

Curriculum Development and Reforms: Enhancing Educational Quality through Continuous Professional Learning

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Abstract:

This paper examines how curriculum development initiatives can promote teacher professional growth through continuous professional learning, collaborative practices, and reflective teaching practices. Curriculum development, reforms and teacher professional growth are closely interconnected processes that play a critical role in improving the quality of education. Effective curriculum reforms require teachers who possess the necessary competencies, pedagogical skills, and positive attitudes to implement new instructional approaches. Tanzanian Competence-based curriculum (CBC) reforms have become a dominant policy response to demands for transferable competencies such as 21st century skills. While international evidence increasingly specifies professional development criteria, system-level evaluations still struggle to show how reform intentions are converted into classroom-enacted learning outcomes especially in contexts, where teacher learning opportunities, assessment approaches and implementation conditions vary sharply. This study is part of STEP-STUDY project on Strengthening Primary School Teacher Professional Development in Tanzania: Generating Evidence for Policy and Practice. This study was underpinned by Guskey's Model of Teacher Professional Development and employed qualitative approach using case study design to explore curriculum development, reforms and teacher professional growth in enhancing effective teaching practices. Interviews were used to collect data from 35 primary school teachers and was supported by data from the document reviews. This study highlights the importance of aligning curriculum reforms with structured teacher support systems, including pre-service and in-service training, and mentoring programs. The paper further discusses the challenges teachers face in implementing curriculum changes, such as limited professional development opportunities, inadequate instructional resources, and insufficient institutional support. It argues that strengthening teacher professional development mechanisms is crucial for successful curriculum implementation and improved learning outcomes. The paper concludes by proposing strategies for integrating teacher professional growth into curriculum development processes to ensure sustainable educational transformation.

Keywords:

Curriculum development, teacher professional growth, professional development, curriculum implementation, teacher support.