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## **Emerging Issues from Pastoralist Community Participation in Secondary School Planning through O&OD Approach in Mvomero District Council**

Eliza Mwakasangula<sup>1</sup> and Mseti Elias<sup>2</sup>

### ***Abstract***

*Various approaches and strategies of engaging community members at local government development activities are growing in Tanzania. Among others is the use of Opportunity and Obstacles to Development (O&OD) to planning. While O&OD approach has existed for more than a decade now, utilizing this approach in nomadic-pastoralist communities offers new insights for the success of this national approach to cater for various community needs. This study examined emerging issues from nomadic-pastoralist community engagement in secondary school planning through the use of O&OD approach whilst using Mvomero District Council as a case. This qualitative-case study utilized a sample size consisted of various participants in the local settings that ensured saturation point. While primary data were collected through interviews and analysed thematically, content analysis was used in the analysis of secondary data. The study concludes that societal-cultural context-specific attributes determine the success of various national approaches such as O&OD that cater for various community needs.*

**Keywords:** Community participation, Secondary School Planning  
O&OD

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## **Introduction**

Community participation is regarded as a vital aspect for successful education sector development planning (Kiewo and Frumence, 2015). It is believed that when community members conceive their own projects and when plans are implemented by the local people according to their preferences, the chances for development are considered higher since Local communities have the information on the local needs (Chaligha, 2008).

Opportunities and Obstacles development (O & OD) was introduced by the President Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PO-RALG) in 2001 (PO-RALG, 2004 and Mwakasangula, 2019). O&OD approach was designed to promote community participation in planning and implementation of projects, it creates a sense of ownership in the community plans. O&OD approach was designed to promote community initiatives as well as to accelerate achievement of national goals in the Tanzanian Development Vision 2025 (The United Republic of Tanzania (URT) 2006; PO-RALG, 2004).

Mvomero being one of the districts in Mvomero region using O&OD approach, the approach is used in various projects including education, health and water. With respect to promoting the education sector O&OD was adopted by Mvomero in order to promote community participation in planning and implementation of education projects and create a sense of ownership in the community plans. However education project remain a project of concern in Mvomero district council, as the project has shown a sign of failure in implementation phase (Planning Officer, 2018). The statistics showed for example that out of five wards intended to involve communities in planning and implementation, implementation have not been done as required (District Education Officer, 2018). As it is stated by Gapchojiga (2011) and JICA (2008) that, the current practices for O&OD have not improved people's participation. This study sought to find out challenges of community Participation in using O & OD planning and implementation approach in education sector.

## **Literature Review**

### **Conceptualization of O&OD**

The O&OD methodology is a comprehensive participatory planning process, which was developed in Tanzania by overcoming many of the short comings of other planning methodologies (PO-RALG, 2007). The approach requires community members to be involved in setting priorities, planning and implementation of the planned activities.

### **O&OD planning at grassroots level**

The planning process using O&OD approach involves eleven steps which allow community members to priorities their preferences in logical framework, the steps are laid down in the community participatory planning process methodology rural process of 2007, the manual was promulgated by the PMO-RALG in 2007. The activities in the manual start by writing an official letters to the ward leadership informing them the intention of conducting O& OD in the ward, the letter should include the following things, stating the date of pre-visit, informing the ward leadership to collect primary data for community planning and informing the ward leadership to call the special meeting during the pre-visit day, the meeting should include key people to be invited, ward leaders and other stakeholders (PMO-RALG, 2007).

After sending the official letter the facilitators will conduct a pre-visit. Pre-visit activity is the activity that allows facilitators to meet with ward leadership, key people who have been invited, extension workers and other stakeholders to discuss O& OD planning process. During this process the facilitators are suppose to explain to the ward leadership and community members the Tanzania Development Vision 2015 which will form policy guide for the preparation of development plan.

After the explanation the community members should choose from main objective I and II of the TDV 2025, the objective that they consider to be priority for the development of their community plan (PMO-RALG, 2007). The facilitators during the pre-visit should also conduct the dialogue with ward leaders, influential people, extension workers and other stakeholders. The dialogue should identify most effective way for community sensitization, identify participants for community planning process, prepare timetable for exercise and logistics, select the priority objectives from TDV 2015 to be used for community development plans, data collection, explain formation and use of focus group, ward members should also sensitize to the ward to attend the meeting so as to plan for their development using O&OD and the ward leaders should also informed to prepare the heads of housed for every hamlet (URT, 2007).

After the re-visit, facilitators together with community leadership choose the good way for community sensitization. The main aim to sensitize the community is to encourage them attend the extraordinary ward assembly for launching O&OD process. In the second day the community members that were sensitized in the dialogue with facilitators continues with sensitizing the ward members on the importance of conducting participatory planning. The third step is to call the extraordinary ward assembly for launching O&OD participatory planning in the ward. Facilitators will collect and check the forms of heads of household if filled in properly, the ward assembly meeting should confirm on the objectives of high priority for the ward, the meeting should select 6 – 10 ward resource persons who are familiar with the ward and its Community. This team together with the Ward Council will work in collaboration with facilitators in the process of preparing the Ward plan, the meeting should form focus groups on the basis of hamlet, gender and age group, representation, the meeting should set criteria for household wealth ranking, Ward sketch map should be drawn, household wealth ranking should be carried out, Ward Executive Officer (VEO) continue to collect secondary data.

The fourth step involves data collection, community leaders and selected participants are informed about this activity, the data are collected after data collection the fifth step to the seven day the activity of these days will be discussion on TDV 2025 objectives and preparing the draft for community plans, focus group discussion is used in this activity. The discussion focuses on the selected objectives which were approved by general ward assembly.

The eight step involves preparation of draft for community development, the draft is to be prepared by the ward officer, facilitators and other selected members from the ward, the draft shows the objectives for the ward (what the ward intends to achieve), resources to be used to achieve the objectives, the obstacles, the causes for the obstacles, measures to address the obstacles, steps of implementation of objectives, indicators for implementation, the costs to be covered by the community and the costs that cannot be covered by the community. The nine step is calling extraordinary ward council meeting which sit to set priorities and prepare a three-year draft for community. The ward assembly should receive and discuss objectives, opportunities, obstacles, causes and interventions as they came from the focus groups so as to prepare the Community Plan.

The ten step involves the extra ordinary ward council meetings for making the three year plan. After that the plan is taken to the Ward Development Committee (WDC) for technical advice. The eleven step involve convening extraordinary ward assembly to discuss and approve the community plans. After the plan approval the plan should be written in Manila paper and be posted on the notice board.

### **Factors for community participation in planning**

Community participation in planning scarcely takes place in a void. There are different factors which encourage and motivate community to take part in community planning (waweru, 2001). Gupter (2004) further stated that Social-economic factors play significant role in shaping both participation and participatory outcomes. Social exclusionary practices like gender inequality, religious factors etc. may undermine participation of certain groups particularly the women in decision-making (p. 366). The factors are such as age, population, culture, group level, financial status, education level, political difference, religious factors,

### **Financial status**

Goodman et al. (1998) stated that a community's financial status can establish if the community will participate in planning or not. Maraga et al. (2010) argued that there is a relationship between community participation in planning and community financial status. Further, Bowen (2007) indicates that material incentives prompt communities to participate in the community projects and programmes planning. Further, group or financial situation can promote participation in planning (Chitere and Mutiso, 1991; Okinda, 2009). There are also other forms of non-financial benefits account for community participation in planning (Samah & Aref, 2009).

### **Culture**

Botes and Rensburg (2000) argued that one of the vital factor influencing community participation is community culture. Community may participate based on existence of traditional forms of community cooperation, makes individuals to collectively give priority to the objectives of the group and culture they belong to which often results in actions of individuals leading to service to the community or society (Bamberger, 1988; Ardichvili, Maurer, Li, Wentling, & Stuedemann, 2006).

**Education level**

Chowdhury (2004) conducted the study on community participation; the study was conducted in Zathila and Betaga wards in Gazipur, Bangladesh, it was found that peoples level of education influenced community participation in different ward projects and programmes. Another study which was conducted in India by Jakariya (2000) observed that community participation is highly influenced by education levels of individuals residing in a particular community.

**Age**

Different studies show the relationship between community participatory planning and age of community members. Maskey et al. (2003) conducted the study in Nepal about community participation in planning and different projects in relation to age of community members. Maskey observed that older people in the community participated more in different projects compared to younger people, this was because older people were retired hence they had ample time to participate in planning meetings. Another study conducted in Nigeria observed that farmers within 35-54 years of age participated more in Taungya forests system than other community members (Victor and Bakare, 2004).

**Political differences**

Political backgrounds of stakeholders have been influential factor in shaping the participation outcomes (Kwena, 2013). Powerful community members, who are politically, dominant, for their own interests may thwart the participation of their counterparts. Samad (2002) Interests of the political elites and administrators, who run the regime, penetrate the arena and shape the outcomes. From time immemorial a politico-cultural factor, that is patron-client relationship has engrained in the local community.

**Methodology**

Case study design is one of the research method used in social science disciplines, it is used in discipline such as Psychology, Sociology and political sciences (Yin, 2009). Case study design is also used for doing research in different professional fields such as social work, business and marketing, public administration, public health and education (Yin, 2006; Yin & Davis, 2006). Considering Challenges of Community Participation using O & OD planning and implementation approach in education sector case study design was used in this study.

The use of case study design in this research facilitated in-depth study of participatory Challenges of Community Participation using O & OD planning and implementation approach in education sector. The in-depth study using case study involved assessing challenges of EDP in the area under study.

The researcher used case study due to focus of one contemporary phenomenon challenges of Community Participation using O & OD planning and implementation approach in education was studied. This was used due to the idea of Yin, according to Yin it was stated that case study is an appropriate strategy when the focus is on the contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, and when the boundaries between the phenomenon and the context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2003). Case study also allowed the researcher to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events. The study provided easy access of data collection at a single point in time, it is easier, reliable and worthwhile economically where resource constraints such as time, labour and funds dictated the operation and outcomes. Case study further helped the researcher to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events. The study further provided easy access of data collection at a single point in time, it was easier, reliable and worthwhile economically where resource constraints such as time, labour and funds dictated the operation and outcomes.

The current study was conducted in Mvomero district at Mzumbe and Mlali wards. The researcher purposely selected Mvomero district because it was among of the district involved in education development planning using O&OD planning approach. Mzumbe and Mlali wards were selected basing on the fact that they are among of the wards involved in planning process using O&OD planning process, the pilot study also shown that they are among of the wards with low implementation of education development plans. Therefore the areas could help the researcher to get relevant answers for the challenges of community Participation in using O & OD planning and implementation approach in education sector. In the council level the researcher sampled education officers (both primary and secondary education officers) and District Planning Officer (DIPLO). In the ward level, the study population in this level composed of Ward Executive Officer (WEO), Ward Education Officer and ward councillor. In the village level the study population was VEO, Ward chairperson, Vitongoji chairperson, members of ward councils, head teachers and head master from primary and secondary schools in the wards.

The sub-sampling frames which were used in this study were obtained from the council, ward and village. First sub-sampling frame consisted of District council officials, the

second sub-sampling frame consisted of ward officials, the third sub-sampling frame consisted of village council members, the fourth sub-sampling frame consisted of village leaders VEO, Ward chairperson and Vitongoji chairperson.

The researcher used purposive sampling to select key informants who belonged in all categories, Council, Ward and village level. Purposive sampling method was used in selecting respondents were selected by virtue of their position and believed to be potential and resourceful, to provide relevant information for the study. Respondents were selected basing on their position. The sample size consisted of participants who provided detailed and comprehensive information till we meet saturation point. These participants were distributed as follows; education officers (both primary and secondary education officers), District Planning Officer (DIPLO), Ward Executive Officer (WEO), Ward Education Officer, ward councillor, VEO, Ward chairperson, Vitongoji chairperson, members of ward councils, head teachers and head master from primary and secondary schools in the wards. The researcher used face to face interview to collect information from all key informants who belonged in all categories, Council, Ward and Ward level. Key informants provided detailed and comprehensive information till we meet saturation point. This group gave insights into the, challenges using O&OD, the key informant's interview helped the researcher to get opinion about respondents and how respondents were involved in the process.

In this study, the researcher used secondary data from various sources such as books, different documents from PO-RALG such as O&OD documents, directives and journals, ward maps, ward plans, council profile, council plan document and ward plan document from selected ward and ward. A secondary source was used so as to provide more sufficient and realistic information and justification to the present study. The study analysed the contents of an interview, that is, data collected in order to identify the main themes that emerge from the responses given by the respondents. Content analysis involves coding and classifying data, also referred to as categorizing and indexing and the aim of content analysis is to make sense of the data collected and to highlight the important messages, features or findings. Content analysis was organised through the following steps; Identifying the main themes; Assigning codes to main themes; Classifying the responses under the main themes; as well as Integrating themes and responses into the text of the report.

## **Presentation and Discussion of the Study's Findings**

### **Community challenges in applying O & OD approach in EDP**

The interview responses indicated the major challenges in the use of O&OD in Mzumbe and Mlali wards. The indicated challenges were low knowledge, Lack of technical and physical capacity, low community contributions, irregular fund disbursement, geographical locations, and local traditional culture and management issues which affect the service delivery by the facilitators. These inhibit them from catalyzing the public to appreciate and present inputs in the discussion in participatory planning.

#### **Lack of technical and physical capacity**

Lack of technical and physical capacity confronts community members from having substantial information on the importance of participatory planning. Ward leaders, ward leaders and school managements lacks knowledge know how' in collecting data, and in compiling whatever data is available for the purposes of planning. This makes them plans that do not meet prescribes standards. Due to this they also fail to involve community members in the EDP. Ward chairperson from Mzumbe and Mlali ward and ward chairperson from Mzumbe and Mlali ward had similar views that they are not aware on how to integrate different community groups into EDP hence they approved whatever they received from school committees. According to the interview with ward chairperson from Mzumbe and Mlali ward it was stated that:

Oooh I have failed, what can I do to improve participatory planning?, we always approve each and everything taken to us from school committees, it is difficult to involve community members,...it is a difficult task. I have decided to resign from my post let other people try... (Ward chairperson, Mzumbe and Mlali ward)

The ward chairperson stated that: "My work is to influence people approve plans in the ward meeting that is involvement, as the plans are prepared by school committees". Basing on the two views, it shows ward chairpersons from the two wards lacks technical and physical capacity. In involving the community and scrutinizing the plans made by school committees. This inhibits participatory planning in the wards.

#### **Lack of Knowledge**

According to the village chairpersons and Ward executive officers the major challenge impeding participatory planning through O&OD is low knowledge among community

members. The findings showed that ward leaders, village leaders and community members have low knowledge of O&OD. Low knowledge could have been caused by low community sensitization and low education level. Village Executive Officers from Changarawe and Vikenge had similar views in this as they stated that:

The ward members always think that all issues in EDP are to be done by the government under free education policy, even when we invite them in the meeting involving them in different EPD others regret saying that, it's the responsibility of the government to plan for education development under free education policy (Ward chairperson, Mzumbe and Mlali ward).

### **Irregular fund disbursement**

The findings found that low fund disbursement from Mvomero district council causes low education plans implementations. Village executive officers and head teachers from primary head masters from primary and secondary school agreed in this view. They all agreed that the fund disbursement from Mvomero district come late and sometime the fund does not come. In the interview sessions with Village Executive Officer from Vikenge it was noted that:

As you know that our work is to plans for education plans, but we always receive fund from Mvomero district and central government, the disbursement of fund is not regular, sometimes we receive lately this causes failure to implement some plans (village executive officer, Changarawe).

### **Unsupportive culture**

The study area is a matrilineal culture in theory but in practice male dominated all EPD planning. In addition the presence of traditional dances (Kigodoro) is a great challenge in EDP since most of the girls reaching menarche period undergo traditional practice known as 'kunemwa'. This practice is conducted under Luguru tribe to allow girls move from one stage to another (girls become women), after which the girls are able to be married. Most of the communities' members undergo this practice, which consequently cause attention to education sector since after the practice girls become ready to be married.

In the interview with kitongoji chairperson from Sangasanga and Village chairperson chairperson from Changarawe and Sangasanga, it was cited that:

...traditional dances 'Kigodoro' have dominated in this ward, most of the community members involve their girls in traditional practice known as 'kunemwa', they use more resources in these traditional culture, they participate more in these culture than participating in education matters (Kitongoji chairperson, Sangasanga)

Regarding the statement above traditional culture is another challenge impeding participation in EDP. This was also confirmed in the interview with the second master from Mongola and Kipera secondary schools who stated that “Other parents influence their children’s practice in traditional dances and get married”. This indicates that cultural challenges EDP practices offered through O&OD.

### **Political opposition**

Mzumbe and Mlali ward manifests political opposition from two parties, namely, the ruling party Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) and the opposition party Chama cha Demokrasia na Maendeleo (CHADEMA). Members from these parties oppose the ideas, plans and views of another party, which makes it a challenge in EDP. In this stance, when the plans are tabled before the ward assembly member, community members end up criticizing the plans. In the interview the ward chairperson provided the following account: There is great opposition in this ward in development issues, it is difficult to implement plans, since once you call a ward assembly you must prepare to answer different ideas from community members who dominate the meeting,

### **Low contribution from community members**

Community contribution in EDP in the ward was another challenge for EPD in Mzumbe and Mlali ward. According the ward chairperson it was reiterated that:“...there is low community participation in development projects, including education development projects, people are not willing to contribute for ward development” (Ward chairperson, Mzumbe and Mlali ward. This implies that, community members contribute less in development projects due to political opposition.

### **Low community attendance in meetings**

The interview revealed that, low number of community members attend the ward and vitongoji meetings. This causes the community plans to be decided upon by few community members. When other community members are informed, they end up resisting the plans claiming that they were not involved: In the interview with village chairperson from Vikenge it was stated that:

There is low community attendance in the meetings, last time called meetings twice but few members attended, in the third time members were few but I decided to continue with the meeting, since some of the issues were to be one. (Village chairperson, Vikenge village)

However in the interview with one of the ward council members it was noted that “community members see no need for attending the ward meetings, they always say that nothing new is presented in the meetings rather than being told to contribute fund for education development projects”. This reason together with political opposition could be among of the factors leading to low community attendance in the meetings.

As it is provided in chapter four, various challenges were found in both Mzumbe and Mlali ward. The major challenge for all wards were low awareness of community members in EDP, lack of technical and physical capacity, management issues, low community attendance in the village meetings, geographical factor and insufficient fund from council headquarters

It was found that both community members and community leaders has low awareness in education and participation matters. The findings concurs to the study by Kilewo (2015) who found that low awareness among community members was the factor for low participation in Comprehensive Council Plans. In Changarawe and Vikenge the community, members believed under frees education policy the government is to provide each and everything in schools. Community members see no need of being involved in EDP as they believe that the government should be responsible to implement each and everything. Members also regret of educating girls as they believe that girls are to be married.

However, low knowledge in Mzumbe is based on the need to attend the meeting, most of the members attend village meeting when there are important agenda touching their lives for example water. This suggests that, there no important agenda like water community members do not attend. Additionally like in Mzumbe ward, Mlali ward the community members also practice traditional rituals known as “Kunemwa” where the girl is involved in this practice as a preparation for marriage. Low knowledge has caused poor members' attendances in the village meeting and thus the low knowledge which consequently leads poor community contribution in EDP. These findings support the observation by Mwanga (2015) in the study in Mtwara region, which found that a low community participation in planning process, caused by low community awareness in the matters at hand. In the current study, low awareness has led to low community involvement in EDP for the Kiroka and Kiziwa villages.

Another challenges found is bad traditional practices: Both villages Kiroka and Kiziwa, practice traditional culture, which involve girls practicing of traditional dances known as “Kigodoro” under which girls are assumed to move from one stage (girls) to another stage (women). Community members use more resources and participate fully in these practices which consequently hinder them to participate in EPD as they wish their girls to be married rather than continuing with school. The findings concurs to the study by Ardichvili, Maurer, Wentling & Stuedemann (2006) who posited that the community may participate based on existence of traditional forms of community cooperation, makes individuals to collectively give priority to the objectives of the group and culture they belong to which often results in actions of individuals leading to service to the community or society. As the villages are challenged by cultural practices more knowledge is required in order to create awareness among community members on the importance of education.

Changarawe village is challenged by political opposition; the village is dominated by two political parties, due the domination of the parties community members oppose different plan basing on their political parties. When the plan is made by a certain political party, the opposing party ends up criticizing the plans, which hinders community contribution and attendance in community meetings. It was further found that, community members attended more meetings when hear that there is embezzlement and the community leader is to be answerable. As the result of the political opposition the village leader has resigned from the power. The political challenge has caused low projects implementation hence low community development. This study corresponds to the study by Muro & Namusonge (2015) the study was conducted in Meru Arusha. The study was about governance factors affecting community participation in development projects. The study found political differences as one of the factors that affect community participation in development projects.

Participation through O&OD method is also challenged by structural issues and management issues. The structural issues include lack of technical and physical capacity which constrains many people from substantial information on the importance of participatory planning, their actual role, and how/why they should get involved in the decision-making in their localities. The lack of technical capacity among the village and ward leaders inhibits them from making plans that meets the prescribed standards, due to inadequate skills or ‘know how’ in collecting data, and in compiling whatever data is available for the purposes of planning. Current findings are similar to the findings by

Mefunya (2011) whose study was about the opportunities and obstacles to development planning method used in Tanzania's decentralized local governments drawing cases of Rulenge and Murusagamba Wards in Ngara District of Kagera Region. The study found that, structural and management factors inhibit the use of O&OD in development planning. The structural issues mentioned include lack of technical capacity among ward facilitators and community members. Community members and ward facilitators lacked knowledge about O&OD.

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