



Emancipatory Education: Pre-Requisite for Social Economic Transformation in Tanzania

Dr. Chrispina Lekule

St. Augustine University of Tanzania

chrispina.lekule@saut.ac.tz

Abstract: This analytical paper discusses the concept of emancipatory education as a way forward for effective achievement of social economic transformation in Tanzania. Based on the philosophical views of a Brazilian thinker, Paulo Freire, the paper argues that, if Tanzania has to achieve a positive social economic transformation education which is the epicenter of this effort should itself be transformed from the current banking model of education. The paper advocates for a pedagogical approach, which promotes critical thinking, creativity, and innovation grounded in an anti-colonial ethos that is contextual and appropriate for Tanzania's unique developmental needs. In setting the ground for this argument, the paper presents a brief overview of the history of education in Tanzania where the evolution of various education policies is discussed. This discussion is underpinned by perspectives of Mwalimu J. K. Nyerere, who believed in education as a tool and a means of alleviating poverty, disease, and ignorance and John Dewey whose views emphasized education as a social process of reconstructing experiences. The paper explores the concept of emancipatory education and obstacles to achieving it in Tanzania. The paper ends with a discussion of a possible blueprint to actualizing emancipatory education towards ultimate social economic transformation in Tanzania.

Keywords: Emancipatory education, Critical pedagogy, Learner centered approach, Social economic transformation, Critical thinking

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1. Introduction

Like many other countries across the globe, Tanzania continues its process of ongoing social and economic transformation and education continues to be a critical component of this. There are still legitimate questions among politicians, academics and researchers, and the public about the ability of the current education system to drive the kind of transformation the country needs. Is our education system providing the knowledge, skills and habits of mind that will facilitate the national social and economic agenda in the 21st Century? The paper submits that our education system is still grounded in colonial structures and traditional pedagogies and both need decolonial emancipatory frameworks to achieve the lofty social and economic outcomes our people are capable of and deserve. In this paper, the term emancipatory education refers to the kind of education acquired by learners who are supposedly given opportunity to think critically and independently so that they can themselves become

producers of knowledge and not mere consumers.

The paper provides a general overview of education in Tanzania from pre-colonial to the present. It further highlights and responds to some burning issues in education, which are closely related to the implications brought about by the ongoing social and economic transformation. Furthermore, based on the different education philosophies held in Tanzania, especially after the independence, in this paper it is argued that the issue of emancipatory education as a pre-requisite for social economic transformation while not new, is a pressing imperative. Emancipatory education is enshrined in different Tanzanian educational policies including the 1968 education for self-reliance and also the 1995, and 2014 all of which underline education as a means of human liberation and realization of ones' potentials and their ability to contribute to the wellbeing of their society. Based on this background, in this paper, in addition to emphasizing the need for emancipatory education, the paper underlines factors that can hinder the achievement of emancipatory education in Tanzania and suggest a model which

might mitigate these obstacles.

Education is generally believed to be a key determinant of a prosperous and decent life. It can also be added that due to the interconnection of education and everyday life, education is the epicenter of the efforts which we make in order to adapt to social and economic changes and to transform the world in which we live. Generally speaking, the nature and the quality of life which people in a given country experience is significantly influenced by the nature and the quality of education acquired. Education should prepare people for adapting to ever changing opportunities and challenges. Irena Bokova, the Director-General of UNESCO argues that;

The world is changing – education must also change. Societies everywhere are undergoing deep transformation, and this calls for new forms of education to foster the competencies that societies and economic need, today and tomorrow. This means moving beyond literacy and numeracy, to focus on learning environments and on new approaches to learning for greater justice, social equity and global solidarity. Education must be about learning to live on a planet under pressure. It must be about cultural literacy, on the basis of respect and equal dignity, helping to weave together the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development (Irena Bokova, Director-General of UNESCO, 2015, p. 3).

This statement is seen as an incisive call for emancipatory education in which education is indeed a key to life and not just a slogan or a fantasy as found by Lekule (2014). Emancipatory education refers to the kind of education acquired by learners who are supposedly given opportunity to think critically and independently so that they can themselves become producers of knowledge and not mere consumers. In critically assessing the current model of education in Tanzania, the paper challenges current models of instructional delivery which treat learners as empty vessels to be filled and where success is measured by results in high stake examinations that require rote learning and memorization. This paper calls for education which focuses on critical thinking rather than memorization, encourages learners to relate what they are learning to the situation in which they live so that they can, in turn, apply their knowledge and passion to making a difference in the community. This is the kind of education which educators passionately collaborate with learners as “their co-subjects who are capable of thinking critically in order to create knowledge together” (Lekule, 2014, p. 2). This kind of education is not “an act of depositing, in which the students are depositories and the teacher is the depositor” (Freire, 2009, p. 52). The implication is that teaching, and learning must be transformative to meet the needs of contemporary society. Learners should be engaged in the process as active participants in their learning which has meaning to their lived experiences in their social and economic contexts. Education should empower and inspire learners to grow mentally and to become critical thinkers capable of understanding situation facing them and

fashioning solutions and responses. It should equip learners with the skills for informed decision-making that questions the status quo and challenges injustice and oppression in the society.

2. Literature Review

2.1 An Overview of Emancipatory Education

From the review of literature it is evident that the concept of emancipatory education has been vastly studied in the western countries. However, as noted by Galloway (2012) it is not clear as to what practically makes education emancipatory, or not. In other words, the concept of emancipatory education is still elusive, especially in the African context like the case of Tanzania where it has been rarely researched. Based on this situation and after analysis of various studies on emancipatory education, the concept of emancipatory education should be viewed as one that treats learners as co-creators of new knowledge. It is a process of teaching and learning which requires educators to carry out their teaching activities not merely as a matter of fulfilling their duties but rather driven by passion for their learners, whom they view not as empty bins which must be filled with some information, but rather as co-subjects empowered with the ability to think critically and independently such that they can together produce a new and relevant knowledge. Furthermore, as argued by Giroux (2019), it is a kind of education which focuses on “creating autonomous, critical and civically engaged students” (p. 506). Such an education does not entertain teachers who regard themselves as knowledgeable and they act as mere depositors of that knowledge into students whom they view as meager depositories (Freire, 2009). When teachers act and think this way, education cannot be regarded as emancipatory but rather as a source of confusion to learners. Furthermore, such an education which is non-emancipative is a hindrance to social economic development. From these stances, it was important that I pose a reflexive glance on the Tanzanian education as a means to understand its emancipatory characteristics and how it prepares learners to cope with socio economic changes in the country. To assess the emancipatory nature of education in Tanzania during the process of writing this analytical paper, the researcher engaged in personal conversations with some experienced teachers for the purpose of grasping their understanding of the concept of emancipatory education. The findings indicated that the concept of emancipatory education is not clearly understood by teachers. Based on the type of questions which were asked during both one to one conversations with the teachers, it became evident that Tanzanian education is generally non-emancipatory steeped in expository teaching methods. The next section provides an overview of the development of education in Tanzania to provide historical context.

2.2 Historical Overview of Tanzanian Education

2.2.1 Traditional Education

Tanzania's education, like most African countries, has gone through remarkably different phases. Prior to the coming of the European Missionaries who introduced the formal schooling we know today, Tanzanians had their own "traditional education that emphasized principles of good citizenship, acquisition of life skills and the individual for a particular perpetuation of valued customs and traditions" (URTMEC, 1995, p. i). The concept of traditional education is used here to refer to indigenous approaches of education and educational systems practiced by various communities in Tanzania prior to the imposed colonial education. This education was culturally integral to everyday life and was unique to various local communities. Generally, this indigenous education was both holistic and "functional" and that it was instrumental in preparing learners for a life depending on their social, economic, and cultural values. According to Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2003), traditional education was a kind of "education that has the input of all members of the community, and which prepares each profession or occupational activity" (p. 425).

Furthermore, as noted in Lekule (2014), the Tanzanian traditional education was a "life-long process of preparing young people who were transitioning from childhood to adolescence and to adulthood" (p.11). Under this type of education, learners were formally brought together at an agreed area where adults would share and discuss their societies' accepted moral values, community responsibilities as well as social and cultural values. Additionally, as noted in Merah (2006), in the traditional formal education in Tanzania, learners were taught about norms related to their spheres of life. Informal learning was indispensable and a requirement for all. It involved a process of observation of those with more experience in life. Through observation, learners acquired relevant technical skills which they needed to be productive members of society. According to Semali and Stambach (1997), this education was crucial in the maintenance and promotion of key values and practices that were necessary for the development of the society. In a nutshell, thinking of the process of learning in the traditional education in Tanzania, all learners had a chance to acquire relevant and holistic education as it involved learning through a continuous experience and practice. Through this type of education learners developed skills which they urgently needed to become efficient and effective contributors to the well-being of the society to which they belonged (Adetutu, 2010). This was the kind of education which Tanzanians previously held to until the coming of the white Missionaries whose agendas revolutionized it for their own good.

2.2.2 Colonial Education

Unlike the traditional education, which was holistic and was intended to nurture learners with skills which were needed for their own wellbeing and for the society, the kind of formal

education which was introduced by colonialists was as argued by Douglas (2007), meant to produce "mid-level personnel to enhance the communication and technical infrastructure that would secure economic development" (p. 6). Moreover, the colonialist education was discriminative in nature and it did not in any way focus on human emancipation, which was contrary to the Tanzanian traditional education. This was highlighted by Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, the founding father of the nation and the first president of the independent Tanzania, formally known as Tanganyika. Mwalimu, noted that the colonial education precisely focused "on transmitting the values of the colonial power and to train individuals for the service of the colonial state" (as cited in Kassan, 2000, p. 3). Colonial education did not intend to improve the lives of its beneficiaries and their immediate communities but rather to serve the needs of their colonial masters. This was clearly indicated in their education policies which emphasized the need for learners to acquire basic skills required for clerical work in the service of the colonial masters. Consequently, the experiential and practical education which included manual labor, such as farming, craft work and other technical skills, which was highly emphasized in the traditional education, was abandoned and treated as less significant. In other words, unlike the traditional education which promoted relevance and learner centered approach, the colonial education was oppressive in that it did not take into account the needs of the learners. It was as a matter of fact culturally genocidal because it forced people to abandon their cultural values and practices and to embrace the western values contrary to the wishes of learners and their immediate communities.

2.2.3 Post-Independence Education

On December 9th, 1961, Tanzania gained its independence from the Colonial rule which had lasted for over 70 years, first under the Germany and later under the British. Both groups had introduced their own education system which did not favour Tanzanians. As a result of this, soon after independency, the new president Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, immediately, began to think about education as an indispensable tool for human emancipation and development. He made education the number one priority and passed a new *Educational Act 1962* (Wedgwood, 2005). According to Samarrai and Peasgood (1998), the new educational policy focussed mostly on preparing Tanzanians to take over white collar jobs which were left behind by the colonialists. The education provided during this time was viewed by the then leaders as a prerequisite for the achievement of African socialism. The 1962 educational policy attempted to differentiate itself from that of colonialists by: abolishing discrimination of all types, promoting Kiswahili as both the national language and medium of instruction, emphasizing uniformity in terms of curriculum, examination and administration, unified teaching services for all teachers and empowered local communities by giving them more authority and responsibility in regard to construction and provision of education in primary schools (URTMEC, 1995, pp. i-ii). Despite the changes and efforts made in differentiating the colonial education from that of the independent Tanzania, it was later on discovered that the difference was too minim as it was mostly

“catered to the needs and interests of a very small proportion of those who manage to enter the hierarchical pyramid of formal schooling” (Kassan, 2000, p. 4). What this meant is that, education offered after independence was not very much different from that of the colonial era. For this reason, a new policy that would promote the kind of education which was more relevant to the needs of all people and the society (the newly independent nation) was urgently needed. Hence, the introduction of the 1967 Education for Self-Reliance Policy, which emphasized the attainment of relevant skills needed to cope with life (Barratt, 2008). Moreover, as noted in Galabawa (2001), the 1967 educational policy “addressed some relevant novel ideas of relevance of education, egalitarianism, practicality and elimination of elitism” (p. 10). The Self-Reliance Educational Policy while potentially game changing, did not maximize its benefits. Major shortcomings included, “limited resources and lack of appropriate and strategic investment to allow for a feasible joint pursuit of access and quality in a holistic manner” (Galabawa, 2001, p. 11). Failure to achieve the 1967 Education for Self-Reliance can be argued as one of the factors that have contributed significantly to the many educational and developmental challenges which Tanzanians are still experiencing. The three historical phases of Tanzanian education which I have just discussed create a platform which makes it necessary to critically think about the current education in relation to the theory of emancipation. Eagan (2010) rightly argues, “Thinking critically about practice of today or yesterday makes possible the improvement of tomorrow’s practice” (p. 429). Challenged by the words of Eagan, the section that follows is a discussion on the world views of the concept of education in relation to how it is viewed in Tanzania.

2.3 The Concept of Education

“Education is the most powerful weapon we can use to change the world” (Nelson Mandela, 2003)

The term education is a multifaceted concept which has been widely studied and yet, it remains difficult to easily define. Due to its importance, educational scholars are in a constant search of a right definition that can embrace what education real means based on its core functions. Hence, given the nature and the context in which a scholar is writing from, the definitions may differ significantly. The differences can be seen clearly in the philosophical thoughts of the gurus of education such as that of Mwalimu Julius Nyerere, a highly respected, distinguished and the first president of the independent Tanzania and the highly studied and renowned American educational theorist John Dewey whose philosophy has inspired many. For Nyerere, as may be denoted from his philosophy of education for Self-Reliance and Ujamaa (African Socialism), the concept of education can be viewed as a process of deliberate transition of cultural values and skills which learners urgently need in order to cope with life in their society (Barratt, 2008). Nyerere also viewed education as something beyond a process of acquiring skills but rather as a tool and a means of alleviating poverty, disease and ignorance by addressing the reality of life in Tanzania. For his part, John Dewey defines education as “a

process of constant reconstruction of experience, rather than transmission of past values, in order to make it more meaningful and capable of solving present problems” (Ibanga, 2016, p. 110). With his philosophy of education as a process of reconstruction, John Dewey also “believed and emphasized that schools were social institutions and that education was a social process” (Lekule, 2014).

In line with both Mwalimu Nyerere and Dewey’s view of education, education should be more practical and it should be organized in such a way that it involves natural active tendencies of doing something that requires observation, acquisition of information, and the use of a constructive imagination of the learners as a means to improve social conditions in which they live. Although as argued in Ibanga (2016), this philosophical thought is limited in that it may lead to unhealthy covetousness, his philosophy as well as that of Mwalimu Nyerere are still reasonably relevant to today’s global society. As a matter of fact, the philosophical thoughts of Nyerere and Dewey form a philosophy of education needed in Tanzania. That is, an education that engages the golden cultural values and skills which society needs and at the same time reconstructs experiences in order to make what learners are acquiring as a means to solve their own problems and to contribute more to the wellbeing of the society in which they live. Not far from Mwalimu Nyerere and John Dewey, various recent scholars have conceptualized education based on its importance to the individual and society. For example, Idris, Hassan, Ya’acob, Gill, Awal (2012), when speaking of the importance of education, they argue that, “Education can be regarded as systematic efforts that is build up by the society in order to deliver the knowledge, value, attitude and skill among their group members towards an effort to enhance individual’s potential and changes that occur in themselves” (p. 445). On that same note, Sharma and Monteiro (2016, p. 72), education is viewed as a process which involves not only the transfer of information and knowledge acquisition but rather a process of transforming learners’ ways of thinking, attitudes and practices which eventually results into production of socially responsible people who are capable of contributing to a creation of better society. Based on this conceptualization, it can equally be argued that education as an ongoing process should aim at ensuring human emancipation, that is, it should facilitate transformation of the life and behavior of those who acquire it.

It is most likely that today’s learners are yearning for an education capable of liberating them from the cycle of undesired conditions in which too many of them find themselves in. In its broadest sense, undesired conditions are made up of social, economic, environmental, and political problems that hinder them from achieving the desired quality life. This in a nutshell is what is referred to as emancipatory education. Understood in this way, education can also be regarded as a vital instrument and a path way to a better life and a means to an end. This conceptualization, finds solid footing in the critical views of Paulo Freire one of the most important and popular educational thinkers of the 20th century. Freire, views education as a liberating tool that promotes critical and independent thinking that facilitates transformational action. With this mindset, Freire

challenges educators to consider the kind of education which regarded learners as empty vessels that are brought to school to be filled with some knowledge. According to Abdullah (2016), this is the system of education which is today referred to as the banking system of education which views teachers as the knowers and learners as empty vessels that went to school to be filled with some information which would later on be retrieved during examination. The practice of such kind of education is detrimental not only to learners but also to the family, community and the nation which is looking out to the learned as the think tanker in solving the everyday challenges of life. Based on this understanding, it is fair to agree with Winart (2018), that the world in which we live and work today demands for a kind of education which can facilitate the development of skills such as; critical thinking, problem solving, communication skills, team work, collaboration, diversity, appreciation, leadership, innovation, lifelong learning, self-direction, professionalism and social responsibility. Each of these skills is unique and plays a unique role in ensuring social economic transformation. Hence, based on authors' insider positionality and passion for a more relevant and useful education, a critical analysis of emancipatory education as a prerequisite for social economic transformation is paramount.

2.4 Importance of Education

The importance of education to human life and to any given society is well understood and acknowledged. In most cases, the importance of education is associated with expected outcomes in economic and social development of a society. In Tanzania, for example, importance of education is clearly stated in various educational policies, including the 1995 Tanzanian Education Policy. According to this policy, education is important because it is viewed as a means of human liberation. More precisely, in Tanzania, the importance of education as indicated in various educational policies is related to its ability to enable learners to develop skills necessary for coping with life in the ever changing environment (TEP, 1995). This importance of education is also underlined in O'dubhslainé (2006) work which states that, "Education is important to individual development, social cohesion and economic growth" (p. 124). Likewise, as noted in Bhardwaj (2016), education is important because of its ability to operate as a "vehicle of knowledge, self-preservation and success" (p. 25). Simply put, education can act as a platform of human emancipation and social economic transformation. The importance of education is also grounded in its citizenship preparation role (O'dubhslainé, 2006). Based on this standpoint, it can be argued that the quality of education in a country equals the quality of its people. Education plays a role in molding human beings by teaching them to think independently such that they develop self-efficacy. Education also teaches learners many things including right and acceptable behavior, as well as rules and regulations that are the norms of their society. It is education that distinguishes humans as a higher form of life. It teaches humanity how to behave, to relate with others in a morally acceptable ways and it sets principles and regulations of life which when observed makes life unique and meaningful compared to that of other creatures. The skills which learners develop as a result of learning leads them to becoming

responsible citizens who are capable of contributing to the needed change in the society, which is contrary to other animals. Furthermore, as noted in Melo (2019), the importance of education of any nation lies in the fact that when properly addressed is capable of stimulating learners to think independently and critically. As a result, those who acquire education are empowered in a manner that they become capable of resisting, not only social and structural inequalities, but also leads to social economic transformation of the lives of the individuals and their communities.

Another importance attached to education is its ability to ensure a bright future. A bright future of a person or society is measured by the extent to which an individual develops and experiences social cohesion and economic growth (O'dubhslainé, 2006). The result of such development is the reason for a bright future. For a person who is capable of thinking critically and understands life challenges and is able to address them, the result is that they will live a happy life compared to those who are unable to think of their life challenges. Education acquired in the right manner, is important because it is capable of highlighting and awakenings the hidden challenges which often affect the lives of people. It is the ability to think critically and to produce useful knowledge which determines the future life of a person. It is the development of new skills and the realization of potentials that open doors to employment and determines the future of a person.

Moreover, Bhardwaj, (2016) contends that education is important because it directs learners in the path to achieving new heights in their life (p. 26). When people have real knowledge which is applicable to their life context, it eventually liberates them from what President Nyerere saw as the three enemies of humanity, that is; abject poverty, ignorance, and disease. Eradicating these three enemies are crucial and Nyerere believed education was the key to this. This education should enable people to think critically and in so doing become aware of the reality of life and finally make informed decisions in addressing possible challenge in life. It is also true that when a person has acquired right education and is able to make informed decision, it is most likely that such a person will also develop self-confidence which is critical in passing through various circumstances of life, particularly the challenging ones. Bhardwaj (2016) aptly argues that "Nothing in the life can be achieved if we don't have belief on ourselves" (p. 25). From this viewpoint, education is important because it enables learners to build self-confidence and self-trust, which is critical in advancing in life.

Finally but not least, education is important because it enlightens the path to life and at the same time molds learners to become a kind of a human person that one admires. By so doing it can be added that education is important because it prepares learners to live a sensible and meaningful life. Borrowing from the words of Bhardwaj (2016), it is evident that the importance of education lies on what it offers,

Education helps people grow as individuals. It opens one's mind to many things that you haven't been exposed to before, and classrooms allow for healthy discussion on difficult subjects. Education

helps build social skills, problem solving skills, decision making skills and creative thinking skills. It introduces you to different cultures, religions and thought processes that you may never be exposed to otherwise. Education also provides a stepping stone to the real world, offering many different courses on proper financial techniques, life planning and personal development (p. 26).

Given this importance of education as discussed so far, a system of education of a given country must ensure its efficiency and effectiveness which should be measured by the extent to which it can be accessed by all people in-discriminatively. Additionally, effective education must empower people who are transformed by the skills they acquire, the innovative minds which they develop as a means to realize their potentials which are indispensable for their own wellbeing and that of their society, the nation, and the global community.

3. Methodology

To write this analytical paper, relevant information was gathered through a critical and systematic review of theoretical and empirical literature available both on line and in the Mario Mgulunde Learning Resources Center at St. Augustine University of Tanzania. Three search engines including Google scholar, Bing and DuckDuckGo were used in identifying relevant and current literature which marched with three key objectives which guided this study namely, to establish the understanding of the concept of emancipatory education and its relevance to Tanzania social economic transformation; to identify traces of emancipatory education by assessing various stages of education in Tanzania which went along with the understanding of the concept of education and its importance. Additionally, the study sought to find out from the literature possible factors that could be hindering the implementation of emancipatory education in Tanzania and how such obstacles could be overcome. In order to come up with relevant and current literature, the study applied open-ended inclusion criteria which allowed the use of positional papers, research based papers as well as books which were considered to have relevant information to the focus of this study. The process of identifying sources began with identification of possible key words which were used in the search process. Some of the key words which were used include; emancipatory education, philosophy of education, gurus of education, education for liberation, critical pedagogy, critical theory, curriculum, transformative education, emancipatory education models, challenges of emancipatory education among others. The search for relevant sources was ongoing during the whole period in which the study was being conducted. The study began in March 2021 and ended in December of the same year. Among the sources of information which were identified, retrieved and scanned through for the purpose of establishing their relevancy to this study only 52 of them were selected and grouped according to the topics where they were considered informative. The sources were then read with a critical eye, while taking short notes which were later on analyzed and synthesized for the purpose of producing knowledge about each of the objectives.

4. Results and Discussion

This study sought to establish the understanding of the concept of emancipatory education, its practicality from both local and global perspectives and how it can be regarded as a prerequisite for effective achievement of social economic transformation. Through a critical review and analysis of various theoretical and empirical literatures available, the study also sought to identify possible elements of emancipatory education in Tanzania starting from the pre-colonial education system to current. Finally, the study wanted to establish possible factors that could be hindering implementation of emancipatory education so as to suggest a contextualized model of emancipatory education as a strategy of ensuring a more liberating education which can bring transformation in the learning process so as to nurture a society with people capable of contributing to social economic transformation. Hence, this section presents and discusses the findings according to the objectives just highlighted.

To begin with, from the review of the most current views of scholars to the champions of emancipatory education, such as Henry Giroux (2019); Melo (2019), Winarti (2018); Ibanga (2016); Ramahi (2015); Bhattecharjee (2015); Galloway (2012), Paul Freire (1993; 2009) among others, the finding on the understanding of the concept of emancipatory education and its practicability appears to be complex and yet interesting. It is complex in that it is dependent on the context in which the author is writing. For example, Giroux (2019), wrote his work in a unique context of Western context of North America where there are concerns about the education which students from the minority and low-income families were acquiring. For Giroux, the kind of education which such learners were going through was destructive in the sense that instead of guiding them to realize their potentials, it deskilled and destroyed their capacity to think critically. Hence, it is probably from this background that Giroux came to view emancipatory education as one that adopts a pedagogical approach whose main focus is “creating students who are socially responsible and civically engaged citizens. This kind of pedagogy reinforces the notion that public schools are democratic public spheres, education is the foundation for any working democracy, and teachers are the most responsible agents for fostering that education” (p. 509). In another study about emancipatory education in Palestine, the findings indicate a little difference in the understanding of emancipatory education. Radhi (2015), whose paper on emancipatory education is within the context of Palestine with its many years of political crisis, emancipatory education is viewed as one which adopts strategies that can mobilize the groups of people especially those that are disenfranchised to grow towards a more democratic society. This conceptualization is slightly different. What is interesting however is that, no matter the differences in context in which they are writing from, scholars underline critical thinking and the need to facilitate a meaningful production of knowledge which is applicable to bettering the lives of the people.

Likewise, in the analysis of the concept of emancipatory education, the findings indicate that for some scholars, the understanding of emancipatory education is viewed as a method

of teaching and learning, which places learners at the center of what takes place in the process of learning as a means of creating awareness of their everyday life and how what they are learning can become relevant to transforming their life situation (Winarti, 2018; Melo, 2019). Hence, as found by this study, emancipatory education is for these scholars a strategy of getting learners attached with their environment, investigating it by ask questions about the reality of life so as to challenge and bring about changes to the status quo. In this perspective, emancipatory education is viewed as one that can enhance learner capabilities by first regarding them as change agents and encouraging them to be engaged in learning activities which can contribute to bringing change in their immediate community. Likewise, through a learning process which challenges learners to reflect and to enter into a dialogue with their experiences, this kind of education are expected to promote innovative actions among learners. To conclude on the findings on conceptualizations of emancipatory education, it is fair to indicate that emancipatory education is by all means the best strategy for social economic transformation of any intending country like Tanzania.

Another pressing finding in this study is in regard to traces of emancipatory education. From the findings, especially with the focus on the history of education in Tanzania, it is evident that the wish to practice emancipatory education has existed from the traditional education, but got disrupted by the colonial education which did not take into consideration the needs of the people but focused mostly on a kind of education which would serve the needs of the colonial masters.

4.1 Obstacles to Emancipatory Education in Tanzania

An emancipatory education is unquestionably needed and desired by all learners. Many young people go to school hoping to gain knowledge, which will enlighten, empower, and liberate them from oppressive structures of their society and the miseries of life. Based on the author's positionality as a citizen of Tanzania with experience in the field of education and also as a passionate educator and a researcher, our system of education does not deliver these desires. There are multiple obstacles but this paper discusses only four of them which include, pedagogical practices, curriculum, teacher training and lack of parental involvement.

4.1.1 Pedagogical Practice -Rote Learning

An emancipatory education involves pedagogical practices that encourage teachers and learners to work together as co-creators of knowledge. The main function of the teacher is that of guiding learners by thinking which will enable them to make more sense of what they are learning and how it applies to their life situations. In other words, in an emancipatory education or school system, independent, critical thinking, and self-directed learning is common. Unfortunately, based on preliminary research which set grounds for this theoretical analysis, it is evident that this kind of pedagogical practice is generally absent.

One participant observed that pedagogical practices are still more or less similar to the ones which were used during the introduction of formal education by the colonialists whose focus was to equip learners the information which they wanted them to know for the purpose of serving their imperialistic agenda. Education was teacher-centered and students were passive receptors. It can be argued that, despite the different efforts being made to improve Tanzanian education is unfortunately still "suffering from narration sickness" (Freire, 1993, p. 71). With the exception of a very few schools in Tanzania, rote learning is still the order of the day. Moreover, "knowledge is viewed as a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (Freire, 1993, p. 53). In this pedagogical approach learners are compelled to absorb predetermined content which will enable them to pass examinations. According to Giroux (2019) this approach to education is repressive because it regards learners mostly by their limitations rather than their strengths. Rote learning kills the natural curiosity of learners and stifles creativity and innovation. The goal of education becomes to pass examinations rather than to think and problem-solve real-world problems. This does not facilitate social economic transformation. It is also true that rote learning is a hindrance to achieving emancipatory education because it discourages critical and independent thinking. It is also repressive and it suppresses learners' spirits and at the same time it promotes status quo.

Moreover, rote learning is oppressive and non-emancipatory because it does not in any way encourage critical thinking and self-consciousness. Neither is it useful to the learner. According to Freire (1993), such an approach reduces education to a mere act of depositing information whereby learners are mere depositories and their teachers are depositors. Commenting on this approach of education Galloway (2012) indicates that rote learning also referred to as the banking learning approach, is destructive in that it automatically hinders the expected dialogue between learners and educators which is fundamental in knowledge production. Moreover, as further argued in Galloway, when an educator takes monopoly in the process of education, the result is the disruption of praxis and enforcement a dichotomy between people (learners) and the world in which they live and are expected to work after the completion of their education. Furthermore, what generally happens in rote learning is the attempt to transmit knowledge from educator to the learner. Hence, it encourages learner dependence on the educator whose end result is creation of inequality which disadvantages others. In this situation, the educator is automatically regarded as a person who thinks and decides what the learners need and what they should take from the learning process while the learner's role is that of passive receptors. This pedagogical approach is very common in Tanzanian schools. From the authors experience as a student, a teacher and now a lecturer, rote learning is the norm in Tanzania. Learners are more comfortable with it rather than being challenged to participate in the search for knowledge. In this pedagogical approach, knowledge is transmitted and learners have very little autonomy to make sense of what they are taught. Students engage as a chore. They are interested only because of the high-stakes nature of the examinations they eventually have to pass. School becomes a burden and students

dislike it. Relationships between teachers and students are negative and students see very little relevance in what they are learning. A positive learning environment is conducive to effective education but is rarely experienced in Tanzanian classrooms. Instead, learners are forced to endure an environment characterized by authoritarianism, force, and coercion where they are frequently dehumanized and humiliated as they struggle with memorization of concepts which are often not useful to their life. This is the opposite of emancipatory education. Ramahi (2015) argues that, "Criticality and independent thinking cannot be fostered through undemocratic ways of teaching where the teacher adopts an all-knowing role" (p. 8). Hence, taking from this argument, it is evident that for education to contribute to social economic transformation a relevant framework of an emancipatory education that promotes cooperation in knowledge production.

4.1.2 School Curriculum

School curriculum, is among the factors that can impede the practice of emancipatory education. In order to understand this fact, it is important that we first gain some understanding of the concept of school curriculum. In a nutshell, school curriculum, though complex to easily define, the researcher is of the view it is the heart of the core function of every education institution. It comprises of both formal (programmed) and the hidden (non-programmed) course of study which is crucial in contributing to behavioural change among learners. According to Mulenga (2018), school curriculum is the "program of education which embodies the intentions of education, it carries the beliefs, values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and all that education is about" (p. 3). Based on this definition, it is evident that, school curriculum is something more than just a list of subjects taught to learners. In reality, curriculum should constitute a contract between society, the state and educational professionals, with regard to the educational activities that learners should undergo to learn something desirable for behavioral change (Khwaja, et al., 2014). For that matter, curriculum should consider the role of context in ensuring relevance, quality, affordability, and accessibility with the ultimate goal of inculcating youth with desirable knowledge, values, and skills for socio-economic turnaround (Twalo, 2010). In the same vain, curriculum planners in any education system should instil the philosophy self-reliance which instructs and emphasizes learning by doing and the use interactive teaching pedagogies (Bhattecharjee, 2015). Not far from that, sound curriculum planning authorities have to consider; the philosophy of the nation, learning content, resources and sequential arrangement of learning material (Okai, 2010). This is to say that, for any nation to achieve its objectives of socio-economic development, a sound curriculum serves as a vehicle of operation in that it provides clear understanding of the learning experiences and intended learning outcomes which are measured by the established knowledge and skills which are required.

Tanzania adopted a content-based curriculum soon after her independence in 1961. However, in 2005 competence-based curriculum was introduced purposefully to manage socio-economic changes that happened in the global market (Kafyulilo

et al., 2012). The content curriculum was ineffective in demonstrating the knowledge, skills, and competences to address local, national and global market demands (Komba & Kira, 2013). However, it is recommended by many scholars for a nation to have constant changes in curriculum in order produce relevant knowledge, skills and competences to quench ever-changing requirement in the labour market (Komba & Mwandangi, 2016). "If education is to become more relevant, to become a real force for improving societies in which we live, then it must become more closely linked to the local, to the spheres of action and influence which most of us experience" (Brooks, 2003, p. 5). On the other hand, in the 1970s and early 1980s, the philosophy of Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) activities in a school learning environment were adopted in which it enhanced learners to have contact with manual work (Ahmad, Krogh & Gjøtterud, 2014). Unfortunately, under the current curriculum, such contact is no longer happening like involving students in working in school farm and garden activities. The pedagogical values associated with ESR activities seem to be wasteful. For that matter, curriculum is mainly perceived to be an abstract activity only possible in school classrooms. This is because schools institutions are operating in isolation instead of striving to integrate local community activities and make use of learners' pre-existing experience.

Under Education for Self-Reliance philosophy, education was expected to provide learners with skills and abilities which is useful in performing community tasks and for solving personal and community challenges (Ahmad, Krogh, & Gjøtterud, 2014). In addition, the philosophy of ESR meant to promote competencies in education which would be important in providing knowledge and skills for emancipating learners in their societies. It is fair to say that, competence based curriculum (CBC) was meant to restore the philosophy of ESR in the sense that, it aimed to equip learners with knowledge and skills to become a real force for improving the society in which they live. Unfortunately, the implementation of CBC in schools becomes difficult due to factors including; insufficient resources and poor knowledge about what competency-based was all about (Kimario, 2011).

Despite various paradigm shifts in curriculum in Tanzania education system, local aspects like history, geography, and botany have not been emphasized in the planned curriculum (Galabawa & Norman, 2004). In other words, teaching and learning content and pedagogies are centrally organized of which it does not equip learners to master local environment. Based on this standpoint, Bhattecharjee (2015) opined that, true knowledge and skills are strongly influenced by prior experience in which learners make sense of the world by synthesizing new experiences with what they have previously come to understand in their daily life. It is fair to say that the manner in which the curriculum is designed in Tanzanian education system deters effective achievement of socio economic development in the society and nation at large (Ahmad, Krogh & Gjøtterud, 2014; Bhattecharjee, 2015; Galabawa & Norman, 2004). In the same manner, the designed content, pedagogies, and mode of assessments lack direct connection with socio-economic activities. In other words, it can be concluded that the current

curriculum limits learner' minds to explore the richness found in their local context because curriculum deals much with abstract activity which is possible in classrooms. Therefore, it is fair to conclude that, to connect curriculum with socio-economic development, the aspect of local environment like history, geography and botany should be integrated to teaching and learning contents alongside with pre-existing experience among learners.

4.1.3 Teacher Education

Teacher education refers to formal training of individuals who are aspiring to become professional teachers. Teachers are expected to acquire technical skills of communicating information, understand pedagogical theories and also develop teaching professional skills which they need in order to take over the responsibility of facilitating effective learning process in formal schooling. The process of preparing teachers -teacher education- is thus fundamental in facilitating an emancipatory education which molds learners to become autonomous, critical, and transformative thinkers. Teachers matter and this means that their education and training also matter. It may further be argued that teacher education and the quality of teachers produced by such education can become a source of enlightenment, or a stumbling block to a society's transformation. Furthermore, teacher preparedness influences student school experiences and outcomes. Kitta and Fussy (2013 p.1) argue that "the future of our nation rests on teachers' hands because the qualities they possess today will inevitably be reflected in the citizens of tomorrow." The importance of teacher education was also emphasized by Nyerere (1968) who was himself a teacher and saw teachers as the most powerful and influential people capable of preparing people whose functions in the society would lead to modernization of the economy of Tanzania. This suggests that social economic transformation is dependent on the preparedness of the manpower in a given society which is first and foremost the purview of teachers. Understood in this way, teacher preparation is therefore fundamental to the practice of emancipatory education which is needed in nurturing innovative and critical thinking minds which are needed for social economic transformation.

Despite the importance of teachers and hence teacher education in determining the quality of a nation's education, there is evidence that teacher education is one of the hindrances of emancipatory education in Tanzania. Despite the many strategic initiatives which have been taken by the government of Tanzania in improving the quality of education including educational development plans such as; the 2010-2015 plan which focused on ensuring successful implementation of millennium goals on education, the issue of teacher education is still a riddle due to a number of challenges which hinder the achievement of quality teacher education and quality teachers in particular. For example, Mgaiwa (2018) identified "lack of specific policies for teacher education, lack of continuing professional development, lack of an autonomous teacher regulatory body, inadequate ICT and

teacher education, and poor quality of candidates joining teacher education"(p. 246). These challenges are reflected in primary and secondary school classrooms and influence the quality of education.

The nature and quality of teacher education in Tanzania, does not facilitate emancipatory education because teacher education itself is not emancipatory. Not only is pre-service training inadequate, but ongoing professional learning and development which is critical to teacher improvement, is also lacking. Information Communication Technology (ICT) deficit has been identified as a critical barrier to the practice of emancipatory education. According to UNESCO (2018) mastery in ICT contributes to improved knowledge as well as teaching and learning approaches as it enables teachers to find high quality teaching and learning materials and locate opportunities for quality professional development. The lack of specific policies that direct teacher education, allows teacher education programs autonomy to do as they please which creates wide differences among teachers in terms of their competence.

4.1.4 Family and Community Engagement

There is a direct relationship between students out of school lives and how they experience school and schooling (Beckford and Lekule, 2018; Beckford, 2020). Teachers should be concerned about who their students are and the neighborhoods they come from. They should cultivate relationships with students' families and communities and invite their active participation the enterprise of education (Beckford, 2020). Emancipatory education requires involvement of parents, families and communities as partners in education. This is not generally the case in Tanzania. According to my personal experience as a classroom teacher in Tanzania, failure to engage parents/families and communities has deleterious impact on the work of teachers as well as school leaders. The first negative impact is shallow and irrelevant education which is due to lack of background information about students which could have been found in both families and communities. Another negative impact is teachers' inability to apply relevant examples during their teaching due to lack of clear knowledge about what is going on the community and the meaning attached to the everyday life experiences which would have made the teaching more meaningful. Omary, Salum & Mapunda (2021) suggest that lack of parental and family involvement in education is particularly evident in rural areas. The reasons include: lack of knowledge of the significance of such partnerships; a belief that parents and families have nothing to offer to the academic mission; and families economic circumstances that do not provide time for involvement in schools which they see as the teachers' responsibility. According to Lekule (2014), teachers tend to exercise hegemony over education without due consideration of the roles parents and families play. This is a key factor that hampers the practice of emancipatory education in Tanzania.

4.2 Solutions to Make Education Emancipatory in Tanzania

For education to become emancipatory, it must first be contextualized by involving various education stakeholders, including local community members, parents and all the expected beneficiaries of the education being offered. In other words, it must open doors to challenge the hegemonic practices that hinder learners from acquiring an education that is relevant to their social, economic and cultural world in which they live. The argument raised here is that, in order for education to become emancipatory, there is the need to pursue strategies that encourage interaction between various stakeholders and more so between educators and learners aiming to produce knowledge together, instead of one sided production of education in which educators are the producers and learners are mere receivers. With this stand point, the section that follows presents a model which this paper suggests as a way forward in enhancing emancipatory education in Tanzania. The model outlines critical shortcomings to be addressed based on the discussion of obstacles which were discussed in the previous section among others.

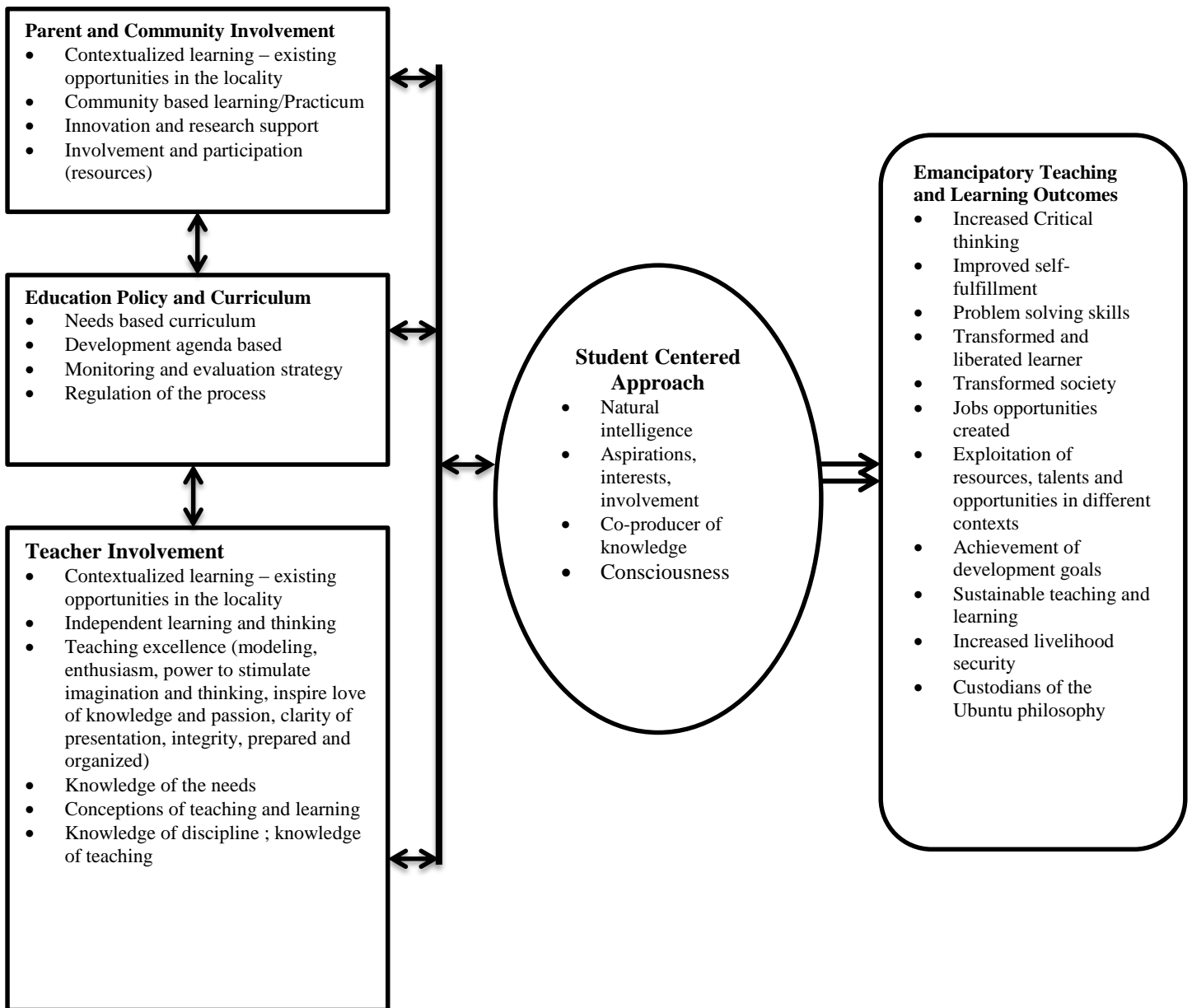


Figure 1: Emancipatory Education Model

Source: Own conceptualization, 2021

Emancipatory education is based on the contention that, our conceptions of social reality are constructions arising from the relationships we have with other individuals in a shared environment (Gutek, 2004). According to Giroux (1983) emancipatory pedagogy is founded on the notion that education should play a role in creating a just and democratic society. This approach should therefore transform the way of thinking about, negotiating, and organizing the relationships in classroom and the school. Is our education system in Tanzania liberating enough to help the learner understand the purpose of learning today?

The model shows that effective emancipatory education (teaching and learning) should involve all stakeholders. It demonstrates a role for all stakeholders in emancipatory education. It shows that emancipatory education goes beyond the scope of traditional schooling to incorporate elements of critical pedagogy and social transformation theory. The model is predicated on the thesis that the ultimate goal of education is to reduce social inequalities and enhance livelihoods, especially of the marginalized and excluded populations. From this model, the learner is inspired by self, the stakeholders' roles and the environment they live in. To address the deep rooted needs of the local people, this model demonstrates education as a cultural collaboration among policy makers and implementers, parents and the community, teachers and the students. From this model, it can be conceptualized that, emancipatory education takes a problem-solving approach in which through education, citizens have the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind to apply learning to their lives. At all education levels, emancipatory model considers that, education should cause impact in communities. Identifying and incorporating all the ingredients as demonstrated in the model is essential.

The emancipatory model which the paper recommends is the one that champions student centered education aimed at nurturing a holistic person who is an independent thinker and an active citizen. It further promotes an educational approach capable of molding learners whose natural intelligence and creativity are determined by his/her aspirations and self-consciousness. Involvement of different stakeholders who are also informed on the purpose of emancipatory education is key. Systems existing should also be prepared to accommodate emancipatory education. Parents, families, and communities must be involved. Education policy makers should make conducive policies and curriculum development should be in line. Systems should be in place to monitor and evaluate the delivery of emancipatory education curricula. From the policy level, teachers and other stakeholders involved should bring the contextualized learning experience to the learner. Independent learning and thinking at all levels should be initiated to elicit critical thinking and independence in problem solving. Teaching excellence in emancipatory education should model character, discipline, knowledge and skills with learners considering all stakeholders.

The outcome of implementing this model benefits the learner directly, the community and all systems indirectly. There is an increased level of critical thinking, problem solving, and transformed, just and liberated society. There are also increased job opportunities, achievement of development goals, equality

and equity, increased opportunities for livelihoods, which all propagate the *Ubuntu* philosophy, which inspires togetherness, I am because you are and you are because I am.

Principles of the Model

- a) The model does not replace the traditional education model but goes beyond to incorporate elements of critical pedagogy and social transformation (adds value to the accepted Tanzanian educational curriculum).
- b) The model is guided by the needs and aspirations of the individual, the community and the society at large.
- c) The driving force behind emancipatory education is the involvement of all stakeholders.
- d) For emancipatory model to work systems which drive change in education and development should play a critical role; there is a need to integrate theory and practice.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

Emancipatory education is a public good which is inextricably linked to social, cultural, and economic wellbeing of the nation. For this reason, providing an emancipatory education in a nation like Tanzania, is important. Tanzania's development requires education which promotes and strengthens independent and critical thinking and problem-solving. For this to happen, critical inquiry as a process of teaching and learning which encourages asking questions and at the same time encourages students to question what they are learning in relation to their everyday life and the circumstances in which they live is indispensable. Tanzania should also focus on ensuring that learners acquire not only ability to think critically but also develop skills, ideas, and values which are necessary for them to be able to define who they are but also be able to realize their potentials. Emancipatory education should also promote the culture of dialogue and collaboration.

Among the challenges which Tanzanian education is currently facing is the persistence of traditional teaching and learning approach which has remained the same for over 60 years since independence in 1961. This situation has a negative impact on the efforts being made so far in bringing social economic transformation. In order for education in Tanzania to become emancipatory and more meaningful, this study suggests taking into account a teaching and learning approach which promotes lifelong learning characterized by self-direction rather than memorization. Applied skills such as critical thinking, which in turn promotes problem-solving, creativity, and innovation are crucial. Moreover, as recommended in Winarti (2018) in order to ensure emancipatory education, the approach of teaching and learning should promote social responsibility, collaboration, and accountability. This is to say that learning should challenge learners to regard their education as a means through which they can develop skills which will enable them to give back to the society. Additionally, it can be concluded that, in order for a

country like Tanzania to achieve social economic transformation, educators are to study the signs of times, the relevance of pedagogical approaches and teaching tools which they apply. Both the approaches and tool used must be current and relevant to learners so that they can become actively engaged to the maximum in the process of knowledge production.

5.2 Recommendations

The findings from this study, have shown that despite the efforts made in Tanzania in promoting a kind of education which is emancipatory for the wellbeing of the society, its achievement remains questionable due to the nature of challenges that hinder it from happening. Hence, apart from the model of emancipatory education which has been recommended in the previous pages, this study recommends educational leaders, policy makers and educational researchers to join efforts in pursuit of bringing to an end pedagogical approaches that tend to perpetuate teaching and learning as a mere process of transmission of knowledge from educators to learners who in this case are treated as mere receptors. Educational policy makers in particular are being challenged by this study to critically consider enacting policies that protect the rights of learners to contribute to the creation of knowledge. Educational leaders and researchers are also recommended to strive towards establishing possible teaching

and learning approaches which are more relevant to the context of learners. Through cooperation between educators and researchers, they should come up with relevant pedagogical approaches which will totally discourage and dismantle the current rote learning approach which this study views as a good for nothing education. Additionally, they should come up with practical suggestions on how schools can effectively promote critical thinking, self-consciousness, innovation and active dialogue between learners, educators and their context.

Although there is evidence of efforts to promote emancipatory education in Tanzania, from the reviewed literature, there is a critical lack of empirical studies that have assessed the quality of education in Tanzania and what is being done to ensure the achievement of emancipatory education which is urgently needed for nurturing the kind of human resources who through their education can contribute effectively to social economic transformation. For this reason, this study should be regarded as the beginning and a wakeup call for educators and educational researchers to find out ways of promoting an emancipatory and liberating education which is urgently needed. Furthermore, the study recommends future researchers to conduct some empirical studies whose results can contribute to the understanding of the dynamics of emancipatory education, applicability, its challenges and the way forward.

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