# A Mentoring Approach to Learner Centred Education in Tanzania:

# A case from the grass roots

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# Abstract

Over the past twenty years there has been an attempt to reform classroom pedagogy in Tanzania by implementing a learner-centred model of education. Even though government policy and curriculum design provide the policy conditions for implementing Learner Centred Education, research suggests that many teachers continue to implement teacher-centred approaches. This study reports on the findings of an instrumental case study that aimed to identify the strategies used by six mentor teachers to support teachers to effectively implement learner-centred education. The findings of this study revealed five strategies that mentors used to support the implementation of pedagogical change. These include; 1) supporting the development of teacher identity, 2) modelling flatter power relationships, 3) developing reflective practice, 4) modelling a learner centred environment and 5) engaging teachers in continuing professional development. The research also identified some of the challenges that mentors experienced, such as large class sizes, lack of resources and incongruent assessment and inspectorate policies.

These findings suggest that if learner-centred pedagogies are to be successfully implemented in Tanzania, an ongoing continuing professional development program based on a mentoring model provides an effective strategy for enabling the implementation of LCE.

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# Chapter One

# Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The first thing you notice when entering the school grounds at Joshua School Academy (JSA) in Arusha, Tanzania, is how different the built environment is to many other African schools. Built in two blocks of six classrooms around garden courtyards, these classrooms could be anywhere in my home country of New Zealand. Designed for active learning and with floods of natural light these rooms are weather proof and provide safe storage for teaching resources. The walls of the rooms are covered in the work of teachers and children and the desks are easily moved around to form small groups, or pushed right back out of the way to enable active learning.  Children happily approach their teachers with a story to share or a question to ask. Teachers warmly welcome their approach and listen carefully, asking questions to extend the children's thoughts and language. This is a fun place to learn. JSA is the primary school established at the private Teachers College in Arusha in which this study is based.

I was there to visit a rural school which participated in teacher education alongside JSA and in which it was proposed  that RATA Teachers' Support (RATA), the voluntary teacher education organisation I represented, provide some professional development. Drawing on my skills as a primary school teacher and principal  I have, as a member of RATA, participated in the delivery of teacher education and mentoring in private (non-state) schools in Ghana, South Africa, Tanzania and India since RATA's establishment in 2006. RATA works at the grass roots level, with privately owned schools run by low-income churches or community groups for their families. It has been invited to work in these schools by word of mouth or by personal relationships between individual RATA team members and local schools. Since 2006 I have worked in teams of New Zealand volunteer  teachers who have delivered training in Learner-Centred Education (LCE) as a form of Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

When RATA began it was as a response to a specific request for help from one school to one individual. The request was simply to help the teachers learn to improve the quality of their teaching. Teaching out of our own experience of effective teaching and learning, we introduced elements of LCE into our educational process.

As the work of RATA developed I began to contemplate the appropriateness of using such pedagogies in those Non-Western contexts and of the impact of LCE on the communities in which we were working in Ghana, India and Tanzania. I was aware that we brought with us many Western assumptions in terms of relationships between individuals, issues of gender and power, assumptions about the purpose of education and what "best practice" in teaching might look like.

The impact of a learner-centred approach was particularly evident in Ghana where we initially worked with three schools, beginning in 2009. In 2012, after three years of annual two week CPD visits I performed an audit of the impact of our mentoring on these schools. I found that two schools were primarily concerned with advertising to their communities that they had a relationship with Western teachers and as a result of that relationship now had a library. It seemed that in focussing on having support from Westerners, and the presence of a library, rather than the quality of the learning going on in the classrooms, Head Teachers were seeking to enrol more students rather than committing to the pedagogical change RATA was offering.

There were a number of issues identified in these schools which indicated that implementation of LCE was not successful. There was little evidence of pedagogical change in the classrooms and teachers continued to use physical discipline towards their students. Discontinuing corporal punishment is a part of the relationship building between students and teachers which RATA sees as essential to providing a learning environment in which students can feel safe to take risks. The desire of schools to perform well in final exams seemed to be the focus, rather than pedagogical change. The private school sector is a complex environment to operate in and the schools may have been influenced in their decision making by

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structural forces beyond their control which limit their choices such as a government focus exam pass rates, parental desire for students to succeed in exams, or a lack of resources to enact LCE.

It was clear that there were some areas in which RATA and these schools could not find mutual agreement and, on reflection, some elements of teacher identity which were not adequately addressed by the RATA team. I recommended that RATA Trust Board discontinue support for these schools.

However in the third school a profound change had taken place. The nature of the relationships of the teachers and students had completely transformed. Children and teachers were working together, discussing books and ideas, debating and problem solving, and the children were much more actively involved in their learning. Corporal punishment was a thing of the past and the school was focusing on building up self-efficacy and mutual respect amongst the students and the teachers. RATA's Board decided to continue working with this school for a further two years and complete the five year cycle we had committed to.

In 2016, a year after the end of RATA's relationship with the Ghanaian school I took my husband to the school on a personal visit. During this visit a conversation I had with a parent and school director had a profound effect on me. A father of two young children who had experienced LCE for all of their schooling spoke about his 11 year old daughter. He told me that his daughter was now challenging him in the home. I responded that I was sorry if the pedagogical change in the school had caused dissent in his home and he replied "No Anney, she will need to be like that when she is older." He recognised that in the future she would need to have the skills to advocate for herself and articulate her ideas. This was a powerful moment as I realised that this father was seeking a different way of life for his daughter. His desire  was that she would be assertive in her interactions with others and hold firmly to what she felt was right. He showed a genuine awareness of the power of pedagogy in positive change.

I began to reflect on the impact of LCE in African and Indian contexts. Was the professional development RATA provides having an unanticipated effect on the communities in which we worked? RATA's goal is to ensure that untrained teachers are equipped to teach effectively in order that the children in low-income communities can have the opportunity to gain an education and perhaps begin to challenge some of the structural forces which limit their ability to move themselves and their families out of poverty. But what is the social impact of RATA's work, and is it responsible to meddle with the status quo in low-income countries? What is the impact of grass roots educational change on the wider education system? I began to ask if the work RATA was doing was the best way to assist teachers in Ghana, Tanzania, and India to develop a successful educational experience for their students. These, and other questions have led me to study for a Master Education at the University of Waikato and subsequently to my research into teacher mentoring in Tanzania.

## 1.2  Tanzanian Education

I begin by examining the Tanzanian education context in order to contextualise the case for my research. Tanzania, along with other sub-Saharan African countries, is the focus of pedagogical reform in education. Mwapachu, (2018) observes that the country faces significant political, economic and social challenges at a global, regional and national level. In order for the country to establish its place in the global market place it needs to develop citizens who can respond to these challenges. Competent political and academic leadership is necessary to establish the conditions in which these challenges can be successfully met. An effective education system is essential so that citizens can be educated to lead Tanzania to thrive in a rapidly changing world (Mwapachu, 2018).

*The Tanzania Development Vision 2025* envisages Tanzania to "be a nation whose people are ingrained with a developmental mind-set and competitive spirit…Tanzania (should) attain creativity, innovativeness and a high level of quality education (or order to) compete regionally and internationally" (Tanzania Planning Commission, 1999, p. 99). A key element of *Vision 2025*

is the concept of mind-set transformation and education is identified as a strategic change agent for mind-set transformation. As a result changes in educational policy and restructuring of the education system have been initiated (Tanzania Planning Commission, 1999).

Tanzania has responded to the pressures of educational change with a series of policy reforms over the years (Hardman, Abd-Kadir, & Tibuhinda, 2012; Vavrus, Thomas, & Bartlett, 2011), including the provision of free education for primary and secondary schools which was outlined in Vision 2025. This significantly impacted the numbers of students in school, however many students are still leaving primary schools without basic literacy basic (Mmasa & Anney, 2016). This has led to a strong focus on enhancing the quality of teaching in Tanzanian schools and the learner-centred pedagogy that has become synonymous with quality.

Traditionally, government schools have implemented a teacher-centred model of classroom practice, with rote learning of facts in order to pass examinations as its focus (Hardman et al., 2012).The goal of developing citizens who are curious, creative and who are critical thinkers cannot be achieved with the rote learning culture in government classrooms (Pota, 2017).

A 2015 report on school based teacher development in Tanzania revealed a disconnect between the educational aims of *Vision 2025*, and the model of teacher training in Tanzania (Hardman et al., 2015). According to this report the type of education experienced by the teachers reflected the rote and recitation approaches to teaching which, they themselves, had received at school and indicated that Initial Teacher Education can often be of insufficient quality (Hardman et al., 2015). The report described the manner in which pre-service teachers are taught as modelling a hierarchical, transmission based, lecture driven system where learning is teacher centred and knowledge is passed down from teacher to students. It also observed that once in the classroom, teachers were receiving ad hoc CPD "with little follow-up in the classroom" (Hardman et al., 2015, p. 604). The teacher centred model was found to prevent the development of LCE where

interaction between teacher and student, and student to student is encouraged .

A review of existing national in-service and teacher education provision was undertaken (Hardman et al., 2012), and a teacher education curriculum was implemented in which there is an expectation that experience in participatory learning (LCE) will encompass almost 50% of the training program (Harrison, 2013). Despite these, and other changes in the Tanzanian education system the literature indicates that learning outcomes are still too low, especially for those students who are from low income families, marginalised or who have special educational needs. Developing sufficient numbers of teachers with effective teaching pedagogies will be essential to improving education in Tanzania.

A 2011 OECD study (Schleicher, 2011) found that the most effective CPD models are concerned with upgrading teachers' pedagogical knowledge and skills in an ongoing manner. In response to this research the Tanzanian government piloted a school based strategy, *'Education Quality Improvement Programme in Tanzania'*, (Hardman et al., 2015) , in which there was a move away from ad hoc professional development sessions to a planned, systematic and sustainable approach where the teacher has a more active role in planning and implementing their on-going professional development (Hardman et al., 2015). The pilot included the implementation of learner-centred teaching with on-going mentoring from teaching colleagues (Akyeampong, Lussier, Pryor, & Westbrook, 2013). As a result of this successful pilot the *'Education Quality Improvement Programme in Tanzania'* was introduced (Hardman et al., 2015). Teacher development and pedagogy sit at the centre of this programme, supported by the nationwide development of the CPD infrastructure to ensure that school-based teacher professional development is sustainable (Hardman et al., 2015).

The ongoing commitment of the Tanzanian government to teacher professional development has grown out of research at a macro level (Bett, 2016; Hardman et al., 2015). The research has drawn on a range of

international contexts and theorised that LCE will be successful in the Tanzanian context. There is a pressing need for research to examine the grass roots level of CPD in Tanzania in order to understand if the enactment of CPD policies at a national level is in line with the experiences of those who actually deliver educational programs.

This research aims to address this gap by examining the experiences of teacher mentors at Joshua Teachers Training College (JTTC) who have implemented the learner-centred form of professional development into their own teaching practice, and are now delivering that model of professional development to their Tanzanian colleagues. The following section introduces JTTC as the case for this study.

## 1.3  Introducing the case: Joshua Teachers Training College

I first visited JTTC in 2011 as a member of RATA. We were there on our way to visit Joshua School Academy Magugu, a rural school in a small village that was partnering with JTTC in educating teachers using a mentoring model. RATA also uses a mentoring model in teacher education and had been invited to support the work of the Arusha team at the Magugu site.

In this section I begin by outlining the case for this study, Joshua Teachers' Training College (JTTC). In 2002, JTTC, a small, private teacher training institution was established in Arusha by Lynda Stephenson, a New Zealand trained teacher who was working in a private Christian school and had begun to offer teacher training opportunities to local Tanzanians. She established the college to address the challenge of the widespread prevalence of teacher centred pedagogy by introducing more learner-centred teaching practice. JTTC was initially staffed by Western teachers and mentors. Because of the challenges presented in finding practicum placements for teachers training in LCE, a pre-school was established  in 2007, with the intention of growing a primary school through to class seven. Joshua School Academy (JSA) grew out of this preschool to provide an environment in which LCE could be implemented and modelled to trainee teachers.

As JTTC grew and Tanzanian teachers developed skills in LCE the JTTC and JSA were increasingly staffed by indigenous Tanzanians. JSA and JTTC are both English medium schools but teachers move freely between English and Swahili, and in some instances local dialects to enable understanding. Although the founder of JTTC is still actively involved, and there are Westerners providing CPD for the staff alongside Tanzanian colleagues, the college is increasingly being led by Tanzanians. The curriculum at JTTC is learner-centred. The leaders of JTTC identified early on the importance of mentoring and relationship which are woven into the culture of the college and enable hands-on learning experiences that bring the training to life.

After an earlier successful CPD contract with African Initiative (AI), an NGO from the United Kingdom, in 2017 JTTC entered a second contract to provide CPD to teachers in 'beacon schools' in Tanzania. The intent was to build on the examples of best practice established by the initial contract, and extend it to a wider network of schools. The JTTC team use the practices of LCE to bring about this pedagogical change. A team of Tanzanian teachers who have been trained at JTTC, and who work at JTTC or JSA, deliver this mentoring program to colleagues in the identified beacon schools. Some of these teachers have also been trained in the Tanzanian government teacher training system. The leadership team for the AI contract is predominantly Tanzanian and interactions between government agencies and JTTC regarding the contract are led by the Tanzanian project manager who was the cultural advisor for this research.

In its primary role of training teachers for Christian schools, JTTC's training has a biblical perspective and maintains a faith based understanding of personal growth and teacher role. The contract with AI has a secular ontology and in implementing this program the mentors are aware of the need to respect the secular nature of the government education system.

This study explores mentoring in LCE as a model of CPD in Tanzania. It considers the strategies used by mentors to implement LCE in government schools and seeks to identify the conditions in which a mentoring model

may be successful. It also discusses the structural factors which may enable, or inhibit, the implementation of this pedagogy.

## 1.4 Research aims and objectives

This study aims to look into the pedagogical experiences of the Tanzanian mentors at JTTC. It will consider the strategies mentors use to facilitate the implementation of LCE and the challenges they face in doing so. The research will also consider the economic, cultural and political impact of the implementation of LCE. This study intends to achieve these aims by considering the following research question:

*How do Joshua Teachers Training College mentors support teachers to implement Learner-Centred Education in Tanzanian Schools?*

It will answer this research question by responding to the following sub-questions:

*Question 1) How do mentors support teachers in six Tanzanian schools to implement Learner-Centred Education?*

*Question 2) What are the factors which inhibit the implementation of Learner Centred Education?*

*Question 3) What are the economic and political factors that influence the implementation of Learner Centred Education?*

### 1.4.1 Chapter Outline

Chapter 2 presents the literature review about key themes in this study. It begins with an overview of educational development in Tanzania from Colonial times through to the present. It also explores the impact of global policies for educational development and considers the factors which have impacted Tanzanian educational policy.

Chapter 3 is concerned with the methodology for this study. The chapter commences with a discussion of critical theory and critical realism as the meta-theoretical underpinnings of this research. The chapter goes on to

describe the research methods, data collection procedures and process of data analysis.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research, focussing on the key themes which emerged from the interview process. The responses of the mentor participants about their experiences of implementing a school based learner-centred CPD program are categorised using a thematic analysis.

Chapter 5 discusses the key themes that emerged from the findings. The strategies used by mentors to bring about pedagogical change are examined to explore how they confirm or dispute previous studies about the implementation of LCE in Tanzania. Also the global political and economic forces which have been identified as influencing educational policy in Tanzania are examined through the lens of critical realism.

Finally, chapter 6, the conclusion gives a brief summary and critique of the findings related to the implementation of LCE in Tanzania. It then details the limitations of this study and makes suggestions for future research.

# Chapter Two

# Literature Review

In this chapter I begin by reviewing education development in Tanzania from pre-colonial times through to the present day. I argue that Tanzania has been influenced by neoliberal globalisation which has constructed a certain approach to teacher development. I will critically discuss the concept of 'quality education' and the implementation of LCE in Tanzania, and will finally conclude by exploring the concept of mentoring as a form of continuing professional development in Tanzania.

## 2.1  Colonial influences on education

Colonialism had a wide spread impact on the nations of Africa. In pre-colonial times, indigenous societies valued the kind of education which contributed to their survival (Tully, 2008). The ability to hunt, grow food, build homes, make clothing, design beautiful objects with practical uses such as baskets and bowls, express oneself spiritually, and use plants for healing were essential to ensure that the people survived, and thrived in the environment in which they lived (el Bouhali & Rwiza, 2017; Swantz, 2016).

With the advent of German colonialism in the late 19th century, colonial powers asserted their influence across all levels of society to serve the interests of the coloniser, not those of Tanzanian citizens (Abrokwaa, 2017). African ways of life were transformed by influences from the West which demanded that African people live in new ways, more attuned to Western values (Harber, 2017). As a result indigenous knowledge became viewed as being of less value in Tanzania (el Bouhali & Rwiza, 2017; Swantz, 2016; Tully, 2008). Institutions of the state such as law, taxation, public works and education were developed to enable the resources of Africa to be extracted at maximum profit to the colonial power (Baker & Peters, 2012; Harber, 2017; Tully, 2008).  Education was for an elite group of indigenous people who were educated in a manner which enhanced the power and demands of their colonial masters (Baker & Peters, 2012; Tully, 2008). Tanzanian citizens were educated not to improve their lives, or develop their

environment, but to provide interpreters and mediators who helped mould their societies into the form required for colonisation to flourish (Harber, 2017). Education became in many circumstances a tool both of evangelisation, and of providing workers to mine the resources of the nation (Harber, 2017). Western, globalising powers had a belief that what they were doing in dominating indigenous people was "civilising" them (Swantz, 2016; Tully, 2008).

## 2.2 Modernisation

The idea of 'civilising' indigenous people was reflected in the concept of modernisation. To become a modern society was to become Westernised, taking on the political and social norms of the West because Westernised modernity was "functionally superior" (Wagner, 2012, p. 66). Modernisation assumed a homogenising process in which emerging nations would model themselves on Western powers in matters of economics, social policy and government, and in doing so citizens would drop their traditional structures, cultures and values (Hernandez, Franklin, Washburn, Craig, & Appleford, 2014).

Implicit in modernity was the need of the colonial power to transform the mind of the community. That is to move away from local collectives and ethnic affiliations which were found in village, church and family units to a focus on national scale co-operation (Fuller, 1991, p. 26). Traditional cultural features of art and ritual became of less importance than a move towards Westernisation and old ways of life diminished (Swantz, 2016, p. 210). Education was seen as a tool of modernisation and as playing a role in the socialisation of children away from traditional familial and village loyalties, towards loyalty to the state and the seeking of modern ways of life (Fuller, 1991, p. 26). The role of education was to mould the minds of students and their families towards development. The  result of this "control of knowledge" (Swantz, 2016, p. 56), is the reduction, or elimination of indigenous knowledge (ibid).

## 2.3 Neo-Colonial Tanzania

In 1961 colonialism concluded when Tanzania gained independence as a result of the Independence movement under the leadership of Mwalimu Julius Neyere. Despite the fact that colonialism had finished, colonialism still continued in the minds of Tanzanian citizens, a concept referred to as neo-colonialism (Crozier, 1964). Neyere was Prime Minister, then President, of Tanzania from 1961 to 1985 and under his leadership development turned to the modernisation of society focussed on the concept of "Ujamaa" (familyhood) a Tanzanian model of socialism (Mwapachu, 2018, p. 15). Neyere's vision was of a united Tanzania, where change on all levels was necessary in order to build the country. He stated in his inaugural Presidential Address in December 1962 "it is useless to long for the good things of today if we are not prepared to change the habits of the past which prevent our making use of the means to achieve good things" (Mwapachu, 2018, p. 5).

Tanzania, having gained independence, was still subject to the laws and economic systems which had existed under colonial rule (Nkrumah, 1965, p. ixix). Although Tanzania had become 'independent' it was still experiencing control of its economy through economic and monetary means and these systems were still linked with those of the former colonial ruler (Mwapachu, 2018; Nkrumah, 1965).

Global influences on Tanzania, although significant in the period of modernisation, became even more profound as the impact of globalisation began to be felt in Tanzania. The following section will examine the rise of international actors in the continued development of Tanzania.

## 2.4 Globalisation

Globalisation has had a wide ranging impact on economies, culture, politics, technology, education and policy making in countries world-wide. Although there is "no global consensus on the factors shaping globalisation" (Jackson, 2016, p. 11), globalisation is concerned with issues such as global-political economic systems relating to trade, foreign investment and international monetary policy (Olssen & Peters, 2005). The importance of international

markets takes precedence over the state, and government regulation and the interests of the individual, over the good of the community. Government focus moves from social cohesion and social good to the provision of systems to enhance the development of a nation's participation in the global economy (B Lingard, 2009, as cited in Ball, 2012).

The network of processes involved in globalisation also include labour, the migration of people around the world, and environmental factors (Held et al, (1999) as cited in Tikly, 2001). In this way globalisation is not defined as any single 'condition', but as complex, ever changing and subject to international relations (Jackson, 2016; Tikly, 2001). More recently, literature has broadened the focus of globalisation to include areas such as education, culture, media, technology and biological factors such as climate change (Hernandez et al., 2014; Jackson, 2016).

The growth of globalisation has been facilitated by the development of structural systems such as policies and laws within nation states which enable the global economy to flourish. Neoliberalism is the ideological framework which has provided the conditions in which this has occurred (B Lingard, 2009, as cited in Ball, 2012; Olssen & Peters, 2005, p. 22).

## 2.5 Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism is a political discourse which works through governments and affects the hegemony of Western nations (Olssen & Peters, 2005). It is concerned with creating the conditions, laws and institutions for the global economy to flourish (Olssen & Peters, 2005). Neoliberalism proposes that economic development is possible where there is liberal democracy (Tabulawa, 2013) and  that education is the channel through which globalisation changes societies (Tikly, 2001). Neoliberal globalisation shifts the focus of government policy and regulation even further towards the interests of the market at the cost of common good and social protection. Private sector influence on, and involvement in, the workings of the state further create the environment in which individualism and a culture of 'self-capitalising' can flourish (Olssen & Peters, 2005).

Despite the role of International Aid Agencies in accelerating neoliberal globalisation, there is a strong critique of such policy from the academic community. Some authors note that the drive to economic development, with its focus on the development of the individual, conflicts with the core values of African communities. Swantz, (2016) and Mwapachu (2018) describe traditional African community as being based on the concept of "we" rather than "I" and highlight the fact that neoliberal individualism is not appropriate in the African context. Education sits at the centre of the development of neoliberalism across national borders. Educational policy decisions are being made internationally and nation states are increasingly losing the ability to maintain control of their education systems, a process which Ball (2012) describes as "denationalisation" (p.4). International Aid Agencies are increasingly influenced by neoliberalism as its influence is felt in funding decisions by providers of funds such as the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (Verger, Edwards, & Altinyelken, 2014). Associated with neoliberalism is a process of political democratisation which is "increasingly viewed as a prerequisite for educational development" (Tabulawa, 2009, p. 44).

The concept of development initially focussed on economic growth as a process for moving societies out of poverty. More recently this focus has widened to include health, education, economics and agriculture (Cremin & Nakabugo, 2012). Formal, school based education is an important element of development worldwide. Education is considered by the United Nations to be a universal human right (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2001). With the origins of schooling being strongly influenced by colonialism, the structures of formal education are similar in many countries of the world. This formal, school based model of education is "often endorsed as one of the keys to development" (Harber, 2017, p. 2).

Emerging from the *Education For All* conferences at Jomtein and Dakar, and influenced by the *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) and *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs), this Western-style, almost hegemonic model of education is proposed as the solution to the provision

of universal primary education and gender equality in education. (Kendall, 2009 as cited in Harber, 2017). It is with this hegemonic, Western, view of educations' purpose and form that global policy on educational development has evolved (Harber, 2017).

The following is a brief outline of significant events in the development of global education strategies. It presents the growing influence of the World Bank on educational development.

## 2.6 Education for All

In the three decades since the 'World Conference on Education for All' in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990, the global education development agenda has been influenced by such multilateral agencies as the World Bank, UNICEF, UNECSO, and the UNDP (King, 2007). These agencies played the dominant role in developing educational policy from *Education for All,* through the *International Development Targets,* and in the implementation of the *Millennium Development Goals* (King, 2007).

At the Jomtien Conference in 1990, after considerable negotiation around the definition of basic education, a target of the provision of universal access to, and completion of, primary education by 2000 was described in *The World Declaration on Education for All* and the *Framework for Action to meet Basic Learning Needs 1990*. UNICEF and the World Bank played a significant role in influencing these documents to focus on the primary level of education (King, 2007).

The *Education for All* (EFA) strategy prioritised the expansion of primary education as a solution to the problem of addressing basic learning needs (Barrett, Sayed, Schweisfurth, & Tikly, 2015).

## 2.7 Education for Sustainable Development

The release of the *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) in 2015 led to a further refinement of the role of education in development. SDG Number 4; *Quality Education*, acknowledges that progress has been made in achieving the goal of universal primary education, that literacy rates are on the rise

and that more girls than ever are attending school (Harber, 2017). However challenges remain. The gap in education between rich and poor remains significant as does that between urban and rural students. SDG number 4 for Education is summarised below:

> "Achieving inclusive and quality education for all reaffirms the belief that education is one of the most powerful and proven vehicles for sustainable development. This goal ensures that all girls and boys complete free primary and secondary schooling by 2030. It also aims to provide equal access to affordable vocational training, to eliminate gender and wealth disparities, and achieve universal access to a quality higher education" (Sustainable development goals/goal 4).

## 2.8  The World Bank and Educational  Development

The World Bank's association with educational development strategies goes back to the early 1960s and it has been described as "the most influential international organisation in the education for development field" (Verger et al., 2014, p. 381).

The World Development Report on Education 2018 reflects the WB's changing emphasis to educational development. A renewed focus on learning, rather than numbers of children in schools puts education at the centre of efforts to improve human welfare (World Bank, 2017).

Of particular interest to this research is the focus on teachers, especially the extent to which it blames teachers for the failure of education because of, amongst other things, their absenteeism and because they "often lack (the) skills or motivation to be effective" (World Bank, 2017, p. 10). In recognising that merely by attending school a child is not guaranteed a quality education, it identifies that teachers are the second most important factor affecting learning in schools, "after well prepared and motivated learners" (World Bank, 2017, p. 151). While acknowledging the importance of appropriate individualised pedagogical training for teachers, and that teaching needs to be pitched at the level of  the student, the report identifies "Increasing teacher motivation with incentives" as the third "most important principle to

achieving learning success through teachers" (World Bank, 2017, p. 151). The assumption that incentivising teachers will motivate them to higher performance takes no consideration of the change in teacher identity and agency required to implement LCE.

The following section examines the concept of teacher quality in education. It explores contrasting definitions of quality education and considers the role of teachers in its implementation.

## 2.9  Quality education

The concept of quality is embedded in the education proposals of many International Aid Agencies which link quality education with the implementation of LCE (Verger et al., 2014; World Bank, 2017). Despite this, there is little clarity on what quality should look like (Vavrus et al., 2011; Verger et al., 2014). As a result there is often a focus on measurement and measurability and very little written about the learning process (Schweisfurth, 2015).

There is considerable debate in the literature about whether quality education can be described on a global scale, with a shared understanding of what quality in education is (Tikly, 2011). Some suggest it is context specific and therefore determined by who is defining it, and why (Anney, 2013; Menter, Peters, & Cowie, 2017). SDG Number 4 acknowledges that quality education is a key factor in transforming individuals and societies (Anney, 2013; World Bank, 2017). In a neoliberal context, the development of citizens with the skills and attitudes to participate globally is an essential element of economic success (Mwapachu, 2018; Pota, 2017).

Four common themes from local, national and global discourse on quality emerge from the literature. These are:

1) Processes - an analysis of the amount of teaching time and the extent of active learning in schools
2) Goals and specifications - strengthened learning assessments to measure progress towards global goals after 2015, and universal primary and secondary school completion

3) Resources and inputs - provision of adequate infrastructure in terms of buildings and of support systems, and provision of sufficient instructional materials, investment in developing highly trained and competent teachers, and

4) Outcomes - test scores, examination results, graduation rates, and success in obtaining employment (Lee & Zuilkowski, 2017; Tikly, 2011; Tshabangu & Msafiri, 2013; UNESCO, 2014).

Judging educational quality on measured outcomes may have its limitations if students are taught merely in order to pass tests. This is especially pertinent if focus on measurement comes at the cost of quality learning and assessment procedures in the early years (Kalolo, 2016)**.** Assessment processes contribute to greater learning if the information used leads to changes and improvement in classroom practice (Barrett et al., 2015).

### 2.9.1  Teachers and Quality Education

Teachers are increasingly identified as key players in achieving quality education (Anney, 2013; Menter, Peters, & Cowie, 2017; World Bank, 2017). In the 11th EFA Global Monitoring Report education systems are described as "only as good as its teachers" (UNESCO, 2014 p. i). The importance of supporting teachers not only in their pre-service education, but also once they are in schools is an essential element of building a quality education system (Hardman et al., 2015; World Bank, 2017).

In suggesting the following dimensions of quality teaching Menter et al. (2017), emphasise that cultural traditions and material conditions of teaching vary around the world and that excellent teaching cannot be measured by a global standard. The dimensions broaden the focus of quality education to embrace professional skills and understandings which can differ according to context.

The dimensions are:

1) Mastery of curriculum knowledge – knowing and understanding what is to be taught

2) Professional content knowledge – knowing the content to be taught so thoroughly that the teacher is competent to teach it

3) Professional knowledge of the art of teaching – theories of learning, classroom management, cultural and sociological understanding of context

4) Professional competency in assessment practices, formative, summative and assessment for learning (Menter et al., 2017).

These dimensions of quality teaching practice are proposed as an alternative to the focus on pedagogy. (Altinyelken, 2010; Harber, 2017; Vavrus, 2009). They offer an alternative model of quality which is responsive to culture, context and communities and potentially acknowledges indigenous knowledge (Elliott, 2014; Lee & Zuilkowski, 2017; Tabulawa, 2003; Tshabangu & Msafiri, 2013).

Education in sub-Saharan Africa presents some unique challenges. Factors which impact educational provision are complex and include such structural issues as a focus on passing exams, the provision of adequate teaching facilities and resources, and the practice of Ministry of Education officials. A significant issue relates to teacher education and ongoing professional development. The poor quality of teacher education results in a poor quality of entrants to the profession. This, coupled with an inconsistent provision of on-going professional development has contributed to the issue of low quality education in schools, particularly in Tanzania (Verger et al., 2014). "It seems that in Africa, teacher education is as much part of the problem of quality in education as part of the solution" (Harber, 2017).

In Tanzania, LCE (participatory learning) has been proposed as the desired model of learning (Tanzania Planning Commission, 1999). The following section explores LCE in depth to examine the elements needed in order to successfully implement this pedagogy in Tanzania.

## 2.10 Learner Centred Education

In an attempt to improve education quality in Sub-Saharan Africa many learner-centred initiatives have been introduced over the past two decades. These include:

1) In Uganda a thematic approach to curriculum was implemented to develop LCE practices (Altinyelken, 2010);

2) In Kenya, a national, school based development program for learning and teaching was implemented in order to improve the effectiveness of teacher practice by providing in-school support and mentoring (Hardman et al., 2009) and;
3) In Tanzania a pilot school based professional development program for primary teachers was implemented in 2011 (Hardman et al., 2015).

Analysis of these projects, and others with a focus on LCE, inidcates that the success of these programs is affected not only by teaching practice, but by a raft of other matters including access to resources, class size, a focus on examination results and the cultural and social context in which teaching occurs (Harber, 2017).

### 2.10.1 The problem of definition

LCE is identified in the literature by many different names, including participatory, child centred, inquiry and discovery learning (Anney, 2013; Barrett et al., 2015; Tabulawa, 2003). LCE has become the pedagogy of choice for many International Aid Agencies (Verger et al., 2014). However there is little consistency of understanding what LCE is and how to implement learner-centred practices. (Anney, 2013; Schweisfurth, 2015). LCE has been described "as a 'hooray' term: one that invokes all sorts of positive and applaudable things while remaining a relatively empty signifier" (Harber and Davis (1997) as cited in Schweisfurth, 2015, p. 262).

Schweisfurth, (2013), defines LCE as a pedagogical approach which gives learners, "…and demands from them, a relatively high level of active control over the content and process of learning. What is learnt, and how, is therefore shaped by learners' needs, capabilities and interests…" (Schweisfurth, 2013, p. 20). It "…extends beyond the childhood phase…" , and centres on the learners' active control over their learning regardless of their age or educational stage (Schweisfurth, 2013, p. 14).

When using a learner-centred approach, the role of the teacher is seen as the facilitator of learning, rather than a holder of knowledge (Schweisfurth, 2015). The individual needs of the learner are placed at the centre of the teaching experience. This requires a considerable ontological shift from

those who implement it (Vavrus, Bartlett, & Selima, 2013). Active participation in learning is seen as a way of embedding knowledge, and a social constructivist approach is at the centre of teacher practice (Anney, 2013; Paris & Combs, 2006; Schweisfurth, 2015; Tabulawa, 2003). The social constructivist epistemology, reflected in Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (Lev Vygotsky, 1896-1934) maintains that knowledge is co-constructed by teacher and learner, builds on existing knowledge, skills, background and personal experience of the individual, and that learning builds in developmentally appropriate contexts over a sustained period of time (Powell & Kalina, 2009; Schweisfurth, 2015).

LCE aims to develop critical thinking skills and an ability to apply knowledge meaningfully and imaginatively (Schweisfurth, 2013). Some literature cautions against setting up a "dichotomy between transmission pedagogy and learner-centred pedagogy" (Barrett et al., 2015) because teachers may use a combination of approaches in various contexts (Barrett et al., 2015; Vavrus et al., 2011). It may be helpful to view it as a part of a continuum of development of understanding the teaching and learning process (Elliott, 2014; Schweisfurth, 2015).

LCE is increasingly being promoted by policy makers, yet is seldom successfully implemented (Tabulawa, 2009). The issues surrounding the implementation of this pedagogy are complex and relate not only to understandings of quality in education, but also to the interactions of the individuals involved in each classroom. Teachers and students each bring their own understanding and experiences of education to the learning environment (Elliott, 2014; Schweisfurth, 2015). These understandings are influenced by the age, experience and background of the learner, teacher experience and background, motivation of teacher and learner, the quality of relationships, cultural contexts, the demands of school, state and national policies and  competency in using available resources (Altinyelken, 2010; Schweisfurth, 2015).

In establishing a framework of 'minimum standards' of LCE, Schweisfurth (2015), presents a model of LCE. These minimum standards propose a set

of benchmarks against which practice can be measured while remaining culturally adaptive (Schweisfurth, 2015). The framework is designed to challenge the view that measurement of outcomes is the way to evaluate success in education. Instead it directs attention towards what actually happens in the classroom, the interactions between teacher and learner, the impact of culture and policy and the focus on assessment as a tool for learning, not as an end in itself. In this way the quantitative goals and targets established by the MDGs and SDGs can be addressed while maintaining an understanding of the context in which the pedagogies are being implemented (Schweisfurth, 2015).

Schweisfurth's framework of minimum standards, as summarised below, guides the understanding of LCE used in this research.

1) Lessons are engaging and motivating to students
2) Learners and teachers should be mutually respectful. Elements which would reflect this include;
   o No corporal punishment, humiliation or exploitation
   o Use of direct and specific feedback
   o Absence of constant, non-specific praise
3) Learning is built on existing knowledge and skills and learning experiences are developmentally appropriate
4) Dialogic teaching. Not teacher centred, from the front, but interactive
5) Curriculum should be relevant to learners' present and future lives
6) Curriculum should embrace skills and attitudes as outcomes alongside knowledge, creating critical and creative thinking by 'learning by doing'
7) Assessment is for learning – it should be meaningful for those being assessed in order that their learning can be improved by it (Schweisfurth, 2015, pp. 263 -264).

LCE is seen as important in developing learners because it encompasses both cognitive and psychological processes. It enables the development of critical and creative thinking skills, sparks curiosity, and if implemented in a relational way in a safe environment, can increase motivation for both teacher and learner (Vavrus et al., 2011).

The skills required of a teacher implementing LCE are vastly different from those used in a predominantly teacher-centred environment. Relationships

between teacher and student assume a higher importance as learning is targeted to individuals, and more interactive learning experiences are provided for the students. These interactions are at the heart of LCE and shape the priorities and identities of both teacher and learner (Schweisfurth, 2015). The relationship between teacher and learner changes as the teacher provides contexts in which the student can develop their creativity, higher order thinking, problem solving skills, learning dispositions and socio-emotional development skills (Anney, 2013; Paris & Combs, 2006; Schweisfurth, 2015; Vavrus et al., 2011; Wagoner, 2018).

Teacher qualifications, experience, knowledge of subject areas, assessment practices, and pedagogical skills influence student learning (Vavrus et al., 2013). Without high-quality initial teacher training, teachers largely teach in a hierarchical, transmission-based, rote and recitation approach just as they were taught (Altinyelken, 2010; Thomas & Salema, 2017; Tikly, 2011; Vavrus et al., 2011). In-service teacher education programs are needed for practicing teachers to understand and implement changes in policy and curriculum, and to discover how to implement and assess LCE in overcrowded classrooms with limited teaching resources (Vavrus et al., 2011).

Development of teacher identity is a key element for successfully implementing LCE. Research into teacher identity acknowledges that teachers draw upon their own experiences and belief systems when making decisions about how to act, or to relate with others (Schutz, Hong, & Cross Francis, 2018). In making decisions about their actions teachers are participating in a form of human agency. Schutz et al., (2018) call this 'identity-agency'. "Identity-agency is the mediator that helps teachers to understand the relationship between social environment and individual identity" (Schutz et al., 2018, p. 27).

In-service teachers typically find pedagogical change more challenging than pre-service teachers because they have already established teacher identities which work for them in their existing settings (Schutz et al., 2018). In order to move towards the implementation of LCE, in-service teachers

must be willing to re-negotiate not only their teacher identities (Schutz et al., 2018) but also their view of the nature of knowledge, students and their role, teachers and their role, and of classroom organisation (Altinyelken, 2010; Anney, 2013; Vavrus et al., 2013).

In order to successfully implement LCE teachers themselves need to be educated by facilitators who have a clear understanding of the pedagogy of LCE, and who are themselves competent in the use of this approach. Learning through lectures about how to plan for, and facilitate group discussion, debates, case studies, role plays and other such activities cannot adequately impart the skills needed (Thomas & Salema, 2017; Vavrus et al., 2011). Teachers in training need to understand and engage in the lived experience of the theories and methods associated with LCE in order to construct their own understanding of the inquiry process, and to develop the skills and confidence needed to see themselves as competent in applying them (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013).

Vavrus et. al, (2013) state that teachers' practices shift gradually over time, often alongside a transformation of beliefs about the nature of knowledge, teacher authority, and the capabilities of their students. In order to develop their skills in LCE they need consistent and sustained opportunities to learn about, witness and experience varied teaching approaches (p. 72). This can prove challenging for teachers who are already employed in a role which reinforces their view of teaching and learning. If teachers' understanding of their role and responsibilities are changed and they find themselves at odds with their school this can have a further impact on their developing teacher identity. This can be particularly challenging if the models of teaching they have adopted are not consistent with the models their school requires them to use, and if there are not appropriate resources available (Schutz et al., 2018).

### 2.10.2 A critique of LCE

Some argue that LCE as an approach to teaching and learning is widely driven by International Aid Agencies in an effort to create citizens for the global economy (Altinyelken, 2010; Obamba, 2013; Tabulawa, 2003; World

Bank, 2011). The concept of 'education for all' as a response to MDGs 2 and 3 has widespread appeal (UNICEF, 2009). Education can, and does, add to the life options available to those who are educated (World Bank, 2017). But educated in which way, and by whom, with what skills or knowledge, and who decides what constitutes a 'good' education?

Implementation of LCE requires a new way of conceptualising education and the nature of knowledge (Tabulawa, 2003). Rapidly changing societies are responding to the challenges of globalisation and fast paced political, social and economic change (de la Sablonniere, Taylor, & Sadykova, 2009). LCE is not always enthusiastically received and has been described as "representing a process of Westernisation disguised as quality and effective teaching" (Tabulawa, 2003, p. 77).

As this study is concerned with a mentoring model of CPD for teachers' implementation of LCE it is important to examine some concerns expressed by teachers about its implementation.

An examination of the literature reveals that teachers throughout the region share similar concerns about the implementation of LCE. These include:

1) Training in LCE as a theory without practical experience
2) Inadequate school based professional support
3) Lack of on-going professional development
4) The high reliance on examinations as a measure of success
5) Large class size and overcrowded classrooms
6) Lack of resources
7) Resistance from parents and students (Anney, 2013; Barrett, 2007; Vavrus, 2009; Wagoner, 2018)

These ideas will be further explored in the following section.

### 2.10.2.1 Pre-service teacher education

Implementing LCE is an expectation explicitly stated in Tanzanian curriculum documents both for teacher training (2013), and for schools (Tanzania Institute of Education, 2015). As described earlier, these expectations present significant challenges to teachers and students throughout the education system because teacher training often involves

learning about LCE in theory, but provides no opportunity to develop a practical understanding of LCE in action (Altinyelken, 2010; Thomas & Salema, 2017).

### 2.10.2.2 Inadequate school based professional support

Research suggests that there is insufficient support from school leaders for teachers trying to implement LCE. Amongst their various administrative tasks, school leaders are responsible for ensuring that the teachers in their schools are adequately supervised and developed in the role of teacher. However they are not always well prepared for this task (Brodie, Lelliott, & Davis, 2002; Hardman et al., 2015; Vavrus & Salema, 2013). School leaders are themselves products of an education system which is based on the technical rationality model, rather than the reflective practitioner model (Vavrus et al., 2011). They often have no experience of LCE and can be reluctant to implement it in their school (Altinyelken, 2010). The literature reveals a variety of other concerns expressed by school leaders including the way in which students may behave in class, a belief that excessive noise from a classroom indicates a lack of learning, or because they are concerned that the students will not perform well in their final examinations (Kalolo, 2016; Vavrus et al., 2013; Vavrus et al., 2011; Wagoner, 2018). It is important that teachers feel supported in their methodologies once teaching in their own classrooms. If their teaching colleagues and school leaders do not share their understanding of teaching and learning this can lead to conflict, and to the teacher using LCE less frequently, or even stopping using this pedagogy altogether (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013; Vavrus & Moshi, 2009).

### 2.10.2.3 Continuing professional development

The literature reports that a lack of CPD is a key reason why LCE has not been successfully implemented (Hardman et al., 2015). Many teachers have reported that they have not received any professional development since they had finished their teacher education (Mmasa & Anney, 2016; Vavrus et al., 2011). School-based, in-service CPD is seen as a possible solution to the challenge of implementing LCE (Mmasa & Anney, 2016; M

O'Sullivan, 2004; Vavrus et al., 2011; Wagoner, 2018). The development of teacher identity and the implementation of LCE occurs gradually over time and research suggests that it is important that teachers receive on-going support in order to develop their understanding of LCE (Bartlett & Mogusu, 2013).

### 2.10.2.4 High reliance on examinations as a measure of success

Tanzanian education policies promote the implementation of LCE, but the practice of measuring success by examination results causes genuine concern for teachers and school leaders (Altinyelken, 2010; Vavrus et al., 2011). Teachers experience substantial pressure to ensure that students pass exams rather than develop the skills and understandings required for LCE (Vavrus et al., 2013; Vavrus et al., 2011). Teaching and learning strategies that are believed to have little impact on examination pass rates are less likely to be sustained (Altinyelken, 2010).

### 2.10.2.5 Large class sizes and overcrowded classrooms

As a result of Tanzanian policy to make primary and secondary education free for everyone (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2014) schools have significantly increased their number of students since February 2016 (UNICEF, 2018). As a consequence schools have struggled to find enough teachers, text books, teaching resources and appropriate buildings such as classrooms and toilet facilities (ibid). The presence of more students in classes has exacerbated the challenges faced by teachers attempting to implement LCE. Often there is not enough space for students to gather in small groups, participate in active learning, or sit in any other way than formal lines (Barrett, 2007; Vavrus et al., 2011).

### 2.10.2.6 Lack of adequate teaching and learning resources

LCE involves active learning and hands-on exploration. This requires a variety of learning aids, such as wall charts, objects to manipulate for maths, examples of natural environmental features and other resources to support the pedagogical approach (Altinyelken, 2010). Resources are often expensive and there is rarely sufficient budget available to schools for purchasing them (Barrett, 2007; Brodie et al., 2002).

### 2.10.2.7 Resistance from parents and students

LCE is a different approach to education than parents and students may have experienced in the past. In order for LCE to be successfully implemented students must be willing to change their understanding of their role in the classroom (Guthrie et al., 2015; Tabulawa, 2009). Because of this, students can sometimes determine whether the implementation of LCE is successful (Elliott, 2014). Research suggests that parents also need to have a greater understanding of the pedagogy which sees success as developing critical skills for life, rather than the passing of exams (Anney, 2013; Barrett, 2007).

## 2.11 Mentoring as Continuing Professional Development

CPD for teachers occurs for a variety of reasons (Sayed, Mogliacci, & Badroodien, 2018), including upgrading teachers' qualifications and improving content knowledge to develop pedagogical skills and classroom management (Timperley, et al., as cited in Sayed et al., 2018, p. 209). In order for teachers to competently implement LCE in Tanzanian schools support is needed for them to upgrade their qualifications and improve their content knowledge (Sayed et al., 2018). A number of CPD models have been introduced in Sub-Sharan Africa, but not all of these have resulted in widespread success (Vavrus et al., 2011). Mentoring is an effective way in which to enhance a teacher's professional identity (Salgur, 2014). "Mentoring is the process of serving as a mentor, someone who facilitates and assists another's development. The process includes modelling because the mentor must be able to model the (processes) being taught…"(Salgur, 2014, p. 46). The concept of 'mentor' works both as a noun and a verb. As a noun it describes life-long learner, supporter friend, guide, listener and role model. As a verb it encompasses listening, analysing, discussing, guiding and supporting (Salgur, 2014).

Mentoring programs exist in a variety of forms and there is no fixed way of developing such a program (Salgur, 2014). The cascade model of CPD in Sub-Saharan Africa  is described as a 'deficit' or "problem" model' which seeks to provide teachers with the skills they are perceived to 'lack' (Sayed

et al., 2018, p. 211). In contrast a 'growth' model, based on a collaborative approach is seen to be more beneficial as teachers take an active role in recognising their developmental needs and become collaborative agents in their own professional development (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002, as cited in Sayed et al., 2018, p. 209). Mentoring sits within the growth model of CPD.

Mentoring in teacher development, by its very nature, needs to be provided over an extended period of time and integrated into teachers' everyday practice (Sayed et al., 2018). As successful CPD generally focuses on classroom application and is practice driven, it relies on the skills of mentoring for effective implementation. The skills required are observation and reflection, group work and regular and deliberate evaluation and feedback (Salgur, 2014; Sayed et al., 2018).

As a growth model of CPD, mentoring is an essential tool for observing and experiencing LCE in practice. Lesson observation is a critical tool in enabling teachers to experience teaching and learning processes (Hardman et al., 2015; M O'Sullivan, 2004; Thomas & Salema, 2017; Vavrus & Salema, 2013; Wagoner, 2018). In the process of mentoring teachers are able to work with more experienced colleagues to reflect on of what they have observed and begin to consider implementing it in their own classrooms (M. O'Sullivan, 2005). Research suggests that teacher identity is developed through a mentoring relationship which enables them to develop the skills of quality teaching (Salgur, 2014; Schutz et al., 2018). Teachers need to feel supported in their teaching methodologies. A Tanzanian study into effective CPD (Hardman et al., 2015) highlights the effectiveness of teachers working together by mentoring or peer coaching, particularly in regard to developing teacher identity (Hardman et al., 2015). School-based, in-service professional development on an on-going basis is seen as a possible solution to the challenge of continuing to use LCE in the classroom (Mmasa & Anney, 2016; M O'Sullivan, 2004; Vavrus et al., 2011; Wagoner, 2018). While there are many studies which examine CPD in Tanzania (Hardman et al., 2015; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2013), little is known about the extent to which mentoring supports the implementation of LCE in Tanzania.

Likewise, little is known about the experiences of mentors and the strategies they use to support teachers to implement LCE.

# Chapter Three

# Research Methodology

## 3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research design, methodology, data collection methods and analysis employed in this study. It begins with a discussion of critical theory and critical realism as the ontological and epistemological foundation for this research. Next, the method of participant recruitment is presented, followed by a discussion of the ethical procedures, and the process for conducting the interviews. The final section of the chapter reports on the process of thematic analysis used to analyse the interview data.

### 3.1.1 Critical Theory

Critical Theory (CT) has gained popularity over recent decades as a research paradigm that has responded to the weaknesses identified in the positivist and interpretivist paradigms (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011) CT facilitates a focus on and explanation of, the complex nature of social interactions (Robertson & Dale, 2015). It is founded on the belief that all human interactions are mediated by the power relationships in the person's social, historical and political environment (Denzin & Lincoln, 2018; Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). Its purpose is not simply to understand people and society but to change their situation, in particular those that find themselves in inequitable situations or who are disempowered within a democratic society (Cohen et al., 2011).

The epistemological foundations of CT underpin this research as it seeks to examine the factors that enable and constrain the strategies used by mentors to implement LCE into Tanzanian schools. In doing so, this research acknowledges that there are wider economic, political and cultural mechanisms that influence mentors' work, both at a national, and international level.

Because of this, CT is the most appropriate paradigm to use, because it involves and acknowledges the difference forces such as political, historical,

economic and sociological factors which influence people's actions, decisions and beliefs (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). The intention of CT is transformative, as it acknowledges that knowledge is political and research should bring about social change that eliminates social injustice (Cohen et al., 2011).

### 3.1.2 Critical Realism

Critical Realism (CR) establishes the ontological framework for this research. Fletcher, (2017), explains that ontology (the nature of reality) cannot be reduced to epistemology (the way of knowing reality) and argues that human knowledge captures only a small part of a deeper and vaster reality. The author claims that there is a part of the real truth that human knowledge cannot attain. In this way she challenges the principles of both empiricism and interpretivism. CR describes reality as having an objective existence that is filtered by cultural and social context, language, and individual processes of meaning making (Craig & Bigby, 2015).

According to Fletcher, (2017), CR perceives reality to be stratified into three levels. The empirical level is the realm of events as they are experienced by individuals. These experiences are always seen through the filter of individual human experience and interpretation. Different individuals may interpret reality in different ways according to their culture, world view, or status in society. The next level is the actual level. Events occur at a natural level whether or not humans experience or interpret them and these actual events can often be different from what is observed at the empirical level. The third level is the real. At this level casual structures or mechanisms occur. These are the realities in an object or system that can act as causal forces to impact what is experienced at empirical level (Fletcher, 2017).

The concepts of agency and structure are key understandings within CR (Craig & Bigby, 2015). Agency is concerned with the ability of humans to be active in creating their own world, and to make conscious, intentional, reflective and sometimes emotionally influenced decisions about their own lives and actions (Craig & Bigby, 2015; Tikly, 2015). Structure is concerned with the existing factors that impact development such as social, cultural

and natural structures (Tikly, 2015). In the context of this research, elements such as governmental policy priorities, curriculum, the training of teachers and assessment processes contribute to the structural context in which the research is situated. It is in the complex intersection and interaction of structure and agency that CR research is situated.

The goal of CR is the explanation and causal analysis of phenomena, social events and problems and it is therefore useful for analysing social problems and suggesting solutions for social change (Fletcher, 2017). Because the study aims to examine the personal experiences of mentors who support the implementation of LCE in Tanzania, this can be seen as exploring the reality in the "real" level of critical realism. However, I also recognise that mentors' experiences are also structured by economic, political and cultural factors. Mentors use agency to respond to these conditions, demonstrating a belief that they can act in ways to resist and transform current pedagogical practice in spite of the challenges they are faced with.

In the following section I outline the design of the instrumental case study and the methods used to examine the experiences of six mentor teachers in Tanzania.

## 3.2  Research Design

### 3.2.1  Instrumental Case Study

Qualitative case studies seek to understand a phenomenon and the 'making of meaning' from the perspectives of those within the case (Merriam, 2010). They are useful in that they reveal a richness of detail, completeness and variance and enable the researcher to develop a deep understanding of the case (Stake, 2011). Case studies are used when there is a specific 'real life' topic to be examined. They are concerned with real people in real situations and have clearly identified boundaries (Cohen et al., 2011; Menter et al., 2011; Mutch, 2013; Stake, 2011).

An instrumental case study methodology was selected for this project. In an instrumental case study, the case is of secondary interest, it plays a supportive role, facilitating an understanding of something else. In looking

at the case in depth the researcher seeks to understand the context and activities of the case in order to gain a broader understanding of a phenomenon (Stake, 2011).  Instrumental case studies provide insight into an issue or refine a theory. In this study an instrumental case study is used to study the phenomenon of interest: mentoring strategies used to support teachers to implement LCE. The case for this research, Joshua Teachers Training College (JTTC) is secondary to the phenomenon of research (the strategies used by mentors to facilitate the implementation of LCE).

It is in the writing up of the case study that the researcher reveals their understanding of the case. The purpose of the write up is to enable the reader to gain understanding of the context in which the research takes place (Merriam, 2010).

### 3.2.2  Ethical considerations

In the first instance ethical consent was sought from the University of Waikato's human ethics committee. Because of the complexity of the requirements of the ethics proposal,  this permission was finally received as I was en route to Africa. This tight time frame led to some difficulties in the process of seeking ethical consent in Tanzania. The process for gaining ethical consent for my research was extremely complex and stressful.

In the months prior to leaving New Zealand I had endeavoured to discover the appropriate pathway to obtain consent for research in Tanzania. The purpose for this request was to advise the Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Vocational Training of the research purpose, aims and procedures, and seek their  permission to invite JTTC to participate in this research (Appendix 1). Because of delays in obtaining ethical consent the time frame for requesting and receiving permission for research at JTTC was extremely tight.

The ethics application process for my research came at a time when the Ministry was moving its head office from Dar es Salaam to Dodoma and there was confusion as to whose responsibility it was to give permission. Initially I had approached the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training

by email after having searched the website for any indication of how to apply. I received an email from the help desk indicating where to send my application. Three email addresses were supplied for Costech – the Tanzanian Commission for Science and Research. I addressed my application letter to that organisation. When I tried to phone Costech I found that none of the telephone numbers was active.

I had received advice from some doctoral students at The University of Waikato that I should personally apply in Dodoma, the place to where the Ministry had recently located so I also planned to go to Dodoma as an alternative process of seeking consent.

When I received ethics approval from Waikato University I immediately sent a research consent application to the three Costech email addresses supplied and received two 'non-delivered' messages, but held out hope for the third. I again emailed the consent application to the help desk at the Tanzania Ministry of Education and Vocational Training asking to be directed to the appropriate person. This was a week out from the proposed start of the research process and my emails mentioned the urgency.

Upon my arrival in Arusha the director of the Joshua Foundation contacted a ministry official in the local office to find out if they knew the process for applying for research permission. We were told we would hear back in three hours. We heard nothing. I re-sent the emails to the Ministry requesting permission, or an indication of where to go to get permission. We then followed a complex series of dead ends in an attempt to gain ethics approval. When it seemed that all avenues had been exhausted I received an email from a Ministry representative in Dodoma indicating that I should seek permission from the local Arusha office.

Once I found someone at the Arusha office to consider my application they stated firmly that my letter was too long. "University letters are always too long!" They asked me to take it away and rewrite it. Of course I could not. The other objection to my letter was that it was addressed to the wrong person. I agreed to re-address the letter, but not shorten it. On my third visit

to the office I was provided with a letter providing permission to conduct the research.

After permission had been received from the Ministry, an information letter (Appendix 2) and consent form (Appendix 3) was hand delivered to the principal of JTTC which requested consent for this research to proceed.

A letter (Appendix 6) was then delivered to a person who had consented to be my Cultural Advisor. His role was two-fold; 1) to advise me on cultural matters and 2), to be available to assist with reading and approval of transcripts if there were issues associated with English being the second or third language of a participant. The Cultural Advisor also received a copy of the information letter provided to participants (Appendix 4) and signed a confidentiality agreement to ensure that any information he received in this role was not shared with anyone apart from the researcher (Appendix 7).

The involvement of a Cultural Advisor was a condition of the ethics consent but as it transpired he was not needed in the process. As a researcher, I was known to most of the participants as I had met, and provided professional development to some of them during earlier visits. The existing relationship of trust was helpful in establishing a rapport with participants, all of whom expressed a willingness to participate in this research.

I had a sound understanding of the necessity to comply with the University of Waikato research requirements, especially regarding the need to protect the privacy of participants and ensuring that they were not coerced to participate. I was completely committed to ensuring this process was followed. However I was aware of the competency of the participants and felt that the ethics approval made assumptions about their competency in English, their ability to understand the process and their sense of agency in agreeing to participate. The participants were all fluent in both spoken and written English, and already knew me, or knew of me from previous visits I had made to JTTC. I had anticipated potential issues of power differential. However these did not occur.

### 3.2.3   Participant Selection

Once consent was granted, I began the process of recruiting participants for this study. Six members of the indigenous mentoring staff at the JTTC in Arusha, Tanzania were invited to participate in this research. The following criteria were set for selection of potential participants:

That potential participants (mentors) were:

1) Members of the mentoring team JTTC;
2) Identified as effective in their ability as a mentor;
3) Identified as effective in implementing LCE by the leaders of JTTC.

The timeframe for research was very tight as I was only in Tanzania for three weeks (Appendix 9). I only received ethical consent for the research a week before arriving in Tanzania. Because of the tight time frame it was not possible to email all potential participants to invite them to participate in the research ahead of time. Instead a member of the leadership team of JTTC, provided the names of ten potential participants who met the criteria to participate in the research. I randomly selected six potential participants by drawing six of the ten names 'from a hat'. The leadership team member then invited them via text to attend an information briefing about this research project.

All six participants attended a 20 minute introductory briefing meeting with the Cultural Advisor and me before the research process began. During the briefing they were given a letter informing them of the aims of the research (Appendix 4). Time was allowed for answering any questions  about the research process. As they all consented to participate, participants were asked to complete and sign a consent form (Appendix 5). In the information letter and briefing  meeting  participants  were informed  that they  had the right to; 1) decline to participate, 2) withdraw from participating in  the  study at  any time, and 3) that at any time  until 8 August 2018 they could withdraw their data without reasons being given. Tanzanian and New Zealand cell phone numbers and my email address were provided to enable participants to advise me if they wished to withdraw from the study. They were assured

that their information would be kept confidential and any data resulting from the interviews would be anonymised. Permission was sought to audio record and transcribe the interviews. They were informed that the transcriptions would be returned to them for review and return. The role of the Cultural Advisor was explained both in the briefing and in the information letter.

### 3.2.4 The participants

This section provides an overview of the participants in this study. The six mentor participants were all local Tanzanians who are teachers in either JSA or JTTC. Each of them has a role in mentoring government teachers through the JTTC contract with African Initiative.

They all followed a different pathway towards teaching at JTTC and JSA. They completed their primary and secondary education in the Tanzanian education system. However, they are all trained in the JTTC model of teaching, which they refer to as 'participatory education', because it focusses on a learner-centred approach. Each of them has experience using LCE in their own teaching practice.

Their teacher education experiences are varied and are shown in Table 1. Three participants have completed B Ed. degrees while employed at JTTC. Four of the participants have received the Joshua Diploma of Mentoring and the other two have developed skills in reflective practice through participating in mentoring during their time at JTTC.

Table 1 Qualifications of mentors (*Pseudonyms used for all mentors)

**Qualifications of mentors**

| Participant | Past Volunteer Teacher | JTTC Training | Open University of Tanzania | JTTC Mentor Diploma | Government Teacher Training |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Isaac * | ✔ | 2012 | | ✔ | |
| Tom | | With mentor | | ✔ | pre Joshua |
| Sunday | | 2008 | 2015 B Ed. | ✔ | |
| Sherlene | ✔ | 2014 | | | |
| Deogratius | ✔ | 2007 | 2018 B Ed. | | |
| Maswa | | 2007 | 2015 B Ed. | ✔ | pre Joshua |

One of the participants, Isaac's role is as a visiting mentor for all government schools involved in the program. He participates in the training held at JTTC and follows up with the individual teachers back in their own schools. The other mentors work alongside teachers at JTTC and JSA, providing on-going support via text messages and social media after teachers return to their own schools.

During their initial training at JTTC, mentors are introduced to the process of reflective practice. Through this, they are challenged to think about who they are as people and as teachers, and to develop a new understanding of the role of a teacher. Four of the participants have been involved in JTTC's own mentoring training program. This program is based on the work of Art Costa and Robert Garmston (Costa & Garmston, 1992).

### 3.2.5  Data Sources

Three sources were used to gather data for this research; 1) semi-structured interviews, 2) a reflective field journal and 3) Tanzanian government policy and curriculum documents regarding LCE, teacher training and continuing professional development.

### 3.2.5.1 Semi-Structured Interviews

Because I intended to gain an in-depth understanding of the mentoring process, interviewing the mentors using semi-structured interviews was selected as the most appropriate approach for this research (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2016, as cited in Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). Semi-structured interviews also provided more flexibility to focus the conversation on issues that were important to the research project as they enabled the participants to expand on, and develop, their ideas and response, resulting in a more intensive discussion of the topic (Mutch, 2013). This gave the participants the opportunity to share their experiences of learning about and implementing LCE and of mentoring their state school colleagues in the use of LCE in their own school contexts.

The semi-structured interviews were conducted at JTTC during the school holidays. Interview times which fitted into participants' lives and family commitments were negotiated. Each of the participants took part in one 45-60 minute semi-structured interview. Interviews were conducted in English, which is the language of instruction in JTTC and JSA. The interviews were transcribed in English and returned to the participants while I was on site.

It was made explicit in the information letter, and later reinforced at the beginning of the interview, that the management of JTTC would not have access to any transcript or recording. In this way the accuracy and objectivity of the interview was enhanced. None of the participants chose to use the services of the Cultural Advisor when reviewing their transcript.

### 3.2.5.2 Reflective research journal

A research journal was kept during the research process. In this journal I recorded written reflections on the research as it proceeded, noting the challenges encountered, new understandings reached, and new skills learned. In this journal I was able to be reflexive, consider what influenced my practice, how my interactions with the participants developed and how my world view impacted the research.

### 3.2.5.3 Documents relating to implementing LCE in Tanzania.

Documents are useful in a case study because they enable data to be gathered to answer a question which does not require informed consent from participants. Documents are the third source of data used in this study. Documents may comprise written, oral or visual materials or artefacts. Public records, personal documents and policy documents are also useful because they often provide detailed insights into the policy direction of an organisation (Merriam, 2010). Some documents are available in the public domain however consent may still be required for others (Mutch, 2013). The sources of data used for this research are outline in the table below.

Table 2 Data Sources

## Data Sources

| Tanzanian government publications | Documents from AI contract | JSA Teaching Documents | JTTC teaching documents |
|---|---|---|---|
| Vision 2025 | Mid-term review, Equal Rights project. May 2017 | Daily and weekly planning | Mentor teacher development plan |
| Curriculum for Certificate in Teacher Education Programs | | | English Teaching Curriculum |
| Curriculum for Basic Education Standard I and II | | | Maths Teaching Curriculum |

### 3.2.6 Thematic Analysis

Analysis of data in qualitative research such as semi-structured interviews and documents involves "identifying salient themes, recurring ideas or language and patterns of belief that link people and settings together" (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, as cited in Mutch, 2013, p. 163). In research data the researcher is "looking for patterns and themes" (Mutch, 2013, p.

164). Data familiarisation is the first step in engaging in the analysis process. This occurs initially in the process of transcribing interviews (Cohen et al., 2011). As the intention of this research was to understand the strategies mentors use to facilitate the implementation of LCE, it was important that the voices of the participants were heard in the presentation of data. I wanted to use the participants' own words and sentence structure because they are "more illuminative and direct than the researchers' own words" (Mutch, 2013, p. 164) .

The interviews were recorded on my ipad using  the 'Voice Recorder and Audio Editor' app. I replayed and transcribed the interviews as soon as possible to ensure that I could recall the context of the conversation. It also helped me to address a small number of confusions caused by accent, which may have been problematic if transcribed at a later time.

The transcripts were checked and emailed immediately to participants for their feed-back. An ethical procedure observed in this study was returning the transcripts to the participants for checking and validation, in order to avoid any misrepresentation. Participants were invited to edit, add detail or delete statements to ensure that the transcript accurately reflected their intended meaning. None of the participants indicated a desire to change their transcript in any way and all gave consent for its use in the research. Pseudonyms have been used in the succeeding parts of the research to ensure anonymity.

After the transcribing of the interviews was complete, I identified a number of themes that had emerged. The process of identifying codes involved highlighting in various colours the significant parts of the transcript.  The colours represented recurring themes and this thematic analysis formed the basis of sorting the data and coding it into NVivo, a qualitative data analysis computer software package used for the analysis of unstructured text. The program enabled the sorting of rich data from broader, to more precise themes. I initially sorted the data into broad nodes or themes 'grandparent nodes' that I had identified in rereading the transcripts. I then refined patterns and themes into  more precise thematic nodes 'parent nodes' by

analysing the initial groupings. A third analysis of the data enabled even further refinement and the renaming of themes and patterns (Mutch, 2013) and these were sorted into 'child nodes' in the NVivo programme. This data formed the basis of the findings presented in the following chapters.

### 3.2.7 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the methodology used in this research. An instrumental case study was used to explore the implementation of LCE into six Tanzanian government schools. An overview of, and reflection on, the ethics process was outlined. The participants were introduced and data sources used in this study presented. Finally, the thematic data analysis process was described.

# Chapter Four

# Findings

This chapter reports on the strategies used by Tanzanian mentor teachers to support the implementation of LCE in six government schools. This chapter seeks to do so by responding to the over-arching question:

*How do mentors support teachers in six Tanzanian schools to implement Learner-Centred Education?*

The first section of the chapter focusses on five strategies identified during the interview process which mentors use to support teachers' implementation of LCE. The focus of this chapter then shifts to examine the challenges mentors experienced in the implementation of LCE. The final part of the chapter consists of a discussion of the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training policies and practice which influence the implementation of LCE in Tanzanian schools.

## 4.1 Mentor strategies

This section responds to research question one by reporting on the findings of the experiences of Tanzanian mentors in facilitating pedagogical change in teachers.

*Question 1:   How do mentors support teachers in six Tanzanian schools to implement Learner Centred Education?*

It draws together the themes which emerged from interviews with the six mentor teachers and from an examination of JTTC planning and policy documents, and Tanzanian education policy and curriculum documents. It begins by identifying five strategies used by mentors to facilitate a pedagogical shift in teachers. These are:

1) Developing teacher identity
2) Modelling flatter power relationships
3) Developing reflective practice
4) Modelling a successful learner-centred environment
5) Supporting continuing professional development

Each of these strategies will be reported on in the following sections.

### 4.1.1  Developing teacher identity

The first strategy mentors used to facilitate pedagogical change in teachers was to strengthen their sense of  teacher identity by supporting them to develop a deeper understanding of the role of a teacher in a learner-centred environment. As demonstrated in the following quote, mentor Sherlene acknowledged the significance of enabling teachers to identify and reflect on their sense of teacher 'self'. She spoke of her personal experience of developing a new teacher identity:

> *"Personally, when I was studying - before we were starting to be taught how to teach… they wanted to prepare who is the teacher? Who is he, or who is she? What is her duties? Her calling? So those are things that impacted into my heart and I became to know who am I? So then … I know who I am and what I am supposed to do."* *Sherlene*

The mentors' description of teacher identity was much broader than merely being a transmitter of knowledge. They reported that the role of teacher  also embraces the social, emotional, spiritual and physical aspects of a student's life. Sherlene described her beliefs about the teacher-student relationship:

> *"The teacher is a parent, the teacher is a guardian, the teacher is a pastor…so I may find a teacher can raise a pupil into different aspects – not only academically but also… physically, spiritually, socially – so the teacher has played a big part towards students"* *Sherlene*

All of the mentors described a marked change in the way in which they perceived the role of teacher after training at JTTC. They called upon this change when working with teachers. There was a common acknowledgement of the importance of understanding oneself as a teacher but also of caring for the social, emotional and physical needs of students whilst developing their educational skills.

Mentors also indicated the importance of a shift in teachers' perception of professional self to encompass creativity as a core function of teachers' work. Deogratius said:

> *"I think the teacher has to be creative. You have to sit and think of different kinds of activities that students love to do and you don't (see) yourself as… filling up information in the student… you have to create an environment where students will love to discover things for themselves… Every time I start to implement the participatory method I realise (there may be) a better way for students to do this."*
> *Deogratius*

This shows that Deogratius' understanding of what it is to be a teacher now embraces the idea that teachers need to be creative in providing students with a variety of experiences from which they can begin to construct their understanding of what they are learning.

Mentors report that when mentoring teachers, there is a contrast between their own understanding of LCE and that of their colleagues. In supporting the development of teacher identities, mentors found they needed to change teachers' ideas of pedagogy and how knowledge is acquired. Deogratius described observation as an important element in achieving this:

> *"When it comes to mentoring someone to use (LCE) one thing they need to know is that… there are (many) approaches you can take…(students need to) actively engage in the lesson… I believe it is a very important thing for teachers to observe other teachers because … you can see what they do and think ooh, he or she is doing this very well, I will take it to my class." Deogratius*

Observation and discussion of lessons delivered by mentors is described as an important factor in supporting the development of teacher identity. Mentors indicate that once teachers have observed the way in which mentors plan and implement successful LCE experiences they seem to be able to begin to imagine changing their teacher identity to include the use of LCE in their own classrooms.

### 4.1.2 Modelling flatter power relationships

The second strategy that mentors used to facilitate pedagogical change was by modelling the use of flatter power relationships with those they mentor to show teachers the value of building positive teacher and student relationships. All six mentors spoke of the need to have teachers 'value the child' by shifting power and supporting their students to construct their own understanding of what they are learning from their learning experiences.

The first training session at JTTC is designed to introduce teachers to the key underpinnings of JTTC's model of LCE (participatory learning). Mentors seek to provide the government teachers with a new understanding of teacher-student relationships. Teachers are introduced to the concept of 'valuing the child' which is central to the practice teachers will observe during training. Isaac described this initial training focus:

> *"…when they come to their training for the first time and you say teachers… you are going to train on valuing the child, you are going to train on the participatory approach and to train on group work, this is the focus for the week." Isaac*

The mentors use the orientation phase of teacher training to establish an understanding of the school culture they believe is important for the development of LCE. Mentors report that positive and safe relationships between students and teachers enable successful implementation of LCE. This is at the core of teaching practice at JTTC:

> *"…when you start doing a (LCE) approach and you become interactive with your students… (they form) a good relationship with you because you are not distant… (government colleagues) become very interested because they see students are engaged here and… are enjoying the lesson…." Deogratius*

Mentors were anxious to emphasise that the relationships they build with teachers are reciprocal. Isaac described the kind of relationship he intentionally builds with them.

> *"The kind of relationship that I do is they feel like I am one of them, and not their leader, not the top person, but someone who is on their side, working with them, knowing what they need, knowing what their problem is and how to address it" Isaac*

By establishing flatter power relationships when mentoring teachers, mentors are modelling the kinds of relationships they seek to build with their students.

Making a change from more traditional hierarchical relationships with students is initially challenging for teachers. This is due to their own belief that a teacher should be a transmitter of knowledge rather than a supportive guide or the facilitator of learning. Tom spoke about the teachers' reactions to the positive relationships modelled at JTTC evident in the choice not to use corporal punishment:

> *"We have other schools coming… and they really see things differently…they say "I think this is really wonderful…We came in not believing you can handle kids without sticks" and therefore they found this was good and they see the good relationships…" Tom*

Building positive relationships is an essential element of maintaining the learning culture at JTTC. Maswa spoke of the need to show learners that they matter to the teacher even when they have not behaved in the expected way. For her the focus was on maintaining the relationship with the child and guiding their behaviour, not on punishment:

> *"If they do something contrary to what you have agreed or to the class rules and you just let it go, there is no trust, there's no love, it's like you let the child get lost. So when you teach them in this manner, they feel the trust like 'wow, somebody loves me, somebody values me.' So they feel… that there is a value." Maswa*

All participants emphasised that the responsibility for learning in LCE is shared between the student and the teacher and that it is the responsibility of the teacher to build the kind of relationship with students that makes them

approachable. Teachers should also provide appropriate activities and create the emotional conditions in which the student can begin to take responsibility for their own learning :

> *"The learner is the one who does the most. The teacher is just there as the scaffolder… is there to help the students achieve what they are doing and not be the centre." Sunday*

The establishment of positive, reciprocal relationships is seen by mentors as the key to the success of LCE. The learning, social and emotional needs of the learner as an individual are acknowledged as a priority for mentors and the building of positive, reciprocal relationships are modelled by the mentors, which seems to enable the mentors to facilitate flatter power relationships to support the implementation of LCE.

### 4.1.3 Developing reflective practice

Another strategy that mentors used to help teachers facilitate pedagogical change was developing their reflective practice. The findings showed that the ability to reflect on, and modify teacher practice is a key element in supporting pedagogical change. Sunday attributed the change in teachers' identity as being a result of reflective practice:

> *"(for) the teachers that come to train I think the most important element here is to transport them from the mind-set they came in with." Sunday*

Mentors emphasised the importance of reflective practice in LCE because a teacher needs to understand that they can have an influence over the types of learning experiences in their own classroom. Isaac gives an example of teachers beginning to reflect on, and modify, their own practice as a result of the training they receive:

> *"… a teacher, by themselves, (can) find a solution of their problem (without me) telling them what the solution is and they feel really good because they are developing something which they can work on without being told by someone." Isaac*

The need for self-reflection and self-awareness emerged as important factors for successful teaching in a learner-centred environment. Mentors reported that a sense of agency began to develop in teachers as they found solutions to their own problems.

The desire for teachers to learn and change is readily acknowledged by mentors. They also understand that this change takes time:

> *"They ask so many questions… they come with the purpose of change… they say I am going to use that one. I say use it – just add – what you are doing is not to be put in the rubbish, change happens slowly, the process is long and change is a process." Maswa*

Sherlene spoke about a conversation at the end of a session of observation. She acknowledged that she may not have all of the answers  to the questions from her colleagues. In doing this she modelled a willingness to approach others for help:

> *"...if there is something he needs to know we can just get time and discuss... and if he needs help… I may repeat the same thing in the next class so that he understands… (we) are sharing ideas, and asking questions and we discuss. If that question is beyond my level we can just ask someone who can help us to answer." Sherlene*

The mentoring relationship is established through daily interaction through which teachers begin to develop a sense of agency to implement change in their own schools.

Mentors also spoke about risk taking, and teachers being free to make mistakes because mentors believe that mistakes are a part of learning and reflective practice. According to mentor Tom, this gives teachers confidence to take risks and enables them to reflect on, and learn from their mistakes:

> *"And the teacher should ensure that his mistakes are part of learning. In our government learning a mistake is a mistake and therefore you have done a mistake… according to my new understanding a*

> *mistake is a part of learning and therefore when you make*
> *mistakes… you can know how to correct the mistakes." Tom*

The mentors reported that teachers' reflections on lesson observation and their own questions help them to recognise that mistakes are an opportunity to learn.

Reflective practice was a strong theme in the interviews. Mentors support teachers to reflect on, and modify their practice, as needed. Mentors are aware that reflective practice challenges teachers' original conceptions of teaching and learning, and that it is essential for the successful implementation of LCE.

### 4.1.4 Modelling a successful learner-centred environment

The fourth strategy that mentors used to support pedagogical change in teachers was by modelling successful LCE. All participants were aware that teachers may have a theoretical understanding of LCE, yet lacked real-life examples and practice. Many teachers had received training in LCE but did not know how to implement it because they had not experienced LCE for themselves.

Sunday acknowledged that the Tanzanian teacher training curriculum had a LCE focus. He observed that developing an understanding of that curriculum was problematic for teachers because they are not given enough training in LCE:

> *"If you look at the government policy itself you don't find any*
> *contradiction with the learner centred approach… the*
> *implementation, that's where the problem comes because if you look*
> *at the new curriculum…it is all learner centred, the way it is designed,*
> *but if you come to the reality… (teachers) didn't have enough training*
> *on this curriculum. So they will obviously teach in just the old way*
> *even if it is a new curriculum.... I understand that the government has*
> *done so much on trying to train teachers but they don't give enough*
> *time for these teachers to learn this stuff... So you find that the policy*

*is good, but the implementation of the policy is not going the right*
*way." Sunday*

Mentors stressed that it was important for teachers to observe LCE in the classrooms at JSA before attempting to implement the practice in their own schools. From interviews with the mentors it is clear that teachers are in the mentors' classroom to observe and learn, not to teach. Maswa describes her attitude to teacher observation in her classroom:

> *"It's all observing. Maybe they can engage with a group or activities.*
> *Maybe there's a game they can play together with the students.*
> *These are the simplest activities that we do." Maswa*

Time spent observing and reflecting on teaching practice is an essential element of teaching at JSA. While observing in the school government teachers have the opportunity to see the enactment of LCE. At the end of each day, time is allowed for reflection on the teaching activities. During conversations with mentors about the decisions they made in the planning and implementation phases of the lessons there is opportunity for government teachers to begin to consider a change in their own practice.

When teachers first experience LCE they are often surprised to see their academic knowledge being implemented in a Tanzanian classroom. Deogratius described their reaction:

> *"Actually they become very, very interested because they get to see*
> *the approach which they are taught in theory in a practical way and*
> *they become interested …(to see) so many activities in which you*
> *can use (with) your students. Some… say "I didn't know that students*
> *could learn this way, that you can get students involved in the lesson*
> *by using this kind of activity." Deogratius*

Teachers learn that a variety of activities can be used in any one lesson. When observing mentor teachers modelling successful practice teachers can see the effectiveness of those activities:

*"…sometimes they come in the classroom and they see a teacher use more than one type of activity…once the teacher has done an assessment the rate of understanding of the lesson sometimes goes to 100%. They say this is not possible! ... with the participatory approach (LCE) the retention of the learning is very high compared to other kinds of methodology (this) builds a kind of interest in the participatory method." Deogratius*

To conclude, mentors report that although many Tanzanian teachers have been exposed to the theory of participatory learning through their training, they may not have experienced the practice for themselves. According to mentors, when teachers spend time observing in the JSA classrooms they begin to envisage how they can implement LCE in their own teaching practice.

### 4.1.5 Supporting continuing professional development

The fifth strategy used by mentor teachers to enable the implementation of LCE in government schools is setting up and maintaining on-going, school-based professional development and mentoring. Mentors reported that their own experience of a relational and participatory model of mentoring at JTTC strongly shaped their own approach to mentoring teachers. It is this form of relationship between mentors and teachers that was identified as being at the heart of the success of the mentoring programme.

Mentors reported that establishing a non-hierarchical, reciprocal relationship ensured that mentoring carried on beyond the time spent by the teachers at JTTC. This shows a personal commitment by mentors to the on-going professional development of their colleagues.

The mentor responsible for the in-school element of the programme is Isaac. He spoke about learning how to develop a mentoring process:

*"To be honest mentoring is a new culture to us. The way you build a culture, you need to train, you need to model, you need to have expectations. So we train, we model, and then we go and we assess. Follow-up is to be happening in schools… when I go into the field I*

*stay there in school for a week. After assessment I will know what*
*are the strengths of the school and I will know what they will need to*
*work on and I will call a meeting… we will discuss and (praise the*
*good things) then I say… I think you need to work on… and we will*
*set general goals as a school." Isaac*

Isaac reported that training teachers in LCE is most effective if they are in a school where this pedagogy is supported. He said that initially they just worked with teachers in schools. They soon realised that they needed to involve school leaders in the training so that they could begin to understand their responsibility in ensuring LCE was established and supported in their schools:

*"…at the beginning… we trained the teachers and (there was not*
*much evidence of LCE being implemented) … because these head*
*teachers and the academic and assistant (leaders) did not come to*
*the training… after they attended they said "wow – we think there is*
*good things to happen in our school"… why? Because they have got*
*their training and they have got their responsibility to perform."*

The role of school leaders was identified by all mentors as the key to ensuring the success of the mentoring program. The implementation of LCE requires the development of teacher identity and teachers need to be supported and enabled by their leaders to ensure that pedagogical change is embedded in schools. Once leaders have the opportunity to observe successful LCE, and begin to understand its implementation, they can begin to support teachers to take risks and experiment with their teaching practice in order to made pedagogical change in their own context.

The on-going nature of mentoring visits enables Isaac to ensure that change is being consistently implemented. He observed that teachers and schools responded differently to his regular visits than to those of government inspectors:

*I spend ¾ of the year (out in the schools) supporting them and seeing*
*if they are improving… but the (government inspectors) they just go*

*once a year… or even after two years…How do you support people (in that way)? When you leave they know you are not coming back until next December …and they start doing their own things. But if they know you are coming tomorrow or another day they do it and after a while it becomes a tradition, they do it even if you are not there…" Isaac*

Isaac reports that teachers and schools show a commitment to embedding pedagogical change by continuing to implement LCE when the mentors are not present. This indicates that schools are committed to implementing the practice they are learning in during their time at JTTC. It also suggests that it is important to have regular visits from mentors to encourage pedagogical development and to ensure that change continues beyond the week long training sessions at JTTC.

Isaac's regular visits to the schools enable him to observe pedagogical change over time. He reported that he can see more change each time he visits. The schools acknowledge that it is the input from mentors that makes the difference:

*"After two weeks I visit the schools and they say 'wow, we feel we are getting there'…you come after six months and … you can hear discussion going on, you can see… students are standing and presenting so I feel 'oh – this is it!'… they say this wasn't happening before and your training has brought a big difference." Isaac*

Although Isaac is the mentor who visits the schools, other mentors reported maintaining ongoing professional development with government teachers by using their mobile phones:

*"We just exchange our numbers and we communicate with them… even now I am communicating with many teachers in Tanzania and they are saying 'I am using this activity…they say these things are working … they say we wish to come again!'" Sherlene*

Mentors indicated a commitment to supporting teachers to implement LCE after they have returned to their schools. Therefore, CPD was an important component of supporting pedagogical change. As demonstrated, this took place through regular, planned visits to schools by Isaac, on-going informal interactions between mentors and teachers, and ensuring that school leaders are trained in LCE and remain involved in the training and implementation of LCE.

## 4.2 Factors which inhibit pedagogical change

This section builds on the previous findings and responds to research question two by reporting on the challenges experienced by mentor teachers in facilitating pedagogical change.

*Question 2: What are the factors which inhibit the implementation of Learner Centred Education?*

Three key challenges emerged from the thematic analysis:

1) large class sizes,
2) a lack of resources, and
3) the contrast between LCE and government assessment processes

### 4.2.1 Class size and small classrooms

All mentors reported that class size in government schools was a significant issue for supporting teachers to implement LCE. Teachers often work with large numbers of students in small classrooms. Mentors indicated that teachers find implementing more interactive pedagogies challenging:

> *"They say they have tried to do what they have seen here and they say it works to some extent but they pose a challenge because they have many kids in the room. One hundred to about 150... therefore it makes some of the practice hard to do." Tom*

The lack of space to implement LCE can have a significant impact on the types of teaching methods used. Isaac spoke of visiting a school with large numbers of students in one classroom and the impracticality of implementing LCE pedagogies in such a crowded environment:

*"…I found the teachers writing on the board this way and the teacher was walking that way because kids were really close to the legs of the teacher. So some of them were sitting at their desks and some of them were sitting on the ground where the teacher teaches so they don't have even a space for doing group work." Isaac*

The physical challenges of large classes in restrictive spaces are a part of a wider issue of resourcing for schools.

### 4.2.2 The challenge of limited resources

A second challenge reported by mentors was that a shortage of teaching resources made it difficult for teachers to implement LCE. Basic resources such as text books and stationary can be difficult for teachers to access. Tom described the challenge of mentoring teachers who have a lack of resources. He indicated that mentors attempt to provide solutions to the challenge of limited resources:

*"…they say they don't have enough resources which we really don't agree because we say you need to use simple resources which you can get around you but they still say they can't get them." Tom*

All mentors were aware that their experience of implementing LCE within a purpose built and well-resourced school context contrasts markedly with the experiences of their government colleagues:

*"…also the government does not provide proper materials. So they (teachers being mentored) may come in your class and see these activities and display and they may love them but when they go to their class they do not have the materials to do them." Sherlene*

Mentors acknowledged that these challenges exist but they also identified solutions. Whenever the challenges were identified they followed up with suggested solutions. One strategy that mentors identified to was through the development of a book of ideas for teaching in an environment with limited resources:

*"In the participatory approach we have the books (with) introduction activities, middle (resource) activities and conclusion activities. So we give them maybe more than 70 activities that are not requiring them to go to the shop and buy something… we give them activities which they can use. Stones, trees, whatever they can." Isaac*

Isaac reported that the teachers are using this book and, as a result he is seeing evidence of change in teacher practice:

*"So these activities, when I go into the classrooms I find that they are implementing a lot and one of the big things that has been happening is group work… you find they have even changed their seating arrangements." Isaac*

Sherlene spoke about the issue of resources for rural schools. These schools have a particular set of challenges relating to distance and accessibility as well as teaching resources. She explained that she believed some schools are "in the bush" and that the school buildings, being built by the community, are often not appropriate for LCE because of their size, lack of furniture and the number of students in each classroom:

*"…you might find a school is at the bush… one building will house a large number of their students so to distribute them in groups is difficult. They don't have furniture sometimes, they don't have tables, they don't have chairs so those kind of challenges they are facing..." Sherlene*

To conclude, these findings indicate that one of the challenges mentors experience when mentoring government teachers is the lack of appropriate teaching resources. The mentors are very mindful of the challenges facing teachers. When implementing the mentor training program they not only identify the challenges, but attempt to come up with possible solutions to those challenges.

### 4.2.3  Government assessment strategy

Another challenge experienced by mentors is the government assessment strategy. This strategy focusses on the passing of examinations at key times during a students' education which is, according to the mentors, incompatible with the on-going, formative nature of assessment required in a learner-centred approach. According to mentors, assessment in government schools is focussed on testing and academic success is determined by passing exams at the end of Class 7, the final year of primary school.  When reflecting on their own assessment practice when teaching in government schools, Tom and Isaac said they had no concept of on-going assessment for learning, but only of the teaching of facts to ensure that students were passing their exams:

> *"…I didn't know how to address student learning needs. You see I was just getting the book and imitating my teachers, I didn't know about the forms of assessment…" Tom*

According to mentors, government teachers are under pressure to have students succeed in their exams. To achieve this they focus on reproducing "knowledge" for exams, rather than developing critical thinking skills. When some of Isaacs' teachers reflected on why students are failing in Tanzania they told him that it's because they did not take enough notes:

> *"And I say do you really think that the reason kids are failing is Tanzania is because their notebooks are not full and they say yes, they have a lot of knowledge. You ask 'do they fail?' They say 'yes, they fail', so you see, the problem is not notes, the problem is understanding and you can't make understanding without doing that participatory learning." Isaac*

The test-driven culture in government schools inhibits the implementation of a key aspect of learner-centred education: assessment for learning and for understanding. Tom acknowledged this tension when describing why he felt the students at JSA were not achieving high marks in the class seven exams:

*"We are not an exam-centred school, we do not focus on… how students can answer questions for good grades… we do not (really use) paper work. To us paperwork doesn't really make a child think more. That's the philosophy behind (our work). They need (to sit the exams because they are required at the end of Class 7)… they become confused by the multiple choice questions, they don't know which one to select…" Tom*

Mentors are very aware that their teaching methods are vastly different to the didactic approach that is considered to be most appropriate to pass exams. The mentors reported that this dichotomy was a source of tension between JTTC and government official because testing procedures which demand the recall of facts contrasts with the philosophical underpinnings of the JTTC teaching methodology.

## 4.3  Policy and curriculum design and Ministry Officials

This section examines the influence of government policy on the implementation of LCE and responds to question three.

*Question 3) What are the economic and political factors that influence the implementation of Learner Centred Education?*

Mentors expressed an awareness of the disconnect between government policy and the daily practice within Tanzanian schools. Two factors contributing to this disconnect were identified:

1) Curriculum and policy documents and
2) The practice of Ministry of Education and Vocational Training officials.

### 4.3.1  Curriculum and policy documents and the practice of government officials

Another challenge experienced by mentors when supporting the implementation of LCE was the disconnect between government policy, curriculum documents and government inspection procedures. Isaac expressed his awareness of the disconnect between policy and practice,

stating that inspectors had theoretical knowledge of participatory learning, but no practical application:

> *"The government insists a lot on participatory approaches to make sure kids are participating, but what do they participate in – nothing – that is number one. When you read about the Ministry of Education and all of their papers, they are all about this but go into the practice, nothing is happening…" Isaac*

Mentors fear government officials as they are in a position of authority over them. Some become agitated at the thought of a school inspection or a visit from the Quality Assurers (QAs). Sherlene reflected on the anxieties many mentors expressed when she said:

> *"If you are beyond (the expected curriculum content) they (the school inspectors) may understand a little bit, but if you are behind, that is a crush. They will be asking some of the reasons. You may show them this is the system we are using… they like the (government) curriculum, so they say 'this one (JSA's) doesn't work, so when do you think you will be at the right place?'...these are the questions. They don't want you to be late to achieve their curriculum." Sherlene*

The focus on passing exams, rather than the development of skills for learning and for life are a source of considerable conflict for mentors and their teachers. This is seen as a significant challenge to the implementation of LCE.

### 4.3.2 District and Regional Education Officers, Quality Assurers and the implementation of LCE

Mentors report that the Tanzanian curriculum requires the implementation of LCE but that the action of District and Regional Education Officers does not always support this. When speaking about the District Education Officers (DEOs) and Regional Education Officers (REOs) for each region, mentors consistently spoke of the need to ensure they were trained in LCE. They identified that it was important that those in decision making positions have a deep understanding of the Tanzanian curriculum, a knowledge of

appropriate assessment practices, and a new understanding of the role of teacher. Sherlene acknowledged this when speaking about mentors' impact on the implementation of LCE in government schools:

> *"If we start at the least, these normal teachers, we may take time. But if we start with these top people (DEOs and REOs), it may not take time because he believes and he knows what you are doing so it is possible to facilitate." Sherlene*

The mentors expressed the belief that if District and Regional Education Officers are convinced of the effectiveness of LCE then they will create the conditions in which this pedagogy can flourish.

Isaac also observed that educating teachers in LCE is not sufficient to make lasting change. He noted that the DEOs and REOs need to understand LCE in order for its implementation to be effective:

> *"We found that when we trained the teachers we made a new culture but the government had another culture and then the problem came. In one of the schools in (another district) the District Commissioner came on to the class and they found… kids sitting in groups and he said 'what kind of arrangement is this? This is not a government one!' Teachers were like "what shall we do? (JTTC) is telling us to do it like this, but this one is telling us to do this'. But the good thing is that we had discussed before with the DEO and then the DEO discussed it with the District Commissioner and then he understood… So if the government knows what we are doing and they do a follow up it is something that is going to help." Isaac*

If government teachers change their teaching practice to align more with LCE they conflict with those who inspect their work. Mentors report that it is important that DEOs, REOs, school leaders and teachers have a shared understanding of the implementation of LCE.

Mentors indicated that Quality Assurers (QAs) had made some change in practice as a result of JTTC's work. Isaac had initially been wary of the QAs

but he reported that significant progress has been made in their understanding and implementation of LCE:

> *"We have started a little bit fearing them (but I went with) them into the field and then… (in one district) I had one of the QAs – we went together and then I did the analysis and he said 'I want to see how you do the assessment and give feedback'… we went through that with the teacher and then I started to give the feedback with the teacher. And then you know he was amazed. He said "where did you train?" Isaac*

Isaac spoke of the need to train the QAs in LCE. To him it was important that they understood that the change in teacher pedagogy that JTTC is modelling is consistent with government policy:

> *"We also want to train the QAs. You see, to know for example we train these teachers on the pedagogy and then the same pedagogy we train the teachers we take to the QAs and train them. So that they can know this is not coming from (JTTC) or whatever, but it is also coming from the top." Isaac*

Isaac described the change in attitude he has seen in the QAs as a response to the training their participation in the JTTC program:

> *"… when we went to train them (QAs) they were surprised and they said this is what we want and they said we want to come to (JTTC) and see because our teachers have seen. Because they have been hearing the testimony, they have been visiting those schools and seeing the change. Kids are discussing things... 'Where did you learn this?' 'JTTC oh – so they are really amazed." Isaac*

The QAs have exhibited a change in attitude and in practice as they began to understand their role in enabling the implementation of quality teaching. They are expressing a clearer understanding of what they are supposed to be doing:

> *"They (QAs) are open now and they are really sharing… they were saying 'oh we thought the way we were doing it was right, but it was not working. But now we feel we are on the same track'." Isaac*

Being "on the same track" with QAs was seen as essential to ensuring that pedagogical change occurs. According to mentors, when QA's can see the effectiveness of LCE they begin to have a new attitude not only towards teachers, but become receptive to the support and training which JTTC provides.

Isaac identified another issue which affected the practice of DEOs, REOs and QAs. He reported that there is no money to train key Ministry stakeholders in LCE. He believes that the existing training process for ministry officials focusses on the wrong things. He reports that their role is to be mentors to schools, not to tell them what to do:

> *"Yes, actually it is their (DEO's) role to be mentors. They have not been in some cases because they were not trained as mentors. They were trained as leaders. You direct and you give orders." Isaac*

Isaac sees the role of JTTC as also training ministry officials to be effective leaders in school development by supporting schools. This is one way of responding to what he sees as budget constraints on their development:

> *"So the budget is not really allowing them (to change practice) because it costs a lot of money to train them, especially these district leaders but if you train them then things are running smoothly and any time we phone them and say we are going to schools they say 'wow. Go there, thank you so much for supporting us'". Isaac*

Mentors also report that officials are beginning to acknowledge and encourage the support they give them in their role because they can see that on-going mentoring is having an impact. They also acknowledge that budgetary constraints on ministry officials mean that they do not have the resources to provide the support themselves.

As the visiting mentor, Isaac communicates with DEOs and REOs to ensure that they are aware he is going into schools to work with teachers in the implementation of LCE. He attempts to ensure that they see the mentoring work done by JTTC as supporting the work of the Ministry of Education. He reports that officials are showing a changed attitude and have begun to thank him for his support. This is a significant change in focus for the Ministry officials and challenges their traditional role. Isaac states they should be mentors, involved in relationships and feedback, not merely bosses giving orders. This parallels the relationships that mentors seek to develop with teachers, and teachers attempt to develop with their students in learner-centred environments.

Isaac acknowledged the structural challenges faced by ministry officials in supporting schools, saying they do not have time to visit often and that the visits are not regular enough to make a difference.

> *"…when (schools) know (government inspectors) are coming they will do a good job, but when (they) leave they will start slacking…" Isaac*

Mentors reported that policies are in place to enable pedagogical change but in reality, these changes in practice are not occurring. The mentors are a part of a team working to influence change at many levels in the Tanzanian education system. They are aware that government policy and school practice do not match. It is because of their understanding of government policy, and their belief in the efficacy of LCE to bring about better educational results that they persevere with training teachers.

## 4.4 Conclusion

This chapter has described the strategies that mentors use to support the implementation of LCE in government schools. Five strategies were identified as leading to success:

1) Developing teacher identity
2) Modelling flatter power relationships
3) Developing reflective practice
4) Modelling a successful learner-centred environment and

5) Supporting continued professional development

Mentors also identified key issues which inhibit their work, including budgetary constraints and the inconsistency between policy and practice.

The success of the implementation of LCE in Tanzanian schools seems to call for a new way of thinking and a vastly different skill set than what has been present in the past. Mentors report that government policy and curriculum design provide the theoretical conditions for this but its implementation is impacted by budgetary and assessment constraints which impact on government officials' ability to effectively support its implementation. While accepting that schools must operate within the boundaries of government policy and the challenges of limited resources, mentors seek to empower teachers to implement LCE by modelling and implementing the five strategies that enable government teachers to make the ontological and pedagogical changes required.

# Chapter Five

# Discussion of Research Findings

## 5.1  Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the results that were reported on in Chapter 4 and situates this research study within the body of literature consulted in respect of the implementation of LCE in Tanzania. The chapter begins by discussing the strategies used by Tanzanian mentor teachers to implement learner-centred educational change in six government schools. It then goes on to outline the factors that inhibited mentors' work. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion that examines the implementation of LCE in Tanzania in response to wider global influences on educational policy.

## 5.2  Strategies used by mentors to facilitate the implementation of LCE

This study has revealed strategies which have enabled Tanzanian mentors to facilitate the implementation of LCE in government schools. Figure 1 represents the six factors which emerged from the interview process that enabled mentors to facilitate a shift in pedagogical practice. Mentors are in a position to directly influence five of these factors. The sixth factor, policy and curriculum, is beyond the mentors' control, yet it influences their ability to successfully implement the pedagogy. Each of these six factors are discussed in the following sections.
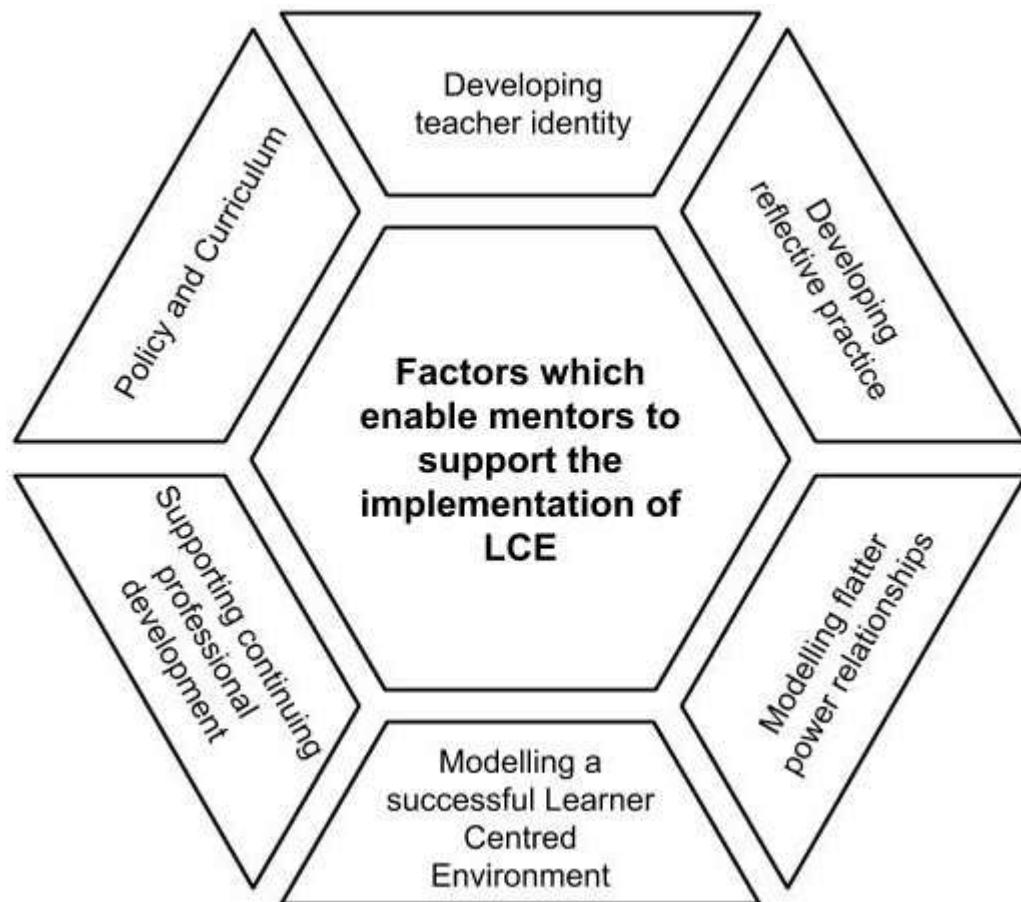
Figure 1 Factors which enable mentors to facilitate the implementation of LCE

### 5.2.1  Developing teacher identity

The first strategy mentors used to facilitate teachers' successful implementation of LCE was supporting the development of teacher identity. As Chapter 4 demonstrated the implementation of LCE requires a new understanding of the nature of knowledge and the strategies for learner-centred teaching. Mentors drew upon their own experience of identity development through mentoring to support the implementation of LCE. Because of this experience, mentors acknowledged that LCE demands a significant shift in conceptualising the role of teacher.

This  finding supports Altinyelken's (2010) research which also found that a shift from traditional, to learner-centred teaching assumes a change in understanding about the nature of knowledge and of the role of teachers and their relationships with students. However Altinyelken concludes that that teaching styles continue to be teacher dominated despite the *Vision 2025 (Tanzania Planning Commission, 1999)* policy requirement for a shift

to learner-centred pedagogy. However this research goes further because it shows the significance of nurturing teacher identity development as an essential element of pedagogical change. I argue that much of the work on pedagogical change in Tanzania has focussed on technicist techniques of pedagogical practice, rather than on the development of teacher identity. Therefore, this research brings fresh insight to the important role mentors play in facilitating teacher identity development.

### 5.2.2  Modelling flatter power relationships

A second way that mentors supported teachers to implement LCE is by modelling flatter power relationships. As seen in chapter 2, previous research has indicated that LCE demands the kind of power relationship in which the teacher creates the social, physical and emotional environment for collaborative  learning to take place (Schweisfurth, 2013). The findings in this study confirm the importance of reciprocal power relationships between teacher and learner in a learner-centred environment. As chapter 4 demonstrated, mentors reported that in JSA, teacher-learner relationships have developed in an intentional and mutually respectful culture over time. Teachers began to build positive relationships with their students as a result of observing positive teacher-student relationships at JSA and by engaging in reflective conversations with their mentors.

This finding confirms Paris and Comb's (2006) investigation which highlighted that positive teacher-student relationships are necessary for implementing LCE. They found that observing teacher and student as active co-constructors of teaching and learning experiences enabled teachers to implement flatter power relationships. Vavrus et al., (2011) report that when the relationship between teacher and student is based on mutual understanding, critical thinking and empathic relationships, teaching becomes more effective (p. 46). This also builds on Schweisfurth's, (2013), minimum standards for LCE. The second of these standards is that learners and teachers should develop mutually respectful relationships. This research goes further by showing how the mentor-teacher relationship is an important tool to model this flatter power relationship. Mentors demonstrate

an awareness of this by intentionally modelling a flatter power relationship based on mutual respect.

### 5.2.3  Developing reflective practice

As chapter 4 demonstrated, the third strategy used by mentors was to develop reflective practice in teachers. This is at the heart of the JTTC teacher development program and is based on research which assumes that all people are capable of change (Costa & Garmston, 1992).  These findings align with previous literature, which also indicates that implementing LCE requires teachers to reflect on their work, with the intention of further improving their teaching skills and changing their practice (Akyeampong, 2017; Altinyelken, 2010). Previous research indicates that reflective practice provides an opportunity to foster personal growth and develop teaching skills but that it is not generally built into teacher education (Bermeo, Kaunda, & Ngarina, 2013). O'Sullivan, (2010) suggests reflective practice is not taught during teacher education because it requires specific skills of mentoring and also of professional knowledge that are not usually found in a content focussed learning environment. Therefore, this study provides an example of a mentoring programme that addresses the noted concerns.

As chapter 4 indicates, the mentors in this study viewed reflective practice as a key strategy to support teachers' implementation of LCE. Therefore this study adds to the growing body of literature that situates reflective practice at the centre of the successful implementation of LCE.

### 5.2.4  Modelling a successful learner-centred environment

The fourth strategy which enabled mentors to bring about pedagogical change was in modelling successful LCE. As chapter 2 demonstrated, Tanzanian teacher training and school curriculum documents include a directive to implement LCE in both teacher training and school contexts. Since 2009 there has been an expectation that a significant amount of time will be spent on training in LCE during teacher education. Miyazaki, (2016) and Power and Kalina (2009) report that teachers generally receive this training as theory, not with practical experience. They also point out that

teachers often revert to the more teacher-centered teaching methods used when they were taught because they do not have any genuine experience of LCE on which to model their practice.

Mentors reported that, although teachers had received theoretical education in LCE, they expressed surprise when observing these strategies in use. Teachers commented that they had learned about LCE teaching strategies but had not seen them in practice. Teachers acknowledged that following their observation of teaching at JSA, and the on-going mentoring support they received that they now had a practical understanding of LCE. This confirms previous research in Tanzania by Vavrus and Bartlett, (2013), and Hardman, (2015), that showed that implementing LCE in Tanzania is challenging to sustain without providing opportunities to observe and participate in a successful LCE .

### 5.2.5 Continuing professional development and mentoring

A fifth strategy which enabled mentors to support teachers to implement LCE was through CPD and mentoring. To date, much of the CPD provided in Tanzania has focused on teaching methods and knowledge and theories of learning which inform the pedagogy, but not on its practical implementation (Miyazaki, 2016). Powell and Kalina, (2009), report that teachers need to have practical experience of LCE in order to ensure that there is sustained pedagogical change.

As chapter 4 demonstrated, two mentors explicitly reported that they felt it was observation, the development of on-going relationships with teachers, meaningful feedback and regular visits to schools which made the implementation of LCE possible. All of the mentors showed an on-going commitment to the professional relationships they had developed with teachers. They expressed a belief that the way in which they practice LCE is effective and of a desire to see teachers continue to achieve pedagogical change in their schools. This supports the findings of Hardman et al., (2015)'s research which indicated that on-going participation in CPD and mentoring are seen as keys to the successful implementation of LCE. In addition Vavrus and Bartlett, (2013), emphasise the importance of

discussing and evaluating their practical experience of teaching with their peers and stress the importance of collegial relationships formed during in-service training. However this research goes further because it has examined a model of CPD that has long term, relationship based mentoring at its heart. The model has been developed over almost 20 years by a team of teachers from Western countries and Tanzania working together to improve the pedagogy of teachers in a small number of Tanzanian schools.

## 5.3 Policy and curriculum

This section addresses structural influences that are outside of the influence of JTTC but have considerable impact on the implementation of LCE. As chapter 2 demonstrated, significant changes in educational policy have been made by the Tanzanian government as a response to global initiatives in educational development. Government vision and policy documents such as *Tanzania Vision 2025*, and curriculum documents for schools and teacher training, (Harrison, 2013; Tanzania Institute of Education, 2015; Tanzania Planning Commission, 1999) require the acquisition of new skills developed by LCE, to facilitate Tanzania's participation in the global economy. However, as chapter 4 demonstrates, mentors report that government practice does not consistently align with the policy directives. Mentors often find themselves at odds with DEOs, REOs and QAs over the need to prepare students for exams.

This finding aligns with those of Vavrus et.al, (2013) which report that despite the recent development of policies designed to encourage the use of LCE there are a number of significant challenges which inhibit its development. These challenges will be further explored in section 5.4

## 5.4 Factors which inhibit the implementation of LCE

Using the stratified levels of reality in critical realism (Fletcher, 2017), this study was guided with a vision of identifying the empirical, actual and real events to examine the implementation of LCE. The empirical realities in this study are the perceptions of the mentors as to how their mentoring model impacted their government colleagues. The actual realities are reflected in the concerns expressed by teachers about the barriers to its implementation

and the real events are the actions and policies of government officials which impact on daily school practice in Tanzania.

Literature reports on numerous programs which have been implemented to attempt to introduce LCE into Tanzanian schools and consistently reports that while there is a great deal of high level talk about LCE, implementing it at the grass roots level is a significant challenge for a number of structural reasons (Hardman et al., 2015; Mmasa & Anney, 2016). The following sections discuss these factors.

### 5.4.1  Practical experience of, and professional development in LCE

The first factor which inhibits mentors work with teachers is a lack of practical experience and professional development in LCE. This was discussed in sections 5.2.2 and 5.2.3. However it is important to note that mentors reported that this was also a significant area of concern for teachers. This finding confirms the claim by Mmasa and Anney (2016) and Vavrus et al., (2011), that lack of professional development is a key cause of concern for teachers in Tanzania .

### 5.4.2  Class size

A second influence on mentors' work with teachers is class size. Mentors report from their own experience in Tanzanian classrooms and from conversations with teachers that classes can sometimes have up to 100 students and one teacher. This finding confirms research by Kalolo (2016), and Mmasa and Anney, (2016) that the physical limitations of the classroom environment are seen as a major obstacle to pedagogical change.  It also confirms Vavrus et. al's (2013) assertion that Tanzanian schools can find it difficult to find sufficient numbers of teachers. Both of these issues present significant challenges to the implementation of LCE.

### 5.4.3  Provision of teaching resources

A further influence on the implementation of LCE is that while the curriculum requires teachers to provide opportunities for active learning experiences, the provision of teaching resources and materials for 'hands on' learning activities requires sufficient funding to support these activities and this is not

available. This finding confirms previous research by Vavrus, Bartlett & Salema, (2013), which reports that economic factors present a challenge to the provision of teaching resources such as paper, pens and basic science equipment. It also supports Barrett (2007), and Brodie et al.'s, (2002), assertion that resources are often expensive and there is rarely sufficient budget available to schools for purchasing them. Mentors showed an understanding of the economic challenges teachers confront through the lack of teaching resources for implementing LCE. On the one hand findings showed that teachers believed they needed a lot of resources to implement LCE. This supports Schweisfurth's (2015), assertion that LCE is an expensive pedagogy.

On the other hand, the findings suggest that mentors are challenging this belief. As demonstrated in chapter 4, mentors believe LCE can be implemented with few resources. This research challenges previous research (Barrett, 2007; Brodie et al., 2002; Vavrus et al., 2013), by arguing that it is possible to implement LCE by the creative use of common materials found in the local environment. Mentors report that teachers have found ways to overcome the challenge of space and resource as a result of observing mentors teach in their schools and by the use of the JTTC designed book of activities. This solution-focused approach enables mentors to influence pedagogical change.

### 5.4.4  Assessment

As chapter 4 showed, there is a disconnect between assessment practices and the curriculum. This disconnect is a result of the tension between the government requirement for test-driven measures of educational success and the formative approach to assessment that is advocated in a learner-centred approach. This confirms Schweisfurth's (2015) and Vavrus et al's, (2013) argument that curriculum and assessment need to align to support the implementation of LCE.

### 5.4.5  The practice of school inspectors

Chapter 4 showed a disconnect between the practice of school inspectors and the demands of the curriculum. Two mentors described this tension as

'a crush' which caused conflict with school inspectors and made them fear their visits to JSA. This finding confirms prior research by Varus et. al, (2013), which also identified the tension between the inspection process and the implementation of LCE.

### 5.4.6 District and Regional Education Officers and Quality Assurers

A further factor impacting the implementation of LCE is the practice of ministry officials. As chapter 4 shows, mentors have become aware that in order to sustain change, it is necessary to work with those who have a broader influence on school policy and practice. This finding supports prior research by Hardman et al., (2015), which states that teacher education should be a part of a broader capacity development strategy that supports all actors in the education system.

Mentors acknowledge that sustained change will only occur when REOs, DEOs, QAs and school leaders move their view of education from a reproductive model, repeating the practice which they have used before, to a model in which they demonstrate agency to change their vision of education, and their role in the implementation of LCE in government schools.

### 5.4.7 Critical Realism

Critical realism helps us to understand the broader significance of how JTTC has used a mentoring model to achieve pedagogical change. The use of critical realism in this research has placed the implementation of LCE in both a global and Tanzanian context. As critical realism is characterized by the search for causation (Fletcher, 2017), this research has considered the disconnect between government policy on LCE and its implementation at the grass roots level. It acknowledges that Tanzania is promoting LCE as a model of quality in education as a result of pressure from global agencies (Mmasa & Anney, 2016; Vavrus & Moshi, 2009), and has explored the challenges to its implementation through six mentors. Using critical realism, this thesis puts forward the argument that mentors can support the implementation of LCE strategies in Tanzania, however its success is significantly influenced by government policy and practice.

This research has shown how mentors have supported teachers to use agency to resist the continuation of teacher-centred pedagogy and transform their practice. Strategies that mentors used to enable this include teacher identity development, modelling flatter power relationships, developing reflective practice, and modelling a successful learner-centred environment. These findings support the research by Shutz et al., (2018) which proposes that development of teacher identity enables teachers to envisage ways to implement LCE in their classrooms. This finding reinforces the role of agency to support the transformation of teacher practice (Craig & Bigby, 2015).

This study has also shown how wider economic and political conditions have limited mentors' ability to support teacher change. Large class sizes and a lack of resources are two examples of economic factors that have limited mentors' ability to support teachers' enactment of LCE. In addition, political factors such as Ministry inspectors and assessment processes limit mentors' ability to support pedagogical change. These practices and processes do not consistently share the curriculum vision for implementing LCE.

Chapter 4 demonstrates that mentors acknowledge these limiting factors. In doing so they move to challenge these systemic conditions by seeking other ways to implement LCE, despite the limitations of the system.

As demonstrated in chapter 2, the *Tanzanian Development Vision 2025* was influenced by international policy and targets. Education plays a significant role in developing the skills and attitudes required to participate in the global economy. Careny, (as cited in Altinyelkin, 2010), reports that LCE has become the chosen approach to quality education in low-income countries and this has become an essential part of receiving overseas aid. This confirms research by Verger et al., (2014) which shows that International Aid Agencies are often the conduit for distribution of funds for education.

Chapter 2 also discussed the fact that International Aid Agencies have had significant influence on the development of curriculum and of educational

policy (Verger et al., 2014), yet in Tanzania there remains a disconnect between policy and practice.

# Chapter Six

# Conclusion

This chapter presents the summary of the key findings from this study and explains how these findings contribute to our understanding of how mentoring can support teachers to implement LCR. This chapter considers the significance of these findings before examining some of the limitations of this study. It concludes by identifying suggestions for future research.

## 6.1  Summary of results

This research aimed to identify the strategies that mentors used to facilitate the implementation of LCE in six schools in Tanzania. It was revealed that there are five strategies which contribute to successful implementation of LCE. The five strategies used by mentors to implement change were identified in chapter 4. These are:

1) Developing teacher identity;
2) Modelling flatter power relationships;
3) Developing reflective practice;
4) Modelling a successful learner-centred environment; and
5) Continuing professional development and mentoring

In implementing these strategies, mentors demonstrate a belief that teachers can influence the learning experiences and assessments they provide for their students. Mentors report that teachers respond to the use of these strategies by implementing changes in their own pedagogy and relationships with others.

LCE is an important element in the Tanzanian teacher training curriculum. However, in many instances teachers do not have practical experience of these pedagogies. Because mentors are themselves products of the Tanzanian education system, they are aware of the challenges involved in pedagogical change. Some of these factors relate to an understanding of the nature of knowledge and the ways in which students learn. Other factors, such as large class sizes, limited teaching spaces and a shortage of resources are beyond the control of the mentor. However, despite these

constraints, mentors endeavour to suggest and model strategies for learning which do not require a large investment of resources.

The commitment of mentors to on-going visits to their mentees' schools is an essential element of their mentoring success. This study suggests that it is through the repeated feedback, modelling, and encouragement that change begins to occur. In establishing flatter power relationships with their government colleagues, mentors in this study modelled the kind of relationship they wish to see teachers develop with their students. In this way, mentors demonstrated a reciprocal sharing of knowledge and opportunity to safely make mistakes. The ability to reflect on experiences and make changes as needed seemed to prompt teachers to take risks in developing learning experiences for their students, and in planning and assessment processes.

Bringing a critical realist lens to this research created an opportunity to look beyond classroom implementation of LCE to the political and economic forces that influence the actions of government officials in enabling, or obstructing its implementation. By anchoring this resesarch on critical realism, this study found that global targets on enhancing the quality of education resulted in the Tanzanian government adopting LCE into educational policy and training practices. Despite this, the study highlighted a disconnect between policy and administrative processes.

Success in Tanzanian schools is still being measured by pass rates in examinations and in progress through the delivery of the curriculum. This focus on measurable outcomes creates a significant tension for government teachers and schools. Changing pedagogical practice will entail shifting the emphasis of assessment from examination pass rates and curriculum coverage to the development of the skills and understandings required by *Tanzania Vision 2025.*

## 6.2 Contributions of the research

This study has made a significant contribution to the body of knowledge regarding the mentoring programme at JTTC. First it has revealed strategies

that mentors use to support teachers' implementation of LCE. These strategies may benefit the Ministry or other providers to support teacher development in Tanzania. The second contribution is that mentors' personal experiences add a new perspective to our understanding of mentoring programmes.

## 6.3 Limitations of the research

Despite the fact that this research has brought new insights into the field, it has several limitations. First, this study includes a sample size of only six mentors involved in mentoring teachers in six government schools. Therefore, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to the whole population of schools in Tanzania. Also, the mentors are all teachers from one private school and teacher training college which has its own distinct approach to teacher mentoring. Lastly, only the perspectives of the mentors were considered in the study. Since the implementation of LCE in government schools involves both government teachers and educational leaders, exploring the perspectives of teachers and educational leaders might reveal new insights and a deeper understanding of the challenges involved. Because this study relied on only six interviews with mentor teachers in order to corroborate data, and strengthen results, it would have been desirable to observe mentors and teachers at work in JSA and government schools. Interviewing government officials may also have provided an alternative perspective for this study, however because of tight time constraints and ethical processes neither of these processes were possible.

## 6.4 Considerations for further research

Since this study takes a mentor's perspective of implementing LCE it is well positioned to identify possible future research. Future researchers could build on these findings to more closely examine the elements of a successful mentor training program. Researchers could also consider the perspectives of government teachers, principals or education officials on the implementation of LCE. A multiple case study could be carried out using semi-structured interviews in different educational settings to explore the

lived reality of selected teachers, school leaders and Ministry officials. This would afford researchers the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of how they perceived their role influences, or is influenced by, the implementation of LCE. Alternatively a mixed methods approach could be taken where teachers are surveyed to find out their experiences of implementing LCE. This could be used in conjunction with semi-structured focus groups to further explore the themes which emerge from the survey. Finally, future research could employ action research to examine effective strategies for implementing LCE into Tanzanian schools.

## 6.5  Concluding statement

To conclude, this thesis has demonstrated that a mentoring model holds promise for supporting teachers to implement LCE in Tanzanian schools.

Despite limited resources and inconsistencies between education policy and Ministry of Education and Vocational Training practice, this research suggests that a mentoring programme may offer one way to support pedagogical change in Tanzania.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1

### Letter to the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training requesting permission to conduct research in Tanzania

Te Kura Toi Tangata
Faculty of Education
The University of Waikato
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walkato.ac.nz/education

THE UNIVERSITY OF
**WAIKATO**
*Te Whare Wānanga o Waikato*

**The Permanent Secretary**

Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
P.O. Box 9121
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania
Email: psmoevt@moe.go.tz

10 May 2018

Dear                    ,

### RE: Request to Conduct Research in Tanzania

I am currently a student in the Master of Global Education programme at the University of Waikato, New Zealand. Having previously been a primary school teacher for thirty years, and a primary school principal for 5 years, my educational interest has now focused on teachers' implementation of learner-centred pedagogy in Tanzania. Since 2006 I have, as a member of RATA Teachers Support, participated in programs to introduce learner-centred pedagogy to teachers in a total of eleven schools in Ghana, South Africa and Tanzania. RATA is a New Zealand NGO which is focussed on training untrained teachers, who work in private schools run, by their local community. As a teacher in the RATA team I have delivered continuing professional development in Tanzania in Joshua School Magugu, in the Babiti district of Manyara, and in Joshua School, Arusha city.

I am requesting permission to conduct a research study at Joshua Teacher Training College in Arusha. My research is entitled: *Learner-centred teaching pedagogy in Tanzania: Experiences from the grass roots*. The purpose of this research is to examine the pedagogical experiences of Tanzanian mentor teachers who have been trained at Joshua Teachers Training College, and are now implementing learner-centred pedagogies in the Joshua School, Arusha. They are also providing mentor training to other teachers in state schools.

This case study research aims to understand the experiences of mentor teachers who are implementing learner-centred pedagogy into Tanzanian primary schools. It will explore the teachers' own experiences of being trained in these pedagogies, and will also consider their experiences of mentoring their state school colleagues as they begin to use these pedagogies in their own schools.

Six mentor teachers will be invited by the researcher to participate in this research. Each will be sent an information letter and provided with an on-site briefing as to the purpose of the research. If they agree to participate, they will sign a consent form indicating their willingness to be a part of the research process. They will be required to take part in a 45-minute semi-structured interview and be invited to share with the researcher their planning documentation from the previous term. The interviews will take place between 19th and 28th June 2018 at the Joshua Teachers Training College, Arusha.

I am aware of the Tanzanian government's commitment to learner centred pedagogy and to continuing teacher professional development. I hope that the study will have positive and practical implications for Tanzanian teachers as they implement learner-centred pedagogies in their schools.

The data collected will be used to write a research report for my thesis leading to the award of a Masters Degree in Global Education from the University of Waikato, New Zealand. The results may also be used in seminar presentations, conferences and publications in journal articles and book chapters. At the conclusion of this research a one page summary of the findings will be provided to you, to the Joshua Teachers Training College, and to the participants.

The study will follow all requirements of the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Regulations 2008, and the Ethical Guidelines of the New Zealand Association for Research in Education (NZARE). The participants' names will remain confidential. The raw data will be kept in a secure place and will be accessed only by the researcher and Dr Donella Cobb, the research supervisor. All participants will have the opportunity to review and edit the transcript of their interview, to ensure that they accurately reflect what they meant to say. All participants will be asked for informed consent to participate in this study and will have the right to withdraw their data at any time up until August 8 2018.

I am unable to commence this research without the consent of the Ministry of Education and Vocation in Tanzania. If you agree to this research project, please provide me with a letter of consent to conduct research in Tanzania.

Should you have other questions concerning the ethical conduct of this research project, or if there are any other questions or clarifications that you require, you can contact me via email (anneycollin2@gmail.com) or by phone +64273061448. You may also contact my research supervisor, Dr Donella Cobb (donella.cobb@waikato.ac.nz) or by phone +6483834466 ext 8385.

Thank you very much for your consideration of my request and I look forward to your reply.

Yours Sincerely

Anney Collin
Student
Master of Global Education
University of Waikato
New Zealand

# Appendix 2

**Request to gain access to, and information from, participants at Joshua Teachers Training College and School**

*Learner-centred teaching pedagogy in Tanzania: Experiences from the grass roots*

*Information Sheet*

**Project Aims**

Learner Centred Pedagogies (LCP's) have become an important part of the Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Vocation's future focus. As you are aware, Joshua Teacher Training College have been implementing these pedagogies since 2002. This research, titled *Learner-centred teaching pedagogy in Tanzania: Experiences from the grass roots,* will examine the pedagogical experiences of your teachers who have been trained at Joshua Teachers Training College and are now implementing learner-centred pedagogies in the Joshua School, and mentoring state school colleagues in the use of these pedagogies.

**About the researcher**

Anney Collin is a student in the Master of Global Education program at the University of Waikato. She was previously a primary school principal. She has participated in training in Learner Centred Pedagogies (LCP) at Joshua School as a part of the RATA team from New Zealand.

**Project invitation**

As the Principal of the Joshua Teachers Training College, your consent is requested to enable the researcher to invite mentor teachers from your school to participate in this research and to access curriculum and planning documentation used by participating teachers. It is believed that mentor teachers, and the documentation, will provide important insight into the implementation of LCPs in a Tanzanian context.

This research is not intended to be an evaluation of Joshua Teachers Training College or School. The purpose of the research is to help gain an understanding of the experiences of teachers as they engage with teaching and mentoring using LCPs. Your consent for teachers to be invited to participate in this study, and the supply of curriculum and planning documentation is, therefore, requested.

**What will happen if I give consent?**

To ensure the integrity of the research the leadership team at JTTC will be requested to provide a list of up to ten potential participants who meet the following criteria. That they:

1) Are members of the teaching staff at Joshua School;
2) Have been identified as effective in their ability as a mentor;

3) Are effective in implementing learner centred pedagogy.

From the list provided I will randomly select six participants to be invited to take part in the research. If one or more of the six selected participants decline to participate another will be randomly selected. I may also view curriculum and planning documentation used by the participants in the course of their teaching.

The management of JTTC and School will not participate in the briefing or interviews, nor will they be given access to the audio or transcripts of interviews. All information provided by participants will be anonymized. Participants will be assured that any decision to participate, or not participate in this research project will not impact on their relationship with JTTC, or their employment situation.

Potential participants will be invited by me to a briefing at the College on June 19 at 2pm. Should they give their consent to participate, they will sign a consent form indicating their willingness to be a part of the research process. They will be required to take part in a 45-minute semi-structured interview at which only myself and participant will be present, and invited to share their last term planning documentation with me. The interviews will take place between 19th and 28th June 2018, with your permission, at your college.

With the consent of the Mentor Teachers, the interviews will be audio recorded. Transcripts of those interviews will be returned to the participants while I am on site, to enable them to be edited to ensure that the transcripts accurately reflect the participants' intended meaning. If there is not sufficient time to complete transcriptions before I leave Tanzania the transcript will be emailed to participants via their personal emails for editing.

Should you have other questions concerning the ethical conduct of this research project, you can contact me (anneycollin2@gmail.com), phone +64273061448, or my research supervisor, Dr Donella Cobb by email (donella.cobb@waikato.ac.nz) or by phone ph: +64 7 838 4466 ext: 8385.

If, after considering this information sheet you have further questions concerning the ethical conduct of this research project, you can contact me, (anneycollin2@gmail.com, phone +64273061448, or my research supervisor, Dr Donella Cobb by email donella.cobb@waikato.ac.nz or by phone +64 7 838 4466 ext: 8385.

If you are willing to consent to the participation of your teachers in this research you will be asked to complete and sign the consent form attached to this letter. Thank you for your time.
Yours sincerely


Anney Collin

# Appendix 3

**Consent to gain access to, and information from, participants at Joshua Teachers Training College and School**

*Giving Consent*

I                          Principal of Joshua Teachers Training College, have read the Information Sheet regarding the purpose of the research titled *Learner-centred teaching pedagogy in Tanzania: Experiences from the grass roots.* I understand the nature of the research and why consent has been requested to access information and invite mentor teachers at Joshua Teachers Training College and School to participate. I have had the opportunity to ask the researcher, Anney Collin, questions about the research project, and have had them answered to my satisfaction.

I understand that Joshua Teachers Training College and Joshua School will be named in the research but that participants' names will remain confidential. I also understand that while the researcher will not identify participants in any publications or presentations reporting the research, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. I also understand that the researcher will delete all electronic files after transcription and that hard copies of the transcriptions will be kept for the required five year period.

I consent to:

☐   The researcher, Anney Collin, having access to, and copying the JTTC curriculum, the school curriculum and teacher planning documentation.

I consent to:

☐   The researcher inviting teachers from Joshua Teachers Training College and the school to participate in the research.

I confirm that:

☐   Any decision made by mentor teachers to participate, or not participate, in this research project will not impact on their relationship with JTTC, or their employment situation.

I understand that:

- ☐ The Joshua Teachers Training College and school will be named in any publications and presentations that report on this research.

- ☐ I can contact the researcher's supervisor, Dr Donella Cobb, if I have any concerns that I feel are unable to be resolved by speaking to the researcher directly.

Name:                                        Signature:

Date:

# Appendix 4

## Information letter for participants

Dear,

I am Anney Collin, a postgraduate student pursuing a Master in Global Education degree at the University of Waikato, Hamilton New Zealand. I am currently conducting a research project entitled: *Learner-centred teaching pedagogy in Tanzania: Experiences from the grass roots*. The purpose of this research is to examine your experiences of implementing learner-centred pedagogies in your school, and of mentoring your state school colleagues as they begin to use these pedagogies in their own school contexts. This research has been approved by the University of Waikato Human Research Ethics Committee and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, Tanzania.

You have been invited to participate in this research because you are a mentor on the teaching staff at Joshua School and 1) are effective in your implementation of learner-centred pedagogy and, 2) are effective in your ability as a mentor.

You are invited to:

> Attend a 20 minute briefing meeting at 2pm on Tuesday 19 June at Joshua Teachers Training College. At this meeting I will explain the purpose of the research, your involvement and invite any questions you may have about my research. Should you give your consent to participate in this research, please complete the attached consent form.

Upon receiving this consent, you will be invited to take part in a 45 minute face–to–face interview at which only you and I will be present. The focus of this interview is to understand your experiences of implementing learner-centred pedagogy, both as a teacher in the Joshua School, and also as a mentor supporting state trained teachers to implement learner-centred pedagogy in their own teaching practice. The interview will be conducted in English. You will also be

invited to share your planning documentation from the last term. With your consent, this documentation will be copied and used as data in this research.

Any decision to participate, or not participate in this research will not impact on your relationship with your employer, the Joshua Foundation, or your employment status. With your consent, the interviews will be audio-recorded. The interviews will be transcribed and the interview transcript will be returned to you within two weeks of the interviews to allow you the opportunity to review, edit, and amend them so that they accurately reflect your intended meaning.  If you wish to have some support in reviewing the transcripts, Mr Lorivi Muro will be available. He has agreed to keep all details of your contributions confidential and not to change any meaning or intent.

All of your responses will be treated confidentially. Pseudonyms will be used to protect your identity in any publications, presentations or thesis to ensure data gathered from you is kept confidential. However, the Joshua Teacher Training College will be named in the research. The recordings and transcripts of your interview will only be reviewed by myself and my supervisor. All data will be kept in a secure location.  You will be given a summary of key findings at the completion of the research.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw your consent to your recordings and data being used up until 8 August 2018 without any reason being given. If you wish to withdraw your participation and data, you can directly contact me by emailing anneycollin2@gmail.com - ph: +64273061448. You can also decline to answer any questions you are not comfortable with in the interview.

Should you have other questions concerning the ethical conduct of this research project, you can contact me or my research supervisor, Dr Donella Cobb by email donella.cobb@waikato.ac.nz or by phone ph: +64 7 838 4466 ext: 8385.

If you are willing to participate in this research you will be asked to complete and sign the consent form attached to this letter. Thank you for your time.

# Appendix 5

## Consent form for participants

This is to notify that I,                                                   mentor teacher at Joshua School have read the information letter for this study and have discussed the details of the research with the researcher Anney Collin.  I have been informed about the study *Learner-centred teaching pedagogy in Tanzania: Experiences from the grass roots,* and I give my consent to participate.

***Please tick each of the following statements to show that you give your consent to participate in the study.***

- ☐ I understand that participation in this research is voluntary.
- ☐ I understand that I can, without having to provide any reason, withdraw from the research at any time.
- ☐ I understand that I can withdraw my data contributions before any data analysis begins on 8 August 2018.
- ☐ I have been informed of the research purpose and aims and I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement.
- ☐ I agree to take part in an approximately 45-minute face-to-face interview with the researcher Anney Collin and I understand that only Anney and I will be present during that interview.
- ☐ I agree that my interview can be audio recorded.
- ☐ I agree to provide the researcher with my teaching planning documentation from the last term.
- ☐ I understand that I am free to decline to answer any questions during the interview.
- ☐ I understand that the interview transcripts will be returned to me for review and edit to ensure that they are an accurate record of my intended meaning. This will take approximately 30 minutes.
- ☐ I understand that all information will be treated confidentially and the researcher will make every effort to protect my identity by using a pseudonym.

- ☐ I understand that no copy of the audio or interview transcripts will be given to Joshua Teachers Training College or School.

- ☐ I understand that, if requested by me, Mr Lorivi Muro will be available to assist with any issue regarding my understanding of the transcript and that any discussion I have with him will be confidential between us.

- ☐ I understand that my agreeing to participate, or not participate, will not impact my relationship with Joshua Teachers Training College or School.

- ☐ I understand that Joshua Teacher Training College will be identified in any publications or presentations that report the findings of this study.

- ☐ I understand that I will be given a one-page summary of the research findings at the conclusion of this study.

- ☐ I have been given a copy of this consent form for my own records

- ☐ I understand that any concerns about the research process or ethical matters can be discussed with the researcher or with her supervisor, Dr Donella Cobb donella.cobb@waikato.ac.nz.

Name:

Date:

Signature:

# Appendix 6

**Letter to Cultural Advisor**

Project Manager

Joshua Teachers Training College

11 May 2018

Dear

My name is Anney Collin, a postgraduate student pursuing a Masters in Global Education degree at the University of Waikato, Hamilton New Zealand. I am currently conducting a research project entitled: *Learner-centred teaching pedagogy in Tanzania: Experiences from the grass roots*. The purpose of this research is to examine the experiences of teachers at Joshua Teachers Training College in implementing learner-centred pedagogies, and to understand their experiences of mentoring their state school colleagues as they begin to use these pedagogies in their own schools.

I am writing to request your involvement as my Cultural Advisor for this research project. Because I am not from Tanzania I would value your advice and guidance so that I can respond appropriately to any cultural practices and protocol issues that may arise during my research.

I will be conducting recorded interviews with six mentor teachers from the College. These will be transcribed and returned to them to review and, if necessary, amend, to ensure that they accurately reflect their intended meaning. Should you give your consent to take on the role of Cultural Advisor, participants will be given the opportunity to contact you to assist them with the review of their transcript, and if necessary, verbally translating portions of the transcripts into Swahili. If you agree to take on this role it is important that you do not influence any changes to the meaning or intent of their answers, rather that you assist them to properly understand any question asked, or answer given, so that their intended meaning is accurately recorded in the transcript.

To ensure that the best possible information is collected and to ensure the privacy of the information, confidentiality is important. For this reason any information obtained by you is to be kept in confidence and is not to be discussed with any other person.

If you agree to take the role of Cultural Advisor, please complete the attached consent form.

If you have any questions about this role, your involvement and/or the project please contact either me, by email (anneycollin2@gmail.com) or by phone +64273061448. Alternatively, my supervisor, Dr Donella Cobb can be contacted by email (donella.cobb@waikato.ac.nz) or by phone; +6478384466 ext 8385.

Yours Sincerely,

## Appendix 7

**Confidentiality Agreement for Cultural Advisor**

This is to notify that I,                    have agreed to act as cultural advisor to Ms Anney Collin for the purpose of her research for her Master of Global Education Degree. I have read the information letter for this study and have discussed the details of the research with Ms Collin.

Please tick

☐  I agree not to disclose to any person any information I receive from the researcher, the participants, or from Joshua Teachers Training College, in the course of this research.

☐  I agree to advise Ms Anney Collin on any matters of cultural significance which may arise during the course of the research.

☐  I understand that I may be required to assist teacher participants to read and interpret the transcripts of the interviews undertaken by them. However I agree not to influence any changes to the meaning or intent of their answers. I agree to communicate this information accurately.

Signed:

Date:

# Appendix 8

**Interview questions**

General

1. Tell me about your journey to being a teacher at JTTC. Where were you trained? In your initial training was there an emphasis on Learner Centred pedagogy?
2. How would you describe the role of a teacher?

Joshua School

3. What were some of the challenges you encountered when you started working at Joshua School?
4. Of all the things that you have learned at JTTC and school what do you think has had the greatest impact on your teaching?
5. How do you plan for teaching and learning in your classroom? What do you think about, and what do you actually do?
6. How is your planning used in the classroom? Is it shared with those you mentor?
7. Thinking about the way in which you were taught and the way you teach now, what would you say are the most significant ideas you have acquired over time?

Learner Centred Pedagogy

8. What does learner-centred pedagogy mean to you? What impact do you think that this way of teaching and learning has on your relationships with; your students, your state teacher colleagues, the parents of your students?
9. What do you see as the most important elements of mentoring your teaching colleagues? How does your understanding of learner-centred pedagogy impact on the way you relate to those you mentor?
10. How do your state school colleagues respond to the change in teaching practice which you model? Do they implement learner-centred pedagogy when working in your classroom?
11. How do you know that teachers are using learner-centred pedagogy in their own schools?
12. When working with your state school colleagues do they speak about the things which make this kind of pedagogy difficult to implement in their schools? What do they say are the greatest challenges? What makes it easy for them to implement this pedagogy?

13. What is the role of school leaders in making learner-centred pedagogy effective?
14. At JTTC and school your language of instruction is English, but sometimes you use Swahili, or other languages, why? How do students respond to language use? What are the advantages of using learner-centred pedagogy in an English speaking classroom? What are the challenges?
15. Is there any conflict between the use of LCP alongside the curriculum and governmental policies which mean that you have to prepare children for exams?
16. Are there any key differences between a child who has experienced learner-centred pedagogy all the way through to class 7, and those who have had a more traditional school experience?

Personal Reflection

17. Do you think that the things you have learned as a teacher using learner-centred pedagogy has had an impact in any other part of your life? Why/why not?

## Appendix 9: Time Line of Research in Tanzania June 2018

| | | | | | Friday 15 | Saturday 16 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Prior to arrival<br>Request consent from Tanzanian Ministry of Education and Vocation by post and email. If unsuccessful personally request at Dar es Salaam Head office on arrival in Tanzania.<br>Confirm dates and accommodation with Joshua Teachers Training College<br>Request research permission from Joshua Teachers Training College via email<br>Request list of possible research participants from JTTC<br>Draft possible time frame for interviews, document availability and provision of interview room with onsite contact once permission received. | | | | | *8.20 am* Arrive in Dar es Salaam Go straight to Ministry of Education and Vocation requesting ethics approval | Private Travel |
| Sunday 17 | Monday 18 | Tuesday 19 | Wednesday 20 | Thursday 21 | Friday 22 | Saturday 23 |
| Private Travel | Return to Ministry of Education and Vocation (if necessary).<br>*4.15 pm* flight to Arusha | Meet with hosts. Joshua teachers Training College Principal to sign consent form<br>*2 pm* Meet with Participants for 20 minute briefing | Review Documents – Curriculum and teacher planning Collect participant consent forms and Cultural Advisor form | Interview 1<br><br>Interview 2 Transcribing of interviews | Interview 3<br><br>Interview 4 Transcribing of interviews | Document analysis<br><br>Transcribing of interviews |
| Journaling | | | | | | |
| Sunday 24 | Monday 25 | Tuesday 26 | Wednesday 27 | Thursday 28 | Friday 29 | |
| Document analysis<br><br>Transcribing of interviews | Interview 5<br><br>Interview 6 Transcribing of interviews | Transcribing of interviews<br><br>Alternative interview time | Transcribing of interviews<br><br>Alternative interview time | Transcribing of interviews Finishing all Document viewing | Depart Arusha | |