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**DEVELOPING TEACHER-LED PROFESSIONAL
LEARNING IN A TANZANIAN SECONDARY
SCHOOL**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The competence of Tanzanian teachers, as in other countries, depends on high quality and widely available ongoing professional learning opportunities. Currently, in Tanzania, provision of professional development for secondary teachers is inadequate and sporadic. This study explores the complexities of teacher-led professional learning in the context of a Tanzanian secondary school and as such, provides a nuanced model of how teachers can develop a sense of agency of their own professional learning. Firstly, this study investigated how Tanzanian secondary school teachers perceived and engaged in school based professional learning. Practice changes made by teachers and their understandings of school-based professional learning are then examined as they engaged in an inquiry and knowledge-building cycle. The factors that constrained and enabled teachers to engage in this school-based professional learning are also analysed.

An embedded mixed action research was conducted in two phases. Phase One survey data revealed that teachers were not satisfied with the quality of their existing professional learning and that they wanted to engage in more learning. When four teachers in one secondary school were assisted to engage in a series of inquiry cycles, as a means to engage in effective professional learning, they demonstrated varying degrees of change in their practices. These transformations were primarily related to implementing new pedagogies based on their students' learning needs and reflecting on their professional learning. This shift in practice was associated with the teachers' changes in their understanding and valuing of teacher-led professional learning and distinguishing this from previous external training that lacked relevance to their teaching situations. Lack of learning materials and funds were found to be critical barriers that constrained their engagement in professional learning. Established support systems enabled the teachers to strengthen their collaborative learning practice and their understanding of ways to engage in their own professional learning.

The findings revealed the teachers' developing capacities to carry out professional learning and to own and manage it themselves. The changes shown by teachers in this study suggest that teachers can initiate and collaborate in effective professional learning if they are supported to do so. This study contributes to understanding of Tanzanian teacher engagement in professional learning, especially in poorly resourced schools. Based on these findings, implications and recommendations are made to develop teacher-led professional learning in Tanzania and similar jurisdictions.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CAR	Collaborative Action Research
COB	Classroom Observation
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DOC	Document
EFA	Education for All
ESDP	Education Sector Development Programme
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
HoS	Head of School
ICT	Information Communication and Technology
IKBC	Inquiry and Knowledge-building Cycle
INSET	In-service Teacher Education
INT	Interview
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
MT	Meeting
MoEVT	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PEDP	Primary Education Development Plan
PL	Professional Learning
PLCs	Professional Learning Communities
PO-RALG	President's Office-Regional Administration and Local Government
PRESET	Pre-service Teacher Education
REF	Reflective journal
RES	Research diary
SBPL	School-based Professional Learning
SEDP	Secondary Education and Development Programme
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TC	Teachers' Community
TDMS	Teacher Development Management System
TIE	Tanzania Institute of Education
TRCs	Teacher Resource Centers
UK	United Kingdom
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
URT	United Republic of Tanzania
USA	United States of America

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