

Actualization of the Key Roles of Stakeholders' Engagement in The Implementation of Change in Primary Schools in Kinondoni Municipal in Tanzania

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Abstract: This study examined the actualization of key roles of stakeholders' engagement in the implementation of transformational change in primary schools in Kinondoni Municipal, Tanzania. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through interviews with head teachers, teachers, and ward education officers, complemented by structured questionnaires administered to a representative sample of stakeholders. Findings revealed that active collaboration, parental involvement, effective communication, advocacy for resources, and awareness of educational policies significantly enhanced the successful implementation of reforms. However, challenges including financial constraints, capacity gaps among head teachers, and resistance from teachers and parents impeded progress. The study recommends targeted capacity-building, structured communication strategies, increased parental and community engagement, timely resource provision, and policy awareness campaigns to ensure that stakeholders' engagement effectively supports educational reforms. These measures are essential for sustaining transformational change, improving school performance, and enhancing the quality of primary education in Kinondoni Municipal.

Keywords: Stakeholder engagement, transformational change, collaboration; parental involvement and educational reforms.

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Introduction

In Tanzania, the urge for implementation of transformational change is wanting despite experiencing bottlenecks in various primary schools in the country. These setbacks include inadequate funding in developing school infrastructure, unequal distribution of resources between urban and rural areas whereby many seeking to be primary school administrators look for urban schools due to availability of social amenities and economic opportunities. The inefficiency or unequal distribution of materials, inadequate training, poor community involvement, and lack of clear communication of policies, challenges administration in public primary schools in Tanzania, Mbelle (2008) & Meney (2024).

Implementation of transformational change in public primary school in Tanzania is serious wanting. The 2014 education policy as revised in 2023, appeal for reforms aimed at improving education quality and accessibility. This is important because primary education sector faces significant challenges during implementation of reforms. The education reforms that have been undertaken in Tanzania include; Tanzania education reforms: The promise of a brighter future by IPP media, the Tanzania rolls out major education reforms in four years by Daily News, The Education System Challenges in Tanzania by OneLoveTanzania.com, Tanzania's Education Policy Reforms:

Challenges and Opportunities, the Tanzania Education and Training Policy 2014 (2023 Edition) by MOJA, an Inside Look at the Tanzanian Education System: Challenges and Opportunities and the Challenges Facing Primary Education under Decentralization of Primary School Management in Tanzania , article presented in the International Journal of Humanities and Social Science of 2020.

The primary education in Tanzania has undergone several reforms aimed at enhancing access, quality, and relevance. After independence, Tanzania government prioritized universal primary education, culminating in the adoption of free primary education (FPE) in the 1970s. Over time, reforms have been introduced to address emerging social, technological, and economic demands. One notable shift has been the transition from content-based to competency-based curricula, which aligns with global trends emphasizing learner-centered approaches, critical thinking, and skills development (Ministry of Education, Science, and Technology [MoEST], 2020). Despite these reforms, schools, particularly public primary schools, continue to face significant administrative challenges that hinder the effective implementation of educational innovations.

Literature Review

Theoretical Review

This study is guided by Transformational Leadership Theory, originally proposed by Burns (1978) and later developed by Bass and Avolio (1994), which emphasizes leaders' ability to inspire followers to exceed self-interest for a collective vision through idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. The theory highlights the role of school leaders in motivating teachers and students, fostering collaboration, and creating supportive learning environments that encourage innovation and high performance. Its strengths include explaining how administrators build trust, empower staff, and promote long-term organizational growth, making it relevant for analyzing leadership in Tanzanian primary schools. However, the theory has limitations, particularly in resource-constrained contexts where inadequate funding, limited teaching materials, untrained staff, and centralized bureaucracies may hinder the effectiveness of visionary leadership. Applied to this study, the theory provides a framework for understanding how head teachers in Kinondoni Municipal manage educational reforms, navigate challenges such as resource shortages and staff resistance, and sustain motivation and collaboration to implement transformational change effectively. Evidence from studies like Akiyoo (2022) further underscores that resource availability is critical for enabling school leaders to realize successful educational innovations.

Empirical Literature Review

Stakeholder engagement is widely recognized as a critical determinant of successful educational reform. Historically, educational transformation has often failed not because of poor policy design but due to inadequate involvement of key actors in the planning and implementation phases. Stakeholders such as teachers, parents, local government officials, community members, and non-governmental organizations play essential roles in creating ownership of reforms, fostering accountability, and ensuring that policy goals are translated into classroom practices (Fullan, 2001; Kotter, 1996). Without active engagement, reforms are often perceived as top-down mandates, which can trigger resistance, reduce motivation, and hinder successful implementation.

Globally, studies have highlighted the centrality of stakeholder engagement in educational change. Rafael et al. (2024), in Italy, examined the role of stakeholder involvement in the implementation of education and skills policy reforms. The study revealed that insufficient consultation and weak collaboration mechanisms limited the success of reforms. Schools and policymakers often lacked a comprehensive understanding of how to involve teachers, parents, and community leaders in the reform process, leading to inconsistent adoption and low commitment to policy objectives. The Italian case illustrates that stakeholder engagement is not merely a procedural step but a strategic necessity for ensuring reforms is contextually relevant and effectively implemented.

In Cameroon, Berka (2021) also found that inadequate stakeholder involvement contributed to implementation failures. Schools that did not actively engage teachers, parents, and local authorities faced resistance, poor communication, and misaligned expectations. This research emphasized that active participation of stakeholders enhances transparency, builds trust, and fosters

collective responsibility, which are essential for managing the complexities of educational change. Similarly, Oloba and Smith (2022) in Nigeria reported that the non-involvement of key factors such as teachers and parents, combined with political interference, significantly undermined reform outcomes. The study noted that head teachers struggled to implement change effectively when stakeholders were neither consulted nor included in decision-making, leading to demotivation and a lack of ownership.

Contrastingly, research in Kenya by Agony et al. (2019) demonstrated that stakeholder support is instrumental in facilitating successful educational reform. In the case of inclusive education, head teachers who engaged actively with the Teachers Service Commission, parents, and local education officers were able to implement policy reforms more effectively. This finding highlights the importance of participatory approaches, where stakeholders are not only informed but also empowered to contribute to decision-making. The Kenyan experience illustrates that involving stakeholders fosters shared responsibility, aligns expectations, and improves the sustainability of reforms.

Theoretically, stakeholder engagement aligns with the principles of transformational leadership, which emphasize collaboration, empowerment, and participatory decision-making (Bass & Avolio, 1994; Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Transformational leaders recognize that successful change is not achieved through authority alone but through inspiring and mobilizing all actors in the system. By involving stakeholders, head teachers create a supportive environment where diverse perspectives are considered, challenges are collectively addressed, and commitment to the reform process is strengthened.

Conceptually, stakeholder engagement encompasses multiple dimensions, including consultation, collaboration, communication, and participation in decision-making. Consultation involves seeking input from stakeholders before and during the reform process, ensuring that their concerns and suggestions are considered. Collaboration requires active cooperation between schools and external factors, such as local government agencies, NGOs, and parent associations, to mobilize resources and expertise. Communication ensures transparency, reduces misunderstandings, and fosters trust among stakeholders. Participation in decision-making gives stakeholders a sense of ownership, making them more likely to support and sustain reforms (Fullan, 2001; Kotter, 1996).

In the Tanzanian context, particularly in Kinondoni Municipal, stakeholder engagement presents unique challenges and opportunities. Rapid urbanization, population growth, and school congestion create a high-pressure environment in which head teachers must navigate multiple interests and demands. Parents and community members often have expectations regarding resource allocation, curriculum quality, and teacher performance, while local education authorities impose compliance requirements. Effective engagement of these stakeholders can enhance accountability, improve resource mobilization, and facilitate smoother implementation of reforms. Conversely, limited stakeholder involvement may lead to resistance, conflict, and ineffective policy translation, as head teachers struggle to reconcile competing interests.

Empirical studies in Tanzania reinforce the importance of stakeholder engagement. Aber (2021), examining public primary

schools in Ilala District, found that head teachers who maintained regular communication and collaboration with parents and local education officers were more successful in implementing reforms aimed at improving teaching and learning in large class settings. In contrast, schools with minimal stakeholder involvement experienced resistance, poor teacher morale, and limited adoption of innovative teaching practices. These findings suggest that the active engagement of stakeholders is not merely supportive but essential for sustaining educational change.

Furthermore, international experiences provide lessons for Tanzania. In Indonesia, Sari et al. (2022) noted that schools with strong collaboration between teachers, parents, and local authorities were better able to implement inclusive education reforms. In the Netherlands, Sunyani et al. (2023) found that government policies explicitly emphasized stakeholder engagement, ensuring that parents, teachers, and communities were partners in reform implementation. These cases demonstrate that stakeholder engagement contributes not only to compliance but also to innovation, as stakeholders provide practical insights and resources that enhance the effectiveness of reforms.

For Kinondoni Municipal, understanding stakeholder engagement is crucial because head teachers operate in a complex urban context where resource limitations, teacher shortages, and infrastructural constraints are common. The extent to which stakeholders are engaged can determine whether reforms are successfully implemented or fail to meet their objectives. By investigating how head teachers involve stakeholders in the implementation of transformational change, this study seeks to identify effective engagement strategies, uncover barriers to participation, and provide recommendations for enhancing collaborative leadership practices in Tanzanian primary schools.

The literature demonstrates that stakeholder engagement is a central pillar in the success of educational reforms. Schools that actively involve teachers, parents, communities, and local authorities are better positioned to overcome challenges, mobilize resources, and sustain transformational change. Conversely, insufficient stakeholder involvement leads to resistance, inefficiency, and partial or failed reform implementation. This study will therefore examine the extent and effectiveness of stakeholder engagement in public primary schools in Kinondoni Municipal, providing critical insights into how participatory practices can strengthen school leadership and improve educational outcomes in the Tanzanian context.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-methods research approach, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to examine administrative challenges faced by primary school head teachers in implementing transformational change in Kinondoni Municipal, Dar es Salaam. An exploratory sequential triangulation design was used, whereby qualitative data collected through interviews with head teachers, teachers, and ward education officers (WEOs) informed the development of structured quantitative questionnaires administered to a larger sample of teachers and school heads. The target population included 792 respondents, comprising 86 primary schools, 600 teachers, 86 head teachers, and 20 ward education officers, with a sample of 100 participants selected using stratified, simple random, and purposive sampling techniques. Questionnaires

captured demographic information, administrative challenges, and strategies for overcoming barriers, while in-depth interviews provided detailed insights from WEOs. The validity and reliability of the instruments were established through expert review, content and face validation, and a pilot study involving test-retest procedures with teachers, which yielded a high correlation coefficient (0.8). Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics for quantitative responses, and thematic coding for qualitative data. Ethical considerations, including informed consent, confidentiality, voluntary participation, and adherence to APA guidelines, were strictly observed throughout the study.

Findings and Discussions

The study sought to find out stakeholders' roles in implementing transformational change. The items discussed here are; collaboration and sharing of best practices, involving diverse stakeholders in decision-making, engaging in advocacy to secure additional resources, and participating in professional networking platforms to address persistent resource gaps. Such practices highlight a growing recognition among teachers and school leaders that collective action, where multiple actors combine their resources, knowledge, and commitment, essential to driving sustainable school improvement. The following are the key roles of implementing transformational change:

Collaboration and Sharing of Best Practices

The study found that collaboration among stakeholders, including teachers, head teachers, parents, and community members, plays a crucial role in implementing transformational change in primary schools. Collaborative practices, such as sharing knowledge, experiences, and resources, help strengthen school improvement initiatives and ensure sustainability. When stakeholders actively engage in exchanging best practices, schools are better equipped to address challenges and adopt innovative strategies. Literature on participatory school management (UNESCO, 2020) emphasizes that collective action, where multiple actors combine their expertise and commitment, is essential for achieving meaningful and lasting educational reforms.

Documentary review and interviews with school leaders in Kinondoni revealed that schools where stakeholders collaborated effectively demonstrated smoother implementation of reforms and better utilization of available resources. One WEO noted:

“Without sharing ideas and working together, initiatives to improve schools often fail or become fragmented” (WEO, August 2025).

This indicates that collaboration fosters a sense of shared responsibility among stakeholders, enhancing the effectiveness of change processes. In conclusion, promoting collaboration and the exchange of best practices among stakeholders is vital for achieving coherent, sustainable, and impactful school reforms.

Parental Involvement

The study found that parental involvement is one of the most critical factors influencing the success of transformational change in primary schools. Parents contribute to school development by monitoring students' progress, participating in school activities, and supporting resource mobilization efforts. Active parental engagement enhances accountability, strengthens school-

community relations, and helps ensure that reforms meet the students' needs. This aligns with UNESCO (2020), which emphasizes that parents' proactive participation is crucial for fostering shared responsibility and school improvement. Interviews indicated that limited parental engagement posed significant challenges. A WEO explained:

"Parents are sometimes reluctant to contribute, thinking education should be entirely the government's responsibility. This makes stakeholder mobilization challenging" (WEO, August 2025).

These findings suggest that without deliberate efforts to involve parents, change initiatives may lack community support and struggle to achieve intended outcomes. Consequently, fostering parental engagement is essential for the effective implementation of educational reforms in primary schools.

Effective Communication

The study revealed that effective communication between head teachers and stakeholders is central to successful change implementation. Clear, consistent, and transparent communication helps stakeholders understand school priorities, reform objectives, and their roles in the process. When communication channels are weak, misunderstandings arise, and support for reforms diminishes, affecting the overall success of change initiatives. Bush and Glover (2019) argue that communication in educational leadership is not merely information transfer but a process of building trust, clarifying roles, and ensuring mutual understanding prerequisites for sustainable change. Interviews with head teachers and WEOs highlighted communication barriers as a recurring challenge. One respondent stated:

"If communication is poor, misunderstandings occur, and support for change initiatives becomes minimal" (Head Teacher, August 2025).

This perspective shows that establishing clear and ongoing communication strategies is vital to engage stakeholders, reduce resistance, and enhance collaboration. Therefore, effective communication acts as a foundation for stakeholder participation and the smooth execution of transformational reforms.

Advocacy and Resource Mobilization

The study found that stakeholders play a key role in advocating for additional resources to address gaps that hinder the implementation of transformational change. Engaging parents, community leaders, and education officers helps schools secure funding, learning materials, and infrastructural support needed to sustain reforms. Resource mobilization ensures that schools can implement new strategies and maintain high-quality learning environments.

During interviews, school leaders emphasized that advocacy initiatives, such as fundraising campaigns and community partnerships, significantly improved access to resources. One head teacher remarked:

"Through collaborative advocacy with parents and community members, we were able to acquire textbooks and repair classroom facilities, which would have been impossible otherwise" (HoS, August 2025).

This finding indicates that proactive stakeholder engagement in resource mobilization directly contributes to the success and sustainability of school reforms, ensuring that initiatives are not hindered by financial or material limitations.

Policy Awareness and Literacy

The study revealed that stakeholders' awareness of education policies and reforms significantly affects their participation in change initiatives. When stakeholders are not fully informed about government programs, they are less likely to engage effectively, which can undermine the implementation of reforms. Fullan (2024) and Anderson (2019) note that building policy literacy is essential to fostering ownership, reducing resistance, and aligning reforms with community expectations. Interviews with WEOs and teachers indicated that some stakeholders were unaware of government reforms, limiting their involvement. A WEO explained:

"Some stakeholders are not fully aware of government reforms and change programs, which reduces their willingness to engage" (WEO, August 2025).

These findings suggest that creating awareness and understanding of educational policies among stakeholders enhances their participation, strengthens collaboration, and improves the likelihood of successful implementation. Therefore, policy literacy is a key driver of stakeholder engagement and transformational change in primary schools.

Challenges Facing Head Teachers in The Implementation of Transformational Change

In addition, researcher investigated challenges facing head teachers as administrators in implementation transformational change in primary schools. The findings highlighted critical need for targeted interventions such as capacity-building workshops for stakeholders, structured communication frameworks between school leaders and the community, and simplified dissemination of government reform agendas to ensure that change processes are not only initiated but also embraced and supported by all actors involved. The results are explained in table 1 below.

Table 1: Challenges Facing Head Teachers in the Implementation of Change (n= 60)

Challenge	Frequency(n)	Percentage (%)	Description
Financial Limitations	60	66.7%	Insufficient capitation grants and delays in disbursement directly hinder implementation of change initiatives.
Capacity Gaps	50	55.6%	Lack of advanced training in leadership and change management limits head teachers' ability to implement reforms effectively.

Resistance to Change	to 45	50.0%	Opposition from teachers and parents due to fear of increased workload, unfamiliarity with reforms, or misconceptions about changes.
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Source: (Research 2025)

Table 4.3 above reveals that head teachers in primary schools face multiple, interconnected challenges in implementing change, with financial limitations emerging as the most critical. With 66.7% of respondents citing this issue, it is clear that insufficient capitation grants and delays in government fund disbursement significantly restrict the ability of school administrators to execute planned reforms. This aligns with the Tanzanian *Education and Training Policy (ETP) 2014*, which recognizes that timely and adequate funding is essential for improving school infrastructure, providing teaching and learning materials, and supporting innovative initiatives. Nsubuga (2019) and Orodho (2019) assert that financial constraints are a common barrier to effective school management and educational reforms across East Africa. Without addressing these resource gaps, head teachers struggle to mobilize the necessary materials and support for meaningful change.

Capacity gaps were reported by 55.6% of respondents, indicating that more than half of head teachers lack advanced training in leadership, management, and change implementation. This limitation affects their ability to strategically plan, coordinate, and monitor reform initiatives, even when resources are available. Literature on educational leadership (Bush & Glover, 2020; Fullan, 2021) emphasizes that competent leadership is crucial for successful reform, as it influences teacher motivation, stakeholder collaboration, and overall school performance. In Tanzania, professional development for school leaders is often limited or inconsistent, which further exacerbates the challenge of implementing reforms effectively. Addressing these gaps through targeted training programs in leadership and change management would enhance the capacity of head teachers to manage resources efficiently and implement policies successfully.

Resistance to change was cited by 50% of respondents, showing that opposition from teachers and parents is a significant barrier. This resistance typically arises from fear of increased workload, unfamiliarity with new reforms, or misconceptions about the objectives of the changes. Fullan (2024) notes that resistance is a normal reaction during educational reforms, and managing it requires clear communication, stakeholder involvement, and trust-building. Social Learning Theory suggests that stakeholders are more likely to accept change when they observe peers adopting new practices, highlighting the importance of modeling positive engagement. Similarly, participatory governance models stress that involving teachers and parents in decision-making reduces resistance and fosters a sense of ownership over reforms (Bray, 2021).

In summary, the table and accompanying data reveal that the successful implementation of change in Tanzanian primary schools is constrained by financial inadequacies, leadership capacity gaps, and stakeholder resistance. These challenges are interdependent:

insufficient resources can exacerbate capacity limitations, while both factors may increase resistance from teachers and parents. Addressing these issues requires a coordinated approach, including timely funding, comprehensive leadership training, and strategies for engaging stakeholders effectively. Such measures are critical to ensuring that reforms are implemented efficiently, sustainably, and in alignment with the objectives of the *Education and Training Policy (2024)*, ultimately improving educational quality and school performance across Tanzania.

One WEO remarked:

Change is often resisted when it is not well explained or when people feel it is imposed. Many teachers and parents struggle to understand why new policies are introduced or what benefits they bring, and this lack of clarity creates fear and uncertainty. When people do not see the purpose or relevance of reforms, they are less likely to cooperate or participate actively. Misconceptions spread quickly, leading to opposition that is not based on the content of the change itself but on misunderstandings. This is where administration becomes critical, because head teachers must not only enforce policies but also communicate them clearly, involve stakeholders in discussions, and demonstrate the positive impact of the changes. Effective administrators use participatory approaches, regular meetings, and feedback mechanisms to reduce anxiety and resistance. They model commitment and show that the reforms are achievable and beneficial, building trust over time. Without this kind of administration, even well-intentioned initiatives fail. How administrators engage, motivate, and guide their subject determines whether change is accepted or rejected, making their role central to successful implementation.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study concluded that the actualization of stakeholders' engagement in implementing transformational change in primary schools in Kinondoni Municipal is critical for success, as collaboration, parental involvement, effective communication, advocacy for resources, and policy awareness significantly influence reform outcomes. Schools where stakeholders actively collaborated and shared best practices, participated in decision-making, and supported resource mobilization experienced smoother implementation of educational reforms. Conversely, challenges such as financial limitations, leadership capacity gaps, and resistance from teachers and parents hindered the change process. Therefore, it is recommended that the government and school administrators prioritize capacity-building programs for head teachers and stakeholders, establish structured communication frameworks, enhance community and parental engagement, ensure timely provision of resources, and conduct awareness campaigns on policy reforms. Implementing these measures will strengthen stakeholder participation, reduce

resistance, and improve the sustainability and effectiveness of transformational changes in primary education.

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