualitative data obtained from the in-depth interviews. In sum, the use of focus group discussions in combination with the in-depth interviews was meant to add value to the quantitative data by explaining certain emerging issues as well as those issues which the quantitative part of the study did not explain. All the thirteen participants were part of the survey sample; one group involved members of school committees from Morogoro Municipality and another group involved parents from one school in Kondoa District.

Scholars have offered different suggestions about the optimum number of participants in a focus group. Pugsley (1996) and Thomas (1999) suggest that for effective discussion, there should be between three and fourteen participants. Kitzinger and Barbour (1999) suggest eight to twelve participants; Bloor et al.(2001) suggest six to eight participants; and Chrzanowska (2002) suggests that focus groups should consist of somewhere between six to ten members. There is thus a lack of consensus on how big a focus group should be. However, it seems clear that the size will largely be determined by the prevailing situations and that the researcher should strive to recruit an optimum number of participants for effective discussion. In this study, the focus group of school-committee members consisted of seven people – three men and four women – while the focus group for parents consisted of six members with an equal proportion of women and men. Both group sizes were very convenient in terms of providing room for every member to participate and interact. In addition, data including feelings, perceptions and general comments were easily captured during the FGDs. It was also interesting that in addition to being a means for collecting data, the FGDs provided opportunities for the participants themselves to do a certain amount of analysis on the collected data (Kvale, 1996).

There are also debates on whether or not focus groups should include participants who already know each other. While market researchers would recommend that focus groups should consist of strangers in order to avoid the 'polluting' and 'inhibiting' effects of established

relationships amongst participants, many social science researchers prefer working with groups consisting of people who already know one another, either through work or in some other way (Kitzinger & Barbour, 1999:8). In the present study, all the members of the two focus groups were familiar with each other since they were all from the same community or because they worked together as members of school committees. This offered an excellent opportunity to get people to talk freely. If one member struggled to remember a certain point or event, another member could provide the information.

There was also what I call 'self-moderation' or 'checks and balances' of group members' ideas or points. For example, when a member provided 'wrong' arguments he or she was corrected or informed by fellow members. In either case, women were less active than men, and they could not express their views as openly as the men did. My role as moderator in the two FGDs was to present issues for discussion, trigger interaction amongst participants and create a conducive environment for them to express personal and differing perspectives on the issue under discussion. As Kvale and Brinkmann (2009:150) point out, '[t]he aim of [a] focus group is not to reach [a] consensus about, or [a] solution to, the issues discussed, but to bring forth different viewpoints on an issue'. In view of this principle, my concern during both FGD sessions was to ensure, as much as I possibly could, that every participant had the opportunity to express his or her ideas confidently, regardless of whether they were contrary to the views of others, whether they diverged from the set discourse or were contrary to convention.

Table 6: Participants in the In-depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussions

| Name of council | In-depth interviews | | | | | | | Focus groups | | | | | |
| | Officials | | Parents | | Teachers | | Total | Group | Parents | | Committee | | Total |
	M	F	M	F	M	F			M	F	M	F	
Morogoro Municipal Council	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	FG (C): n= 7	-	-	4	3	7
Mvomero District Council	-	1	1	-	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Siha District Council	1	-	-	1	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kondoa District Council	1	-	-	-	-	-	1	FG (P): n = 6	3	3	-	-	6
Dodoma Municipal Council	1	-	1	-	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kibaha Town Council	-	1	-	1	1	-	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Kibaha District Council	1	-	-	1	-	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	4	3	2	3	2	3	**17**	13	3	3	4	3	**13**

FG (C): Focus group for committee members; FG (P): Focus group for parents
Key: M = Males; F = Females

3.4.4 Documentary review

A wide range of written materials in organizations may serve as a valuable source of data (Curry et al, 2009). Documentary review involves analysing organizational documents such as reports, minutes from meetings, attendance records and employment and financial records. It can also involve analysing policy documents and legislation. In these respects, a documentary review can yield both quantitative and qualitative textual data. Depending on the type of data obtained, the researcher can analyse it quantitatively, qualitatively or by combining the two analytical approaches. The researcher can then generate inferences through objectively and systematically identifying the main elements of written communication. This enables categorization and classification of data. The classification enables the researcher to make inferences about the antecedents of a communication, to describe and make inferences about characteristics of a communication and to make inferences about the effects of a communication (Curry et al, 2009).

For this present study, documentary review was used in collecting secondary data. Documents that were used as sources of data include policy and legislation documents, reports from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, the Prime Minister's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government (PMO-RALG), Local Government Authorities (LGAs) and schools. Minutes of the school meetings, various records (e.g., financial, inventory, pupil admission and staff register) were also used as sources of secondary data. Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were used depending on the type of data obtained from these documents.

3.5 Data analysis and presentation

Data analysis involves examining and organizing data sets for easy interpretation. Just as with the data collection methods, the study used a combination of quantitative and qualitative analytical methods, and the analyses were done based on the research questions. Data from the questionnaires were coded and entered in to the SPSS (version 19) computer software and then summarized through frequency distribution tables and cross-tabulations. Further analyses which were performed included reliability tests, the use of Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient, independent samples t-tests and multiple linear regression analysis.

A reliability test was performed on multiple-item measures to test their internal consistency (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011) and decide whether or not these items could be combined to a single interval-measure. In this study, a reliability (Cronbach's alpha) test was performed on each of the three 10-item measured dimensions of the dependent variable (DEO, DUO and DOI) and their combination (DOE). The test was also performed on the two multiple-item measured explanatory variables, namely, access to information (which was measured in 9 items), and the perceived level of competence (measured in a 6 item ordinal scale ranging from 1 to 6) in all the four empirical chapters.

Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient (Pearson's r) was used to assess the direction and strength of correlation between the independent and the dependent variable. However, in order to use the Pearson's r, both the independent and dependent variables needed to be measured continuously in interval or ratio scales (Niño-Zarazúa, 2012). For this reason, the analysis was performed to examine the strength and direction of the correlation between each of the two interval-scale independent variables (access to information and perceived level of competence) and each of the three dimensions of the dependent variable as well as their combined measurement.

Independent samples t-tests were used to compare the mean scores on each of the three dimensions of the dependent variable and their composite measurement, for the different groups of the categorical explanatory variables. Independent sample t-tests are appropriate when there are two different(independent) groups of people or conditions (e.g., males and females, informal and formal etc.) and when a researcher is interested in comparing their scores (Pallant, 2010). My interest in this study was to compare the mean scores on the perceived degree of empowerment for six categorical variables: gender, area of residence, level of education, type of employment, age group and membership in the school committee.

The final analysis that I performed was multiple linear regression. There are a number of different approaches to multiple regression analyses that can be used based on the nature of the question to be addressed. Three main types of multiple regression analyses are often used. These are standard or simultaneous, hierarchical or sequential, and stepwise regression analyses (Pallant, 2010:149). In this study, I used hierarchical regression analyses with variables entered in three blocks; the first block included the demographic and personal characteristics, the second included structural variables, and the third included both groups of

variables. The rationale for embarking on such an approach of regression was to assess the relative contribution of each group of variables in predicting the dependent variable and also in assessing the significance of each explanatory variable in predicting the dependent measures in the final model.

Table 7: A Summary of the Statistical Analyses/tests Used

Analysis/statistical test	Chapter 4	Chapter 5	Chapter 6	Chapter 7	Chapter 8
1. Comparison of means	√	√	√		
2. Reliability (Cronbach's alpha)	√	√	√	√	
3. Pearson's product moment coefficient	√	√	√	√	
4. Independent samples t-test	√	√	√	√	
5. Multiple linear regression	√	√	√	√	√

√ means that the test/analysis was used

Qualitative data (text) from documentary review and all data which included narrative explanations and opinions from respondents, for instance those obtained through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, were analysed qualitatively. Audio-recorded and handwritten raw data were transcribed comprehensively to reduce them to specifically interpretable themes and sub-themes pursuant to the research questions. Measurements of empowerment in the schools were obtained based on responses to questions about the extent to which parents and school committee members had the opportunity to participate in school decision making, most specifically, in relation to school plans, budget, expenditure, pupils' discipline and the construction and repair of school infrastructure. The answers were either combined into a single index or presented separately, as per Kabeer's (1999) suggestion for how measures of decision making in women's empowerment can be done. In the present study, the former (index approach) was used for presenting quantitative measures while the latter (separate presentation of individual measures) was employed for qualitative data on specific decisions such as on construction and repair, control of pupils' discipline and curriculum.

3.6 Addressing issues of validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are two closely related aspects in social science research, and they explain the quality of the research findings. The two, however, must not be confused with each other. While validity refers to the quality of a research instrument in terms of the extent

to which is accurate, correct, true, meaningful and right (Guba & Lincoln, 1998), reliability refers to the degree to which there is consistency in results when different observers or the same observer on different occasions uses the same measuring instrument (Hammersley, 1990). It is important for a researcher to show that the procedures used in a particular study were both reliable and valid – before thinking about concluding the research dissertation (Silverman, 2000; 2013).

The concept of validity has been explained by various authors in different ways but often with similar meanings. According to King et al. (1994:25), validity refers to the fact of actually measuring what one thinks one is measuring. This definition is based on the fact that social-science research involves measurement or observation. As such, it is important to try to ensure that one is measuring what one actually intends to measure. It is also vital to show how one's observations are influenced by the circumstances in which they are made. Therefore, when talking about the validity of research, one often refers to the conclusions reached about the quality of different parts of one's research methodology. Pervin (1984) argues that validity in social sciences is not restricted to measurements but to examining 'the extent to which our observations indeed reflect the phenomena or variables of interest to us' (Pervin, 1984:48). Yin (2009:40-45), meanwhile, explains validity differently and in a wider sense. To him, validity can be examined as *construct, internal* and *external* validity. These three types of validity constitute the scope of validity in my study.

Construct validity concerns the extent to which a study establishes correct operational measures for the constructs – concepts – studied. Operationalization entails the whole process of translating a construct into its manifestations. To this end, the idea is described as a series of operations or procedures. As a result, instead of it only being an idea in one person's mind, it becomes a public thought that anyone can look at and examine for themselves. In this study, construct validity was ensured through using multiple methods, and sources of data (triangulation) ensured that the data obtained from one source could be crosschecked through the other sources. This ensured that both the exploratory depth and accuracy of data were enhanced. For example, in exploring the issue of school committees' and parents' access to information, I first used the survey questionnaires, then interviewed some parents and committee members. I then pursued the issue by reviewing documents such as reports, minutes, manuals and legislation. Triangulation was done to ensure that the data on the issue

were obtained not just from the parents and committee members themselves, but also from teachers and education officers.

A pilot study with 14 respondents was done to test the validity of the questionnaire instrument, to ascertain whether the items measured what they were intended to measure. After this, some items that were not understood by respondents were corrected and those which were inconsistent were removed before administering the questionnaire to the larger sample.

Moving on now to internal validity; it is used to examine the extent to which a causal relationship has been established in a particular study. In this study, the theoretical framework was based on previous studies to ensure that the claims made in this study are supported with evidence. In the qualitative phase, I ensured that I captured, authentically,the lived experiences of the people I talked to. This was necessary to ensure that what I presented was the real experience of the subjects and not my personal feelings. To enable me to achieve this, I used audio recording of the interviews to capture as accurately as possible the intended phenomena or attributes (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003).

Yin's third type of validity is external validity. This establishes the domain to which a study's findings can be generalized. In other words, when claiming that one's research findings have implications for other groups and individuals in other settings and at other times, it is important to examine the external validity of the claims. In this study, I used a sample of 310 respondents taken from 101 schools. This sample is large enough to warrant generalizing the findings beyond the study sample. In addition, the selection of the study participants was done based on objective criteria, and also, data were collected through multiple methods (questionnaires, interview, focus groups and document review) to minimize bias and increase generalizability.

Regarding the issue of reliability; all strategies employed to enhance validity were relevant for insuring reliability. Pilot-testing the questionnaires, using multi-method approaches in data collection (interviews, focus group discussion and documentary analysis) and objectivity ensure both the reliability and validity of my study. I dare to make this claim because there is congruence between reliability and validity in research. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), there can be no validity without reliability; hence, demonstrating the validity is

adequate to establish the reliability. This argument is also supported by Patton (2001), who argues that reliability is a consequence of the validity in a study.

3.7 Ethical considerations

Social science research involves collecting data from and about people. In this regard it is crucial to adhere to ethical standards, to ensure that participants' rights are protected and that the findings are as trustworthy as possible. The study was conducted in accordance with the ethical standards set for social science research and the requirements of the Norwegian and Tanzanian research authorities. The following ethical principles were observed throughout the research process: (1) Voluntary participation: people were not forced to participate in the study. (2) Participants were clearly informed of the purpose, procedures (such as audio recording) and the consequences of their participation in the study before they decided to participate in it. (3) Questions were carefully framed and asked in ways that avoided causing psychological harm to the participants. During focus group discussions, proper moderation of the discussions was done to ensure a peaceful and harmonious environment. (4) It was necessary to assure the participants that the information they provided would not be used for other purposes than those explained to them when consent was sought. Where participants wanted to remain anonymous, this was fully assured. (5) I obtained written permission from the PMO-RALG and the councils in the areas where fieldwork was conducted. To facilitate the data collection process I obtained letters of introduction from the University of Bergen and from the Directorate of Research and Postgraduate Studies (DRPS) at Mzumbe University in Tanzania. (6) I explicitly acknowledge literature and sources of empirical evidence. (7) I ensured that when collecting the data, I used appropriate tools and followed acceptable procedures.

3.8 Summary and concluding remarks for the chapter

In this chapter, I have elaborated the key methodological aspects of the study: the methods and instruments used in the gathering of data, the approaches through which the analysis and interpretation of the data proceeded, and the way findings were presented. As pointed out earlier in the chapter, this study was a mixed-method inquiry involving a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. I used an explanatory sequential design that started with a quantitative phase followed up with a qualitative phase. Based on the experiences gained from the whole process of planning the study, doing field work, analysing data and interpreting the findings, I draw the following three important methodological lessons:

First, it was important to have a proper plan but allow for flexibility. Social science research is not merely a linear process of proposal writing, data collection, analysis, and finally dissemination. Rather, it is a complex process that requires careful planning and high flexibility in implementation, bearing in mind that the social environment is always dynamic and less predictable. Proper planning enables a researcher to gain an overall picture of resource and time requirements, the types of information needed, the sources and ways of obtaining the information, the appropriate strategy for carrying out the study, and for analysing data and disseminating the findings. Having said this, the plan should not be regarded as a blueprint for what *must* be done. Flexibility in implementing the research plan is necessary so that unforeseen field conditions – for instance when no one shows up for an interview appointment or when the roads are impassable and other practical issues – a can be coped with in the best possible way. In this study, it was necessary at times to adjust my plan to the actual field conditions. For example, during data collection I often had to re-schedule my interview and questionnaire administration dates and times so as not to interfere with the subjects' personal plans. I also had to find other participants in cases where the initially selected ones could not be reached. This means that a consensus must always be reached between the researcher and participants as to the appropriate date and time, but when this fails to work as planned, some adjustments can be made. Through this kind of mutual agreement with my study participants, it was possible to increase the participation rate of both the members and non-members of the school committees in the survey, interviews and focus group discussions.

Second, data collection and analysis, particularly through the qualitative approach, are not linear. Rather, they are iterative or what could be called back-and-forth processes. As the literature and practice suggest, qualitative data analysis often proceeds as data collection continues, with emerging issues from the interpretations being addressed in view of the theoretical framework. Thus, the analysis of data continuesthroughout the whole research process. In the present study, some analyses were done in the focus groups with the participants themselves, through a pair-wise ranking matrix approach under the guidance of the researcher (see Appendix 4). During the study, there were some instances where I had to go back to the field to gather data for some emerging issues. The experience of having to do this goes to show that due to unforeseen circumstances, planning a study (i.e., the proposal stage) might be comparatively easier than putting it into action.

Third, using a mixed methods approach in data collection and analysis increases the diversity of data, deepens the level of explanation and increases the trustworthiness of the findings. This is particularly the case when quantitative research is followed up with in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. In the study from which this dissertation is written, I started with a survey which was followed up with in-depth interviews and focus group discussions to address the issues that emerged from the survey data. This approach was useful for triangulation purposes. It was possible to check the consistency of the quantitative data and their validity. Finally, the qualitative component in this study helped bring about interaction between the respondents and myself as a researcher. The interaction created a friendly environment for the respondents and helped them respond more freely to the questions.

CHAPTER FOUR

Before Participation, Does Opportunity Exist?

4.0 Introduction

As I have pointed out earlier in in this work, empowerment of school committees and parents (the dependent variable) was measured according to three distinct dimensions: first, the Degree of Existence of Opportunity (DEO) for people to become members of school committees and the degree to which they are allowed to participate in school decision making; second, the Degree to which they make Use of the Opportunity (DUO); and third, after the school committee members and parents use the opportunity, the Degree Of Impact (DOI) which they achieve in relation to their desired outcome. This third dimension has to do with the effectiveness of people's use of opportunity (Alsop et al., 2006). In this chapter, I focus on the first dimension of empowerment. My specific objectives are, first, to examine the degree to which people at the grassroots level have the opportunity to participate in school decision making, and secondly, to explore factors that affect the existence of that opportunity.

4.1 Establishment of the school committees

School committees in Tanzania are legally established under section 39 of the Education Act, 1978, as amended in 1995. The Act clearly states that for every pre-school and primary school, a school committee shall be established, which shall be 'responsible for the management and maintenance of the school' (URT 1995b.S.39:1). The regulations stipulate that a school committee should have nine to eleven members, of whom seven must be elected from the school community.[5] Five members are to represent parents and two are to represent the teachers, while the remaining two to four members can be ex-officio or co-opted members. There is no legal requirement for school committee members to have a minimum level of education. This was pointed out by an education official from a Local Government Authority (LGA) who was asked about the process of forming the school committees and whether there were criteria for membership:

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[5]In this study, a school community is a specified group of people in a geographical location, with a vested interest in the day to day activities and performance of the school. Parents and other members of the community around a particular school constitute a school community.

> To become a member of a school committee does not necessarily require one to have a very high level of education. What is needed is a reasonable level of literacy. When one joins the committee, one is exposed, through practice and frequent training, to the practical issues related to school management. These, together with personal willingness, can make members of school committees well informed and competent in accomplishing what is expected of them. (E3)

When probed about whether there was a need for revising the membership criteria, particularly by specifying a minimum level of education for a person to be eligible for membership in the school committees, another LGA officer had this to say:

> Well, I don't see any necessity of specifying a minimum level of education qualification that a person should have to be eligible for election to the school committee. It is a very big mistake to think that way because the majority of the community members will automatically be excluded from taking part in governing their school, while it is actually their fundamental right to do so. I think having some basic education can be sufficient, as long as the person in question is self-motivated. By actively participating, the person is trained up, and his or her knowledge and skills are strengthened and assured. (E2)

These two quotes imply that there were no education-based criteria restricting membership to the school committees. People with basic education and even those who could only read and write, if supported by their school community, had a chance to become members of school committees. However, it is still debatable as to whether the process should continue this way because this study has revealed some problems associated with having committee members with little education. Such problems include, for example, poor skills in the areas of school governance such as planning and budgeting, bookkeeping and report writing.

During the study, I examined the procedures for forming a school committee. For all the seven LGAs involved in the study, I specifically explored the *process* through which a person can become a school committee member. This was in order to find out whether the election of committee members followed a standard democratic procedure or if it varied from one context to another. In examining the process, it was important to assess the extent to which the committees originated from people at the grassroots level, particularly the communities where the schools were located. During the interviews with education officials and school committee members, it was learned that in all the LGAs, school committee formation is a legal requirement; the whole process is left to the respective school communities in collaboration with their local (village and 'mtaa') governments. This was confirmed by an education official from Kibaha District Council:

> The process of forming school committees is the duty of the respective school communities, who, in collaboration with the village or 'mtaa' government, decide when to re-elect a new committee when the tenure of the school committee comes to an end. The district education office, through the Ward

Education Coordinators in each ward, has the responsibility of ensuring that each school has a school committee which is active. (E7)

It was also learned during interviews that Tanzania's school committees were given a boost from 2002 to 2006, when the first phase of the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP I) was implemented. The implementation was supported by the World Bank and other donors. It was during this time that the current school-committee operating framework was stipulated. The operating framework broadened the committees' scope of responsibilities, conferring more authority to them and requiring them to ensure accountability to their respective school communities.

Immediately after the implementation of the Primary Education Development Plan started in 2002, school committees were strengthened and assigned more responsibilities than they had before the onset of PEDP. I am saying so because in the past the committees were there to serve the key role of bridging relationships between the schools and their surrounding communities. Through the PEDP, more responsibilities and power have been given to the school committees to enable them to plan and implement local school development plans and oversee the spending capitation and development grants disbursed to the schools. (E4)

This quote indicates that Tanzanian school committees in general were invigorated by external donors who wanted to be sure their support to the schools was overseen by the beneficiaries themselves and that the funds were not misused by politicians and bureaucrats.

4.2 Existence of opportunity for membership and office tenure

During the study, I examined the processes through which a person in a school community can become a member of the school committee. I pursued this by interviewing education officers at the LGA level, by examining the education Act and asking the school committee members pointed questions in the survey questionnaire.

The findings from the survey (see Table 8) indicate that school committees were formed in five main ways: hand-raising and consensus, secret ballot, appointment membership, automatic membership and ex-officio membership. Of the five ways, membership through election by fellow members of the school community was the most prominent. Such election could be done by hand-raising and consensus, which was indicated by 52% (111) of the school committee members as the way through which they became members, or by secret ballot, which was indicated by 28% (60) of the members as their means of entry into the school committee.

The second main method for becoming a committee member was to be appointed by the head teacher. And teachers themselves, if they hold some specific responsibilities, can become school committee members in this way. For example, teachers who are responsible for overseeing discipline, self-reliance and maintenance can be appointed committee members by the school head teacher. Then there are other cases where one's membership happens automatically; this is the case for head teachers who, by law, are members and secretaries of school committees. The last important way through which membership can be obtained is through ex-official membership. This pertains to certain influential people, for instance councillors or elites, who may become members under the umbrella of 'patrons'. Patrons are people who can support the school financially, either from their own pocket or by connecting the school to donors such as local and international NGOs. This implies that local actors and factors have substantial influence in determining how the candidates are nominated and how the election proceeds.

The maximum tenure of office for a school committee member is three years. This was learned from interviews with school committee members and confirmed by an education official from one of the urban LGAs:

> Normally, a school committee member has official tenure for three years. That means that after every three years a new school committee has to be formed through the formally established procedures. This does not mean that a member who is in the school committee that has finished its tenure cannot become a member of the subsequent one. There are people who become members of school committee more than once. (E5)

Table 8: Ways through which people become members of school committees

Membership modality	% (N)
1. Elected by fellow school community members through hand-raising /consensus	52 (111)
2. Elected by fellow school community members through secret ballot	28 (60)
3. Appointed by the head teacher	09 (19)
4. Ex-officio membership	04 (09)
5. Automatic membership	07 (15)
Total	100 (214)

Question: How did you become a member of the school committee?

Results from the interviews and survey indicate that school committees share similarities with other types of user committees, as suggested in the professional literature (Manor, 2004a;

2004b). For example, it was found that membership to school committees was gained through a combination of the three methods suggested by Manor (2004b:195 –198). Most members who were involved in this present study were elected by their fellow 'users' of education services in their respective school communities. This is what Manor calls a 'semi-democratic process' and gaining membership in this way turns out also to be consistent with the findings published in user-committee literature. However, some members were appointed by low-level bureaucrats through a top-down approach. It was particularly noted in this study that the head teachers played an important role of appointing some teachers as school committee members. This implies that the process through which people entered the committees was a bit complex. Nevertheless, it is clear that the most popular method for gaining membership was through election by fellow school-community members, either through hand-raising /consensus or secret ballot.

4.3 Existence of opportunity to participate in decision making

Empowerment is the process of bringing people who are outside the decision making process into it (Rowlands, 1995). In measuring the Degree of Existence of Opportunity (DEO) to participate in decision making, one must pay attention to the extent of access to the process of decision making in the social, economic and cultural spheres. In this study, the DEO for school committee members and parents to participate in decision making was measured by asking them to judge the extent to which they could participate in ten fundamental issues in their respective schools. The ten issues (aspects) were determined on the basis of information drawn from a government document (URT, 2001b) and from various similar, empirically-based studies (such as Bray, 2001; Essuman & Akyeampong, 2011; Friis-Hansen & Duveskog, 2012; Khan, 2006; Masue, 2011; & Nielsen, 2007). Each of the ten aspects was measured on a scale of 1-6 (1=very low, 2= low, 3= somewhat low, 4= somewhat high, 5 = high, 6 = very high). The ten issues were listed as 'areas of decision making'. Of these, nine concerned the schools' day-to-day activities, particularly: (1) control of pupils' discipline, (2) planning and budgeting, (3) expenditure, (4) choice and procurement of books, (5) enrolment of pupils, (6) awarding tender for various supplies, (7) nurturing school-community relations, (8) construction and repair of school infrastructure and (9) resource mobilization. In addition, one issue linked to the national level of decision making was included, and this was curriculum development.

Table 9: Perceived opportunity to participate in school governance (N = 305 – 310)

| | Measures
← very low- very high → | | | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | |
Aspects/issues	Responses in %						*M (S.D)*
1. Construction and repair	1	3	5	18	55	17	4.7(1.0)
2.Control of pupils' discipline	1	2	10	30	41	17	4.6 (1.0)
3. Mobilization of resources	1	3	7	25	46	17	4.6 (1.0)
4. Planning and budgeting	3	2	11	31	37	17	4.5 (1.1)
5. Nurturing school-community relations	2	1	10	32	39	16	4.5 (1.0)
6. Enrolment of pupils	3	6	9	24	38	18	4.4 (1.4)
7. Expenditure decisions	3	3	13	29	32	19	4.4 (1.2)
8. Choice & procurement of books	5	3	16	29	32	14	4.2 (1.2)
9. Tender awarding for various supplies	5	5	13	29	37	10	4.1 (1.2)
10. Curriculum decisions	42	31	18	6	2	1	2.0 (1.1)

Question: Please indicate how much you have the opportunity to participate in each of the following aspects of decision making in your school. Key: 1= very low, 2= low, 3= somewhat low, 4 = somewhat high, 5=high, 6=very high.

4.3.1 DEO – ranking of the mean scores

As indicated in Table 9, the school committee members and parents perceived a 50% DEO for decision making on five out of ten aspects: construction and repair of school infrastructure (M = 4.7), control of pupils' discipline (M = 4.6), mobilization of resources (M = 4.6), nurturing of school-community relations (M = 4.5) and planning and budgeting (M = 4.5). The opportunity to make decisions on expenditures, pupil enrolment, choice and procurement of books and awarding tenders was somewhat high, while it was very low for curriculum decisions (mean = 2.0), with 73% of the cases accounting for a low and very low perceived degree of existence of opportunity for decision making.

Data from the interviews and focus groups also showed a similar trend to the quantitative results. Most participants said they were involved in various issues in their respective schools. For example, when a parent in Mvomero District was asked to explain his place in shaping the discipline of pupils, he expressed the following sentiments:

> As a parent, I feel I have the opportunity to shape the behaviour of my child both at home and in school. When a pupil commits a disciplinary breach in school, for example theft, truancy or fighting, the parent or guardian of that pupil will be called in to discuss the matter with the school committee and teachers before a decision is reached. From what I know, with the exception of minor disciplinary misconducts, disciplinary action is not decided upon before the parent or guardian is called to discuss the alleged misconduct with the teachers and the school committee. At home, I always inspire my son to be a disciplinary model at school, for that is what I am always proud of. (P1)

A similar perspective was presented by a teacher in Siha district, when she responded to the probing question 'Do you think parents and guardians have a role to play when it comes to the discipline of pupils here in school?'

> Certainly yes! They have a conspicuous responsibility for this. In my view, parents and guardians are number one discipline controllers and we are number two. They are with the children longer than we are, because, as you know, this is a day school. They teach them how they are expected to behave in the society, values and ethics. They tell them the dangers of engaging in irresponsible behaviour such as early age sex, alcoholism and drugs. We have always made sure to discuss with the respective parent/guardian whenever a disciplinary issue arises with a pupil, before any action is taken against the pupil alleged to have committed a breach of discipline. (T2)

4.3.2 Variations in the perceived DEO among respondents

Table 10 presents comparative results on the DEO for members of school committee vs. parents to participate in the ten issues/aspects in their respective schools. The bases of comparison are the mean score and the percentage of cases indicating high perceived DEO. The levels of significance (p-values) are used to indicate whether or not the variations are significant, thus enabling comparison of the various aspects. As can be seen from the mean scores and the percentage of responses indicating high DEO, members of school committees indicated a significantly higher DEO for participation in decision making compared to parents in six of the ten decision making areas, namely, planning and budgeting ($p < .001$), choice and procurement of books and stationery ($p < .001$), expenditure decisions ($p = .001$), control of pupils' discipline ($p = .007$), construction and repair of school infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers' houses and toilet facilities ($p = .04$) and awarding of tender for various school supplies ($p = .04$).

Table 10: Variations in perceived DEO among members and non-members to the school committees

Aspect	N	M(S.D)	High (%)	p-value
1.Control of pupils' discipline				
Members of school committees	214	4.7 (0.9)	63	.007
Parents	96	4.3 (1.0)	45	
2.Planning and budgeting				
Members of school committees	214	4.7 (1.0)	61	< .001
3.Expenditure decisions				
Members of school committees	214	4.6 (1.0)	54	.001
Parents	94	4.0 (1.4)	43	
4.Procurement of books and stationery				
Members of school committees	214	4.5 (1.0)	52	.001
Parents	95	3.7 (1.4	34	
5. Enrolment of pupils				
Members of school committees	212	4.6 (1.1)	59	.08
Parents	93	4.2 (1.5)	54	
6.Tender awarding for various supplies				
Members of school committees	212	4.3 (1.1)	52	.04
Parents	95	3.8 (1.4)	34	
7.Construction and repair of infrastructure				
Members of school committees	214	4.8 (0.9)	76	.04
Parents	95	4.5 (1.0)	61	
8.Nurturing school-community relations				
Members of school committees	214	4.6 (1.0)	56	.07
Parents	96	4.3 (1.2)	50	
9. Mobilization of resources /contributions				
Members of school committees	213	4.7 (0.9)	66	.15
Parents	95	4.4 (1.2)	56	
10. Curriculum decisions				
Members of school committees	214	2.1 (1.2)	5	.18
Parents	96	1.8 (0.9)	0	

Question (same as in Table 9): 'Please indicate how much you have the opportunity to participate in each of the following aspects of decision making in your school', and the categories were: (1) Members of school committee & (2) non- members referred to as 'parents'

The results indicate, on one hand, insignificant differences in school committee members and parents' DEO with regard to pupil enrolment ($p = .08$), nurturing good school-community relations ($p = .07$) and mobilization of resources ($p = .15$). On the other hand, the significant differences observed in the DEO for participation in decision making among school committee members and parents imply that the committee members have more responsibility than non-member parents for making decisions on issues related to planning and budgeting, choice and procurement of books, expenditure, pupils' discipline, construction, repair and awarding tenders. Yet the insignificant differences noted in the perceived DEO to participate in issues related to pupil enrolment, nurturing good school-community relations and resource mobilization indicate that both groups participated more or less equally in each of these issues.

It was further observed that both groups indicated a very low DEO for participation in curriculum development (with mean scores of 2.1 for school committee members and 1.8 for parents). Only 5% of the school committee members indicated a high DEO to participate in curriculum decisions, while none of the parents did so. The very low mean scores on curriculum decisions clearly indicate that both categories of respondents had very little or no part to play in this issue.

4.4 Access to information

Adequacy of information exchange is an important factor for effectively participating in local decision making. In the management of education at the grassroots level, information is not only necessary for keeping people well-informed of what is happening in their local vicinity (school) and at the national levels, but also for enabling them to understand what they are supposed to make decisions about, and why and how they should take charge of their own development through participating in decision making.

Access to information was measured in two ways: first, by using a nine-item ordinal scale of 1 – 6, with 1 and 6 representing very low and very high degrees of information exchange respectively, and secondly, by assessing various sources of education-related information both at the local school level and the national level. Ten statements on sources of information were listed, and respondents were asked to rate each of them using a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree), with two intermediate points 3 (somewhat disagree) and 4 (somewhat agree) to indicate the extent to which they relied on the various sources in order to obtain and convey information (feedback)
.

In Table 11, each of the listed items captures a specific aspect of information. The question was designed to find out the extent to which the school committee members and parents could obtain and transmit information on issues related to education and development, not only locally at the school and village/mtaa level, but also nationally. At the local level, the access to and exchange of information was examined for the aspects of school plan and budget, school expenditure, daily operations, school's bank account /balance, academic performance, school committee and its roles, and the procurement of school materials and equipment. In addition, the respondents' access to information on a general, national level was assessed

through two questions about access to information on the national education policy and legislation and on curriculum.

Table 11: Respondents' perceived degree of access to information: ranking of the means (N = 310)

	Measures						
	← very low-very high →						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Information about:	Responses in %						M (S.D)
1. Academic performance of the school	0	3	17	54	27	0	5.0 (0.8)
2. School's expenditure	4	14	44	34	4	0	4.2 (0.9)
3. School plan & budget	1	17	45	35	2	0	4.2 (0.8)
4. School committee and roles	0	3	15	44	37	1	4.2 (0.8)
5. Procurement	0	5	19	46	28	2	4.0 (0.9)
6. Daily operations in the school	1	3	23	50	22	1	4.0 (0.8)
7. The school's bank balance	8	16	38	28	9	1	3.2 (1.0)
8. National education policy & legislation	22	35	36	7	1	0	2.3 (0.8)
9. Curriculum	43	35	16	3	2	0	2.0 (1.0)

Question: To what extent can you access the following categories of information in your school? Key: 1=very low, 2= low, 3= somewhat low, 4 = somewhat high, 5 = high, 6 = very high.

The results constitute responses from school committee members and parents on their perceived degrees of information access with respect to each of the nine areas of information. Overall, the school committees members and parents indicated a high perceived degree of information access in four (44%) of the nine areas: information about the school's academic performance (M = 5.0), information about the school committee and its roles (M = 4.2), information about procurement (M = 4.0) and information about daily school operations (M = 4.0, S.D = 0.8). In other words, the respondents indicated a high perceived degree of access to information in four of the seven – that is 57% – of the information areas at the local level.

It was found, however, that the respondents perceived a very low degree of access to information on the two aspects about curriculum development (M = 2.0) and national education policy/legislation (M = 2.3). These two areas reflect the local communities' inadequate accessto information on the national education orientation in terms of curriculum and policy. It was also noted that the respondents indicated a somewhat low perceived degree of information on the school's bank balance (M = 3.2).

4.4.1 Variations in degrees of information access amongst the respondents

During the study, it was necessary to examine variations in the degree of access to information amongst the school committee members and non-member parents. This would help explain how much school committees, as the major representatives of local communities/parents, were informed and able to control important functions in their respective schools.

Table 12: Perceived degree of access to information by membership to the committee (N = 310)

Information area	M (S.D)	High – Very high (%)	p – value
1.Information about school plan & budget			
Members of school committees	4.3(0.8)	41	.013
Parents	4.0 (0.8)	27	
2.Information about school's expenditure			
Members of school committees	4.4 (0.8)	46	< .001
Parents	3.8 (0.8)	20	
3. Information about daily operations in the school			
Members of school committees	4.0 (0.7)	79	< .001
Parents	3.7 (1.0)	57	
4. Information about the school's bank balance			
Members of school committees	3.4 (1.0)	46	< .001
Parents	2.6 (1.0)	19	
5. Information about academic performance of the school			
Members of school committees	5.1 (0.8)	81	.100
Parents	4.9 (0.7)	79	
6. Information about procurement of school materials equipment			
Members of school committees	4.2 (0.8)	84	.001
Parents	3.6 (0.9)	59	
7. Information about the school committee and roles			
Members of school committees	4.4 (0.7)	87	< .001
Parents	3.8 (0.9)	69	
8. Information about curriculum			
Members of school committees	1.9 (1.0)	6	.200
Parents	1.7 (1.0)	5	
9. Information about the national education policy & legislation			
Members of school committee	2.4 (0.9)	8	.005
Parents	2.1 (0.9)	7	

Question: To what extent can you access the following categories of information in your school?

The results in Table 12 indicate that school committee members have a generally higher degree of perceived access to information than the non-member parents. The difference was highly significant ($p \leq 0.005$) in six of the nine areas, namely academic performance, school's bank balance, expenditure, school committee and roles, daily operations and national education policy and legislation. Interestingly, the results indicate a high perceived degree of access to information ($M = 5.1$) for the committee members and 4.9 for the non-member

parents, about the academic performance of their children and the school in general. The percentage of cases indicating a high to very high perceived degree of access to information was 81% and 79% for the committee members and non-members respectively, with no significant difference between the two categories of respondents. The results further indicate an explicit information deficiency on the school's banking details, as reflected by somewhat low mean scores of 3.4 for school committee members and 2.6 for parents. This can be interpreted as a sign of inadequate transparency in the schools' financial records.

The results indicate a very low perceived degree of access to information on curriculum, with $M = 1.9$ for school committee members and 1.7 for parents. Responses on the issue of access to information about national education policy and legislation were also very low for both groups of respondents ($M = 2.4$ and 2.1 for school committee members and parents respectively). These results indicate that national-level education issues were inadequately communicated to the stakeholders at the grassroots level.

Results from the interviews and focus groups provide insights that corroborate the evidence from the quantitative results on respondents' perceived degree of access to information. Consistent with the quantitative results, the qualitative data explicitly reflect that the participants were well informed about the academic performance of their children and the school, to the extent of being able to tell the number of pupils who passed their Primary School Leaving Examination (PSLE) and continued on to secondary education. One parent in Mvomero District Council, when asked if he was aware of how well his school was performing academically and the ease with which this information could be accessed, said the following:

> I am quite aware of how good my school is performing in the national examinations. This is because when results come out, they are displayed on all public noticeboards and they can also easily be accessed in the school. I remember last year 45 out of 50 pupils who sat for the Primary Education Leaving Examination were selected to continue on to secondary education. (P1)

Another parent in Dodoma Municipality stated that he was well informed about the academic performance of his children and the school in general. When asked why he was inclined to know more about academic performance than other issues such as the school's bank account, his response showed where his major interest lay:

> I am very much interested in the academic performance of my children, for it is the key determinant of whether or not they will be selected to continue to secondary education. (P3)

Similarly, another parent in Siha District Council stated that information about the academic performance of individual pupils and the school was readily accessible to her in many ways – both formally and informally:

> For me, I think the most accessible information is that concerning the academic performance of my children and the school in general. I receive an academic performance report for my children at the end of every term. I also get feedback from the teachers every time I ask them about how my children are performing academically. (P2)

A teacher in Siha District also confirmed the diversity of ways through which information about pupils' academic performance could be accessed:

> We normally have a school *baraza* at the end of every academic term or year, and it involves all pupils, teachers and members of the school committee. In this meeting we discuss various things that happened in the school over the term or year – both academic and non-academic – highlighting key successes and challenges. This school *baraza* normally ends with an announcement of the end of term/year examination results, and the pupils who have performed outstandingly are rewarded. (T2)[6]

With regard to curriculum and government policy, the qualitative results indicate that all the three categories of participants in the interviews and focus groups had very little information on these key issues that govern the general conduct of education governance. Insofar as the curriculum is concerned, responses mentioned a lack of information on the whole concept of curriculum and the process involved in developing it.

> I really don't know what it is all about. This is something related to teaching and learning, so I think the teachers can have more understanding of it than we parents do. As far as I am concerned, my responsibility is to make sure that I provide my children with what they need for their schooling, and the teachers will get them into that. (P2)

Even the teachers themselves, although they seemed to know what curriculum entails, gave responses indicating that their knowledge was very limited, especially with regard to curriculum formation and how it should be implemented.

> We don't have any opportunity to contribute to the curriculum. As you know, this is something that is planned centrally at the ministry and directed down to the schools for implementation. Even though there are frequent changes to the curriculum, the stakeholders at the local level, especially the teachers who have a lot of experience with what works and what does not work, are not consulted. (T1)

The teacher quoted here states that the frequent changes to the curriculum are largely communicated to them as directives for implementation. The curricular changes happen

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[6] *Baraza* (Swahili term): council, cabinet or general meeting

without due warning to teachers and parents, and this causes serious problems in selecting and procuring books.

> Frequent changes in the curriculum have often led to adverse consequences for all of us – teachers, pupils and parents. For instance, last year we bought some books for our pupils, but due to unanticipated changes in the curriculum, we are now told that the textbooks we bought cannot be used. So now we must buy the newly-prescribed ones. [FG1 (C6)]

In the interview and FGD sessions, it was also noted that there is inadequate information about policy issues regarding education delivery and school contributions. This was noticed because certain respondents lacked a general awareness of the intentions and policies outlined in policy/legislation documents.

> I have no idea about the policy and what is in it. Well, I don't think it is that importance to me. It is more legal and not easily accessible to parents. Maybe the teachers can have some insight into it and can help clarify it to us. [FG2 (P3)]

4.4.2 Sources of information

The study also examined the key sources of education-related information, in particular from the local level (school) and generally from the national level. Ten information sources were listed, and respondents were asked to use a 6-point Likert scale – 1 (strongly disagree), 3 (somewhat disagree), 4 (somewhat agree), 6 (strongly agree) – to indicate the extent to which they relied on each of the sources. The results are summarized in Table 13 and interpretation is done by using mean scores.

Table 13: Ranking of the mean scores for the major information sources (N = 310)

Statements	1	2	3	4	5	6	M (S.D)
			strongly disagree – strongly agree				
	Responses in %						
I get information through:-							
1. school meetings	1	1	7	10	56	26	5.0 (0.9)
2. the teachers	7	8	7	18	51	9	4.2 (1.4)
3. my children	6	8	7	25	44	10	4.2 (1.3)
4. radio broadcasts	16	12	9	25	34	6	3.7 (1.6)
5. public noticeboards	14	19	11	31	23	3	3.4 (1.4)
6. local leaders	10	31	20	21	16	2	3.1 (1.3)
7. television broadcasts	25	23	11	21	18	2	2.9 (1.5)
8. education officials	21	24	17	23	14	1	2.9 (1.4)
9. newspapers	25	28	11	23	12	1	2.7 (1.4)
10. government documents	24	35	19	12	9	0	2.5 (1.6)

Question: Please indicate how much each of the following statements reflects your way(s) of getting information about various issues in your school and education in general.

The results in Table 13 indicate three major sources respondents reported to use in obtaining school-related information. These were mainly interactional (through meetings and asking the teachers and children). Overall, there was little difference in the ways through which respondents obtained information.

School meetings were indicated as the most important source of information, with a mean score of 5.0 (which implies 'agree' on the six-point Likert scale). The respondents' scores on this information source ranged between 'agree' (56% of the respondents) and 'strongly agree' (26% of the respondents). On comparison, the mean score for this information source was 5.1 for school committee members and 4.7 for the parents. Thus, 87% of committee members and 70% of parents either agreed or strongly agreed that they gained information about various issues in their school through meetings. On average, therefore, the respondents agreed that school meetings were the best source of education information for them, and school committee members attended more meetings than did the parents. The variation in the mean scores amongst the parents and school committee members thus indicates that the committee members are closer to the school decision making process than the parents. This can be interpreted as a higher degree of empowerment for the committee members than for the parents.

These findings concur with empowerment theorists' and practitioners' argument that collective/group interaction is often needed for effective consciousness raising processes because it enables individuals to collectively identify their problems and to challenge and eventually change the prevailing situation (Cox, 1992). This approach is argued to be more effective in empowering people than is one-to-one interaction because through one-to-one interaction, there is always the potential for diversity in information sharing amongst the participants. Naturally, as subjective individuals, each person may experience information differently. Proponents of the one-to-one interaction approach, however, present a counter argument; some parents may be hesitant to voice their problems in the school meetings because they do not want to antagonize their child's teachers. Likewise, some pupils prefer bringing up their suggestions in one-to-one meetings with teachers whom they trust rather than in an open forum or meeting (Gruber & Trickett, 1987). In such situations, the group interaction approach is regarded as inappropriate.

In the literature on decentralized governance, meetings as means for gaining information have not been considered to be all that successful, partly because of some elected politicians' reluctance to hold them at convenient times and places. Nevertheless, meetings have become important instruments for giving citizens at the grassroots level the opportunity to participate in decision making and to voice their concerns and priorities. Manor's concept of 'mass meetings' essentially pertains to meetings where people deliberate on various development issues and/or proposals (Manor, 2004:11). Mass meetings have been recognized as one of the most practical ways of engaging people at the grassroots level in educational decision making. For example, Sharma (2013) points to the use of parent-teacher meetings and parents' meetings in bringing school operations closer to the people at the local level in Nepal, Finland, Austria and Poland. A similar experience from Ethiopia indicates successful institutionalization of community participation in school governance through regular and ad hoc school management committee meetings and parent-teacher associations (Yamada, 2014).

In the present study, the results in Table 13 indicate that the respondents relied on one-to-one interaction with teachers and their children for information about what was happening in the schools and in the education sector in general. These two information sources had mean scores of 4.2 each. Evidence from the results indicates that 60% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that they gained education information by asking the teachers; while 54% either agreed or strongly agreed that they relied on their children for information about various issues in the school. This observation affirms that the supportive environment of one-to-one interaction between individual teachers, pupils, parents and school committee members is a necessary strategy for enhancing people's empowerment.

While in Table 13, both categories of respondents (school committee members and parents) equally indicated that interaction with individual teachers enabled them to obtain information about various issues in and outside the school, parents indicated that they relied more on their children than did the members of school committee (M = 4.3 for parents and 4.2 for members of school committee), with 59% of both categories agreeing or strongly agreeing that they received information by asking the teachers. This is clear evidence that teachers are a trusted and readily-accessible source of education information for the members of school committees and parents at the local level. On the other hand, the results also indicate that parents depended much more on their children for information than did the members of school

committees (M = 4.5 and 4.1 respectively. The corresponding percentages of 'agree'/ 'strongly agree' responses were 60% for the committee members and 52% for parents).

Exposure to mass media is an important factor in stimulating social change. Mass media is a diverse concept encompassing newspapers, television (TV), radio, computers and others digital channels (Kurane & Shetty, 2012). Mass media helps the wider populace gain awareness of new information, new ideas, new attitudes and new desires. It helps shape people's way of thinking and acting, hence leading to development and new achievements. In this study I examined the place of mass media as an important source of information necessary for empowering people at the grassroots level. Despite the diversity of mass media, I focused on newspapers, television and radio because these three forms are fairly common to Tanzanians, regardless of their socio-economic or educational status.

Based on the degree to which the respondents indicated that they relied on the three media as sources of information, newspapers and television were reported to be less used than radio. The mean scores in Table 13 show that newspapers were the least used (M = 2.7) and TV slightly more used (M = 2.9). These mean scores imply that the respondents disagreed somewhat about often using them as sources of information. The curtailed use of newspapers and TV was partly attributed to a lack of electricity, especially throughout most parts of the rural districts. Even if people could afford to buy TVs, they could not use them much. Studies report that despite the significant recent growth in modern Information Communication Technology (ICT) in Africa, radio remains the continent's most readily accessible mass-medium (Harvey, 2011; Harvey, Burns, & Oswald, 2012). To exemplify; in a study examining the opportunities and challenges of using Participatory Action Research (PAR) with community radio broadcasters to investigate the impact of climate change in Ghana, it was reported that radio had the widest scope of accessibility both in terms of geographical coverage and audiences when compared with TV, printed media and other ICTs such as the internet. In a recent surveys by InterMedia involving adults aged 15 and above in Ghana (N = 2051) and Kenya (N= 2000), it was reported that 87% and 86% respectively owned a radio receiver as compared to 41% and 59% respectively who reported owning a TV (Bowen & Goldstein, 2010; cited in Harvey, 2011:2038). The major reasons mentioned for this trend in radio usage were mainly linked to its affordability in terms of production and household ownership, and its adaptability and accessibility to rural communities, especially for those who had limited levels of literacy or who were completely illiterate.

With regard to newspapers; it was found that due to transport problems, the rural areas in particular do not have direct and timely newspaper delivery. What is more, due to the high frequency of limited illiteracy, especially amongst rural respondents, the relevance of newspapers in citizens' access to information was found to be minimal when compared with radio broadcasts. As a result – and this finding holds not only for the regions involved in this study but also for the other regions throughout Tanzania – newspapers can be regarded as less accessible media by a large segment of the rural population. These results concur with those of a study carried out in Madagascar published five years ago on communication for empowerment. There it was found that only about 6.7% of the study respondents in rural Madagascar mentioned the printed press, newspapers in particular, as their primary source of information (UNDP & CSCC, 2008). On top of that, those who said they relied on newspapers as one of their primary sources of information indicated that they only received them once a week in most cases. The third factor which participants claimed was a barrier for using newspapers as source of information was unaffordability. The fact that newspapers must be bought daily or often, and the fact that one copy of a newspaper costs about $1 USD means that the poor cannot afford it. A quote from one parent in Kondoa district serves as a good indicator for why radio is the most convenient media channel:

> Radio receivers are widely available and come in many varieties to serve consumer tastes: pocket radio receivers, home receivers, embedded radio receivers (with appliances such as mobile phones and torches [flashlights]. More importantly, most of the radio receivers would not necessarily need electricity to power them. So for me, I always follow different radio programmes through my two – dry cell radio receiver. [FG (P5)]

Given that radio was indicated to be the most accessible media by the public, it is hereby recommended to be used for disseminating education-related information for people, and particularly at the grassroots level. However, while this study suggests the use of radio as a medium for transmitting education information to the public, it strongly emphasizes the need to improve the other types of mass media, particularly TV and newspapers. By diversifying the information sources, people at the grassroots level will gain increased access to information.

Table 14: Major sources of information by respondent's category

Information area	M (S.D)	High – Very high (%)	p – value
1.Information about school plan & budget			
Members of school committees	4.3(0.8)	41	.013
Parents	4.0 (0.8)	27	
2.Information about school's expenditure			
Members of school committees	4.4 (0.8)	46	< .001
Parents	3.8 (0.8)	20	
3. Information about daily operations in the school			
Members of school committees	4.0 (0.7)	79	< .001
Parents	3.7 (1.0)	57	
4. Information about the school's bank balance			
Members of school committees	3.4 (1.0)	46	< .001
Parents	2.6 (1.0)	19	
5. Information about academic performance of the school			
Members of school committees	5.1 (0.8)	81	.100
Parents	4.9 (0.7)	79	
6. Information about procurement of school materials equipment			
Members of school committees	4.2 (0.8)	84	.001
Parents	3.6 (0.9)	59	
7. Information about the school committee and roles			
Members of school committees	4.4 (0.7)	87	< .001
Parents	3.8 (0.9)	69	
8. Information about curriculum			
Members of school committees	1.9 (1.0)	6	.200
Parents	1.7 (1.0)	5	
9. Information about the national education policy & legislation			
Members of school committee	2.4 (0.9)	8	.005
Parents	2.1 (0.9)	7	

Question: Please indicate how much each of the following statements reflects your way(s) of getting information on various issues in your school and education in general.

Both categories of respondents indicated that newspapers and TV broadcasts were lesser sources of education-related information compared with radio broadcasts. However, the results indicate that school committee members reported a somewhat higher use of media than the non-member parents. For example, while 43% ($N = 214$) of the committee members either agreed or strongly agreed that that they relied on radio broadcasts as sources of educational information, only 34% ($N = 96$) of the parents did so.

The study also examined the importance of government documents in providing the public at the grassroots level with education-related information. The documents that were examined include policy papers, circulars, guidelines and legislation statutes. The results show that overall (Table 13) and in a comparative perspective (Table 14), the respondents relied far less

on government documents as sources of educational information. This is reflected by the overall mean score (2.5) in Table 13 ($N = 310$) and in Table 14 (< 3) in either category with 4 % (n = 96) and 12% ($N = 214$) of the parents and members of school committee respectively agreeing or strongly agreeing that they rely on such documents for information about their schools and the education sector in general. For most of the schools visited during the study, it was observed that government documents such as the Education and Training Policy and the Education Act of 1978 were not available in the school. Of the government documents on hand, there were a few providing operational guidelines and procedures. Examples here are procurement manuals and documents for bookkeeping and accounting procedures.

Public noticeboards were reported by respondents as somewhat important sources of educational information, as reflected by the mean score (3.4). The percentage of respondents who indicated agree/strongly agree was (26) in Table 14, and the comparative mean scores (3.3 and 3.4 for the school committee members and parents respectively) amounted to 25% of either category of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that they obtained information from this source. Public noticeboards were not deemed to be the most important information source probably because of limited literacy and the fact that people seldom have time to go to the public places (village offices, ward offices, schools, etc.) where these noticeboards are usually placed.

In this study I also analysed each of the ten information sources in terms of the types/categories of information they provided (see Table 15). This step was particularly necessary for establishing the relative importance of each source and examining the diversity of each source in terms of types of information accessed. The results indicate that school meetings, teachers and children were ranked by the committee members to be the most diverse and easily accessible information sources, whereas government documents, newspapers and television were ranked as the least diverse and least accessible information sources by both the school committee members and the parents. The ranking was done in a focus group discussion with the members of a school committee in Morogoro Municipal Council using a pair-wise rank matrix (Appendix 4).

The results support those obtained through the survey questionnaire, which indicated school meetings, children and teachers as the most readily accessible sources of information. Here

again, newspapers and government documents were deemed the least accessible information sources.

Table 15: Types of information by sources

Information source	Examples of types of information exchanged
1.School meetings	Information about school plan and budget, school expenditure and general procurement, discipline of pupils & routines, academic performance & government policy/ decisions, dates for enrolment of nursery and class 1 pupils.
2. Children in school	Information/call for a meeting, information about arrival of a new teacher, transfer of a teacher, unusual events in school such as theft or death of a pupil, academic performance cum examination results & an important guest visiting the school.
3.Teachers	Information about pupils' academic progress, discipline, start and end of academic terms, change of curriculum and instructional materials such as books, various guidelines from the district/municipal office, starting of enrolment of children.
4.Public noticeboards	Names of pupils selected for secondary education, announcements for meeting, contribution at school, visitors, examination results, income & expenditure.
5.Radio broadcasts	National examination results, government decisions & education projects, dates for starting school year, enrolment of children, and various events.
6.Village/ *mtaa* leaders	Reminder about school contributions and enrolment of pupils.
7. Education officials	Information about national examinations, guidelines/instructions, various reports from the LGA education office & financial disbursements (capitation & development fund).
8.Newspapers	Information about release of national examination results, national education budget.
9.Television broadcasts	National examination results, general performance of education sector, education budget & important government decisions.
10.Government documents	Information about policies /legislation & education reports.

Source: Focus Group [FG(C)]

4.5 Respondents' competencies/skills

Competenceis a self-belief that one possesses the skills and abilities necessary to perform a job or task well (Gist, 1987). Respondents' competence was examined in terms of their perceived level of skill in six main areas related to the daily and long-term functioning of the school. These were planning and budgeting, basic bookkeeping, procurement, leadership, report writing, and bargaining and negotiation. To facilitate easy interpretation of Table 16, the figures in columns indicate percentages of respondents who indicated they had a certain level of competence in each of the six areas. For example, while the average perceived level of competence in the area of planning and budgeting was 3.4, 14% of the respondents thought

they had a high a degree of competence, and none indicated a very high degree of competence.

As the results indicate, the mean scores ranged from 3.1 to 3.2. This implies a somewhat low level of skill in the six areas of competence. Furthermore, the difference between members of school committee and parents in terms of the perceived level of competence was highly significant ($p<$ .001), where, in all six aspects, committee members indicated they had a higher skill level. Furthermore, as Table 16 shows, out of all the six aspects, planning and budgeting scored best, with columns 4, 5 and 6 in combination indicating that slightly over 50% of respondents claimed to have a somewhat high to high level of skill. The other five skill categories ranged at best between 42% and 46%.

Table 16: Ranking of the means for perceived level of competence *(N = 310); SD = 1.1*

Categories of skills	very low competence-very high competence ⟶						M
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
	Responses in %						
(1) Planning & budgeting	6	17	24	40	14	0	3.4
(2) Procurement	7	18	31	34	9	0	3.2
(3) Leadership	7	21	30	30	12	0	3.2
(4) Report writing	7	20	31	35	8	0	3.2
(5) Bargaining and negotiation	8	18	28	34	12	0	3.2
(6) Book-keeping & accounting	8	21	28	36	7	0	3.1

Question: Please assess your level of competence/skills in the following categories of activities   in your school. (Key: 1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = somewhat low, 4 = somewhat high, 5 = high, 6 = very high)

The overall results in Table 16, on respondent's perceived level of competence in six aspects of school management, indicate a somewhat low perceived level of competence in all the six areas with the exception of planning and budgeting (mean of 3.4 and 54% indicating somewhat high to high level of competence). The results also display a characteristic trend in all six areas: a very low proportion of the respondents indicated a high perceived level of competence, and none claimed to have a very high level of competence in any area. Even so, the comparative results in the next table (Table 17) indicate significant differences in the competence level between the school committee members and parents in all the six areas. This can be seen from the fact that the mean scores of committee members in all the six areas of competence are significantly higher than those of parents (p < .001). This implies that school committee members were more skilled than parents in all the six areas of competence.

Table 17: Variations in respondents' perceived level of skills, by category

Categories of skills	Mean	Somewhat high – high (%)	p- value
1. Skills in planning & budgeting			
Members of school committees	3.6 (0.9)	60	< .001
Parents	3.0 (1.3)	38	
2 Skills in basic book-keeping & accounting			
Members of school committees	3.4 (1.0)	51	< .001
Parents	2.7 (1.2)	27	
3. Skills in procurement			
Members of school committees	3.4 (1.0)	49	< .001
Parents	2.8 (1.1)	32	
4. Leadership skills			
Members of school committees	3.5 (1.0)	53	< .001
Parents	2.6 1.0)	18	
5. Skills in report writing			
Members of school committees	3.4 (1.0)	51	< .001
Parents	2.8 (1.1)	25	
6. Bargaining and negotiation skills			
Members of school committees	3.4 (1.0)	54	< .001
Parents	2.8 (1.1)	28	

4.6 Establishing causal relationships

So far, the results I have presented describe patterns of responses to the variables, but no causal relationship has been established between the dependent and independent variables through regression analysis. Before doing this, I describe the dependent and independent variables and the way they were measured. Although I, at the beginning of this chapter, explained how the dependent and independent variables were measured, I now further clarify how the operationalization of variables proceeded because some of these variables have either been recoded into 'new' variables or summed up into indexes.

4.7 Measuring the dependent variable (the DEO)

The Degree of Existence of Opportunity (DEO) for decision making was measured through self-reported scores by the respondents on their opportunity for decision making, hence, the results obtained depict *respondents' perceived degree of existence of opportunity for decision making* using ten items, each measured in a six-point summative scale (1 = very low; 6 = very high).
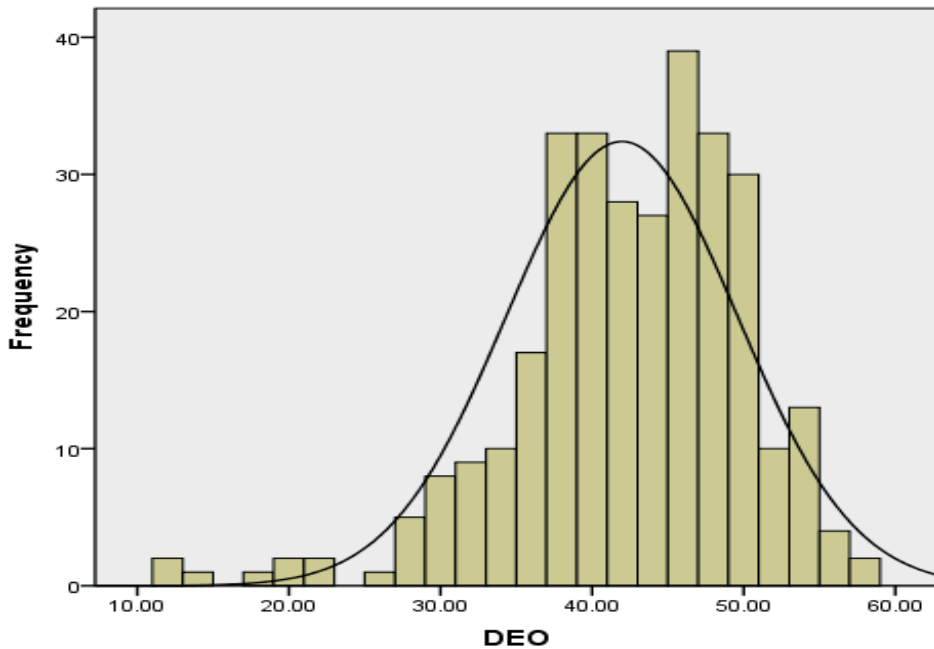
Figure 11: Distribution of the respondent's perceived DEO indexes

An index for each respondent was then computed by summing the scores for individual items, after passing a reliability test for internal consistency of the items (Cronbach's alpha = .85) to constitute an interval scale for regression analysis (Allen & Seaman, 2007). The possible total score ranged between 10 and 60, with the higher scores indicating higher perceived DEO and vice versa. The mean score was 42 with a standard deviation of 7.6. The actual (self-reported) minimum score was 12 while the maximum was 58. The distribution (Figure 11) was somewhat negatively skewed, with skewedness of -.90(SE = .14) and kurtosis of 1.6 (SE = .28).

4.8 Measuring the independent variables

4.8.1 Demographics

The demographic variables included in the regression analysis were the respondents' gender, level of education, area of residence (rural-urban distinction), age group and type of employment. The inclusion of these variables was theoretically and empirically informed.

Gender

It is argued that in most of the developing countries, women are less involved than men in decision making at the family, local and national levels (Kabeer, 1999). In this study, gender was coded as a dummy variable with the value 0 denoting female and 1 denoting male. The two gender categories were equally represented in the total sample of 310.

Level of education

The education level was included as an independent variable based on the fact that it has been associated with psychological empowerment. This was found, for instance, in Cakir and Yerin Guneri's (2011) study of factors contributing to the empowerment of Turkish migrant women in the United Kingdom. Level of education was coded as a dummy variable (0 = primary education or less, and 1 for secondary education or more) because the majority of the respondents [83% (N = 310)] indicated they had either primary or secondary education. The distribution of respondents with respect to the recoded variable was 50.3% for primary education or less, and 49.7% for secondary education or more.

Area of residence

Coded as a dummy variable (0 = rural and 1 = urban), the area of residence was included to examine variations in the perceived DEO for decision making in schools. The distribution of respondents with respect to this variable was 48% rural and 52% urban (N = 310).

Age group

Coded into a dummy variable (0 = older generation i.e., 46 – 70 years of age; and 1 = younger generation i.e., 25 -45 years of age), the participants' age group was included to examine the effect of the age group on the DEO for participation in decision making in the respective schools.

Type of employment

The type of employment was coded as a dummy variable (0 = informal; 1 = formal) from the initial variable, which had six categories encompassing formal employment (public/private sector) and five other forms of informal/ self-employment. This variable was meant for examining the influence of employment status on the empowerment of members of school committee and parents.

4.8.2 Structural variables

These variables pertain to structural aspects that influence people's opportunity for decision making. They include access to information and membership to a school committee.

Access to information

The measurement of respondents' perceived degree of access to information was based on nine key information areas in the schools. This measurement also used a six-point Likert scale (1 = very low; 6 = very high) and had a reliability statistic (Cronbach's alpha) of .73. An index was computed by adding the points of each of the nine items. This index had minimum and maximum possible scores of 9 and 54. The actual minimum and maximum scores were 19 and 44 respectively, with a mean of 33 (SD = 4.4).

Membership to the school committee

This variable had to do with whether respondents were members or non-member of a school committee, coded as 1 and 0 respectively. The variable was meant for examining variation in the degree of empowerment amongst school committee members and non-members (parents).

4.8.3 Personal characteristics

Competence

Competence – the only variable in the 'personal characteristics' category – is related to respondents' beliefs about their ability to accomplish assigned tasks. This variable has to do with self-efficacy. People's beliefs about their ability to exercise control over their own lives and the events that affect their lives are central to their own functioning (Bandura, 1993). I included this variable in my study on the grounds that the perceptions of individual school committee members and parents about their abilities are important in explaining how much opportunity they have to participate in and influence decisions in their respective local schools. An assumption here is that a high level of perceived competence entails a high level of perceived opportunity for decision making. This variable was measured in six items through a six-point Likert scale (1= very low & 6 = very high).

The reliability statistics of this scale indicate a Cronbach's alpha of .86, which implies a high internal consistency that permits me to combine the measurements for the six items into an

index with total minimum and maximum possible scores at 6 and 36 respectively. The responses ($N = 310$) lay between 6 and 30, with a mean of 19 and a standard deviation of 5.

4.9 Exploring association(s) and causal relationship(s)

4.9.1 Correlation analysis

Prior to establishing causal relationships, Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient analysis was performed (Niño-Zarazúa, 2012; Pallant, 2010) to examine the relationship between the DEO (as measured on an interval scale of 10 to 60) and two independent variables: the perceived degree of access to information (as measured on an interval scale of 9 to 54), and the perceived level of competence (as measured on an interval scale of 6 to 36). Correlation analysis was performed, first, to examine the relationship between each of the two predictor variables and the dependent variable,and secondly, to check for conceptual overlaps, if any, between the two predictor variables. Doing this would enable me to decide whether or not to add the two variables into the causal (regression) model.

Table 18: Correlation of the two interval independent variables & DEO (df = 308)

Variable	M (SD)	Cronbach's alpha	1	2	3
1. Perceived degree of existence of opportunity (DEO)	42 (7.6)	.85	-		
2. Perceived degree of access to information	33 (4.4)	.73	.45**	-	
3. Perceived level of competence	19 (5.0)	.86	.21**	.30**	-

** Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed);

As the results in Table 18 indicate, the two independent variables had significant positive correlation with the dependent variable. While the respondents' perceived degree of access to information showed a medium positive correlation with their perceived DEO to participate in decision making, r (308) = .45, $p \leq .01$, their perceived level of competence was weakly correlated to their perceived DEO to participate in decision making, r (308) = .21, $p \leq .01$. The two results nevertheless support hypotheses 1 and 2 (presented in Chapter 1). The results further indicate a medium positive correlation between the two independent variables, r (308) = 0.3, $p \leq 0.01$, but the correlation was not strong enough to be able to claim significant conceptual overlap between them. Conversely, both of them qualified for inclusion in the final analysis (regression) model.

4.9.2 Independent samples t-test

An independent samples t-test (Pallant, 2010) was performed to compare the perceived DEO for the six categorical independent variables (factors). In this analysis, the t-test was used as the key statistical source for comparing means of the groups formed by the variables to see if they were different enough to justify that their occurrence was not merely coincidental.

The results in Table 19 indicate three key findings: that school committee membership, gender and level of education had significant effects on the respondent's perceived DEO to participate in decision making. This was demonstrated by respondents who were non-members to the school committee (parents) indicating a lower DEO to participate in school decision making ($M = 35$, $SD = 8.4$) as compared to those who were members ($M = 39$, $SD = 5.4$); t (308) = -5.25, $p < .001$. With regard to gender, female respondents reported a lower perceived DEO to participate in decision making in their respective local schools (M = 36, SD = 6.6) than did the male respondents ($M = 39$, $SD = 6.7$); t (308) = -3.90, $p < .001$; hence supporting hypothesis 3.

Table 19: Independent samples t-test for the categorical variables and DEO (df = 308)

Variable	N	M(SD)	95% C.I for the difference	t	p-value
1. Gender					
Female	155	36 (6.6)	-4.20 – -1.44	-3.88	< .001
Male	155	39 (6.7)			
2. Area of residence					
Rural	149	37 (7.0)	-1.83 – 1.20	-0.41	.681
Urban	161	38 (6.6)			
3. Level of education					
Primary or lower	156	37 (7.0)	-3.61 – -0.61	-2.77	.01
Secondary or higher	154	39 (6.3)			
4. Type of employment					
Informal	202	37 (7.3)	-0.29 – 2.88	-1.61	.11
Formal	108	38 (5.6)			
5. Age group					
Older generation (46 -70)	113	38 (6.5)	-1.18 – 2.00	0.50	.62
Younger generation (20-45)	197	37 (6.9)			
6. Membership to the school committee					
Non-member (parent)	96	35 (8.4)	-5.76 – -2.62	-5.25	< .001
Member of school committee	214	39 (5.4)			

Dependent variable: Degree of Empowerment (DOE)

The t-test results also show that the respondents' level of education had significant effects on their perceived DEO to participate in decision making in their respective local primary schools. Respondents who had completed no more than primary education reported a lower perceived DEO for decision making in primary schools ($M = 37$, $SD = 7.0$) in comparison to

those who had completed at least secondary education ($M = 39$, $SD = 6.3$); t (308) = -2.77, $p = .01$. Regarding type of employment, the results indicate a marginally significant difference in the respondents' perceived DEO to participate in school decision making. Informally employed respondents showed a slightly lower mean score (M = 37, SD = 7.3) than formally employed respondents [(M = 38, SD = 5.6); t (308) = -1.61, p = 0.11]. Even so, this does not provide sufficient evidence that the two categories of respondents were different in terms of their perceived DEO to participate in school decision making. Based on this finding, hypothesis 7 is not supported.

On the other hand, there was no significant difference in scores for the rural ($M = 37$, $SD = 7.0$) and urban inhabitants ($M = 38$, $SD = 6.6$); t (308) = 0.41, $p = 0.681$. This is because the magnitude of the differences in the means (mean difference = -.32, 95% CI: -1.83 to 1.20) was very small (eta squared = .001). This implies that the scores for the two groups in terms of their perceived DEO to participate in decision making were more or less equal; hence hypothesis 6 is not supported. A similar trend was also observed when it came to age group. Despite the older generation indicating a higher perceived degree of existence of opportunity to participate in decision making (M = 38, SD = 6.5) compared to the younger generation (M = 37, SD = 6.9); t (308) = -.50, p = .620, the difference could not make a significant impact on the perceived DEO for decision making in the schools (mean difference = 0.40, 95% CI: -1.18 to 1.97).

4.9.3 Regression analysis

A series of three regression analyses were run involving the demographic and personal characteristics (model I), the structural factors (model II) and a combination of the two groups of variables (model III), as indicated in Table 20. The demographic and personal characteristics (gender, area of residence, level of education, age group and level of competence) were first entered into the regression model to examine their effects on the perceived DEO. The combination of these variables had a significant effect on the perceived DEO [F (5,304) = 4.80, $p<$ .001, R^2_{adj} = .058]; meaning that the model was able to explain 5.8% of the total variance in the respondents' DEO.

Table 20: Results of multiple linear regression analysis for respondents' perceived DEO

Predictors/factors	Demographic & personal (I)			Structural (II)			Overall model (III)		
	β	t	p-value	β	t	p-value	β	t	p-value
Gender	.146	2.40	.017				.10	1.80	.022
Area of residence	-.001	-.01	.990				-.04	.73	.469
Level of education	-.086	-.95	.344				-.04	-.42	.677
Age group	-.003	-.06	.954				.05	1.03	.302
Level of competence	.253	2.84	.005				.07	.82	.415
Access to information				.402	7.26	<.001	.38	6.66	<.001
Membership to the committee				.123	2.22	.027	.11	1.81	.071
Discrimination power	$R^2 = .073$, $R^2_{adj.} = .058$			$R^2 = .218$, $R^2_{adj.} = .213$			$R^2 = .233$, $R^2_{adj.} = .215$		
Level of significance	$F = 4.80$, $p < .001$			$F = 42.75$, $p < .001$			$F = 13.11$, $p < .001$		

It was noted, however, that only gender and the perceived level of competence appeared to be highly significant for explaining DEO [$\beta = .146$, $t(304) = 2.40$, $p =. 017$] and [$\beta = .253$, $t(304) = 2.84$, $p = .005$] respectively. By contrast, the area of residence, level of education and age group were insignificant. The results displayed by this model suggest that gender and the perceived level of competence are the most important factors for explaining the perceived DEO of the members and non-members of the school committees. Male school committee members and male parents had a higher chance of perceiving high DEO to participate in school decision making than those who were female. Also, committee members and non-members with a high perceived level of competence are more likely to demonstrate high perceived DEO than those who perceive themselves as having a low level of competence in various areas of school decision making.

The structural variables (perceived degree of access to information and membership to the committee) were put in the second regression model without the demographic variables. They were shown to significantly affect the respondents' perceived DEO [$F(2, 307) = 42.75$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{adj} = .213$]. Overall, the model explained 21.3% of the variance in perceived DEO, which is nearly four times that explained by the first (demographic and personal) regression model. Two factors – the perceived degree of access to information and membership to the committee – were significant predictors of perceived DEO [$\beta = .402$, $t(307) = 7.26$, $p< .001$ and $\beta = .123$, $t(307) = 2.22$, $p< .027$ respectively]. The results in this model suggest that high access to information amongst the committee members and non-members (parents) results in high DEO. Furthermore, respondents who are members of the school committees have more chance than the non-members of demonstrating high perceived DEO to participate in school decision making.

The last step in the regression analysis involved combining all the independent variables into one model to explore their combined effects on respondents' perceived DEO to participate in decision making. This model showed more or less the same prediction power [F (7, 302) = 13.11, $p <$ .001, R^2_{adj} = .215] as the second (structural) regression model, since it explained 21.5% of the total variance in perceived DEO, which was only 0.2% higher than that explained by the second model. It is worth noting that two variables were highly significant predictors of DEO for participation in school decision making. These were access to information [β = .38, t (306) = 6.66, p <.001], and gender [β = .10, t (306) = 1.79, p <.022]. By contrast, membership to the school committee was marginally significant [β = .11, t (306) = 1.81, p <.071]. These findings suggest that gender, the perceived degree of access to information and membership to the school committee were important variables that explained the DEO to participate in decision making.

4.10 Discussion

In this chapter, I sought to examine the extent to which the opportunity to participate in school decision making existed for the members of school committees and parents in Tanzania. I also examined factors affecting the DEO to influence school decisions.

As the results in Table 20 indicate, the six-point Likert-scale assessment showed respondents to have more opportunity to influence decision making in five out of ten selected aspects of school governance. These were construction and repair (mean = 4.7), control of pupils' discipline (mean = 4.6), mobilization of resources (mean = 4.6), budget planning (mean = 4.5), and nurturing school-community relations (mean = 4.5). The implication of these results is that people's perceived DEO to participate in school decision making varied according to the different aspects. It is easier for people to enter the decision making process on some issues more than others. This is evident when we compare, for instance, construction and repair with curriculum decisions, control of pupils' discipline and planning and budgeting.

Regarding causal relationships, the findings confirm that access to information, gender and membership to the school committee are important factors for explaining school committee members' and parents' empowerment to participate in school decision making.

Access to information (as shown from the respondents' self-reported measures) had the strongest effect on the DEO to participate in decision making. Respondents who reported a higher degree of information also reported a higher DEO for participating in decision making. This finding is consistent with the propositions of empowerment theory and empirical evidence from similar studies, which assert that access to information is an important foundation for empowering citizens at the grassroots level (Brinkerhoff Omar,2006; Manor, 2002;Narayan-Parker & Petesch, 2007). Sound decision making does not happen in a vacuum but in an environment where people have sufficient information to weigh the possible alternatives and consequences of various choices (Chamberlin, 1997). A number of related empirical studies have reported a similar finding. For example, Spreitzer's (1996) study on the social structural characteristics of psychological empowerment reported a positive relationship between access to information and psychological empowerment. It is also asserted that information about an organization's mission and performance is important in enhancing employees' psychological empowerment (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). The findings of the present study suggest that access to information is an important factor for enabling people at the grassroots level to realize the opportunities available for them to participate and influence decisions in their local schools. This opportunity can therefore be increased by ensuring adequate and timely information to and from the people on important issues affecting their children's schooling, for instance in areas such as curriculum, education policy, school budget and expenditure, academic performance and procurement.

Regarding the effect of gender on DEO to participate in decision making, it was found that men had more DEO than women. This was confirmed by evidence from both the t-test and regression analysis results in Tables 19 and 20 respectively. These findings support the general trend indicated by similar studies on the effect of gender on the opportunity to participate in decision making. A study on knowledge and decision making in maternal health care in Nepal, for example, indicated that women had less decision making opportunity compared to men, where only 37.2 % of the Nepalese women were reported to have the opportunity to make decisions for their health care (Shrestha, 2013). In another study on domestic water needs in India, the majority of married women who were interviewed indicated that they preferred that their husbands participate in water management committees and represent their interests, because gender norms discouraged men and women from interacting in public (Singh et al 2006, cited in Quisumbing & Pandolfelli, 2010:6). Similarly, in a study on male-female perceived participation in decision making in a university setting

(Denton & Zeytinoglu, 1993), the differences between male and female faculty members' perceived degrees of participation in decision making were basically attributed to the cultural beliefs and the organizational structure of the university. In yet another study on the determinants of empowerment in the Gambia, it was found that the probability for women to feel no empowerment at all, or only partial empowerment, is higher by 3.3 and 2.8 percentage points than for men, respectively. The findings of the present study indicate an important phenomenon: gender inequality in access to decision making opportunity was socio-culturally constructed to the extent that women did not even feel they were marginalized. For example, a woman in Siha District gave the following response when asked whether she had the chance to participate in school decision making:

> When there is a meeting in school, it is either me or my husband who attend. However, for any decision that is reached in the meeting regarding a financial contribution, it is my husband who decides, since he is the head of the household. (P2)

Another woman from Kibaha District provided a similar response when she was asked the probing question: '[a]re you satisfied with the current situation where most of the decisive roles relating to the education of your children are taken by your husband?'

> He is the head of the household so I don't see why that should be regarded as a problem! You know, for us women who are married, there are responsibilities that are clearly known to be for men and others for us women. (P5)

The evidence captured in these two quotes indicates dominance of patriarchal decision making. The internalization of gender inequality, which these quotes express, has arisen due to its entrenchment in the socio-cultural practices of the society, so much so that it is 'accepted' by the victims (i.e., women) as 'appropriate' practice. However, this does not necessarily cancel out the *un*desirability of women's marginalization in the process of empowering people at the grassroots level in education-related decision making. The findings suggest that gender inequality poses a challenge to the efforts towards empowering the grassroots level in school decision making, and that the problem of gender inequality requires adequate attention when planning empowerment strategies.

With regard to school committee membership; the study findings proved that such membership resulted in greater DEO to participate in school decision making. This was seen from the t-test and regression analysis in Tables 19 and 20 respectively. The respondents who were non-members of school committees (i.e., parents) indicated a lower perceived DEO for

decision making than those who were members. The regression analysis results suggest that being a school committee member resulted in the person having more decision making opportunity than did non-members. This finding supports Narayan-Parker's (2002) proposition that strengthening people's *local organization capacity* is an important condition for grassroots' empowerment. It is argued that organized groups and communities play an important role in strengthening people's *voice* and access to the opportunity for participation in decision making.

On the other hand, Zimmerman et al. (1992), in their empirical study on psychological empowerment, found that individuals who were involved in community organizations and activities reported higher levels of intrapersonal psychological empowerment than did the non-participants. In Madagascar, FRAM is an example of a community organization in the education sector that has been successful in empowering parents and students in school governance (Brinkerhoff & Omar, 2006). The findings in this chapter therefore suggest that enabling people at the grassroots level to organize into local groups will increase their opportunity to participate in decision making, because it results in increased information sharing and learning within the groups. Since membership in the school committee rotates amongst community members through election, it is assumed that in the long run, all the community members will have become members of the school committee and in turn gained knowledge, skills and experience. If parents who were not school committee members formed parents' neighbourhood groups to engage in school development programmes, this would be more effective than if they tried to influence school decisions individually.

It was surprising that the level of education, the perceived level of competence and the area of residence (rural or urban) did not explain the respondents' perceived DEO to participate in school decision making. These findings are contrary to the theoretical propositions and empirical evidence from related studies. The explanation for the insignificance shown by these variables on the DEO to participate in school decision making is more likely associated with endogeneity, the degree of variation in the independent variables among the respondents and measurement. It is unlikely that the reason could be due to multi-collinearity because prior to entering the variables into the regression models, a correlation analysis was run to check for inter-correlation amongst the independent variables, and none were found to be highly correlated. There is therefore a likelihood that endogeneity could have led to the insignificance of the level of education, competence and area of residence in explaining the

perceived DEO. Endogeneity is a common bias in social science research, for example in the fields of public administration and political science. It results from a lack of control over the explanatory variables, which creates a situation where some of the explanatory variables we take on are in some instances 'a consequence rather than a cause, of our dependent variable' (King et al, 1994:185). For example, with competence being the explanatory variable, it is possible that the empowerment to participate in decision making has been caused by other factors such as increased information access. Increased empowerment might consequently lead to a higher degree of perceived competence. However, the problem of endogeneity in this study may not compromise the validity of the findings because of the back-up from the in-depth interviews and focus groups discussions.

Another possible cause of the variables not displaying significance when regression analysis was run could be the extent of variation in the explanatory variable. For example, the respondents' level of education was 50% for primary education or less, 46% for secondary education and only 4% for the highest levels of education. This means that there was not much variation among the respondents, given that the majority had completed either primary or secondary education.

4.11 Concluding remarks

In light of the findings, I culminate my discussion in this chapter with the conclusion that opportunity exists for people at the grassroots level to become members of school committees and to participate in school decision making. However, the processes through which the committees are formed lack authentic democracy, and the committees are part and parcel of the bureaucracy. This implies that there is a need for improving the processes of forming school committees by increasing democracy and detaching the committees from the bureaucratic machinery. The study also notes that despite the fact that there is opportunity for the people at the grassroots level to participate in school decision making, the degree of opportunity is not the same in all aspects of school decision making. Some issues, particularly the operational ones, are more accessible than the strategic issues, which are dominated by a top-down decision-making approach. For example, it was noted during the study that curriculum content and policy directives were pushed down to the schools for implementations without the involvement of the affected parties. This means that the ordinary people at the grassroots level had insignificant input on strategic issues. In addition,

information about operational issues related to financial control was not readily accessed. This was seen, for example, on the scores on access to information about the school's bank balance. This observation explains why the reported scores on DEO on the same issues were also very low.

More, of course, could be said, but the results presented in this chapter are limited to explaining the DEO to participate in school decision making, and they do not tell how much of the existing opportunity is *used* or the *impact* which the use has on the decisions made. This is why, in the next chapter, I examine the degree of use of existing opportunity for participation in school decision making. Nevertheless, the DEO to participate in decision making qualifies as an important dimension of empowerment.

CHAPTER FIVE
Where Opportunity Exists, Do People Make Use of It?

5.0 Introduction

In chapter 4, I analysed the school committee members' and parents' perceived Degree of Existence of Opportunity (DEO) to participate in school decision making. This is the lowest level of empowerment in the analytical model. At the DEO level, however, it was impossible to gain an overall picture of people's empowerment at the grassroots level (i.e., school committee members and non-members, referred to as parents). This is why I move a step further in this present chapter to find out the extent to which people at the grassroots level make use of the DEO by actually participating in school decision making.

The main argument I raise in this chapter is that merely having structures and processes in place to enhance people's opportunity to participate in decision making does not automatically guarantee their full empowerment unless they themselves value the opportunity and use it. This chapter therefore examines the Degree of Use of the Opportunity (DUO) for decision making by the members and non-members of the school committees, and the factors that influence the DUO.

5.1 Key variables

5.1.1 Dependent variable

The dependent variable in this analysis is the second dimension of empowerment – the Degree of Use of the existing Opportunity (DUO) to participate in school decision making. This variable was measured in the same way as was the DEO, using self-reported scores that describe respondents' *perceived degree of using the existing opportunity for decision making*. The same ten items used in measuring the DEO were used in measuring the DUO, and each item was measured in a six-point scale ranging from 1 – 6, implying a very low to very high degree of DUO. An index was then computed by summing the scores for individual items, after checking for reliability/internal consistency of the measurements.

The reliability statistic (Cronbach's alpha) for this scale was .87. This coefficient was high enough to permit combining the measurements to constitute an interval scale. The possible

total score range for this scale was between 10 and 60, with the high scores indicating high perceived DUO for decision making and vice versa. The actual scores for the respondents' perceived DUO ranged between 19 and 53 (M = 39.3; SD = 6.24), and the distribution of the scores was somewhat skewed, with a skewedness of -.32 (SE = .14) and kurtosis of -.14 (SE = .28).
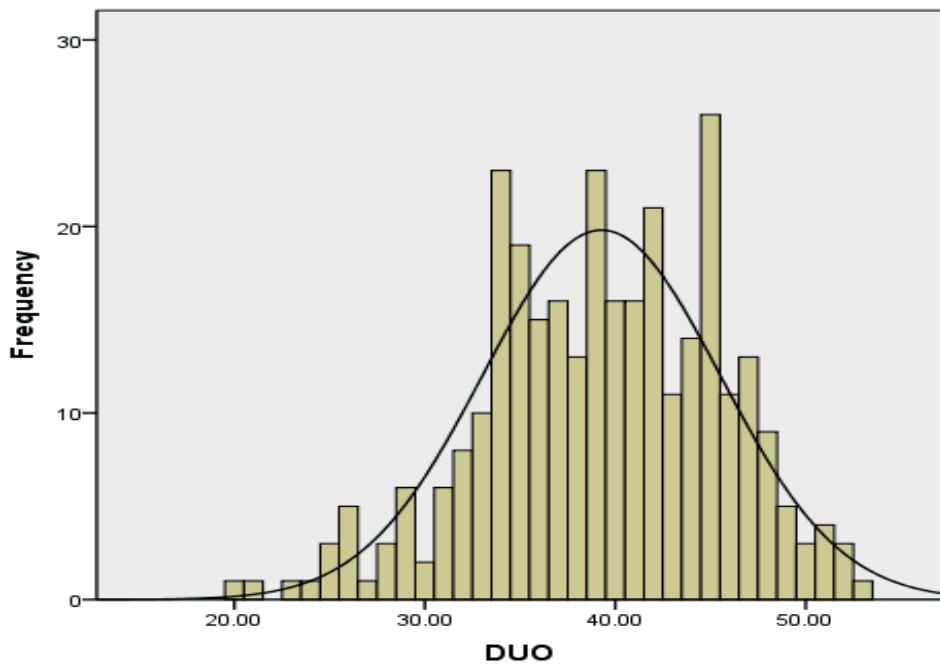
Figure 12: Distribution of respondents' perceived DUO

5.1.2 Independent variables

The independent variables used in this chapter were the same as in the preceding chapter, when examining the DEO to participate in decision making. I will therefore not spend much time in describing them in any great detail. I provide summarized information in Table 21 so readers can easily understand the characteristics of the variables and subsequent analysis and interpretation of the results. In doing so, I group the variables into demographic, structural and personal characteristics, describe the type of each variable and how measurement was done.

Table 21: A descriptive summary of the independent variables (N = 310)

Variable & description	Type of variable	Codes /measures	%	M (SD)	A
Demographic variables:					
1.Gender	Dummy	0 = female	50	-	-
		1 = male	50		
2. Level of education	Dummy	0 = primary or less	50	-	-
		1 = secondary or more	50		
3.Area of residence	Dummy	0 = rural	48	-	-
		1 = urban	52		
4. Age group	Dummy	0 = younger generation (25-45)	36.5	-	-
		1 = older generation (46-70)	63.5		
5. Type of employment	Dummy	0 = informal	65	-	-
		1 = formal	35		
Structural variables:					
1. Access to information	Index	Interval (9 to 54)	-	33 (4.4)	.73
2. Membership to the committee	Dummy	0 = non-member (parent)	31	-	-
		1 = member	69		
Personal characteristics:					
1. Competence	Index	Interval (6 to 36)	-	19 (5.0)	.86

5.2 Descriptive statistics

5.2.1 Respondents' perceived DUO for decision making

Table 22 (below) presents ranked mean scores for the ten areas of school decision making starting from the highest to the lowest. The mean scores are interpreted based on the following criteria (2 – 2.4 = low, 2.5 – 3.4 = somewhat low, 3.5 – 4.4 somewhat high, and 4.5 – 5= high degree of DUO to make decisions). This calibration is based on the scale of 1 – 6 used in measuring the DUO:

Based on the interpretation criteria of the mean scores, the results in Table 22 show that the respondents reported a somewhat high DUO to participate in school decision making in eight out of the ten areas. In addition, there were two extreme cases of 'low' and 'high' reported on levels of participating in curriculum development ($M = 2.0$) and construction and repair of school infrastructure ($M = 4.8$) respectively.

The comparative results (Table 23) indicate a trend similar to that shown in the previous chapter for DEO. The school committee members reported a comparatively higher DUO to participate in school decision making than the non-members (parents), with high reported scores concentrating on participation in construction and repair of school infrastructure.

Table 22: Ranked mean scores for perceived DUO (N = 305 – 310)

	Measures (very low – very high)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Areas of exercising choice/opportunity	Responses in %						M (S.D)
9. Construction and repair	0	1	5	21	60	14	4.8 (0.8)
1. Control of pupils' discipline	1	2	13	36	42	7	4.4 (0.9)
10. Mobilization of resources	0	3	18	35	39	5	4.3 (0.9)
5. Enrolment of pupils	3	4	17	33	38	5	4.2 (1.1)
2. Planning and budgeting	1	4	19	38	35	3	4.1 (1.0)
3. Expenditure decisions	2	4	23	41	27	3	4.0 (1.0)
4. Choice & procurement of books	3	6	25	39	25	3	4.0 (1.0)
8. Nurturing school-community relations	0	1	19	48	29	3	4.0 (0.8)
7. Tender awarding for various supplies	2	5	24	46	20	2	3.8 (1.0)
6. Curriculum decisions	40	42	14	4	0	0	2.0 (0.8)

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you participate in decision making on each of the following areas in your school. Scale: 1 (very low) to 6 (very high).

Table 23: Respondents' perceived DUO by category: a comparison of mean scores

Aspect	N	M(S.D)	% high – very high	p-value
1. Control of pupils' discipline				
Parents	96	4.0 (1.0)	27	< .001
Members of school committees	214	4.6 (0.8)	59	
2. Planning and budgeting				
Parents	95	3.8 (1.0)	22	< .001
Members of school committees	214	4.3 (0.9)	45	
3. Expenditure decisions				
Parents	94	3.5 (1.0)	15	< .001
Members of school committees	214	4.0 (0.9)	36	
4. Procurement of books and stationery				
Parents	95	3.3 (1.1)	10	< .001
Members of school committees	214	4.1 (0.9)	35	
5. Enrolment of pupils				
Parents	93	3.6 (1.3)	27	< .001
Members of school committees	212	4.4 (0.9)	51	
6. Curriculum decisions				
Parents	95	1.8 (0.9)	0	.282
Members of school committees	212	1.9 (0.8)	1	
7. Tender awarding for various supplies				
Parents	95	3.4 (1.0)	9	< .001
Members of school committees	214	4.0 (1.0)	27	
8. Nurturing school-community relations				
Parents	96	3.8 (0.8)	19	< .001
Members of school committees	214	4.3 (0.7)	38	
9. Construction and repair of infrastructure				
Parents	95	4.5 (0.8)	59	< .001
Members of school committees	213	4.9 (0.7)	80	
10. Mobilization of resources /contributions				
Parents	96	4.0 (1.0)	33	.008
Members of school committees	214	4.3 (0.9)	49	

Question (same as in Table 22): Please indicate the extent to which you participate in decision making on each of the following areas in your school. Scale: 1 (very low) to 6 (very high).

On comparing this chapter's results with those in the preceding chapter, the reported scores on DUO are somehow lower than those on DEO. This implies that both the members and non-members of school committees reported a lower perceived degree of use of the existing opportunity to participate in school decision making than what they perceived as the actual existing opportunity. In other words, they participated less than they were expected to. This situation can be attributed to a number of factors that were revealed during the qualitative interviews – factors such as inadequate capabilities (knowledge, skills and other resources), the constraints of formal and informal institutions, reluctance due to a low level of trust between the school administration and the committee members and parents, and attitudes of some school committee members and the community towards participating in school decision making and development activities in general.

An issue related to DUO for decision making is the ability to make financial contributions. Through the in-depth interviews, it was found that some parents' low level of income was one reason for making inadequate contributions to the school. A widow in Kibaha Town Council said that although she was very much willing to contribute to improving the learning environment for her children, she was not earning enough to be able to provide food and other necessities for her four-child household and remain with something to contribute to the school.

> I am willing to contribute to the school in order to improve the educational environment of my children …yes, but the—I earn very little from my small food business, which sustains me and my four children. I would like to expand my business but loans are not easy to access. You must have some property to show as security when you want to borrow money from the bank. (P4)

Concerning constraints brought about by opportunity structures; the issue of women being constrained by traditions and beliefs also featured during the in-depth interviews. It was noted especially in the rural schools that women's representation in the school committees or parents' meetings catered more for numbers than actual participation in decision making when compared with men.

> Tanzania is largely a patriarchal society, so in most of the ethnic tribes, it goes without saying that men are the heads of households. That being the case, most married women do not have a say on issues related to their children's education such as making financial contributions or buying school uniforms and stationary. (T5)

Evidence from the qualitative interviews and focus group discussions indicates that women neither sensed the gap that existed between them and men, nor did they grasp the importance of participating in school decision making. Women, it was found, were comfortable with the patriarchal decision-making system regarding the schooling of their children. One woman in Kondoa District Council, when asked if she had any feeling of being marginalized by her husband in deciding on important issues concerning the education of their children, had the following to say:

> I don't feel marginalized because of my husband being responsible for deciding on many issues of importance to the schooling of our children…This is his central role as the head of the household. As you know, in our society, there are role divisions according to gender and that, in the end, leaves everybody with specific responsibilities to accomplish. [FG (P3)]

This tendency was noted in both the urban and rural areas, but it was much more pronounced in the latter. The results in the previous chapter on the DEO to participate in school decision making reflected similar observations which are also reported in relatedstudies (Singh et al 2006; Denton & Zeytinoglu, 1993)There is an important point to be made here: gender differences in the access to and use of opportunity to participate in school decision making are socially constructed and structurally embedded. Therefore, in order to intervene in any way to empower people at the grassroots level, it is crucial, first, to pay due attention to how the socio-structural aspects hindering empowerment of all segments of the population can be addressed, before embarking on efforts to encourage women's and men's participation in decision making.

Regarding people's reluctance to use decision-making opportunities, it was found, during the interviews and focus group discussions, that some school committee members' were unwilling to attend committee meetings because of their unfulfilled expectations:

> Some people in the community who are elected or appointed members of the school committee have a lot of personal expectations about financial or material gains through membership. They don't understand that being a member of school committee is more of a sacrifice in terms time and energy, rather than being a means for monetary or material gain. As they come to realize that their ambitions cannot be met, they gradually become less and less active and finally you no longer see them coming to any meeting or activities in the school. [FG1 (C4)]

Another reason for inadequate DUO to participate in school decision making was the tendency of local elites and the more educated people to be less interested in becoming school committee members. Most of the responses regarding why this was the case centred largely on

attitudes and the lack of incentives. In an interview session, a female teacher in Mvomero District had the following views:

> Experience shows that most of the local elite and educated people, including the retired people living close to the school, have little interest in becoming school committee members because they consider this to be a trivial issue that may lower their popularity, especially when they take into consideration that in most cases, school committees usually work in an environment where resources are limited, and most of the school development plans end up as implementation failures. (T1)

The effects of personal attitudes on participation in school decision making were also captured during focus group discussions. It was indicated that the elites and the more educated people considered involvement in school committees to be minimally important. This was reflected from the school committee members' views on the attitude of local elites and the more educated people:

> To me, I think this is all to do with attitude. You know some of these people have been working in high ranking positions in the government, so for them, to work as a school committee member seems to be a trivial issue. [FG1 (C1)]

This opinion was supported by a similar view from another school committee member, who asserted that the local elites were more involved in the secondary school boards than in the primary school committees:

> I agree with you John. In the secondary school boards we have more educated members than we have in the primary school committees. I think they attach more status to these boards than they do to the school committees, and also the sitting allowance they get paid might be one of the attracting factors. [FG1 (C7)]

5.3 Exploring associations and causal relationships

5.3.1 Correlation analysis

Similar to the preceding chapter, the correlation results between the two categorical independent variables and the dependent variable (DUO) indicated that the respondents' degree of access to information and perceived degree of competence had significant positive correlation.

Table 24: Univariate statistics, scale reliability and Pearson's correlation

Variable	M (SD)	Cronbach's alpha	1	2	3
1. Perceived degree of using the opportunity (DUO)	39.3 (6.2)	.87	-		
2. Perceived degree of access to information	33.0 (4.4)	.73	.50**	-	
3. Perceived level of competence	19.3 (5.0)	.86	.20**	.30**	-

** Significant at the 0.01level (2-tailed); +Dependent variable: DUO to participate in school decision making

While the relationship between the respondents' perceived access to information and perceived DUO to participate in decision making was fairly strong [r (308) = 0.50, p ≤ .01], the relationship between their perceived level of competence and DUO was weak [r (308) = 0.20]. These results support hypotheses 1 and 2.

5.3.2 Independent t-test

The t-test results in Table 25 indicate that gender, school committee membership, area of residence and age had significant effects on the perceived DUO to participate in decision making.

Table 25: Independent samples t-test for the categorical variables and perceived DUO

Variable	N	M(SD)	95% C.I for the difference	t	p-value
1. Gender					
Female	155	37.34 (6.0)	-5.19 – -2.53	-5.71	< .001
Male	155	41.20 (6.0)			
2. Area of residence					
Rural	149	38.12 (6.5)	-3.60 – -.84	-3.17	.002
Urban	161	40.34 (5.8)			
3. Level of education					
Primary or lower	156	38.62 (6.2)	-2.70 – .83	-1.85	.065
Secondary or higher	154	40.00 (6.3)			
4. Type of employment					
Informal	202	39.32 (6.6)	-1.34 – 1.60	0.18	.86
Formal	108	39.19 (5.6)			
5. Age group					
Younger generation (25 – 45)	113	40.60 (5.7)	0.63 – 3.50	2.84	.005
Older generation (46 – 70)	197	38.52 (6.4)			
6. Membership to the school committee					
Non-member (parent)	96	35.70 (6.3)	-6.63 – -3.84	-7.40	< .001
Member of school committee	214	41.00 (5.5)			

The results show that being female was associated with a lower perceived DUO to participate in school decision making (M = 37.34, SD = 6.0) when compared to being male (M = 41.20, SD = 6.0); t (308) = -5.71, p< .001; hence the finding supports hypothesis 4. Membership in

the school committee was also associated with respondent's perceived DUO to participate in school decision making. Non-members (parents) reported a significantly lower perceived DUO to participate in school decision making ($M = 35.70$, $SD = 6.3$) than did the members ($M = 41.00$, $SD = 5.5$); t (308) = -7.40, $p < .001$; hence hypothesis 5 is supported.

Also consistent with the study expectations was that living in a rural or urban area mattered in explaining respondent's perceived DUO to participate in decision making. Respondents from rural areas reported a significantly lower perceived DUO to participate in school decision making ($M = 38.12$, $SD = 6.5$) when compared to those from urban areas ($M = 40.34$, $SD = 5.8$); t (308) = -3.17, $p = .002$; thus, hypothesis 6 is confirmed.

The t- test results further indicate that age is another important variable showing a significant association with the respondent's perceived DUO to participate in school decision making. There were two categories of age groups: the younger generation (25 – 45) and the older generation (46 – 70). Contrary to the expectations of the study, however, the results indicated that older respondents had a significantly lower perceived DUO to participate in school decision making ($M = 40.60$, $SD = 5.70$) as compared to the younger generation ($M = 38.62$, $SD = 6.4$); t (304) = 2.84, $p = .005$; hence hypothesis 8 is not supported.

It was surprising that respondents' level of education showed marginal significant effects on their perceived DUO to participate in school decision making. Respondents who had completed no more than primary education indicated a slightly lower perceived DUO to participate in school decision making ($M = 38.62$, $SD = 6.2$) than did those who had completed at least secondary education ($M = 40.00$, $SD = 6.30$); t (308) = -1.85, $p = .065$. Despite this, however, the results largely pointed in the same direction as the proposition that a higher level of education will be associated with high perceived degree of empowerment.

Finally, the t-test results did not show significant effects of respondents' type of employment on their perceived DUO to participate in school decision making. This was seen from the mean scores being more or less equal (39.32 and 39.19) for both the informally and formally employed respondents respectively; thus, hypothesis 8 is refuted.

5.3.3 Regression analysis

A hierarchical multiple regression analysis was run to determine the relative effect of the demographic factors independently of the structural variables. This was achieved through a two-step hierarchical regression involving seven predictors: five were demographic – gender, area of residence, level of education, age group and perceived level of competence – and two were structural variables – perceived degree of access to information and respondent's category – as shown in Table 26.

Table 26: Regression analysis for respondents' perceived DUO

Predictors/factors	Demographic & personal (I)			Structural (II)			Overall model (III)		
	β	t	p	β	t	p	β	t	p
Gender	.250	4.27	< .001				.22	4.07	< .001
Area of residence	.130	2.36	.019				.10	1.81	.071
Level of education	-.137	-1.58	.115				-.05	-.62	.540
Age group	-.140	-2.60	.010				-.10	-1.70	.100
Level of competence	.212	2.49	.013				-.03	-.37	.710
Access to information				.363	8.82	< .001	.31	5.80	< .001
Membership to the committee				.239	6.74	< .001	.25	4.43	< .001
*Discrimination power	$R^2 = .146$, $R^2_{adj.} = .132$			$R^2 = .260$, $R^2_{adj.} = .256$			$R^2 = .324$, $R^2_{adj.} = .308$		
†Level of significance	$F = 10.40$, $p < .001$			$F = 54.03$, $p < .001$			$F = 20.67$, $p < .001$		

The demographic and personal characteristics in step 1 showed significance in predicting the dependent variable, $F (5,304) = 10.40$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{adj} = .132$. This implies that 13.2% of the variance in respondents' perceived DUO for participating in decision making was explained by their demographic and personal characteristics. On the other hand, the structural variables in step 2 (perceived access to information and whether or not they were committee members) also predicted significantly the respondents' perceived DUO for participation in decision making $(2,307) = 54.03$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{adj} = .256$. This means that 25.6% of the variance in DUO was explained by the structural variables. The third model which comprised of all the seven variables was significant in the prediction of DUO, $F (7,302) = 20.67$, $p < .001$, $R^2_{adj} = .308$; and it explained 30.8% of the variance in the perceived DUO to participate in school decision making.

Partitioning of the explained variance between the two groups of variables reveals that out of the five demographic factors gender was the most significant in explaining the respondents' perceived DUO for participation in school decision making ($p < .001$), while area of residence

and age group were marginally significant predictors (p =.10). Thus, hypotheses 4 and 6 are supported.

Since the structural variables – both the perceived access to information and membership in the school committee – were significant predictors of the respondents' perceived DUO to participate in school decision making (p < .001), this supports hypotheses 1 and 5.

5.4 Discussion

The analyses presented in this chapter were meant to find out how the trends in the respondents' perceived DUO to participate in school decision making relate to the DEO discussed in the preceding chapter. Were the factors which were found to affect respondents' perceived DEO to participate in school decision making the same as those affecting their perceived DUO?

The results indicate consistency with those presented in the preceding chapter: access to information, gender and membership in the school committees were significant factors in explaining the respondents' perceived DUO. It should be noted however that membership to the school committee was more significant in explaining one's DUO (p < .001) than DEO (p < .071). From the results, three important implications stand out. First, adequate access to information on issues of importance in the schools is vital for people at the grassroots level in enabling their participation in school decision making. This was evident inasmuch as the reported DUO increased as the reported degree of access to information increased. The connection between two measurements in this study – the respondents' self-reported measurement of their degree of access to information, and their measurement of perceived DUO to participate in decision making –is supported by both the academic literature and empowerment practice. In Bowen & Lawler's (1992) research on work organizations, they argue that access to organizational information provides individual workers with a wider understanding of what their organization is trying to accomplish. Such information enables workers to devise alternative frames of reference for understanding their roles in light of the organization's operations. Empowerment of individual workers occurs through their understanding the goals of their work units. When they figure out how their own work can contribute to the realization of their organization's vision and objectives, they develop a sense of meaning and purpose (Conger & Kanungo, 1988). Empirical evidence from Spreitzer's

(1995) study on workers' psychological empowerment also confirms a positive relationship between access to information and empowerment.

The second major implication is that gender inequality in decision making is a persistent challenge that needs to be addressed. A finding of this and the foregoing chapter is that school committee members' and parents' perceived access to the decision making process in schools differed significantly between male and female respondents. Women were less likely than men to report high DEO and DUO to participate in school decision making. This tendency was found to be consistent with the qualitative results, which indicated that women had a lower profile in the decision making process when compared to men. This suggests that women played a comparatively less active role than did men in school decision making. The trend is also consistent with the literature on gender and development, which proposes that women are generally disadvantaged in all societies, especially in the developing countries where cultural beliefs are strong (UNDP, 2005). It is argued that gender inequality in decision making is still pervasive despite the efforts that have so far been made to address it. This is partly because many organizations and individuals pay little or no attention to gender as an important variable in development (Kelan & Jones, 2010). The results in this chapter also support empirical evidence from a study on the extent and determinants of female-male differences in perceived participation in decision-making in a university setting. Female faculty were found to have a lower chance than male faculty to perceive their work environment as enabling them to participate and influence important decisions or acquire an administrative title (Denton & Zeytinoglu, 1993).

Membership to the school committee was a significant factor for the respondents' perceived DUO for participating in decision making. In this study, the membership variable had to do with whether a respondent was a school committee member or not. As the results show, a person's membership, or lack thereof, was a significant predictor of his or her perceived DUO to participate in decision making. The respondents who were non-members indicated a lower perceived DUO for decision making than members. The regression analysis results confirmed this as well. This finding supports Narayan-Parker's (2002) argument that 'local organization capacity' is an important factor for grassroots empowerment, for organized groups and communities play an important role in strengthening people's ability to participate in policy dialogues and decision making. Also, Zimmerman et al. (1992), in their empirical study on psychological empowerment, found that individuals who were involved in community

organizations and activities reported higher levels of an intrapersonal component of psychological empowerment than the non-participants.

5.5 Concluding notes

In this chapter, I examined the degree to which people at the grassroots levels make use of the existing opportunity to participate in school decision making. The chapter concludes that although it was evident that people at the grassroots level often attempt to make use of the opportunity to participate in school governance, they seem not to utilize fully the opportunity due to limitations of their agency and the constraints of the opportunity structure. Additionally, the findings of this chapter have come up with sufficient supporting evidence consistent with the preceding chapter on DEO that information (in the sense of its access and provision), gender and school committee membership significantly influence people's DUO to participate in school decision making. This implies that the efforts to enhance these people's empowerment should focus on three areas: (1) Devising ways through which the limitations of people's agency and constraints of the opportunity structure can be circumvented in order to increase the DUO to participate in school decision making; (2) devising appropriate ways of ensuring adequate, timely and appropriate information flow to and from the people; (3) devising ways through which the organization of the people can be enhanced. This could, for example, be through encouraging them to join school committees and neighbourhood groups; and (4) devising ways to integrate gender issues into empowerment efforts, so that the outcomes can equitably favour both men and women.

CHAPTER SIX

After Using the Opportunity, Does It Make an Impact on the Decisions?

6.0 Introduction

This chapter examines the empowerment of school committee members and parents at the level of influence, that is to say, the impact they have on the decisions taken. Based on the study's theoretical framework, influence/impact constitutes the third dimension of empowerment. This is the degree to which people's recognition and use of the existing opportunity for participation in decision making become significant through their being able to achieve desired goals. The exploration of this level of empowerment stands as a further step in the research because it enquires into the concretized significance of people's preferences when final decisions are made.

The key questions addressed in this chapter are as follows: How much are the school committee members and parents able to realize their goals as a result of recognizing the existing opportunity for participating in decision making and making use of it? In other words, does their participation have any impact in terms of their preferences being taken seriously when final decisions are made? What factors determine the school committees' and parents' influence in decision making in the schools? Do the individual committee members and parents perceive themselves as having the same degree of influence as they do for the existence and use of opportunity? In what ways is it possible to strengthen the school committee members' and parents' influence?

6.1 Variables

6.1.1. Dependent variable

In this chapter, the Degree Of Influence (DOI) or, if you like, 'impact' on decision making is the dependent variable. DOI was measured through self-reported scores by the individual respondents using the same items that were used in assessing DEO and DUO, except that the questions asked with respect to the ten areas sought to determine the degree to which their participation could influence the decision making process and the final decisions.

Each of the ten items was measured in a six-point ordinal scale (1 implying very low and 6 very high degree of influence). The reliability statistic of this scale (Cronbach's alpha) was 0.83, indicating high internal consistency of the measurements. A summative index was then

constructed to form an interval scale from 10 to 60. The reported minimum and maximum scores were 21 and 50 respectively (M = 37; SD = 5.0). The distribution of the scores was slightly positively skewed, with skewedness of -.25 (SE = .14) and kurtosis of -.14 (SE = .28). There was no problem with this because the skewedness and kurtosis values were very close to that of a normal distribution (skewedness = 0 and kurtosis = 0).
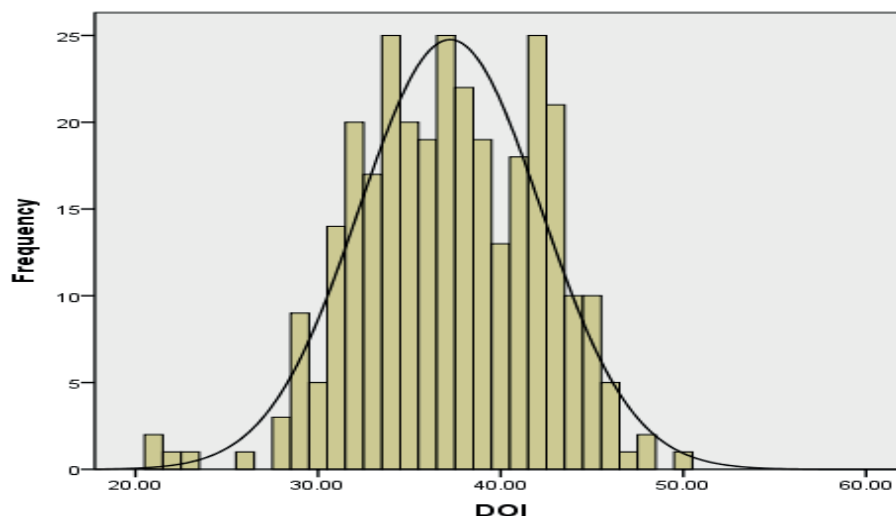
Figure 13: Distribution of the respondents' perceived DOI

6.1.2 Independent variables

The same independent variables as in Chapters 4 and 5 were used in this and the rest of the empirical chapters. If readers would like a reminder of the independent variables, please see Table 21 in Chapter Five.

6.1.3 Analyses and tests

Preliminary analyses were performed to examine and understand trends in the subsequent results. Three basic types of analyses were used: frequency distribution, to examine the general pattern of the dependent variable; reliability analysis, to examine the internal consistency of the item-measurements; and comparison of means, to explore variations in the dependent variable amongst the two categories of respondents (members and non-members of school committees).

Some higher-level analyses were performed to examine associations amongst the independent and dependent variables and to establish causal relationships. Pearson correlation, t-test and regression analysis were the main statistical approaches for exploring associations and establishing causality.

6.2 Patterns in the areas of influence and the dimensions of empowerment

The general trend of the results, as shown in Tables 27 and 28 does not show much difference from the trends in Chapters 4 and 5.

Table 27: Ranked mean scores for respondents' perceived DOI: N = 305 – 310

	Measures (very low – very high)						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Areas of influence			Responses in %				M (S.D)
1. Construction and repair	0	1	3	33	57	6	4.7 (0.7)
2. Control of pupils' discipline	0	1	7	48	42	2	4.4 (0.7)
3. Enrolment of pupils	1	5	24	43	27	1	4.0 (0.9)
4. Mobilisation of resources	0	3	27	36	31	3	4.0 (0.9)
5. School-Community relations	0	1	23	52	22	0	4.0 (0.7)
6. Planning & Budgeting	1	2	34	45	17	1	3.8 (0.8)
7. Expenditure decisions	0	6	34	49	11	0	3.6 (0.9)
8. Choice & procurement of books	1	9	40	42	9	0	3.5 (0.8)
9. Tender awarding for various supplies	1	9	38	44	8	0	3.5 (0.8)
10. Curriculum decisions	31	48	20	1	0	0	2.0 (0.7)

Question: Please indicate the extent to which you influence decision making and exert impact on each of the following decision making areas in your school.

When ranking the items based on the mean scores, it is clear that construction and repair remained the area in which respondents reported having the highest degree of influence. Curriculum was the area in which they had least influence. In expenditure and finance, they reported having a somewhat low to somewhat high degree of influence. The school committee members continued the pattern of reporting significantly higher DOI than the non-members (parents) in most areas of decision making.

There is, however, one key difference in the trends amongst the three dimensions of empowerment (DOE, DUO and DOI) that is worth highlighting here. The reported scores on both the individual and the aggregated items (index) for the DOI dimension of empowerment were the lowest (37) when compared to 39 and 42 of DUO and DEO respectively (see Fig. 14 below).

Table 28: Respondents' perceived DOI, by category

Areas of influence	N	M(S.D)	% (high	p-value
1.Control of pupils' discipline				
Parents	96	4.2 (.76)	30	.001
Members of school committees	214	4.4 (.65)	50	
2.Planning and budgeting				
Parents	95	3.6 (.84)	14	.008
Members of school committees	214	3.9 (.77)	20	
3.Expenditure decisions				
Parents	94	3.4 (.83)	7	< .001
Members of school committees	214	3.7 (.72)	12	
4.Procurement of books and stationery				
Parents	95	3.2 (.80)	1	< .001
Members of school committees	214	3.6 (.77)	12	
5. Enrolment of pupils				
Parents	93	3.8 (.95)	26	.123
Members of school committees	212	4.0 (.85)	29	
6. Curriculum decisions				
Parents	95	2.0 (.79)	0	.508
Members of school committees	212	1.9 (.72)	0	
7. Tender awarding for various supplies				
Parents	95	3.3 (.86)	4	.001
Members of school committees	214	3.6 (.77)	10	
8.Nurturing school-community relations				
Parents	96	3.8 (.72)	14	.0180
Members of school committees	214	4.0 (.73)	26	
9. Construction and repair of infrastructure				
Parents	95	4.4 (.71)	51	< .001
Members of school committees	213	4.8 (.63)	69	
10. Mobilization of resources /contributions				
Parents	96	3.6 (.82)	15	< .001
Members of school committees	214	4.2 (.90)	43	

Question (same as for Table 27): Please indicate the extent to which you influence decision making and exert impact on each of the following decision making areas in your school.

The findings, as shown in table 29, suggest that in socio-economic and political decision making, there is often a mismatch between the amount of decision making opportunity existing for the poor, the intensity to which they use it and the extent to which their use makes an impact on the decisions made.

Table 29: A ranked comparison of item-means for the three dimensions of empowerment

	Dimensions of empowerment		
	DEO	DUO	DOI
Areas of decision making	M(SD)	M(SD)	M(SD)
1. Construction and repair	4.7 (1.0)	4.8 (0.8)	4.7 (0.7)
2. Control of pupils' discipline	4.6 (1.0)	4.4 (0.9)	4.4 (0.7)
3. Mobilization of resources	4.6 (1.0)	4.3 (0.9)	4.0 (0.9)
4. Planning and budgeting	4.5 (1.1)	4.2 (1.1)	4.0 (0.9)
5. Nurturing school-community relations	4.5 (1.0)	4.1 (1.0)	4.0 (0.7)
6. Expenditure decisions	4.4 (1.2)	4.0 (1.0)	3.6 (0.9)
7. Enrolment of pupils	4.4 (1.4)	4.0 (1.0)	3.8 (0.8)
8. Choice & procurement of books	4.2 (1.2)	4.0 (0.8)	3.5 (0.8)
9. Tender awarding for various supplies	4.1 (1.2)	3.8 (1.0)	3.5 (0.8)
10. Curriculum decisions	2.0 (1.1)	2.0 (0.8)	2.0 (0.7)
Total (index)	42	39	37

In other words, the trends observed in the comparative analysis of DEO, DUO and DOI suggest that although citizens, particularly the marginalized and poor might theoretically be aware of an opportunity to participate in socio-economic development and political decisions, it may not always be possible for them to use it. The reasons for this discrepancy might be due, first, to constraints brought about by the opportunity structure, that is, the institutional, social and political context within which they pursue their interests. Second, their agency may be deficient. As outlined in Chapter 2, agency entails the ability to make meaningful choices, and it encompasses assets (such as land, savings, livestock and the like) and capabilities (good health and education, identity, leadership, self-esteem/efficacy and confidence) (Alsop et al.,2006; Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005; Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007; Narayan, 2005;Santos, 2009). Thirdly, the stratifications of society might lead to poor people's low participation and impact on the development agenda, despite the presence of pro-poor legal and political provisions for equal opportunity to participate in decision making. The most powerful strata in society has the tendency to dominate the entry and exit points of the less powerful, hence limiting the intensity of their participation and influence.

6.3 Association and causal analysis

6.3.1 Correlation analysis

The results of the correlation analysis presented in Table 30 show significant positive correlation between the two interval-scale independent variables and the dependent variable (perceived DOI). Whereas respondents' perceived degree of access to information showed a moderate correlation [r (308) = .38, p ≤ .01], their perceived level of competence had a weak

correlation with their perceived DOI [r (308) = .22, p ≤ .01]. In light of these results, hypotheses 1 and 2 are supported.

Table 30: Correlation analysis of the two interval variables and DOI (df =308)

Variable	M (SD)	Cronbach's alpha	1	2	3
1. Perceived degree of influence (DOI)	37 (5.0)	.83	-		
2. Perceived degree of access to information	33 (4.4)	.73	.38**	-	
3. Perceived level of competence	19 (5.0)	.86	.22**	.30**	-

** Significant at the 0.01 level (2- tail)

6.3.2 Independent samples t-tests

The independent sample t-tests performed for each of the six categorical independent variables (gender, area of residence, education, type of employment, age group and whether or not they were school committee members) show that four out of the six variables had significant effects on perceived DOI. Just as in Chapters 4 and 5, the results in this chapter (as presented in Table 31) show that female respondents reported a lower perceived DOI (M = 35, SD = 4.5) than did male respondents (M = 40, SD = 4.4), t (308) = -8.80, p < .001. This finding supports hypothesis 4.

Table 31: Independent samples t-test for categorical independent variables & DOI

Variable	N	M(SD)	95% C.I for the difference	t	p-value
1. Gender					
Female	155	35 (4.5)	-5.5 – -3.5	-8.80	< .001
Male	155	40 (4.4)			
2. Area of residence					
Rural	149	37 (5.1)	-2.5 – -0.3	-2.60	.011
Urban	161	38 (4.8)			
3. Level of education					
Primary or lower	156	36 (5.0)	-3.1 – 0.9	-3.60	.001
Secondary or higher	154	38 (4.8)			
4. Type of employment					
Informal	202	38 (5.0)	-0.5 – 1.9	1.14	0.26
Formal	108	37(5.0)			
5. Age group					
Younger generation (20 – 45)	113	38 (4.8)	-0.14 – 2.16	1.72	.086
Older generation (46 – 70)	197	37 (5.1)			
6. Respondent's category					
Non-member (parent)	96	35 (6.3)	-4.0 – -1.17	-4.90	< .001
Member of school committee	214	38 (5.5)			

The results are also concurrent with those in the two previous chapters regarding the effect of membership status (i.e., being a member or non-member of a school committee) on the perceived DOI in decision making. It was found that being a non-member was associated with a lower perceived DOI (M = 35, SD = 6.3) relative to being a member of the same (M = 38, SD = 5.5), t (308) = -4.90, p < .001. As such, the finding supports hypothesis 5.

The level of education also showed significant effects on the respondents' perceived DOI in decision making in the school. It was found that having no more than primary education was associated with a lower perceived DOI in decision making (M = 3.6, SD = 5.0) than having completed at least secondary education (M = 38, SD = 4.8), t (308) = -3.60 , p = .001. In line with the findings in Chapters 5 and 6, this finding supports hypothesis 3.

Similar to the findings in Chapter 5, rural respondents indicated a lower DOI (M = 37, SD = 5.1) than did urban respondents (M= 38, SD = 4.8), t (308) = -2.60, p = .011, hence supporting hypothesis 6. But contrary to the finding in Chapter 5, where the respondents' age group showed a significant effect on their perceived DUO, in the present chapter, the variable had marginal effects on perceived DOI. Respondents between 20 and 45 years of age (whom I have called the 'younger generation') indicated a higher perceived DOI in decision making (M = 38, SD = 5.0) than did those between 46 and 70 (M = 37, SD = 5.1), t (308) = 1.72, p = .086. This finding supports hypothesis 8.

By contrast, the type of employment did not have significant effects on the respondents' perceived DOI in decision making, despite a trend emerging of informally (self)-employed respondents indicating a slightly higher perceived DOI (M = 38, SD = 5.0) than did those who were formally employed (M = 37, SD = 5.0); t (308) = 1.14, p = .26. This leads to the disconfirmation of hypothesis 7.

6.3.3 Regression analysis

The regression analysis involved three stages. The first stage examined the demographic and personal characteristics (gender, area of residence, level of education, age group and level of competence), the second involved the two structural variables (perceived degree of access to information and respondent's category) and the third involved a combination of all the variables to find out how each affected the respondent's perceived DOI in decision making.

Table 32: Regression analyses of demographic & structural variables on DOI[*][+]

Predictors/factors	Demographic & personal (I)			Structural (II)			Overall model(III)		
	β	t	p	β	t	p	β	t	p
Gender	.404	7.18	< .001				.37	6.95	< .001
Area of residence	.072	1.38	.170				.05	.94	.350
Level of education	-.010	-.12	.903				.04	.52	.793
Age group	-.053	-1.03	.305				-.01	-.26	.601
Level of competence	.098	1.20	.234				-.06	-.71	.478
Access to information				.328	5.71	< .001	.24	4.34	< .001
Membership to the school committee				.134	2.33	.020	.14	2.53	< .012
[*]Prediction power	$R^2 = .217, R^2_{adj.} = .204$			$R^2 = .161, R^2_{adj.} = .156$			$R^2 = .301, R^2_{adj.} = .285$		
[+]Level of significance	$F = 16.75, p < .001$			$F = 29.36, p < .001$			$F = 18.53, p < .001$		

As the results in Table 32 indicate, the demographic and personal characteristics model significantly predicted the school committee members' and parents' perceived DOI [$F (5,304)$ =16.75, $p < .001$, $R^2_{adj.} = .204$], meaning that the demographic and personal characteristics, independent of the structural variables, explained 20.4% of the total variance in DOI on decisions taken in primary schools. Of the five demographic and personal characteristics, gender was shown to have the highest level of significance ($p < .001$), while area of residence, perceived level of competence and age group had marginal effects on respondents' perceived DOI. Respondents' level of education was not a significant predictor of perceived DOI.

The results further indicate that the second model, which involved the two structural variables independent of the demographic and personal characteristics, significantly predicted the respondent's perceived DOI on the decisions taken in the school, $F (2,307) = 29.36$, $p < .001$, R^2 adj. = .156. The amount of variance explained by the two structural variables was 15.6%.

The third stage of analysis involved regression of all the seven variables at once. The combined model significantly predicted the respondents' perceived DOI in decision making, F

(7, 302) = 18.53, p < .001, $R^2_{adj.}$ = .285. This means that the combined model was able to explain 28.5% of the total variance in respondents' perceived DOI on decision making, which is clearly more than any of the other models. The results in Table 32 indicate that the variables which showed significance in model I [gender: β = .37, t (302) = 6.95, p < .001] and model II [perceived degree of access to information: β = .24, t (302) = 4.34, p < .001 and membership to the school committee: β = .14, t (302) = 2.53, p = .012] maintained their statuses of significance even when the number of variables regressed was expanded to 7. Thus, gender, perceived degree of access to information and membership in the school committee were important factors for explaining the school committee members and parents' DOI in school decision making.

6.4 Discussion

In this chapter, I analyse the empowerment of school committee members and non-members (parents) by assessing the degree to which their use of the existing opportunity to participate in decision making influenced school decisions. As seen from the analyses, the findings do not depart much from those reported in Chapters 4 and 5. The results showed that the perceived degree of access to information, gender and committee membership status were significant factors in explaining the perceived degree of influence on school decisions. These results lead to three important implications:

First, that information is a necessary condition for empowering people at the grassroots level, particularly in school decision making. This entails, according to Khwaja (2005), that information must be both provided and accessible. In school governance, people who are well informed about the opportunities available to them to participate in making and implementing school decisions are more likely to show a higher degree of empowerment than those who are uninformed. It was found that people's DOI on school decision making was associated with a high degree of access to information. This finding suggests, in line with the existing literature (e.g., Draper & Ramsey, 2012; Khwaja, 2005; Narayan-Parker, 2005; Kanter, 1989), that citizens who are able to make their preferences known and to receive information from the state and other actors, are enabled in making optimal choices about how their local entities, for instance schools, ought to operate. They are thus more likely to experience a high degree of empowerment.

Second, DOI in decision making by people at the grassroots level depends very much on the people's 'local organization capacity'. This means the extent to which the people organize themselves and participate in local groups that act as mechanisms for sharing information, ideas and experience. The study found that being a member of a school committee had a significant positive effect on one's level of DOI on school decisions. This finding supports the argument in the literature (e.g., Brinkerhoff & Omar, 2006; Zimmerman et al., 1992) that when people at the grassroots level are organized in common interest groups, they benefit from the synergy effect of the group, and it makes the members' voices stronger than that of the individual members in the decision making arena.

Third, gender is an important variable in the empowerment of people in decision making, particularly in societies like that of Tanzania, where gender inequality is yet to be successfully eliminated. The inequality between men and women in influencing school decision making was shown to be strongly significant. The findings showed the role of men in school decision making to be clearly dominant. Yet as evidence from the interviews indicates, the asymmetrical power relation between men and women in school decision making was not considered by the respondents – even the women – to be problematic, due to the culturally-rooted belief that it is acceptable to have patriarchal dominance in the access to, participation in and influence on socio-economic decision making. This study's observations on the effect of gender on people's influence on decision making in a society of culturally-nurtured gender inequality support what the literature suggests, particularly regarding how female-male differences in participation and influence in decision making can be explained in terms of cultural beliefs and social structures (Conn, 1990; UNDP, 2005; Kelan & Jones, 2010; Quisumbing & Pandolfelli, 2010; Shrestha, 2013; Trommlerová et al., 2013).

6.5 Concluding remarks

The results in this chapter show similar trends to the two previous chapters – especially with regard to the effect of information, membership to the school committee and gender – on the degree of influence on school decision making. The chapter underscores that among many other factors, the three should be taken into consideration when the state and other actors initiate projects that are geared towards increasing people's degree of use of opportunity to participate in and influence local-level decision making, particularly in primary schools. This includes ensuring adequate access to information on, for example, school planning and

budgeting, cash flow and bank information, school performance records, and why, how, and when the members of the local community can participate. Furthermore, there should be proper strategies for electing school committee members through a democratic, hence legitimate, process – one whereby the committees can act as sources of knowledge for the wider community and can influence other actors in the school decision making process. Regarding gender, the evidence in this chapter, as in the two previous chapters, indicates that influence in school decision making is male-centred. Men are more influential than women in making decisions about the education of children, not only in the home but also in school contexts. This observation suggests that gender inequality in school decision making is a prominent phenomenon in Tanzania that needs to be given adequate attention.

CHAPTER SEVEN
Empowerment as an Index of the Existence, Use and Impact of Choice

7.0 Introduction

This chapter measures the empowerment of school committees and parents by combining the results obtained through Alsop & Heinsohn's (2005) three-dimension framework of measuring empowerment. This entails separately examining the degree to which choice exists, how much it is used, and the impact it makes on the decisional outcomes. 'Choice', in the context of this work, means the opportunity for members of school committees and parents to participate in making and implementing decisions of importance to the education of their children and the development of their schools. This chapter therefore presents and discusses empowerment as an aggregate (index) of the three measurements of empowerment that explain the perceived Degree Of Empowerment (DOE) of the members and non-members of the school committees.

7.1 Variables
7.1.1 Dependent variable

The dependent variable in this chapter – the perceived Degree Of Empowerment (DOE) – is a computed index from the three dimensions, the perceived Degree of Existence of Opportunity (DEO), the perceived Degree of Use of the Opportunity (DUO) and the Degree Of Influence/Impact (DOI), each being measured in ten items using a six-point ordinal scale (1 = very low and 6 = very high). The scale had a reliability statistic (Cronbach's alpha) of .89, implying high internal consistency of the measurements. This made it possible to combine the measurements into an index to construct an interval scale ranging from 30 to 180, where the low indexes indicate low DOE and vice versa. The actual indexes computed from the respondents' self-reported measurements of DEO, DUO and DOI ranged from 55 to 150 (M = 119, SD = 14.4). The distribution of the indexes was negatively skewed at -.653 (SE = .14) and kurtosis of .972 (SE = .28).
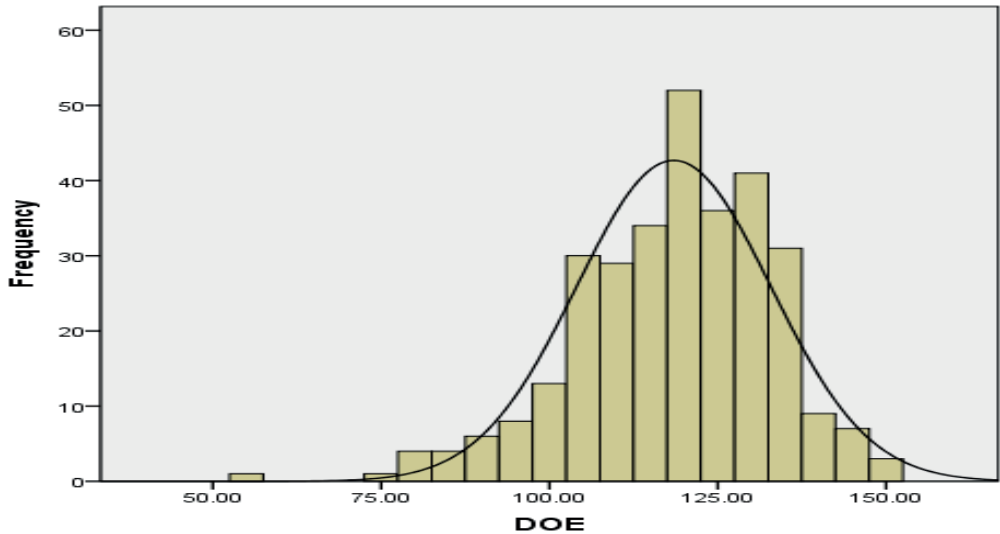
Figure 14: Distribution of respondents' perceived DOE indexes (scale: 30 – 180)

7.1.2 Independent variables

These are the same variables as those used in the previous empirical chapters: demographics (gender, area of residence, level of education, type of employment and age group), structural (perceived degree of access to information and membership in the committee) and personal characteristics (perceived level of competence).

7.2 Statistical analyses and hypotheses tests

7.2.1 Correlation analysis

The results from the Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient analyses, which were performed on the two independent variables and the dependent variable (Table 33), indicate a positive correlation between the former and the latter (perceived DOE).

Table 33: Correlation analysis of interval-scale independent variables & perceived DOE [+]

Variable	M (SD)	Cronbach's alpha	1	2	3
1. Perceived degree of Empowerment (DOE)	119 (14.4)	.89	-		
2. Perceived degree of access to information	33 (4.4)	.73	.57**	-	
3. Perceived level of competence	19 (5.0)	.86	.27**	.30**	-

** Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) ; [+]$df.$ = 308

Respondents' perceived degree of access to information had a strong positive correlation with perceived DOE [r (308) = .57, $p \leq .01$], while the perceived level of competence indicated a moderate correlation [r (308) =.27, $p \leq .01$]. The results suggest that both access to information and level of competence are positively correlated to an individual's perceived DOE, hence supporting hypotheses 1 and 2.

7.2.2 Independent samples t-tests

Table 34: Independent samples t-tests for the categorical independent variables * [+]

Variable	N	M(SD)	95% C.I for the difference	t	p-value
1. Gender					
Female	155	113 (13.29)	14.32 – 8.37	-7.50	< .001
Male	155	124 (13.30)			
2. Area of residence					
Rural	149	116 (14.90)	-7.37 – 9.56	-2.55	.011
Urban	161	120 (13.80)			
3. Level of education					
Primary or lower	156	116 (14.40)	-8.96 – -2.61	-3.59	< .001
Secondary or higher	154	121 (13.92)			
4. Type of employment					
Informal	202	118 (15.38)	-3.91 – -3.71	-.30	.767
Formal	108	119 (12.80)			
5. Age group					
Older generation (46 -70)	113	121 (12.80)	-.90 – 6.60	1.92	.056
Younger generation (20-45)	197	117 (15.22)			
6. Membership to the committee					
Non-member (parent)	96	109 (15.64)	-16.15 – -9.77	-8.00	< .001
Member	214	122 (11.90)			

*Dependent variable: perceived DOE; [+]df = 308

Independent-samples t-tests were conducted to compare the respondent's perceived DOE among the categories of each the independent variables (gender, area of residence, education, type of employment, age group and committee member status). As per the results, four out of the six categorical variables showed significant effects on perceived DOE. These were gender, level of education, membership in the committee and area of residence. By contrast, age group had marginally significant effects and the type of employment had no significant effects on the respondents' perceived DOE.

The results clearly indicated that there was a significant difference in the empowerment indexes of female (M =113, SD=13.29) and male respondents (M = 124, SD = 13.30), t (308) = -7.50, p< .001. These results relay the information that gender really did affect the perceived DOE of individual respondents. In particular, the results suggest that on average, women have a lower profile compared to men, in pursuing decision making opportunities and in influencing the decisions made by the respective primary schools' leadership in Tanzania. Hence, the finding supports hypothesis 3and concurs with the findings I reported for the three dimensions of empowerment – DEO, DUO and DOI – in the three previous chapters.

The results further show the significant effect of respondents' education level on their perceived DOE, where a lower level of education was associated with lower perceived DOE. It was found that respondents who had completed no more than primary education reported a lower perceived DOE (M = 116, SD = 14.40) relative to those who had completed secondary education or more (M = 121, SD = 13.92), t (308) = -3.59, $p \leq$ .001. This finding suggests that a high level of education amongst the members and non-members of school committees is associated with high perceived DOE in school governance. Accordingly, hypothesis 3 is supported.

It was also found that committee membership had significant effects on the respondents' perceived DOE. The results show that non-members, referred to in this study as 'parents', reported a lower perceived DOE (M = 109, SD = 15.64) when compared to the members (M = 122, SD = 11.90), t (308) = -8.00, p< .001). The finding suggests that being a school committee member gave the individuals a higher chance of increasing their DOE with respect to decision making in respective local schools, hence, supporting hypothesis 5.

As for area of residence, the results show that there were significant effects on the respondents' perceived DOE which were associated with the rural-urban distinctions. Respondents who lived in rural areas indicated a lower perceived DOE (M = 116, SD = 14.90) compared to those who lived in urban areas (M = 120, SD = 13.80), t (308) = -2.55, p = .011. This finding implies that on average, rural residents had a lower perceived DOE as compared to urban residents. This suggests support for hypothesis 6.

Contrary to expectation, the findings show that the respondents' age group had a marginally significant effect on their perceived DOE. The older generation (age 45 – 70) indicated a

higher perceived DOE (M = 121, SD = 12.80) than the younger-generation respondents (age 20 – 45) (M = 117, SD = 15.22). This finding suggests the converse of hypothesis 8, namely that the older generation had a higher level of engagement and influence in school governance than the younger generation.

Finally, the results did not indicate that the respondents' type of employment made any significant impact on their perceived DOE. This can be seen from the more or less indifferent mean empowerment indexes of the informally and formally employed respondents (M = 117, SD = 15.8 and M = 118, SD = 12.80 respectively) and the very small and insignificant t-statistic (t = -.30, p = .767). This finding suggests, contrary to hypothesis 7, that being informally or formally employed made no significant difference in the individuals' perceived DOE in making decisions about various issues of school governance.

7.2.3 Regression analysis

Three regression analyses were run, and, as Table 35 indicates, they involved the demographic and personal characteristics (model I), the structural factors (model II) and a combination of the two groups of variables (model III).

Table 35: Regression analysis of demographic, personal and structural factors on perceived DOE

Predictors/factors	Demographic/personal (I)			Structural (II)			Overall model (III)		
	β	t	p	β	t	p	β	t	p
Gender	.33	5.70	< .001				.27	5.64	< .001
Area of residence	.10	1.51	.132				.04	.83	.408
Level of education	-.12	-1.28	.200				-.03	-.37	.712
Age group	-.10	-1.54	.125				-.01	-.28	.778
Level of competence	.26	3.13	.002				.003	.039	.969
Access to information				.49	9.75	< .001	.42	8.60	< . 001
Membership to school committee				.22	4.36	< .001	.22	4.25	< . 001
*Coefficient of determination	R^2 = .197, R^2_{adj} =.184			R^2 = .368, R^2_{adj} =.364			R^2 = .440, R^2_{adj} =.427		
+Level of significance	F = 14.90, p < .001			F = 89.20, p < .001			F = 133.79, p < .001		

The demographic and personal characteristics (gender, area of residence, level of education, age group and level of competence) were first entered into the regression model to examine their effects on the perceived DOE. The combination of these variables indeed had a significant effects on the perceived DOE [F (5,304) = 14.90, p< .001, R^2_{adj} = .184. The model was able to explain 18.4% of the total variance in the respondents' DOE. This can be seen from the coefficient of determination below the respective column in Table 35. Even so, it is noted that only gender and perceived level of competence showed high levels of significance

[β = .33, t (304) = 5.70, $p <$ .001 and β = .26, t (304) = 3.13, p = .002 respectively], while age group and area of residence had marginal prediction significance to the perceived DOE [β = -.10, t (304) = -1.54, p = .125 and β = .10, t (304) = 1.54, p = .125]. Surprisingly, the level of education was not significant. The results displayed by this model suggest that gender and perceived level of competence are the most important factors to explain the perceived DOE of the school committee member and non-members. Male committee members and parents had a higher chance of perceiving high DOE in school decision making than female members and parents. Also, committee members and non-members with a high perceived level of competence were more likely to demonstrate high perceived DOE than those who perceived themselves as having a low level of competence in various aspects of school governance.

The structural variables (perceived degree of access to information and membership in the committee) were combined in the second regression model, and the results showed significant effects on the respondents' perceived DOE [F (2, 307) = 89.20, $p <$ .001, R^2_{adj} = .364]. Overall, the model explained 36.4% of the variance in perceived DOE, which is nearly twice that explained by the demographic and personal characteristics in the first model. Both the perceived degree of access to information and committee membership were significant predictors of perceived DOE [β = .49, t (307) = 9.75, $p <$ .001 and β = .22, t (307) = 4.36, $p <$ .001 respectively]. The results in this model suggest that high access to information amongst the committee members and non-members (parents) will result in high DOE. Furthermore, committee members have more chance than non-members of demonstrating high perceived DOE in school governance.

The last step of regression analysis involved combining all the independent variables into one model to explore their combined effects on respondents' perceived DOE. Of the three models, this one had the strongest prediction power [F (7, 302) = 133.79, $p <$ .001, R^2_{adj} = .427] because it explained 42.7% of the total variance in perceived DOE, which is 6.3% higher than that explained by the second model and over two times the first model's prediction power. However, it is noted that all the variables which had statistically weak coefficients in the first model lost their significance in the third model when the structural variables were entered; implying that they were not the true predictors of the respondents' perceived DOE. On the other hand, the variables that displayed statistically significant coefficients in the first and second model (gender, perceived degree of access to information and membership to the committee) maintained their statistical significance in the combined model. These findings

suggest that gender, perceived degree of access to information and school committee membership explain the degree of empowerment (DOE) of the citizens in school governance in Tanzania.

7.3 Parent – Teacher power relations in school decision making

Analysing the power relations between teachers and parents is an important condition for judging how far school governance reforms have succeeded in enabling the people at grassroots level to participate in decision making. In this study, I classified the 10 school decision making aspects (see Q 3.1- 3.4 of the questionnaire in Appendix 1A) based on Bauch and Goldring's (1998) power relations quadrants and theoretical insights (described in Chapter 2) and supplemented that with qualitative data from interviews and focus groups. The results indicate that power relations between parents and teachers in school decision making varied among the various aspects as illustrated in Figure 16 in the discussion part of this chapter.

7.4 Discussion

The results in this chapter have shown similarities with the three previous empirical chapters, particularly on the factors influencing a person's degree of empowerment. Access to information, gender and school committee membership were factors significant for explaining the extent to which people at the grassroots level (members of school committees and parents at large) demonstrated a DOE to participate in school decision making. Rather than re-presenting a discussion which is largely or exactly the same as that presented in the previous chapters – that is, to point to the significance of information, committee membership and gender – I will restrict myself to discussing the results on parent – teacher power relations in school decision making.

As indicated in the results in Figure 16, four aspects of school decision making are in quadrant 2, four aspects in quadrant 4; and one aspect each in quadrants 3 and 1 respectively. The school decision-making aspects in quadrant 2 are control of pupils' discipline, maintaining school-community relations, awarding tenders for various school supplies and mobilization of resources. This means that partnership between teachers and parents was more evident in the decision making process regarding these aspects than in other aspects, and that parents and teachers had mutual power in deciding about these aspects. For example, in taking control of pupils' discipline, both teachers and parents said they were mutually involved in shaping the

discipline of the school children, with teachers playing a more conspicuous role on the school premises and the parents taking charge when children were at home. In the context of the general theory of this study, it can be argued that teachers and parents collaborate most of all on decision making in in these four aspects. This finding is also consistent with what Glatter & Woods (1995) suggest.

The aspects of decision making which were classified in quadrant 4, which denotes teacher professionalism mode, are choice and procurement of books, expenditure decisions, planning and budgeting and the enrolment of pupils. Decisions in these areas appeared to be more influenced by teachers than parents. For example, choice and procurement of books and pupil enrolment were indicated to be more influenced by the teachers because they were reported to be linked to the teachers' day-to-day professional responsibilities. Planning, budgeting and expenditure decisions were also indicated to be more influenced by teachers than parents, since most of the parents in school committees indicated they had inadequate knowledge and skills in these areas. Consequently, the head teachers and their teacher-colleagues had more influence over these functions than did the parents. In actual fact, the teachers were the ones who made proposals on expenditures and the budget, and the parents were consulted for approval. In all four aspects, teachers were observed to have more power than parents, based on 'their professional legitimacy and trustworthiness' (Bak, 2005).

PARENTS

more power

(1)	(2)
Parent empowerment mode	Partnership/communal mode
- Construction and repair	-Control of pupils' discipline
	-School – Community relations
	-Awarding tender for various supplies
	-Mobilisation of resources

less power ← **TEACHERS** → more power

(3)	(4)
Bureaucratic mode	Teacher professionalism mode
- Curriculum development	-Choice & procurement of books
	-Expenditure decisions
	-Planning & budgeting
	-Enrolment of pupils

less power

Figure 15: Power relations amongst parents and teachers in school decision making

In quadrant 3, which denotes a bureaucratic mode of governance, neither the teachers nor the parents had influence. In this mode, a top-down approach dominates the decision making process. Evidence from the survey and qualitative data indicated that the schools were passive recipients of centrally formulated curriculum content and goals. Both the teachers and parents indicated they were not involved in any stage of curriculum development; they only played a role in its implementation.

Lastly, in quadrant 1, the parent empowerment mode was more evident in only one aspect: the construction and repair of school infrastructure (classrooms, teachers' houses and toilets). It was observed during the study that parents, in collaboration with their local leaders, had more influence in decisions in this area. This was seen from the high average score by members of school committees on the degree to which they had influence on construction and repair. This data was supplemented by data interviews and focus groups. The results of my study are thus consistent with Bauch and Goldring's (1998) schema, which shows this mode of governance to be characterized by parents' active participation in the decision making process. According

to the results of my study, this highest level of parental involvement concerned the construction and repair of school infrastructure.

7.5 Concluding points for the chapter

The chapter examined the overall empowerment of the members of school committees and parents in school decision making by aggregating the three dimensions of empowerment from Chapters 4, 5 and 6 into an index measurement which constituted the dependent variable, that is, the Degree Of Empowerment (DOE). The results on DOE do not depart from those of DEO, DUO and DOI. Consistent with the three dimensions constituting the DOE index, the results on DOE indicate some differences in the respondents' levels of empowerment in the ten aspects of school governance. This implies that any intervention meant to enhance the empowerment of school committee members and parents in school decision making will require more emphasis on some aspects than others. Similarly, power relations between teachers and parents vary considerably. Parents have more power than teachers in some aspects, and teachers have more power than parents in other aspects, and then there are aspects where power is largely equal. The results in this chapter   conveys a similar message to that of the other three empirical chapters, for access to information, membership to the school committees and gender are the factors that can explain the degree of empowerment (DOE). Thus, any efforts geared towards increasing the power of people at the grassroots level in school decision-making can be aided by taking these factors into consideration.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Summary, Concluding Discussion and Implications

8.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the study by recapping on the research problem, aims, methodological approaches and key findings, showing their completeness in answering the research question. Based on how the findings have already been shown to relate to existing theoretical knowledge and empirical evidence from earlier studies, I discuss the findings' relevance and implications, first in terms of theory, then in terms of policy and practice. In the final paragraphs I acknowledge the limitations of the study and suggest how they point to potential areas for further research. The chapter closes by elucidating how the study contributes to the literature of empowerment.

8.1 An overview of the study problem, methodology and key findings

This dissertation is based on a study that examined the empowerment of school committee members and parents. The school committee members' and parents' empowerment was thus examined at the level of opportunity existence, use of the opportunity, impact of using the opportunity, and the combination (index) of the three dimensions.

The study was sequentially designed and employed a mixed methods approach (Cresswell & Plano Clark, 2011). A survey was conducted in seven districts/municipalities involving 310 school committee members and non-member parents. This was followed up by seventeen in-depth interviews with education officials, teachers and parents and two focus group discussions – one with members of school committee and another with parents – for the purpose of complementing the quantitative survey data with more in-depth explanations and information. A review of policy documents, reports and minutes of meetings was done to obtain secondary information and to add value to the primary data. The results indicate that gender, access to information and membership in a school committee were the most important factors to affect respondents' empowerment. The three variables showed themselves to be significant in all the three models (DEO, DUO and DOI) and in the overall degree of empowerment (DOE).

Table 36: Regression analysis models for reported DEO, DUO, DOI and DOE

Predictors/factors	DEO (model I)			DUO (model II)			DOI (model III)			DOE (combined model)		
	β	t	p	β	t	p	β	t	p	β	t	p
Demographic & personal												
Gender	.10	1.79	.022	.22	4.07	<.001	.37	6.95	<.001	.27	5.64	<.001
Area of residence	-.04	-.73	.342	.09	1.81	.071	.05	.94	.350	.04	.83	.408
Level of education	-.03	-.42	.981	-.05	-.62	.540	.04	.52	.601	-.03	-.37	.712
Age group	.05	1.03	.413	-.08	-1.70	.100	-.01	-.26	.793	-.01	-.28	.778
Level of competence	.07	.82	.936	-.03	-.37	.710	-.06	-.71	.478	.003	.039	.969
Structural												
Access to information	.38	6.66	<.001	.31	5.80	<.001	.24	4.34	<.001	.42	8.60	<. 001
Membership to the committee	.11	1.81	.071	.25	4.43	<.001	.14	2.53	.012	.22	4.25	<. 001
Coefficient of determination	R^2 = .233, R^2 adj. = .215			R^2 = .324, R^2 adj. = .308			R^2 = .301, R^2 adj. = .285			R^2 = .440, R^2 adj. = .427		
Significance level	$F_{(7,302)}$ = 13.11, p < .001			$F_{(7,302)}$ = 20.67, p < .001			$F_{(7,301)}$ = 18.53, p < .001			$F_{(7,301)}$ = 33.79, p < .001		

The trends in the magnitude of the dependent variable depict an interesting phenomenon. As shown in Figure 14, the lowest dimension of empowerment, the respondents' DEO, had a mean index of 42. This was the highest score, whereas respondent's DOI, which is the highest dimension, had a mean index value of 37, thus the lowest score of all three in the lengthy 60-point scale.
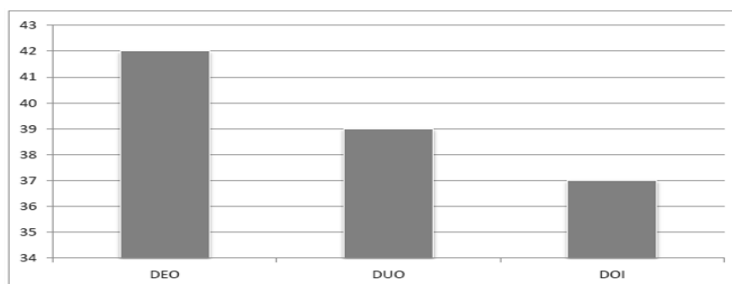
Figure 16: A comparison of the indexes for DEO, DUO and DOE

It seems that in most cases, the degree of existence of opportunity for people at the grassroots level to participate in decision making may not necessarily have congruence with the degree to which they actually participate in the decision making process. It was found during the study that what the school committee members and parents reported as the existing opportunity to participate in school decision making surpassed what they reported as the degree of their actual participation and influence in school governance. The reasons for this discrepancy can be explained in terms of the respondents' limitations of both agency and opportunity structure.

First, in terms of the limitations of agency, it was found that the discrepancy observed in the results between the perceived DEO and DUO to participate in school decision making can be argued to be partly a result of the respondents' low level of agency (knowledge, skills, resources and willingness). This observation concurs with evidence from other empirical studies, for instance, in evaluating the impact of Norwegian aid to the programme Education For All (EFA) in the South (Bolivia, Zambia, Burkina Faso and Uganda, to mention a few) through Sector-Wide Approaches (SWAPs) (Askvik & Tjomsland, 2005; Hoppers, 2009). These researchers also observed some failure in the outcomes of decentralization: although the intention was to foster democratic participation and effectiveness in service delivery at the grassroots level, the local actors were not adequately capable of managing the devolved functions and resources emanating from the centre. Hence, despite the attempts to install good local administrative structures, local community participation was hindered. In such a

situation, the decentralization of educational administration would be considered an ineffective approach to improving education. It can thus be argued that decentralized service delivery would be effective only if the local community's capabilities have first been adequately built up. This would enable the local actors to take over responsibilities from the ministerial authorities.

Second, constraints brought about by the opportunity structure also underlie the respondents' failure to use the existing opportunity to participate in school decision making. The findings indicate some cases of married women not playing an active role in school decision making, especially regarding school contributions and financing the children's education because of institutionalized patriarchal dominance. Their husband, they argued, were the ones who were entitled to make decisions in these areas because of the men's socio-cultural responsibility as household heads. When these women were asked *To what extent you feel that opportunity exists for you to participate in making decisions in your school?* the response scores were higher than when they were asked *How much do you actually participate in making decisions in your school?* This observation suggests that the female respondents may recognize an existing opportunity but still fail to exploit it due to structural societal constraints. Such an observation can also extend to poor people more generally. The observation concurs with assertions made in literature on empowerment (Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005). Empowerment is not something that can simply be guaranteed to people at the grassroots level, either individually, in groups or as a community. Rather, it is achieved through processes whereby people empower themselves (Sen, 1997). It therefore follows that empowerment of the communities lies with the individual community members (Brinkerhoff & Omar, 2010; 2006). People must make use of the opportunities and enabling mechanisms created by the government to act effectively in transforming their own lives (Wallerstein, 2006). Enabling policies, legislation and local-level institutional frameworks created by the government for people to participate in decision making will make no difference in the people's empowerment status unless they willingly make use of the opportunities and participate in leading their own development initiatives. In this context, it is worth mentioning NGOs as good examples of institutions that citizens can involve themselves in to plan and implement development projects. However, these institutions cannot make any difference unless the community members willingly and enthusiastically use the NGO-provided opportunities to change their own lives. This study suggests that sustainable

empowerment does not depend on structural changes alone, but also on the individuals, groups or communities themselves.

Despite the fact that throughout the analyses in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, gender, access to information and membership to the school committeewere consistently shown to be important determinants of the three empowerment dimensions, it was surprising that the level of education, perceived level of competence and area of residence (rural or urban) did not explain the respondents' perceived DEO to participate in school decision making. This finding was contrary to theoretical propositions and empirical evidence from related studies. The explanation, presented in Chapter 4, for the insignificant effect of these variables on the levels of empowerment could be associated to endogeneity, meaning the degree of variation in the independent variables amongst the respondents and measurements. It is unlikely that the reason could be due to multi-collinearity because prior to entering the variables into the regression models, a correlation analysis was run to check for inter-correlation amongst the independent variables. None were found to be highly correlated.

Another reason why some variables particularly the level of formal education might have had little empowering effect could be that formal education per se was less significant than the type of acquired knowledge and skills the respondents' actually had. Formal education can either enhance one's ability to engage in dialogue, to think and argue critically, or it can result in one becoming a passive recipient of instructions (Freire, 1970). In a study on 'Tanzanian education on entrepreneurial influence among females', Nziku (2012) found that the level of education was a weak determinant of entrepreneurial decisions, particularly in relation to starting businesses. What she found to have a greater impact on women's decisions to start businesses was the kind of training they had received. To have attended or not attended formal education was found to insignificantly contribute to business start-up decisions. The majority of business women had either never been to school, or had not even completed primaryschool. This indicated that their businesses were highly influenced by the kinds of knowledge and skills they had acquired through the training they had received after completing formal education (Nziku, 2012:68-69). This observation suggests that although the level of education is important for enhancing people's empowerment, specific knowledge and skills are necessary to enable them to respond to specific challenges. Such skills can include bargaining, entrepreneurship, dialogue and managerial skills. In school decision making, therefore, it follows that in addition to formal education, school committee members

should be trained in specific skills useful for school governance; having skills in areas such as planning, budgeting, bookkeeping and record keeping will increase their competence and confidence in decision making.

8.2 Challenges to decentralized school governance and local empowerment

Several challenges have been identified by researchers, policy analysts and practitioners as barriers to the success of decentralized school governance and the empowerment of people at the grassroots level in education. This study goes hand-in-hand with the existing research, for in the course of the study, several challenges were identified as barriers to enhancing people's opportunity, participation and influence in school decision making at the grassroots level. These were as follows:

8.2.1 Inadequate capabilities/competences

Keeping people's knowledge and skills updated is a necessary condition for increasing their effective influence in decision making. In Askvik's (2005) study of South Africa's School Governing Bodies (SGBs), it was found that the school principals view training programmes as critical measures for enhancing the responsibilities of the SGBs. It was noted, for instance, that attendance to workshops by illiterates and ignorant parents enabled them to learn about the South African Schools Act and various tasks of the SGBs, including planning and budgeting (Askvik, 2005).

In this present study, however, it was noted that efforts to build the capacities of school committee members were irregular due to limited funding. This was the main excuse given by most of the education officials interviewed. One official's comment can serve to illustrate the point:

> The most efficient way of strengthening the capacity of school committees is through providing frequent training in the basic skills necessary for day to day management of the school. This aspect has always been poorly accomplished because we do not have enough funds. (E1)

During the study's quantitative phase, it was learned that out of the 310 respondents included in the survey, 119 (38%) indicated they had never received any training in school management. While it may seem impressive that the remaining respondents (62%) indicated they had received training in school management, it was revealed that 76% of these received training only for five days in 2003, under the donor-funded PEDP /(I). This program ended in 2006. These findings imply that training for capacity building was mainly implemented

through donor funds at large, and after the donors' reduction of funding, the training was discontinued.

During a focus group discussion with school committee members from Morogoro Municipal Council, it was also found that the inclusion of teachers in the school committees created power inequality. Teachers, it was learned, were on average more knowledgeable and skilful than most of the parental committee members, so much so that they were unable to participate fully in some of the tasks requiring specialist knowledge and skill, for instance planning and budgeting. As a result, they 'endorsed' the head teacher and other teachers who could accomplish these tasks on their behalf. One non-teacher committee member expressed a view which was supported by the focus group's other members:

> We don't have enough knowledge and skills compared to the teachers, who are much more informed about schools and how things ought to go with the school plans, budget and the like. They know more about laws and procedures that govern the schools than we ourselves do. They know what is best for the children and the school; so, we trust them to do the technical responsibilities on our behalf and we approve them. [FG (C3)]

8.2.2 Insufficient information and sources of information

Evidence from the study, from the professional literature and from the actual practice of empowerment all point to information as one of the important factors for enhancing people's DEO, DUO and DOI. The assessment which was done in this study regarding school committee members' and parents' access to information indicates that out of the nine areas of school governance, respondents were well informed in only four areas (44%). These were academic performance, school committee and its roles, procurement and daily school operations. By contrast, access to information was low on the schools' financial records, particularly bank information, and very low or completely lacking on curriculum development and the national education policy. These latter two aspects are crucial in school governance.

With regard to the sources of information, it was found that there was little diversity in information sources which school committee members and non-members (parents) used. This is despite the fact that there were at least ten possible sources of information on school issues and education in general. For example, it was surprising to learn that school committee members and parents used, at most, school meetings, children and teachers as their main sources of information, while government documents, mass media and local leaders were the

least used sources of information. According to Kanter's (1989) suggestion, organizations seeking to empower their people must make more information more available to more people at more levels through more devices. This means that the information should be complete in terms of its content and type; it should be accessible through a range of means to everybody at all levels of the organization who are entitled to be informed. The findings in this study indicate that people at the grassroots level (parents at large) had somewhat limited access to information in terms of completeness, and, as stated, they largely used only three sources. Consequently, the number of people who are well informed on primary education is quite restricted. Evidence from the analysis of mass media as a source of information indicates that TV broadcasts and newspapers had limited accessibility particularly in the rural areas due to the high cost of TV sets and the lack of electricity. Newspapers had low coverage in the rural areas and were also little used in urban areas due to limited literacy, poor infrastructure and unaffordability. Some people, it was found, were not using newspapers as sources of information because they were unable to read. What is more, due to the bad condition of most rural roads, delivery of newspapers was difficult. With regard to affordability, most of the newspapers cost at least about one US-dollar which people could not afford on a daily basis.

Government documents on education, if well prepared and readily accessible, can be very useful sources of information to people at the grassroots level. These documents provide information on important issues in the country's education system, including curriculum, policy, legislation and procedural guidance. However, it was found in the study that government documents were the respondents' weakest source of information. Why this was the case was related to inadequate accessibility and unclear, ambiguous language. Some of the documents were written in rather technical English. There was, for instance, no clear information on *why* parents should contribute financially to their schools. Some parents, it was noted, could not distinguish between school fees and other contributions, so they were asking why they should contribute since the government had abolished school fees in the primary schools. This observation implies an explicit mismatch between what is actually stipulated in the policy documents and what is practically perceived by parents at the grassroots level. The confusion seems to have arisen partly due to inadequate information on the part of parents and also imprecise statements issued by the government regarding what exactly had been abolished. For example in the PEDP document, the government indicates the following strategy as one of the means to ensure that no school-age child will be denied the opportunity for schooling: *'[t]he Government will abolish school fees and all other*

mandatory parentalcontributions from January 2002 so that no child may be denied schooling' (URT, 2003:5).From this statement it is tempting to assume that after January 2002, parents no longer need to pay school fees. What was stated two years later in the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) was also unclear: *'The Government will maintain its current policy of abolishing primary school fees and related contributions'*(URT, 2005:44). This statement is unclear as to whether the contributions have completely been abolished or are being gradually abolished. In actual practice, mandatory fees have been abolished, but contributions are still required to keep the schools afloat.

A similar observation was made by Vavrus and Moshi (2009) in their study on the cost of free primary education in Tanzania. They reported ambiguity on school 'fees' and school 'contributions' as reflected by parents using the terms interchangeably and insisting that they could not see any practical distinction between the two.

8.2.3 Poor attendance at meetings

Despite the fact that public meetings were identified as the major source of accessing and exchanging information in school decision making, it was found that attendance at school meetings by the committee members and parents was poor. The main reason for this was that people were busy and had limited time to attend. For instance, in the rural areas where most of the school committee members and parents are peasants, it was learned that getting people to attend meetings was a big challenge, especially during peak times for farm activities: the weeks of preparing the soil, sowing, weeding and harvesting. On the other hand, the urban respondents accounted for the poor attendance to meetings by saying it had to do with people being busy with their small business activities. Those who were formally employed would be busy with office work. Furthermore, in interviews in some of the schools, it was learned that some people were reluctant to attend school meetings because they had lost trust in the school and the local leadership as a result of misuse of school funds by the head teachers. Yet others were reported to neglect attending meetings because they were unaware of the importance of participating in the school decision making process.

Based on these observations, I present three suggestions regarding the use of mass meetings as a means whereby school/education authorities can exchange information with the local communities: First, it is important to organize meetings at an opportune time point to ensure

that they do not interfere with people's schedules. In the rural areas where agriculture is the main socio-economic activity, it is important to schedule all the regular school meetings in the periods when people are not very busy with farm activities. Second, local community members need to be made more aware of how important it is for them to participate in the decision making process. This can be accomplished through shared efforts between the central and local government, NGOs and the private sector to sensitize the public on why it is important to have their 'input' on school decision making. Third, the school leadership must increase transparency on how much the schools receive from the government grant and through contributions from parents and other sources, and they must account for how these funds were spent. Such transparency will build trust between the school leadership and the local community members and in turn increase their willingness to participate in the decision making process and implement the development-related decisions taken by the school.

8.2.4 Inadequate financial resources

The schools, it was found, lacked adequate financial resources and were thus unable to implement school development plans. The inadequacy of financial resources was attributed to the central government failing to disburse capitation and development grants to the schools in a timely manner; once the grants were received, they were insufficient; and because most of the people are poor, they do not make sufficient financial contributions. This evidence was gleaned through interviews with teachers and parents in different schools. The following quotes are from members of the Kibaha and Siha District Councils:

> There are delays in receiving grant funds from the government, which causes us to fail to meet our planned targets. This distorts the logic of planning ahead because we are not sure of getting money to implement the plans. This is really a big challenge facing the school committee. We have failed to finish roofing the two teachers' houses which we planned to do last year. (T5)

> It is usual that we do not receive funds in a timely manner, as we used to do during the first phase of PEDP implementation in the early 2000s. Although funding is supposed to be received quarterly, it happens that a month or more passes after commencement of a quota without receiving even a single cent. This makes a big impact on the running of the school. (T2)

The quotes indicate that the government's delayed disbursement of funds constrains the implementation of the school development plans, which in turn impedes school committees' confidence in planning, let alone implementation. This problem was observed in all five LGAs.

8.3. Implications of the findings

8.3.1Theoretical implications

In this study, I sought to examine the degree of empowerment of school committees and parents in Tanzania, particularly in terms of the extent to which opportunity exists for them to participate in school decision making (Chapter 4); the extent to which they make use of the opportunity to participate in decision making (Chapter 5); the extent to which their participation in school decision making actually makes an impact on the schools' decisions (Chapter 6); and the extent of their overall empowerment (Chapter 7). The study also examined factors and challenges which influence the empowerment of school committee members and parents and suggested some ways of addressing them.

Important trends were observed in the dependent variable, which was partitioned into the three dimensions of empowerment (DEO, DUO and DOI) as suggested in Alsop & Heinsohn (2005) and Alsop et al. (2006). Figure 16 indicates that members of school committees perceived a higher Degree of Existence of Opportunity (DEO) to participate in school decision making but that they were unable to use it to the full extent. This was because of constraints in exercising their agency (such as limited skills and knowledge) and constraints posed by the opportunity structure. The prime example of this was the cultural beliefs that hindered women from participating in and influencing school decision making. The women reported a lower DOI than DUO for decision making. The finding here was also found to be in line with the theoretical propositions and empirical literature that state that gender, access to information and membership in local groups are important factors that explain the degree of empowerment in terms of DEO, DUO, DOI and their combination, DOE. Based on the study findings, the following theoretical implications are drawn:

First, studying empowerment as a continuum of DEO, DUO and DOI provides an effective theoretical approach for empowerment studies. This present study is one of the first attempts to demonstrate the operationalization of empowerment from its very lowest form (existence of opportunity to participate) to its highest order (the degree of influence/ impact resulting from one's choice to make use of the opportunity).

Secondly, the variations in the DEO, DUO and DOI, as depicted in Fig16 suggest that there is often a mismatch between the three. The trends observed suggest that. although

citizens,particularly the marginalized and poor, might theoretically be aware of an existing opportunity for them to participate in socio-economic development and political decisions, it may not always be the case that they successfully make use of it and achieve what they want, first, because of the constraints of the opportunity structure, that is the institutional, social and political context within which they pursue their interests, and second, their agency which entails their ability to exploit the opportunity. Inadequateresources and capabilities (good health and education, identity, leadership, self-esteem/efficacy and confidence) (Alsop et al,2006; Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005; Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007; Narayan, 2005; Samman & Santos, 2009) also limit people from exercising their agency. Third, as also discussed in chapter 4, the tendency of the powerful social groups to dominate the decision making process might lead to the poor participating less and having insignificant influence on the development agenda despite the presence of pro-poor legal and political provisions for equal opportunity to participate in decision making.

8.3.2 Implications for policy and practice

The study findings demonstrate, on one hand, that access to information influences the DEO, DUO and DOI. On the other hand, it is evident from the findings that the school committee members and parents suffered from a significant lack of information, particularly on the schools' financial records. This was revealed from their stating that they were not aware of how much the bank balance was. It was also noted, through the quantitative and qualitative data, that people lacked information on the two issues of importance at the national level – curriculum development and national education policy. These inadequacies were attributed to the centralized control of information, and the ineffectiveness of the mass media in delivering information to large segments of the population, largely due to poor infrastructure and low literacy. The policy implications for these findings are two-fold: First at the school level, more transparency is needed on all financial matters. This can be done by introducing mechanisms to increase the head teacher's accountability to the local community. The LGAs could, for example, make it mandatory for head teachers to publish the schools' financial reports at the end of every fiscal year, and to post it on all public noticeboards in the respective school and village or 'mtaa ' where the school is located. The financial report could also be read aloud at the end of certain public meetings. Second, at the national level, the government, through the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, needs to increase transparency in curriculum development and national education policy making. This

could be achieved by replacing the current top-down approach with a bottom-up one. This would increase people's awareness, support and trust of the policy and curriculum contents.

The study pinpointed three other areas that hold large implications for policy and practice. The first concerns gender inequality. The policy implication here is that more sensitization is needed throughout the whole society on how important it is for all categories of people to become involved in decision making processes. Efforts in this direction could begin by utilizing radio and TV broadcasts, mass meetings and posters

Secondly, since it was learned that school committee membership was a significant factor for empowering people in school decision making, this implies that school committees are important in enhancing the empowerment of people at the grassroots level in terms of direct and indirect (representative) democracy. However, the study also found that the school committees face serious challenges due to financial and skill-related constraints. The policy implication of this finding is that there is a need to strengthen school committees throughout the country so that they can accomplish their key task: to enhance local empowerment in school decision making. The committees can be strengthened through increasing financial resource allocations (capitation & development grant) to the schools and by providing frequent training to the members to enhance their knowledge, skills and capabilities.

Thirdly, evidence from this study shows that there is no association of school committees that can help coordinate their activities at different levels, or which could act as a conduit for sharing knowledge, skill, experience, and success stories. With the present situation, it is likely that a committee of school A in village X may not be aware of what another committee in school B in the same village is doing to address a shared local problem such as truancy or a desk shortage. Nor is it possible to learn from each other why, for instance, a particular school in a certain ward has succeeded more than others in the same ward in addressing a specific problem, thus to encourage others to emulate the experience. The policy implication here is that there is a need for an association of school committees to enable them to learn from each other. This can start at the village and ward levels under the coordination of Ward Education Officers (WECs) and then proceed to the District levels.

8.4 Limitations of the study and suggestions for further research

The study suffers from two limitations which open up new avenues for future research.

First, it focused on the empowerment of school committee members and parents in the public primary schools in Tanzania. It is known that the school committees and the school management system of the public primary schools are part and parcel of the state bureaucracy. The study did not cover the private schools which are normally outside the state bureaucracy's managerial jurisdiction. These private schools are becoming increasingly popular under the pluralist governance system. Information is therefore lacking on how they operate and whether their school committees and parents are more empowered than those of the public schools. It appears that a comparative study between private and public primary schools on the empowerment of school committees and parents would certainly have been interesting and worthwhile. For this reason, I suggest a similar study be conducted to compare the empowerment of school committees and parents in the public and private primary schools.

Second, the study findings are limited to the intrinsic value of empowerment. That is, they explain empowerment as an outcome rather than an instrument (a means) to other ends such as socio-economic development. Studies of this nature fall short of demonstrating the extrinsic value of empowerment for socio-economic development. It would thus be very interesting to extend this study further to examining the effect of empowerment on, for example, school performance, governance and infrastructure development. Therefore, the study suggests further studies to explain empowerment as a means to other ends. In school governance, for example, the question 'How much of a school's academic performance is brought about by the empowerment of school committee members and parents?' could be addressed by conducting a study of this kind. Similarly, the question 'How much of a school's effectiveness in construction and maintenance of school buildings is brought about by the empowerment of school committee members and parents could be answered by carrying out a study that would analyse empowerment as a means to effective construction and maintenance of school buildings.

8.5 The study's contribution to the literature

Despite the limitations, the study makes four important contributions to the existing literature. First, to the general literature on empowerment; it is argued that empowerment can be measured directly (Alkire, 2013; Ibrahim & Alkire, 2007; Alsop et al., 2006; Alsop

&Heinsohn, 2005). This study has attempted to apply the framework of measuring empowerment directly in three distinct levels of opportunity: its existence, use and impact (Alsop et al., 2006; Alsop & Heinsohn, 2005). The study has thus demonstrated that people's degree of empowerment can be measured through a continuum of degrees of opportunity existence (DEO), use of the opportunity (DUO) and influence/impact (DOI). Overall, empowerment can be explained as an index of the three dimensions. Hence, the study provides new theoretical perspectives in understanding the concept of empowerment.

Second, the study applies an 'empowerment lens' to *go beyond numbers* in explaining how much members of school committees and parents in Tanzania participate and influence school decision making. Particularly, the study makes an important contribution to the scanty literature on school governance in Tanzania and the developing world at large by examining participation in decision making in terms of *how much power people at the grassroots level have to influence the decision making process,* instead of just examining *the number of people or frequency of participation in making and implementation school decisions*.

Third, the emerging literature on 'user committees', as Manor (2004a.) points out, has grown rapidly in the developing countries since the mid-1990s, but not enough solid empirical evidence is available on the extent to which these user committees function as decentralized governance instruments. For this reason, Manor calls upon researchers to study this area and to come up with more evidence on the user committees.

This dissertation is, in one sense, a response to the call for generating more evidence on user committees. It provides a picture of how Tanzanian school committees, as examples of user committees, actually function, and how successful they are in giving ordinary people at the grassroots level influence over the planning and implementation of school development programmes and/or specific projects.

8.6 Concluding thoughts

It was observed in the study that while the process of empowering Tanzanian school committees and parents has convincingly begun, especially with regard to people gaining the opportunity to participate in the committees and to engage in basic school development issues such as contributing resources and constructing and maintaining school buildings, there has thus far been insufficient progress in increasing democracy in school governance. I

point particularly to the processes through which the school committees are formed and operate. This study found that school committee members had insufficient influence on critical issues in education such as the education policy, curriculum development and pedagogy. It was also found that there was inadequate information about the national education policy, curricular and financial matters, particularly as regards the schools' bank transactions and balance. All these insufficiencies, together with the parental committee members' lack of skills in most areas of school governance, posed a significant challenge to the progress of empowering the grassroots level in education-related decision making.

Based on the findings and the identified challenges, it is suggested that the government's current efforts to empower local communities in education governance need to advance beyond the establishment of institutional frameworks for peoples' engagement. The government should now build the capacity of people at the grassroots level through allocating adequate resources, providing regular training and through launching mass-media campaigns to raise public awareness of critical issues. This can be achieved through collaboration between multiple actors (i.e., the state, the private sector, NGOs and the local communities themselves). This approach, in my view, can work better in addressing the currently identified challenges and to empower the most affected parties in education decision making – the citizens.

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Appendix 1A: Questionnaire for members of school committees

Introduction

Dear respondent, thank you for agreeing to participate in this study which explores the empowerment of school committees and local communities in Tanzania. We would like to ask you some questions that will help us understand your situation as a member of school committee in your local area, the way you engage in decision making in the school, the challenges you face in the course of doing so, and your feelings about the degree of autonomy and control you have when you are making decisions and putting them into practice.

The information you provide will be anonymous and handled with maximum confidentiality, so please answer the questions freely. Some of the questions may be quite personal, and we hope you will be comfortable with them. If, however, you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, please be free to say so.

I: INFORMATION ABOUT LOCATION

1.1   Region_____
1.2   District _____
1.3   Ward_____
1.4   Village/ "mtaa"_____
1.5   School_____
1.6   Type of area (please circle the appropriate)
1 Urban   2 Rural

II: RESPONDENT'S BASIC INFORMATION

2.1   Respondent identification number_____

2.2 Sex (please circle appropriately) 1 Male 2 Female

2.3   Are you a household head? 1 Yes   2 No

2.4 Can you please tell me your age group? (Just circle the right answer)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	≥ 61

2.5 What is your marital status?

1	2	3	4
Married	Single	Divorced	Widowed

2.6 Can you please tell me your major source of employment?

1 Formal employment   ( ); 2   Subsistence farming   ( )

3 Pastoralism   ( ); 4   Fishing   ( )

4 Retail business   ( ); 5   Catering ('mama-lishe'/ 'baba-lishe')   ( )

III: QUESTIONS ON DEGREE OF EMPOWERMENT

3.1 Please indicate how much you have the opportunity to participate in each of the following aspects of decision making in your school.

   Use the following scale: (1= very low; 2= low; 3= somewhat low; 4= somewhat high; 5= high; 6= very high)

Aspect of decision making		1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	Control of discipline of pupils at school						
ii)	Planning and budgeting in the school						
iii)	Expenditure decisions in the school						

		1	2	3	4	5	6
iv)	Procurement of books and stationery in the school						
v)	Admission/enrolment of pupils						
vi)	Enhancing pupils' academic performance and curriculum improvement						
vii)	Awarding tenders for the construction of school infrastructure, supply of materials and equipment						
viii)	School-community relationships						
ix)	Construction of school infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers' houses and latrines						
x)	Mobilization of resources at the local level						

3.2 For each of the following aspects, please indicate the degree to which you actually make use of the existing opportunity to participate in decision making at the school.

(1= Very low; 2= Low; 3= somewhat low; 4= somewhat high; 5= High; 6= Very high)

Aspect		1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	Discipline of pupils in the school						
ii)	Planning and budgeting in the school						
iii)	Expenditure decisions in the school						
iv)	Procurement of books and stationery in the school						
v)	Admission/enrolment of pupils						
vi)	Enhancing pupils' academic performance and curriculum improvement						
vii)	Tender awarding for construction of school infrastructure, supply of materials and equipment						
viii)	School-community relationships						
ix)	Construction of school infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers' houses and latrines						
x)	Mobilization of resources at the local level						

3.3 How much can you say your participation has influence on decision making /change in each of the following aspects at the school? Use the following scale to assess your degree of influence:

(1= very low; 2= low; 3= somewhat low; 4= somewhat high; 5= high; 6= very high)

Aspect of school governance		1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	Discipline of pupils in the school						
ii)	Planning and budgeting in the school						
iii)	Expenditure decisions in the school						
iv)	Procurement of books and stationery in the school						
v)	Admission/enrolment of pupils						
vi)	Enhancing pPupils' academic performance and curriculum improvement						
vii)	Awarding tenders for construction of school infrastructure, supply of materials, equipment						
viii)	School-community relationships						

		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
ix)	Construction of school infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers' houses and latrines							
x)	Mobilization of resources at the local level							

3.4 Please indicate who it is who normally makes the decisions regarding each of the aspects listed in the table below.

Aspect of school governance		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	Discipline of pupils in the school							
ii)	Planning and budgeting in the school							
iii)	Expenditure decisions in the school							
iv)	Procurement of books and stationery in the school							
v)	Admission/enrolment of pupils							
vi)	Initiatives for enhancing pupils' academic performance							
vii)	Awarding tenders for construction of school infrastructure, supply of materials and equipment							
viii)	School-community relationships							
ix)	Construction of school infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers' houses and latrines							
x)	Mobilization of resources at the local level							

Key: 0 = Don't know; 1= Members of the school committee jointly make the decision; 2= The head teacher, in collaboration with the school management team, makes the decision; 3= Chairperson and the secretary of the school committee make the decision; 4= The head teacher, in consultation with the other teachers, makes the decision; 5= The village /mtaa government, in consultation with the head teacher, makes the decision; 6= District Education Office

IV QUESTIONS ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION & GENERAL AWARENESS

4.1 Can you please tell me how you access information on issues regarding the school and education development in general?

a) I regularly attend local education meetings where I am briefed by education officials

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

b) I usually get information by attending school committee meetings

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

c) I get information from the teachers by asking them

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

d) I get information through my children who attend the school

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

e) I get information through the village/mtaa government

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

f) I get information through local newspapers

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

g) I get information through television broadcasts

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

h) I get information through radio broadcasts

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

g) I get information through reading policy documents, work manuals and other public documents

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

g) I get information through advertisements on public noticeboards

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.2 Do you know exactly the number of regular meetings the school committee is supposed to hold in a year?   1 Yes   2 No

4.3 How often do you attend school committee meetings?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Occasionally		Fairly frequently		Very frequently

4.4 How do you compare your access to information before the reforms (during late 1990s) and now?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very much improved	Improved	Somehow improved	Somehow the same	Deteriorated	Highly Deteriorated

4.5 How often do you visit the school to get information about the progress of children and the school in general?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very often	Often		Less often		Never

4.6 To what extent can you access the following categories of information in the school?

i) Information about school development plans and budget

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

ii) Information about the school's income and expenditures

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iii) Information about day to day activities

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iv) Information about the school's bank balance

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

v) Information about curriculum

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

vi) Information about academic performance in the school

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

vii) Information about roles of the school committee

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

viii) Information about national education policies, legislation and guidelines

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

ix) Information about procedures for procuring equipment and materials

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

x) Information about teachers' recruitment, performance and conduct

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

V: QUESTIONS ON DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSION

5.1 How did you become a member of the school committee? (Please tick once)

1. I was elected by the majority of local community members through a secret ballot election ( )

2. I was elected by the majority of local community members through hand raising election   ( )

3. I was appointed by local political leaders   ( )

4. I was appointed by the LGA education authorities   ( )

5. I was appointed by the school head teacher   ( )

6. Other? (Please specify and code)   ( )

_____

5.3 What is the level of inclusion in the decision making process in the school?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

5.4 Can you please tell me your level of involvement in each of the following aspects of decision making in your school?

i) Planning and budgeting

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

ii) Admission of pupils

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iii) Resource mobilization

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iv) Pupils' discipline

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

v) Construction of school buildings and other infrastructure

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

vi) Procurement of equipment, materials and books

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

vii) Curriculum

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

V: QUESTIONS ON LEVEL OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS

5.1 What is your level of education? (Please tick only once)

1	Completed primary education or equivalent	( )
2	Completed primary education with vocational training	( )
3	Primary education dropout	( )
4	Completed O- level secondary education	( )
5	O-level secondary education with vocational education certificate	( )
6	O-level secondary education dropout	( )
7	Completed advanced level secondary (A-level) education	( )
8	A-level education with vocational education diploma	( )
9	University education	( )

<div align="center">10   Uneducated (no primary education or equivalent)   ( )</div>

5.2 For the period you have been serving as a school committee member, have you received any training to improve your skills?

1 Yes   2 No

5.3 Please assess your level of competence in the following categories of skills which are essential in school management:

i) Planning and budgeting

1	2	3	4	5	6	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High		Very high

ii) Basic accounting and bookkeeping

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iii) Procurement of school facilities and services

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iv) Leadership skills

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

v) Report writing

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

v) Bargaining/Negotiation

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

VI: QUESTIONS ON WILLINGNESS

6.1 Did you willingly decide to become a member of school committee?   1 Yes   2 No

6.2 Are you willing to continue serving as a school committee member in subsequent tenures?   1 Yes   2 No

6.3 How would you describe your level of motivation to work as a school committee member?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

6.4 Can you please evaluate your level of motivation to continue serving as a member of school committee in subsequent tenures?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

6.5 Do you participate /contribute in school development activities?

1 Yes   2 No

6.6 How much is your level of engagement in the following forms of school contribution?

i) Financial contribution for school infrastructure such as classroom construction

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

ii) Labour /manpower contribution in school development activities such as construction

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iii) Material contributions such as cement, timber, sand and so on for constructing school buildings and other infrastructure

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iv) Technical contribution in various tasks such as construction and repair

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

v) Community mobilization

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

6.7 Why do you participate in various issues in your school?

(Please use the scale to circle the number on the scale which reflects the level of correctness of each of the following statements as the reason for your participation in school development activities.)

a) Because I fear being punished by the government if I disobey the law.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

b) Because I feel I am responsible for contributing to improve the education of my children.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

c) Because of pressure from my fellow community members.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

d) Because of influence from local political leaders.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

e) Because of incentives from NGOs and donors.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

f) Because of the influence of my religious denomination.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

VII: QUESTIONS ON EXPERIENCE AND EXPOSURE

7.1 Have you served as a school committee member before the reforms (early 1990s and before)? 1 Yes 2 No

7.2 How long have you served as a school committee member, altogether, not just for this present term but including previous years? (Please circle the value of your appropriate answer)

1 Up to one year; 2 More than one year but less than two years; 3 More than one year but less than two years; 4 More than two years but less than three years; 5 More than three years but less than five years; 6 Over five years

7.3 On how many other user committees do you serve?

1 none ; 2 one; 3 two;

4 three ; 5 more than three

7.4 Can you pleasemention the other user committee(s) of which you are a member? (You can circle once or more depending on the number of committees you are serving in.)

1 Water user committee; 2 Community forest management committee; 3 Primary health care committee

4 Village/*mtaa* finance and economic planning committee; 5 Village /*mtaa* Peace and security committee

6 Other _____

VIII: QUESTIONS ON FINANCIAL RESOURCE CAPABILITY

8.1 How would you generally assess your ability to contribute financially to school development?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Moderate	Somewhathigh	High	Very high

8.2 Please estimate the proportion of your financial resources that comes from your own economic activities annually (tick only once)

1 Less than 10%   ( )   2 Over 10% but not more than 30%   ( )

3 Over 10% but not more than 30%   ( )   4 Over 30% but not more than 50%   ( )

5 Over 30% but not more than 50%   ( )   6 Over 50% but not more than 70%   ( )

7 Over 70% but not more than 90 %   ( )   8   Over 90%   ( )

8.3 How much of your financial resources come from external support as gifts/grant?

1   Less than 10%   ( )   2   Over 10 but not more than 30%   ( )

3 Over 10 but not more than 30%   ( )   4   Over 30% but not more than 50%   ( )

5   Over 50% but not more than 70%   ( )   5   Over 70% but not more than 90 %   ( )

6   Over 90%   ( )

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

Researcher's contacts: Phone number   +255652614606; E-mail address: orest.masue@gmail.com

Appendix 1B: Questionnaire for parents

Introduction

Dear respondent, thank you for agreeing to participate in this study which explores the empowerment of school committees and local communities in Tanzania. We would like to ask you some questions that will help us understand your situation as a member of school committee in your local area, the way you engage in decision making in the school, the challenges you face in the course of doing so, and your feelings about the degree of autonomy and control you have when you are making decisions and putting them into practice.

The information you provide will be anonymous and handled with maximum confidentiality, so please answer the questions freely. Some of the questions may be quite personal, and we hope you will be comfortable with them. If, however, you feel uncomfortable answering any questions, please be free to say so.

I: INFORMATION ABOUT LOCATION

1.7 Region_____
1.8 District_____
1.9 Ward_____
1.10 Village/ "mtaa"_____
1.11 School_____
1.12 Type of area (please circle the appropriate)
1 Urban   3 Rural

II: RESPONDENT'S BASIC INFORMATION

2.2 Sex (please circle appropriately)

1 Male

2 Female

2.3   Are you a household head? 1 Yes   2 No

2.3 Can you please tell me your age group? (Just circle the right answer)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
16-20	21-25	26-30	31-35	36-45	46-50	51-55	56-60	≥ 61

2.4 What is your marital status?

1	2	3	4
Married	Single	Divorced	Widowed

2.6 Can you please tell me your category of employment?

1 Formal employment   ( ); 2 Subsistence farming   ( )

3 Pastoralism   ( ); 4 Fishing   ( )

5 Retail business   ( ); 6 Catering ('mama-lishe'/ 'baba-lishe') ( )

6   Others
_____
_____
_____

III: QUESTIONS ON OPPORTUNITY, ITS USE & IMPACT

3.1 Please indicate the extent to which you feel that opportunity exists for you to participate in each of the following issues in your school.

   Use the following scale:

1= Very low; 2= Low; 3= Somewhat low; 4= Somewhat high; 5= High; 6= Very high

Aspect of decision making		1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	Discipline of pupils in the school						
ii)	Planning and budgeting in the school						
iii)	Expenditure decisions in the school						
iv)	Procurement of books and stationery in the school						
v)	Admission/enrolment of pupils						
vi)	Enhancing pupils' academic performance and curriculum improvement						
vii)	Awarding tenders for the supply of materials, equipment and construction						
viii)	School-community relationships						
ix)	Construction of school infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers' houses and latrines						
x)	Mobilization of resources through contribution to the school						

3.2 In each of the school governance aspects, please indicate the degree to which you actually make use of the existing opportunity to participate in decision making at the school.

Scale: 1= Very low; 2= Low; 3= somewhat low; 4= Somewhat high; 5= High; 6= Very high

Aspect of school governance		0	1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	Discipline of pupils in the school							
ii)	Planning and budgeting in the school							
iii)	Expenditure decisions in the school							
iv)	Procurement of books and stationery in the school							
v)	Admission/enrolment of pupils							
vi)	Enhancing pupils' academic performance and curriculum improvement							
vii)	Awarding tenders for the supply of materials, equipment and construction							
viii)	School-community relationships							
ix)	Construction of school infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers' houses and latrines							
x)	Mobilization of resources through contribution to the school							

3.3 How much can you say your participation has influence in decision making /change in each of the following aspects at the school? Use the following scale to assess your degree of influence:

Scale: 1= Very low; 2= Low; 3= Somewhat low; 4= Somewhat high; 5= High; 6= Very high

Aspect of school governance		1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	Discipline of pupils in the school						
ii)	Planning and budgeting in the school						
iii)	Expenditure decisions in the school						

	Aspect of school governance							
iv)	Procurement of books and stationery in the school							
v)	Admission/enrolment of pupils							
vi)	Enhancing pupils' academic performance and curriculum improvement							
vii)	Awarding tenders for the supply of materials, equipment and construction							
viii)	School-community relationships							
ix)	Construction of school infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers' houses and latrines							
x)	Mobilization of resources through contribution to the school							

	Aspect of school governance	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	Discipline of pupils in the school							
ii)	Planning and budgeting in the school							
iii)	Expenditure decisions in the school							
iv)	Procurement of books and stationery in the school							
v)	Admission/enrolment of pupils							
vi)	Initiatives for enhancing pupils' academic performance							
vii)	Awarding tenders for construction of school infrastructure, supply of materials and equipment							
viii)	School-community relationships							
ix)	Construction of school infrastructure such as classrooms, teachers' houses and latrines							
x)	Mobilization of resources							

3.4 Please indicate who is it who normally makes the decisions regarding each of the aspects listed in the table below.

Key:

 0 = Don't know; 1= Members of the school committee jointly make the decision; 2= The head teacher, in collaboration with the school management team, makes the decision; 3= Chairperson and the secretary of the school committee make the decision; 4= The head teacher, in consultation with the other teachers, makes the decision; 5= The village /mtaa government, in consultation with the head teacher, makes the decision;6= District Education Office

IV: QUESTIONS ON ACCESS TO INFORMATION & GENERAL AWARENESS

4.1 Can you please tell me how you access information on issues regarding the school and education development in general?

 a) I regularly attend local education meetings where I am briefed by education officials.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

b) I usually get information by attending school committee meetings.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

c) I get information from the teachers by asking them.

1	2	3	4	5	6

Strongly disagree	Disagree		Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

d) I get information through my children who attend the school.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

e) I get information through the village/mtaa government.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

f) I get information through local newspapers.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

g) I get information through television broadcasts.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

h) I get information through radio broadcasts.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

g) I get information through reading policy documents, work manuals and other public documents.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

g) I get information through advertisements on public noticeboards.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

4.2 How often do you attend school committee meetings?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Never	Occasionally		Fairly frequently		Very frequently

4.3 How do you compare your access to information before the reforms (during late 1990s) and now?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very much improved	Improved	Somehow improved	Somehow the same	Deteriorated	Highly Deteriorated

4. 4 How often do you visit the school to get information about the progress of children and the school in general?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very often	Often		Less often		Never

4.5 To what extent can you access the following categories of information in your school?

i) Information about school development plans and budget

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

ii) Information about the school's income and expenditure

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iii) Information about day to day activities

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iv) Information about the school's bank balance

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

v) Information about curriculum

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

vi) Information about academic performance in the school

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

vii) Information about roles of the school committee

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

viii) Information about national education policies, legislation and guidelines

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

ix) Information about procedures, the procurement of equipment and materials

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

V: QUESTIONS ON DEMOCRACY AND INCLUSION

5.1 What can you say about your level of inclusion in the decision making process at the school?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

5.2 Can you please tell me your level of involvement in each of the following aspects of decision making in your school?

i) Planning and budgeting

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

ii) Admission of pupils

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iii) Resource mobilization

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iv) Pupils' discipline

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

v) Construction of school buildings and other infrastructure

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

vi) Procurement of equipment, materials and books

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

vii) Curriculum

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

ix) Election of the members of the school committee

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

VI: QUESTIONS ON LEVEL OF EDUCATION, SKILLS AND AWARENESS

6.1 What is your level of education? (Please tick only once)

1	Completed primary education or equivalent	( )
2	Completed primary education with vocational training	( )
3	Primary education dropout	( )
4	Completed O- level secondary education	( )
5	O-level secondary education with vocational education certificate	( )
6	O-level secondary education dropout	( )
7	Completed advanced level secondary (A-level) education	( )
8	A-level education with vocational education diploma	( )
9	University education	( )

10   Uneducated (has neither primary education nor equivalent)   (   )

6.2 Have you ever received any training on school governance?   1 Ye   2 No

VII: QUESTIONS ON WILLINGNESS

7.1 Have you ever served as a member of school committee?   1 Yes   2 No

7.2 If your answer is <u>no</u>, are you interested to become a member of school committee? 1 Yes 2 No

7.3 If your answer is <u>yes</u>, are you willing to be a member of the school committee again?

1 Yes   2 No

7.4 Do you participate in /contribute to school development activities? 1 Yes   2 No

7.5 How much is your level of engagement in the following forms of school contribution?

i) Financial contribution for school infrastructure such as classroom construction

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

ii) Labour /manpower contribution in school development activities such as construction

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iii) Material contributions such as cement, timber, sand and so on for constructing school buildings and other infrastructure

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

iv) Technical contribution in various tasks such as construction and repair

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

v) Community mobilization

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

7.6 Why do you participate in various issues in your school?

(Please use the scale to circle the number on the scale which reflects the level of correctness of each of the following statements as the reason for your participation in school development activities)

a) Because I fear being punished by the government if I disobey the law.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

b) Because I feel I am responsible for contributing to improve the education of my children.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

c) Because of pressure from my fellow members of the community.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

d) Because of influence from local political leaders.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

e) Because of incentives from NGOs and donors.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

f) Because of the influence of my religious denomination

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree

VIII: QUESTIONS ON EXPERIENCE AND EXPOSURE

8.1 How long have you participated in education development activities in your local community?

_____years

8.2 Do you also participate in development activities in other sectors as well? 1 Yes   2 No

8.3 How long have you served as a school committee member altogether, not just for this present term but including previous years? (Please circle the value of your appropriate answer)

> 0 Not at all; 1 Up to one year; 2 More than one year but less than two years; 3 More than two years but less than three years; 4 More than three years but less than five years; 5 Over five years

8.4 Pleasemention the other user committee(s) of which you are a member. (You can circle once or more depending on the number of committees you are serving in.)

1 Water user committee; 2 Community forest management committee; 3 Primary health care committee

4 Village/*mtaa* finance and economic planning committee; 5 Village /*mtaa* Peace and security committee; 6 Other
_____

IX: QUESTIONS ON FINANCIAL RESOURCE CAPABILITY

9.1 How would you generally assess your ability to contribute financial to school development?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

9.2 How would you generally describe your financial stability?

1	2	3	4	5	6
Very low	Low	Somewhat low	Somewhat high	High	Very high

9.3 Please assess your ability to pay for the following necessities for your family. For each category, tick appropriately according to the scale provided:

Scale: 1= With very much difficulty, 2= With much difficulty, 3= With some difficulty,

4= With reasonable ease, 5= With much ease, 6= With very much ease

	Necessities	1	2	3	4	5	6
i)	Daily food						
ii)	Health services						
iii)	Clothing						
iv)	Education for your children						
v)	Paying various bills						
vi)	Transport						

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION

Researcher's contacts: Phone number   +255652614606; E-mail address: orest.masue@gmail.com

Appendix 2A: Interview guide for parents

1. How long have you lived in this village/ 'mtaa'?

-Probe on whether s/he is a native or has migrated to the village/ 'mtaa'.

2. Does your school have a school committee?

-Probe on whether s/he knows about who the members are.

-Probe on whether s/he is aware of what the school committee does.

3. Do you feel that your school committee represents you well in the school decision making?

-Probe on: strengths & weaknesses of the committees in representing you?

-Probe on what the committee could do to improve its effectiveness.

4. I have found in my visits to school committees in this district/municipality that people who have a high level of education are not interested in becoming members of school committees. Do you find this also to be the case?

-Probe on the possibility of reluctance.

-Probe on the possibility of having a negative attitude towards the school committees.

-Probe on what could be done to attract them.

5. How often do you attend school meetings?

-Probe on the reasons for poor attendance to school meetings.

-Probe on the extent to which these meetings are held at convenient times.

5. Do you participate in issues of policy and curriculum development in your school?

-Probe according to the response.

6. How much are you informed about different things happening in your school?

-Probe as per the response.

7. Why are people more informed about the performance of their own children and the school in general than on other issues such as curriculum and policy?

-Probe as per response.

Appendix 2B: Interview Guide for Education Officers

1. When did you start working in your current job?

- Probe on previous experience /first appointment.

-Probe on education qualifications.

2. How well do you think school committees in your district/municipality are performing?

-Probe on successes, challenges and prospects.

-Probe as per the direction of response.

3. Can you explain to me how a school committee is formed?

-Probe on legal requirement/enabling legislation.

-Probe on composition and tenure of the committees.

-Probe on membership criteria, e.g., educational qualification and membership approval.

-Probe on election process.

-Probe as per response.

4. Why is it that most of the school committees have members whose education is at primary or secondary level? Do you think this leads to any problems?

-Continue probing as per response and look for suggestions on what could be the suitable educational qualification for school committee members.

5. What are the reasons for the recent popularity of school committees in Tanzania?

-Probe on the likelihood of donor influences and other factors such as people's increased awareness.

-Probe as per response.

_____

Appendix 2 C: Interview Guide for Teachers

1. For how long have you worked in this school?

2. In what ways do you cooperate with parents in school decision making?

-Probe on the role of parents in various areas of school decision making such as the discipline of pupils and other areas.

- Probe as per response.

3. How do you inform parents about what is happening in your school?

-Probe as per direction of response.

4. Do you play any role in determining the school curriculum?

-Probe as per response.

5. Why are people with a high level education not very much involved in school committees?

-Probe accordingly.

6. What are the main sources of funding to your school? What can you say about their sufficiency and reliability?

-Probe as per response.

7. Suggest some ways through which school decision making can be improved.

_____

UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN
Department of Administration and Organisation Theory

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

To whom it may concern,

RE: Mr. Orest Sebastian Masue

The aforementioned person is a PhD candidate at the Department of Administration and Organisation Theory, University of Bergen, Norway since January 2011.

Mr. Orest Masue has completed the first year of his PhD programme and is now starting research work for his PhD dissertation on **"Empowerment of school committees and local communities in Tanzania"** which I am the supervisor. To accomplish this task, Mr. Orest needs to collect data from various Local Government Authorities and Primary Schools in Tanzania from January 2011 to September 2012, through survey questionnaires, interviews to various persons and various documentary reviews.

With this introduction letter, I request you to assist Mr. Orest Masue according to your official procedures in accessing appropriate sources of data and any other procedural requirements that are important for conducting research in Tanzania. As a rule, all data obtained will be used for academic purpose only.

Your co-operation is highly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

Prof. Steinar Askvik,
Supervisor
Telephone: 55 58 24 74
E- mail: Steinar.Askvik@aorg.uib.no

Address: Christiesgt 17/19, 5007; PO Box 7802, N - 5020 Bergen. Telephone: +47 55 58 21 75; Website: www.uib.no/admorg E-mail: post@aorg.uib.no

Appendix 3B: Letter of introduction Mzumbe University
_____

MZUMBE UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Tel: +255 (0) 23 2604380/1/3/4
Fax: +255 (0) 23 2604382
Cell: +255 (0) 754 694029
E-mail: drps@mzumbe.ac.tz
Website: www.mzumbe.ac.tz

P.O.BOX 63
MZUMBE
MOROGORO, TANZANIA

Ref. No. MU/DPGS/PGS/41/VOL.I/209   Date: 28th December, 2011

Permanent Secretary
TAMISEMI,
P.O. Box 1923,
DODOMA.

RE: INTRODUCTION OF MR. OREST SEBASTIAN MASUE

The aforementioned person is an employee of Mzumbe University at the Capacity of Assistant Lecturer. He is currently pursuing PhD in Public Administration at the University of Bergen, Norway.   As part of requirements for completion of his studies, he needs to collect data for writing his PhD dissertation on "Empowerment of School Communities and Local Communities in Tanzania".   The study will involve data collect from seven (7) LGAs; namely Morogoro Municipal Council, Mvomero District Council, Kibaha District Council, Kibaha Township, Dodoma Municipal Council, Kondoa District Council and Siha District Council.

This letter serves to achieve three purposes. First, to verify that he is granted permission to undertake the research, second, to introduce him to you and thirdly to request you to facilitate any form of assistance he might need for successful completion of his study We can assure you that this activity is entirely for academic purpose and not otherwise.

We trust that you will accord our student with necessary assistance.

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Stella M. Kinemo.
For: VICE CHANCELLOR

Appendix 3C: Letter of introduction, PMO – RALG

THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Telegrams "TAMISEMI" DODOMA
Telephone No. (026) 2322848, 2321607,
2322853, 2322420
Fax No. (026) 2322116, 2322146,
2321013.
E-mail: ps@pmoralg.go.tz
In reply please quote:

Regional Administration
and Local Government,
P.O. Box. 1923,
DODOMA.

Ref. No. HA.176/415/01/41   02/03/2012 .

Municipal Director,
Morogoro Municipal Council,
P.O. Box 166,
MOROGORO.

Municipal Director,
Dodoma Municipal Council,
P.O. Box 1249,
DODOMA.

Town Director,
Kibaha Town Council,
P.O. Box 30112,
KIBAHA.

District Executive Director,
Kondoa District Council,
P.O. Box 1,
KONDOA.

District Executive Director,
Siha District Council,
P.O. Box 342,
Siha
KILIMANJARO.

District Executive Director,
Kibaha District Council,
P.O. Box 30112,
KIBAHA

District Executive Director,
Mvomero District Council,
P.O. Box 59,
MVOMERO.

Ref: **INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO**
MR. OREST SEBASTIAN MASUE

Reference is made to the above heading.

This is to introduce to you that the bearer of this letter is currently
pursuing PhD in Public Administration at the University of Bergen,
Norway.

As part of requirements for completion of his studies he needs to
collect data for writing his PhD Dissertation titled "Empowerment of
School Communities and Local Communities in Tanzania". This
study involves data collection from your Local Government
Authorities (LGAs).

Therefore, you are requested to accord him any necessary assistance
in completion of his study.

Thank you for your continued cooperation.

Kategere, V. F.
For: **PERMANENT SECRETARY**

Appendix 4A: List of the schools involved

S/N	NAME OF SCHOOLSCHOOL	COUNCIL	REGION
1.	Gubali primary school	Kondoa District Council	Dodoma
2.	Choka primary school	,,	,,
3.	Tandala primary school	,,	,,
4.	Kelema-Maziwani primary school	,,	,,
5.	Dalai primary school	,,	,,
6.	Pongai primary school	,,	,,
7.	Waida primary school	,,	,,
8.	Mondo primary school	,,	,,
9.	Araa primary school	,,	,,
10.	Kondoa primary school	,,	,,
11.	Kolowasi primary school	,,	,,
12.	Bolisa primary school	,,	,,
13.	Bicha primary school	,,	,,
14.	Iboni primary school	,,	,,
15.	Kilimani primary school	,,	,,
16.	Unkuku primary school	,,	,,
17.	Chinangali primary school	Dodoma Municipal Council	,,
18.	Sokoine primary school	,,	,,
19.	Chamwinno primary school	,,	,,
20.	Chamwino –B primary school	,,	,,
21.	Uhuru primary school	,,	,,
22.	Kaloleni primary school	,,	,,
23.	Chang'ombe primary school	,,	,,
24.	Medeli primary school	,,	,,
25.	Ntyuka primary school	,,	,,
26.	Dodoma Mlimani	,,	,,
27.	Chang'ombe – B primary school	,,	,,
28.	Mazengo primary school	,,	,,
29.	Kizota primary school	,,	,,
30.	Kikuyu primary school	,,	,,
31.	Kikuyu – B primary school	,,	,,
32.	Nkuhungu primary school	,,	,,
33.	Mindu primary school	Morogoro Municipal Council	Morogoro
34.	Chief Albert Luthuli primary school	,,	,,
35.	Bigwa primary school	,,	,,
36.	Kasanga primary school	,,	,,
37.	Mgolole primary school	,,	,,
38.	Misongeni primary school	,,	,,
39.	Kigurunyembe primary school	,,	,,
40.	Kilakala primary school	,,	,,
41.	Mwande primary school	,,	,,
42.	Mafisa – B primary school	,,	,,
43.	Msamvu – A primary school	,,	,,
44.	Msamvu – B primary school	,,	,,
45.	Mtawala primary school	,,	,,
46.	Mji mkuu primary school	,,	,,
47.	Mbuyuni primary school	,,	,,
48.	Makuture Primary school	Mvomero District Council	,,
49.	Kipera primary school	,,	,,
50.	Vitonga primary school	,,	,,
51.	Mlali primary school	,,	,,
52.	Lugono primary school	,,	,,
53.	Kibaoni primary school	,,	,,
54.	Mangae primary school	,,	,,

55.	Mlandizi primary school	,,	,,
56.	Changarawe primary school	,,	,,
57.	Mzumbe primary school	,,	,,
58.	Tangeni primary school	,,	,,
59.	Masanze primary school	,,	,,
60.	Mbigiri primary school	,,	,,
61.	Wami – Dakawa primary school	,,	,,
62.	Wami – Sokoine primary school	,,	,,
63.	Ngartati primary school	Siha District Council	Kilimanjaro
64.	Sanya Juu primary school	,,	,,
65.	Makiwaru primary school	,,	,,
66.	Majengo primary school	,,	,,
67.	Kilingi primary school	,,	,,
68.	Tindigani Naibili primary school	,,	,,
69.	Fuka primary school	,,	,,
70.	Koboko primary school	,,	,,
71.	Nasai primary school	,,	,,
72.	Kilari primary school	,,	,,
73.	Merali primary school	,,	,,
74.	Lawate primary school	,,	,,
75.	Siha primary school	,,	,,
76.	Wanri kati primary school	,,	,,
77.	Wiri primary school	,,	,,
78.	Mkoani primary school	Kibaha Town Council	Pwani
79.	Kibaha primary school	,,	,,
80.	Jitihada primary school	,,	,,
81.	Mwendapole primary school	,,	,,
82.	Visiga primary school	,,	,,
83.	Kambarage primary school	,,	,,
84.	Nyumbu primary school	,,	,,
85.	Mailimoja primary school	,,	,,
86.	Maendeleo primary school	,,	,,
87.	Juhudi primary school	,,	,,
88.	Kongowe primary school	,,	,,
89.	Twendepamoja primary school	,,	,,
90.	Jitegemee primary school	,,	,,
91.	Mkuza primary school	,,	,,
92.	Msangani primary school	,,	,,
93.	Gwata primary school	Kibaha District Council	,,
94.	Mlandizi – A primary school	,,	,,
95.	Ngeta primary school	,,	,,
96.	Msongola primary school	,,	,,
97.	Tumaini primary school	,,	,,
98.	Mwanabwito primary school	,,	,,
99.	Ngwale primary school	,,	,,
100.	Azimio primary school	,,	,,
101.	Ruvu JKT primary school	,,	,,

Appendix 4B: Participants of in-depth interviews

Id.	Category	Gender	Level of education	Place
E1	Education official	Female	B.A. (Education)	Morogoro Municipal Council Headquarters, Morogoro
E2	,,	Female	B.A. (Administration)	Mvomero District Council Headquarters, Dakawa, Morogoro
E3	,,	Male	B.A. (Ed)	Siha District Council Headquarters, Sanyajuu, Kilimanjaro
E4	,,	Male	B.A. (Ed)	Kondoa District Council Headquarters, Kondoa, Dodoma
E5	,,	Male	B.A. (Ed)	Dodoma Municipal Council Headquarters, Dodoma
E6	,,	Female	B.A. (Ed)	Kibaha Town Council Headquarters, Kibaha, Pwani
E7	,,	Male	B.A. (Ed)	Kibaha District Council Headquarters, Kibaha, Pwani
P1	Parent	Male	Primary Ed	Mvomero District Council
P2	,,	Female	Secondary Ed	Siha District Council , Sanyajuu, Kilimanjaro
P3	,,	Male	Primary Ed	Dodoma Municipal Council, Dodoma
P4		Female	Primary Ed	Kibaha Town Council
P5	,,	Female	Primary Ed	Kibaha District Council, Kibaha, Pwani
T1	Teacher	Female	Certificate	Mvomero District Council
T2	,,	Female	Certificate	Siha District Council , Sanyajuu, Kilimanjaro
T3	,,	Male	Diploma	Dodoma Municipal Council, Dodoma
T4	,,	Male	Certificate	Kibaha Town Council, Kibaha, Pwani
T5	,,	Female	Diploma	Kibaha District Council, Kibaha, Pwani

Appendix 4C: Participants in the Focus Groups

ID	School & location	Participants M	F	T	Composition	Date
FG(C)	Kilakala primary school, Morogoro Municipality	4	3	7	Committee members	12.02.2013
		FG(C1)	FG(C5)			
		FG(C2)	FG(C6)			
		FG(C3)	FG(C7)			
		FG(C4)				
FG(P)	Choka Primary school, Kondoa District Council	3	3	6	Parents	14.03.2013
		FG(P4)	FG(P1)			
		FG(P5)	FG(P2)			
		FG(P6)	FG(P3)			
	Total number of participants	7	6	13		

Appendix 5: A pair-wise rank matrix of information sources

SOURCES OF INFORMATION	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	Total	Rank
1.School meetings (M)		M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	9	1
2.Teachers (T)			C	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	7	3
3.School children (C)				C	C	C	C	C	C	C	8	2
4.Radio broadcasts (R)					N	L	R	R	R	R	4	5.5
5.Public noticeboards (N)						N	N	O	N	N	5	4
6.Local leaders (L)							L	L	L	TV	4	5.5
7.Television broadcasts (TV)								O	NP	TV	2	9
8.Education officials (O)									NP	O	3	7.5
9.Newspapers (NP)										NP	3	7.5
10.Government documents (GD)											0	10

Source: Focus Group [FG(C)]

Errata for
Empowerment of School Committees and Parents in Tanzania

Delineating Existence of Opportunity, Its Use and Impact on School Decisions

Orest Sebastian Masue

Thesis for the degree philosophiae doctor (PhD)

at the University of Bergen

(Signature of candidate)

13.11.2014

Errata

On the title page, the phrase "school decision making" on the sub-title should read (and has been changed to) "school decisions".

Page 7 (the last sentence, the last but one line) before figure 2: The letter "s" should read "some".

Page 9 (on country profile) second paragraph, the area covered by water should read "(62,000 km^2)" without a superscripted closing bracket.

Page 100 Table 10 the scores for the second aspect (planning and budgeting) should be:

Aspect	N	M (S.D)	High (%)	p-value
2. Planning and budgeting				
Members of school committees	214	4.7 (1.0)	61	< .001
Parents	95	4.0 (1.1)	38	

Page 183, the work by Dyer &Rose (2005) cited in the text on pages 60 and 61 but not acknowledged in the reference list has been acknowledged (second reference on p.183), and now reads:

Dyer, C., & Rose, P. (2005). Decentralisation for educational development? An editorial introduction. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, *35*(2), 105-113.