

Education quality: New evidence for Zanzibar

Friday 24 September

Venue: Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, Zanzibar

Purpose

The purpose of the seminar is to bring together researchers, education experts, planners and development partners to debate the implications for policy and practice of recent research findings on school quality in Zanzibar.

Objectives

1. To present findings from recent research by the EdQual Research Programme* Consortium that are immediately relevant to Zanzibar;
2. To debate implications for policy and practice in Zanzibar; and
3. To collaboratively identify some ways forward for improving the quality of basic education in Zanzibar.

* EdQual is a five-year Research Programme funded by the UK's Department for International Development to conduct research mainly in Africa on improving the quality of education processes for disadvantaged learners. More information is available at www.edqual.org.

Abstracts

Understanding and planning for education quality

Presenter: Dr. Angeline Mbogo Barrett

EdQual Research and Communications Coordinator.

Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol, UK

Co-author: Prof. Leon Tikly, Director, EdQual RPC

Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol, UK.

The day starts with a short presentation defining education quality and presenting a framework to assist planning for education quality. It is argued that quality in education has three dimensions:

Inclusion: All learners have access to potential outcomes.

Relevance: Learning outcomes are meaningful for all learners, valued by their communities and consistent with national development priorities in a changing global context.

Democratic: Learning outcomes are determined through public debate and ensured through processes of accountability.

Three different types of environment influence the quality of education experienced by individual learners – the community and home environment, the school environment and the policy environment. Planning for education quality requires looking not only at elements within each environment but the interaction between them.

Key influences on primary achievement in Zanzibar: Evidence from SACMEQ II

Presenter: Dr. Michèle Smith

Lead Researcher, SeeQ.

Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol, UK.

EdQual's School Effectiveness and Education Quality project (SeeQ) has been using multilevel modelling techniques to perform secondary analysis of the SACMEQ II dataset. These statistical techniques allow us to identify school and pupil level factors that explain the variability in achievement of standard six pupils in reading and mathematics. The greatest disparities in achievement in both subjects were between geographic regions. Hence, a part of the analysis was aimed at exploring whether and how factors influencing achievement vary between the five SACMEQ zones (Unguja North, Urban/Unguja West, Unguja South, Pemba North, Pemba South). This provides an indication as to whether interventions to improve school quality should be targeted at certain populations or introduced as blanket policies across Zanzibar. Some comparison with the factors found to be important in Zanzibar and in other low income countries in Southern and Eastern Africa may also be presented. Participants will be invited to debate the implications of SeeQ's findings for policy.

Exploring Issues of School Effectiveness and Self-Evaluation at the System and School Levels in the Context of Zanzibar

Presenter: Massoud Mohamed Salim, PhD Research Student.

Graduate School of Education, University of Bristol, U.K.

Planning Officer, Department of Policy and Planning, MoEVT Zanzibar

School effectiveness and school improvement research assists governments to improve school quality and school evaluation practices. While school effectiveness research has focused on identifying the school factors associated with learning achievement, school improvement concerns how a school becomes more effective. Massoud's research focuses on replicating and extending some of the methodologies employed in these studies so as to examine their applicability in the Zanzibar context. His research aims to investigate the range and extent of school effectiveness and explore the potential for using 'value added' measures of school effectiveness to enhance the process of secondary school evaluation and self-evaluation in the context of Zanzibar. 'Value added' measures take account of students' prior achievement and hence can be a fairer indicator of school quality than raw scores. In this meeting, Massoud will share his research findings with education stakeholders in Zanzibar. Participants will be invited to debate implications of the findings for improving policy and practice in the Zanzibar education system, and collaboratively identify some ways for improving educational evaluation practices and the general quality of Zanzibar's secondary schools.