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Quality Enhancement in Teacher Education

Tanzanian Teacher Educators' Conceptions and Experiences



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Abstract

The overall aim of this study was *to investigate and examine teacher educators' conceptions and experiences of quality of teacher education*. The research interest therefore was two-fold: a) to deepen understanding of the concept quality and b) scrutinize experiences of teacher educators of quality enhancement. To achieve this ambition the study was conducted in the context of a newly established university college-based teacher education in Tanzania.

Two research questions guided the study. The first focused on investigating how teacher educators conceived quality in the domain of teacher education and the second intended to explore teacher educators' experiences of quality enhancement.

The theoretical framework of the study centered on the concepts of teacher education, quality, and criteria for quality enhancement. Phenomenographic and phenomenological approaches under the main umbrella of qualitative research design were selected. Twenty five teacher educators participated in the study. Interviews were used for the collection of the data.

The results of the first research question, in brief, indicate that teacher educators' conceptions of quality are expressed in two main categories, namely, *outstanding academic scholarship and adequate professional scholarship*. Quality as outstanding academic scholarship was illustrated by two sub-categories: *excellence and positive transformation*. While the former was composed of two aspects, the latter was demonstrated by three aspects. Quality as adequate professional scholarship was described in three sub-categories. The first was *improved teaching competency*, consisting of two aspects. The second was *conscious research orientation*, which is displayed by three aspects, and the last was *enhancing the ability to reflect*, represented by two aspects.

The results of the second research question, which focused on exploring teacher educators' experience of quality enhancement, were classified into two main categories of description: *insufficient programs of teacher education and unsatisfactory professional development of teacher educators*. From the two categories, the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges related to programs of educating teachers, particularly curriculum development and implementation, and the professional development of educators, were exposed.

Since the ambition of conducting the study was to deepen the understanding by producing insight that would act as a platform for appraising and enhancing the quality of teacher education, the results hopefully can be used for the development of the quality of teacher education in Tanzania.

Key words: teacher education, quality, teacher educator, professional development, phenomenography, phenomenology

Abstrakt

Det övergripande syftet med denna studie var att undersöka och granska lärarutbildares uppfattningar och upplevelser av kvaliteten på lärarutbildningen. Forskningsintresset var inriktat på följande två frågor: a) att fördjupa förståelsen av begreppet kvalitet och b) att granska lärarutbildares erfarenheter av kvalitetsutveckling. Med utgångspunkt i denna ambition genomfördes studien inom ramen för en nyetablerad högskolebaserad lärarutbildning i Tanzania.

Två forskningsfrågor strukturerar studien. Den första inriktades på att undersöka hur lärarutbildare uppfattat begreppet kvalitet inom lärarutbildningen och den andra på lärarutbildares erfarenheter av kvalitetsutveckling.

Den teoretiska bakgrunden för studien inriktades på begreppen lärarutbildning, kvalitet och kvalitetsutveckling. En blandning av en fenomenografisk och fenomenologisk ansats valdes inom ramen för en kvalitativ forskningsdesign. Tjugofem lärarutbildare deltog i studien och intervjuer användes för insamling av data.

I korthet visar resultaten av den första forskningsfrågan att lärarutbildares föreställningar om kvalitet uttrycks i två huvudkategorier, nämligen *utmärkt akademiskt kunnande* och *adekvat professionellt kunnande*. Kvalitet som utmärkt akademiskt kunnande illustrerades av två underkategorier: *toppkompetens* och *positiv omvandling*. Medan den tidigare bestod av två aspekter omfattade den senare tre aspekter. Kvalitet som *adekvat professionellt kunnande* beskrevs i tre underkategorier. Den första var *förbättrad undervisningskompetens*, som består av två aspekter. Den andra handlade om *medveten forskningsinriktning*, vilken beskrevs i tre aspekter, och den sista var att *öka förmågan att reflektera*, representerad av två aspekter.

Resultatet av den andra frågeställningen, som fokuserade på att utforska lärarutbildares erfarenhet av kvalitetsutveckling, indelades i två beskrivningskategorier: *ofullständiga program för lärarutbildning* och *bristfällig kompetensutveckling för lärarutbildare*. Ur de två kategorierna exponerades styrkor, svagheter, möjligheter och utmaningar för lärarutbildningsprogram, särskilt för utvecklingen och implementeringen av läroplaner samt för kompetensutvecklingen av lärare.

Eftersom ambitionen för att utföra studien var att fördjupa förståelsen av kvalitet inom lärarutbildningen, är förhoppningen att resultaten kan användas för att utveckla kvaliteten på lärarutbildningen i Tanzania.

Nyckelord: lärarutbildning, kvalitet, lärarutbildare, professionell utveckling, fenomenografi, fenomenologi

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Vasa, December 16, 2013

Colonel Didas Chambulila

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List of abbreviations

ACSEE	Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examination
CBTE	Competency-Based Teacher Education
COSTECH	Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology
CSEE	Certificate of Secondary Education Examination
DUCE	Dar-es-Salaam University College of Education
EFA	Education For All
FOE	Faculty of Education
ICT	Information Communication Technology
MoEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MoEVT	Ministry of Education and Vocation Training
MSTHE	Ministry of Science Technology and Higher Education
MUCE	Mkwawa University College of Education
NECTA	National Examination Council of Tanzania
PEDEP	Primary Education Development Plan
SEDEP	Secondary Education Development Plan
TDMS	Teacher Education Development and Management Strategy
TEPT	Teacher Education Project in Tanzania
TCU	Tanzania Commission of Universities
TIE	Tanzania Institute of Education
UDSM	University of Dar-es-Salaam
UPE	Universal Primary Education

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

Quality in teacher education is the main theme of this study. I investigate and discuss teacher educators' conceptions of the quality of teacher education and examine their experiences of quality enhancement. A new university college-based teacher education, which is a system of educating teachers in Tanzania established in 2005 as a result of transformation, is the setting of this study (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005). Transformation here means the conversion of an educational institution, primarily a teachers' college, which previously used to offer non-degree programs, to a university college of education with a mandate to offer teacher education programs up to degree level under the guardianship of the mother university (MoEC, MSTHE & UDSM, 2004; Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005).

Quality enhancement has been considered one of the central drives for the establishment of the new university college-based teacher education system. Another drive is connected to the increase in access of enrollment in teacher education to meet the high demand of teachers in secondary schools (MoEC, 2008; Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005). The high demand for teachers in secondary schools has been caused by the rapid increase of the transition rate from primary education to secondary education, which rose tremendously from 21.7 percent in 2002 to 67.5 in 2006 (MoEVT, 2011). In Tanzania, research (Jidamva, 2012; Mosha, 1995; Rajabu, 2000) shows that rapid enrollment expansion in the school system often has been detrimental to the quality of teachers and hence teacher education.

Why is the quality of teacher education a focal point of the current study? Worldwide (Hallinan & Khmelkov, 2001; Townsend & Bates, 2007; Goodwin & Oyler, 2008; Hjardemaal, 2011), in Africa (Johnson, & Beinart, 2008; Verspoor, 2008; Palme, 2001) and in Tanzania in particular (Ranjani, Scholl & Zombwe, 2007; Haki Elimu, 2008) the quality of teacher education has become a problem of major concern because of its falling standard in different areas and aspects. As a result, it has become one of the most important agendas in many academic, political and other social forums (Mhando, 2012).

It should, be noted, however, that in spite of the fact that almost every part of the world faces certain problems in teacher education (Hallinan & Khmelkov, 2001, Townsend & Bates, 2007); the nature, type and magnitude of these problems vary. Scholars identify common problems that face teacher education across the world as being low quality, shortage of teachers, inadequate training programs, low retention rate of professionals, under-qualification of teacher educators, and students who join the profession, low status of the profession, lack of

professional development courses, inadequate funding, political interference, difficult working environment, unmotivated learners, and inadequate teaching and learning facilities (Perraton, Creed and Robinson, 2002; Darling-Hammond et al 2005; Davidson, 2007; Temu, 2007; Mhando, 2012). Hence, criticisms directed at teacher education vary from one place to another.

In Tanzania for instance, teacher education is widely accused for low learning, and not performing appropriately in enhancing quality teaching (Mhando, 2012; Mosha, 2012). It seems plausible to use student learning outcomes as a measure of 'good teaching' and a basis for measuring teacher quality, as good teaching and learning outcomes certainly are related (Ingvarson & Rowe, 2008). Research (Mosha, 2004, Temu, 2007; Haki Elimu, 2005; Rajani & Sumra, 2003; Kuleana, 2001; MoEC, 2003; Davidson, 2005; Komba, 2010) concludes that there is widespread concern about the low quality of teacher education as teachers lack the necessary competencies needed for effective performance of their work.

One of the reasons that is connected to the low quality of teacher education is inadequate programs that prepare and develop teachers (Mmari, 2000; Temu, 2007; Kitta & Tilya, 2010). Teachers are ill prepared and ill developed (Mmari, 2001; Galabawa, 2000). Consequently, teaching and learning in the school system is claimed to be of low quality and dominated by rote learning strategies (Meena, 2009; Tilya & Mafumiko, 2010). The other related reason, which is also connected to the criticism of low quality of teacher education, is the professional status and development of teacher educators (Temu, 2007). With regard to this reason, teacher education is charged with having underqualified personnel (Temu, 2007; Binde, 2010) and ineffective professional development strategies in terms of its educators (Meena, 2009; Galabawa, 2000). Teacher educators in this context refers to academics who are teachers by profession and educate teachers. The concept will be further dealt later (3.3).

From this point of view, the focus of the study on investigating quality of teacher education in Tanzania is directed to two areas of criticism: inadequacy of the programs that prepare and develop teachers, and ineffective professional development of teacher educators. I will argue for this choice in Section 1.2

In response to the considered low quality of teacher education in Tanzania, several measures to address the plight have been instituted over time (see for instance, Mtana, Mhando & Hojlund, 2000; Osaki, 2007). In particular, in 2004 the Government decided to transform three institutions, basically former teachers' colleges, into university colleges of education as a strategy to address low quality among other problems in teacher education (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005). Transformation was sought as a viable strategy towards enhancing the quality of teacher education along other ambitions. Accordingly, Mkwawa High School, Dar es Salaam Teachers' College and Mtwara Teachers'

College¹ were earmarked for transformation (MoEC, MSTHE & UDSM, 2004; Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005; MoEC, 2007).

Dar-es-Salaam University College of Education (DUCE) and Mkwawa University College of Education (MUCE) are the targets of this study. DUCE and MUCE are the constituent colleges of education of UDSM (University of Dar es Salaam) which were established in 2005 and 2006 respectively, as a result of transformation (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005) to offer what here is termed as a new university-based teacher education. The two institutions are state owned and operate under the established hierarchy of The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training. In spite of significant changes in funding brought about by the influence of liberalization, market policy (see also Clark, 1993) and cost sharing, government control remains strong. As such, the government ambition is to maintain high academic standards and produce a teaching force that meets the needs of the current education system.

While interest in this study focuses on quality, as highlighted earlier, in fact the statement of the policy document which establishes transformation goes beyond quality. It is stated that the intention of transformation is to strengthen the qualification and development of teachers by increasing access and improving quality (MoEC, MSTHE & UDSM, 2004; Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005). Access in this context means increase in the quantity of enrollments in teacher education (Galabawa, 2000). The difference is that, while I consider transformation as a strategy towards enhancing quality, the policy document regards it as a strategy for enhancing both quality and quantity. However, as Davidson (2004) argues, on the one hand, quality and quantity are linked, but on the other hand, it is also cautioned that the two are in one way or another contradictory in nature and rarely thrive together. One flourishes at the expense of the other (Suzuki, 2002; Haddad, 1985).

The controversy between quality and quantity is further illustrated by Ishumi (1986), who points out that in educational innovation policies, when quality and quantity are addressed simultaneously, the emphasis tends to favor the component of quantity rather than that of quality. What is the relevance of this observation to the transformation and the general context of the current study? As noted earlier, in Tanzania, experience shows that educational innovations that address expansion of enrollment tend to weaken quality at the expense of quantity (Rajabu, 2000; Babyegeya, 2006). For example, it is stated that because of ongoing education reforms in the school system, where large expansion of enrollment is aimed at (Jidamva, 2012), the first priority of teacher education is

¹ For the purposes of this study, Mtwara Teachers' College is excluded. The main reason for its exclusion is that the government's ambition to transform the college into a university college of education did not go forward as was planned. The causes for delay or failure are not yet known. It is also not my intention to examine those causes in detail.

to increase access to the programs that qualify and develop teachers (Kapinga, 2012). Lomas raises in this context a critical question of whether the development of mass higher education means the end of quality (see also Lomas, 2002). There is an important observation here which shows the need to be careful when dealing with a huge expansion of enrollment in education as it may lead to lower quality if it does not match the available resources.

As such, quality has been singled-out as a major concern in teacher education (Mhando, 2012.); in contrast transformation identifies both quality and quantity as targets to be achieved (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005). This context, in which quality is placed parallel to quantity, is an inspiration for further exploration of this thesis. In fact, this is the reason for focusing specifically on quality rather than on access.

However, it should be noted that giving priority to quality does not mean that the component of quantity is ignored. Wedgwood (2007) argues that quantity provides momentum for quality to improve; and the two are internally linked to each other (Davidson, 2004). This means that the improvement of the quality of teacher education as a whole inevitably depends on the improvement of quantity, too (Mosha, 2004). In this sense, it is important to ensure that the study also does not neglect quantity. The focus on quality is deliberate in order to uncover components which might be overlooked and undermined when there is a huge expansion of education provision (Davidson, 2004; Jidamva, 2012) as in the situation now in Tanzania. As stated earlier, the transformation context addresses both quality and quantity.

The context of transformation

How does the theme of quality relate to the transformation of teacher education? The preceding background discussion has exposed, among other details, two facts which are of essential important in relation to this question. The first one is related to the main theme of the study, i.e. quality in teacher education. The second fact relates to the connection of the main theme of the study and the transformation of teacher education. The establishment of the bond between quality and transformation has been significant for the development of the research problem.

Quality as a concept can neither exist nor be studied independently; it has to be connected to a certain phenomenon (Sheridan, 2009; Mosha, 2000). In the current investigation it is internally linked to the transformation of the former Mkwawa High School and Dar es Salaam Teachers College into constituent colleges of education of the University of Dar es Salaam. Transformation has imposed a great influence on the whole design of the study about how quality is perceived and practiced in teacher education. It is a framework in which the research is conducted. For this reason I find it necessary to discuss the transformation context.

Why did I decide to choose transformation as the context for carrying out the study on quality in teacher education? The reasons for my choice are based on three arguments. One, the whole development of transformation was mainly a response to the low quality of teacher education in Tanzania. Hence, transformation was adopted as a strategy for enhancing the preparation and development of teachers (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005).

Two, the transformation of the two institutions under investigation denotes one of the current developments in teacher education in Tanzania. As a recent development, I considered that it would act as a springboard for the two established university colleges to optimize utilization of the plentiful opportunities and resources attracted by transformation to create a conducive environment for quality enhancement in teacher education. In addition, as a current innovation, I considered that perhaps it will adopt current global perspectives and practices inherent in quality development in teacher education. In turn, this could enrich and therefore increase the quality of data about conceptions of quality and experiences of quality enhancement expected to be provided by teacher educators.

Three, this reason also relates to the second one. As opposed to other universities in Tanzania that offer teacher education through schools, faculties and departments of education (see Ishumi, 2010; Kapinga, 2012) among other courses, the two transformed university colleges of education are established specifically to offer only teacher education. All students who join these university colleges study teacher education from the beginning of their course to the end, and their studies in the respective subject matter and education are part of their degree program. This type of approach to teacher education is what is referred to as a concurrent and integrated system of teacher education (see Hansén, & Forsman, 2009; Niemi 2008; Ash & Burgess, 2008; De Coster, Forsthuber, & Steinberg, 2006). The concurrent and integrated mode of teacher education is assumed to be a suitable approach because students commit themselves to the education programs early when they start their undergraduate study (Rots, Aelterman, Vlerick, & Vermeulen, 2007; Lee, 1996). It is further argued by Lee (1996) that teacher educators also gain enough time for preparing and interacting with students, and hence accumulate enough experience of the profession. This teacher educators' professional experience is an essential target of this study.

The notion quality has already been used frequently; however, its operational meaning is not yet stated. Quality as a notion carries several conceptions and its meanings vary from one setting to another (Goodwin & Oyler, 2008; Botas, 2008; Sheridan, 2009). As a result, the notion is perceived differently, and it is in many cases not easily understood in a specific context. Hence, it is important to operationalize the notion. In this context, quality refers to the enhanced value of a phenomenon, specifically teacher education. Programs and educators in teacher education are the focal points and hence benchmarks for quality

standards examined in the study. The complexity of the notion quality will be further discussed in Chapter 3.

1.2 Motives for the study

In the previous section I have presented the general background of the study. The discussion has been focused on establishing the problem and exposing the transformation context in which the investigation is conducted. In particular, the discussion has been tailored to state the reasons for the choice of context of the study. In this section, therefore, I explicitly outline the motives that guided my choice of research topic.

My selection of research topic can be condensed into three areas of motives. The first is rooted in the criticism that is raised and directed towards *low quality of teacher education* in Tanzania. Studies on quality of education in the school system and teacher education (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005; Mmari, 2000 & 2001; Galabawa, 2001; Rajabu, 2001; Temu, 2007) reveal weaknesses in the teacher education programs. Both initial and in-service teacher education programs are claimed to be superficial, fragmented and therefore inadequate tools to achieve the anticipated quality of the teaching force (Temu, 2007; Wedgwood, 2007).

In addition, the quality of teacher educators in the Tanzanian teacher education system has also been subject to criticism. Teacher educators are the main players in the implementation of the programs that prepare and develop teachers who comprise the teaching force in the school system. Research (Temu, 2007; Binde, 2010; Mmari, 2001; Meena, 2009) questions the academic status and professional practices related to the development of these professionals. Some teacher educators lack the necessary qualifications (Binde, 2010; Temu, 2007), while inadequate professional development courses are a common deficiency (Galabawa, 2001; Mosha, 2004; Meena, 2009).

As a consequence of the prevalence of these identified shortcomings, i.e. inadequate programs of teacher education and insufficient professional merits of teacher educators, graduates from teacher education programs demonstrate a low mastery of essential competencies needed to ensure quality teaching in schools (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005; Mmari, 2001; Kita & Tilya, 2010). Therefore, the claim that the quality of education in the school system is poor because of the low quality of teacher education cannot be disputed (Temu, 2007; Tilya & Mafumiko, 2010). Hence, one of the ambitions is to analyse the problem of low quality of teacher education, and if possible produce suggestions for practical strategies to addressing this problem.

The second motive is connected to the assertion that quality of teacher education in Tanzania is an area which is under-researched. Hence, there *is a need for research* that focuses on quality in the field of teacher education. In Tanzania

only a few studies that address the quality of teacher education are available (Temu, 2007; Mosha, 2000; Galabawa, 2001; Babyegeya, 2006). Unfortunately, even those few available, with the exception of Mosha (2004), lack focus on teacher education. They were conducted to examine the quality of either primary or secondary education, or both (Temu, 2007; Mosha, 2000; Galabawa, 2001). The issue of quality in teacher education has just been integrated into these studies, mostly as a result of the empirical findings. As a result, neither theoretical frameworks nor empirical findings about quality in these studies are critically and analytically discussed to reflect its importance and complexity in teacher education.

In particular, programs of teacher education and the professionalism of teacher educators are not examined in the aforementioned studies. Hence, much is unknown about the links between teacher education programs and the quality of teachers. A similar gap exists in the professionalism of teacher educators. Smith (2003) and Snoek, Swennen and Van der Klink (2009), writing from the European viewpoint, observe that research on teacher educators is underrepresented as compared to research on teachers in the school system. This claim is also evident in the Tanzanian context, where several studies on the professional development of teachers can be found (e.g. Komba, 2007; Anangisy, 2006, 2010; Komba & Nkumbi, 2008), but few on the professional development of teacher educators (Mtana, Mhando & Hojlund, 2000). Hence, the decision to conduct this research, which investigates the quality of teacher education and in particular focuses on programs of teacher education and professional development of teacher educators, is expected to bridge the gap in knowledge and research in this area.

The third motive for selecting this topic has developed from *my own interest and experience in teacher education*. I have grown and developed in the teaching profession as a teacher educator in a teacher's college. As a teacher educator I have been involved in several programs and projects that have been addressing the issue of quality. Some of these programs and projects have been conducted by external agencies. The programs have been beneficial not only to the field of teacher education at large, but also to my personal growth. In particular, they have been emphasizing research-based knowledge. Teacher education programs that advocate the production of knowledge based on research findings is believed to be an appropriate approach to developing quality teacher education.

Åbo Akademi University, Finland initiated the Teacher Education Project in Tanzania (TEPT). The main objective of the project was to improve the quality of teacher educators in teachers' colleges through upgrading their academic qualifications (Malmberg & Hansen 2006; Meena, 2009). I did my Masters in Education through this project. In addition, this research, which is part of the requirement for the award of PhD, is an extension of the same project (see also Mhando, 2012). I find it meaningful and inspiring to study a phenomenon which extends the effort of the project in which I was professionally developed. As a

teacher educator, my ambition is that the study will contribute to the generation of new knowledge, facilitating general development of teacher education in Tanzania and maybe even wider.

1.3 General aim and relevance of the study

Against the background and motives discussed, the general aim of the study is to examine teacher educators' conceptions of quality and experiences of quality enhancement of teacher education in Tanzania. The new university-based teacher education system, together with general teacher education system at large, provides the context of the investigation. The results are accordingly expected to provide a platform for measures of addressing the considered problem: the quality of teacher education in the country.

The rationale for this study is based on two main assumptions. The first assumption strives to *have practical relevance* in the educational system in general and teacher education in particular. The findings may be expected to contribute to inform policy makers, teacher educators and other actors in the field of teacher education on how to design and implement quality teacher education programs. It is emphasized by researchers (Osaki, 2007; Mosha, 2004; Hallinan & Khmelkov, 2001; Kita & Tilya, 2010) that designing relevant and realistic teacher education programs is a prerequisite for provision of quality education in the field of teacher education and consequently in the school system.

A further practical relevance is that the results of the study are anticipated to shed light on possible action strategies that can be established to address the current problem of low quality in teacher education (Kita & Tilya, 2010). Using practitioners' lived experiences to study a phenomenon is fundamental for understanding the phenomenon itself (Wilson & Washington, 2007; Husserl 1970). Hence, studying quality of teacher education from teacher educators with lived experience in the field will facilitate understanding of the problems that prevail and congruently, strategies for improvement may be identified. These strategies are expected to be tools for improving the quality of teacher education, the school system (Lockheed & Levin, 1993; Mwai, 2004; Mosha, 2000; Galabawa, 2001) and, lastly, the quality of people's lives (Nyerere, 1967; Munishi, 2000; Mosha & Dachi, 2004).

The second assumption for the rationale of carrying out this inquiry is based on the belief that the study has *theoretical relevance* in the field of teacher education and in the scientific community in general. It is anticipated that the research will contribute to the pool of existing scientific knowledge. The concern for quality in education is critical not only in Tanzania (Mosha, 2004) and Africa (Verspoor, 2008), but also outside (Hjardemaal, 2011). This implies that, currently, the knowledge in this area is of need.

My epistemological point of departure is *subjectivist*. The two notions epistemological and subjectivist point of departure are in this respect essential. By *epistemology* I refer to the science of the nature of knowledge and understanding, and *subjectivist* is a philosophy which is based on the belief that reality is what a person interprets it to be (Thungu, Wandera, Gachie & Alumande, 2010; Aspfors, 2012). In this perspective, i.e. the subjectivist epistemological point of view, a phenomenon is investigated under the *ontological stance* that knowledge is relative and a socially constructed reality (Lincoln & Guba, 1994; Jacobson, 1998). Here, *ontology* is used as a philosophical term which stands for the nature of reality. Broadly, the term may also mean the nature of a human being (see also Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Aspfors, 2012).

As I adopt subjectivist point of departure, my ambition is therefore to reconstruct the meaning that the teacher educators attach to quality and quality enhancement. Catching their multiple personal conceptions and perceptions is what I really aim to achieve at the end. However, it is cautioned that lived experience, which is the basis of educators' conceptions and perceptions, can never be provided adequately in its full potential, its richness and depth (see also Van Manen, 1990; Aspfors, 2012), and therefore the authenticity of the knowledge in qualitative research can be questioned as it is considered to run the risk of subjectivity.

My task as a researcher is to strive as much as possible to put forward adequate descriptions which closely reflect educators' perspectives. The dialogue between the researcher and the respondents will finally generate knowledge considered to be a reflection of teacher educators' conceptions and perceptions on and quality enhancement of teacher education. This matter will be further addressed later (4.4) in the discussion of validity and reliability.

1.4 The structure of the thesis

The thesis comprises six chapters. Chapter 1 is the introduction to the study. The chapter starts with a background description that establishes the problem of the study. The transformation of two former teachers' colleges into university colleges of education has been described in this chapter as a framework in which the study is conducted. The chapter further proceeds to state the motives and the general aim. Chapter 2 presents the context of teacher education in Tanzania. In this part the main salient features that characterize teacher education in the Tanzanian context are described. The focus of the descriptions is centered on presenting the system and programs of educating teachers in Tanzania.

Chapter 3 is the main theoretical framework which discusses the key concepts of the study: teacher education, quality and criteria for quality enhancement in teacher education. The chapter further outlines possible strengths and

weaknesses that might facilitate or hinder quality enhancement depending on how the considered quality criteria are taken into account. Chapter 4 concerns the methodology of the study. It portrays and discusses the research questions, and the methods and principles of data analysis. Validity, reliability (trustworthiness) and ethical issues as treated in the study are also scrutinized in this part.

Chapter 5 deals with analysis of the findings. The findings in terms of categories of descriptions are presented and discussed. Chapter 6 concludes with a discussion of the results and a summary of the study.

2 The context of the study

The context of study is briefly highlighted in the background (1.1). In this chapter the discussion focuses on the system of educating teachers. It further deepens the explanations of the context and presents the constituent elements of the system, set-up and programs of teacher education in Tanzania.

2.1 System of teacher education in Tanzania

In this part I will describe and analyze the system of teacher education in Tanzania in order to provide an insight into the system in which teachers are trained and qualify for.

In Tanzania, as in other countries, teacher education is a section within the main sector of education. Hence, its organizational structure falls within the major structure of the education system (MoEC, 1995). The structure of education system has three main levels: primary education at lower level, secondary education at the middle level, and tertiary level at the higher level (MoEC, 2011; Meena, 2009). Teacher education falls in the category of tertiary education (URT, 1995, 2011). The provision of quality education at all levels of education is highly emphasized in policy documents and other academic literature (URT, 1995, 1999, 2004; TIE, 2006; Babyegeya, 2006; Jidamva, 2012).

Primary and secondary education is basic for teacher education and also includes pre-primary education. Pre-primary education, which is not compulsory and not accessible to all children at the moment, lasts for two years. Primary education lasts for seven years, i.e. grade one up to grade seven. It is compulsory and accessible to all school-aged children (MoEC, 2003 Kumburu, 2011). Secondary education comprises two levels: lower and advanced (Jidamva, 2012). Lower secondary education takes four years and advanced level two years (Kumburu, 2011). The transition from lower secondary education to advanced secondary education is determined by performance in the final examination, which is conducted centrally by NECTA (Jidamva, 2012). Some of those who end up at the lower level of secondary education can join technical and other professional courses (MoEC, 1995; Qorro, 2007).

Both graduates of lower and advanced secondary education qualify for admission into teacher education programs. Graduates of lower secondary education are eligible for the certificate in teacher education and graduates of advanced secondary education can qualify to join either the diploma in teacher education programs (MoEVT, 2010) or bachelor in teacher education programs (TCU, 2007).

Tabel 1 Structure of the system of Education in Tanzania

Main category	Sub-category	Duration	Addition information
Primary	Pre-primary	2 years	Primary education is compulsory and the transition rate to secondary education by 2008 has reached almost 50%
	Primary	7 years	
Secondary	Ordinary level (form one to four)	4 years	Graduates of ordinary level or form four can join among other courses the certificate in primary education.
	Advanced level (form five to six)	2 years	
Tertiary	Among other courses Diploma in TE	2+ years	Graduates of advanced level of secondary education can join the diploma in TE or undergraduate studies. At the university, undergraduate studies integrate teacher education for those who opt for the teaching profession.
	University studies	3+ years	

(Source: Adapted from URT (1995).

The aims and objectives of teacher education are derived from the broader national objectives of education and training (Babygeya, 2006) which emphasize quality. The general objective of teacher education in Tanzania is to develop in student teachers, teachers and teacher educators, quality cognitive, affective and behavioral skills that will lead to the availability of a competent teaching force which can effectively manage and ensure quality teaching and learning processes in schools (URT, 1995; MoEC 2005). In particular, teacher education has to sharpen the knowledge of subject matter content, enhance pedagogical skills, and improve the mastery of the general educational

foundation knowledge of its current and future professionals (TIE, 2006; MoEVT, 2007).

The two-tier system of teacher education

The system of teacher education is established depending on the context in which it operates and functions. Usually is designed to meet the needs of a particular school system (Kansanen, 2006). Since the 1970s, Tanzania has developed a two-tier system of teacher education. On one side of the system there are teachers' colleges which prepare primary and lower secondary school teachers. On the other side of the system, there are universities and university colleges of education which train graduate teachers who qualify to teach at all levels of secondary schools and teacher colleges (Babygeya, 2006; URT, 1995). The latter also prepare highly educated professionals for the educational sector (Ng'wandu, 2006), including teacher educators who teach at university education departments.

The concept 'two-tier system' has two meanings. The first one refers to the two sub-systems of teacher education mentioned above: college and university-based systems (Babygeya, 2006). It means the routes in which teachers are qualified and developed through pre-service and in-service education. The second meaning refers to a mode of educating teachers in which two phases of equal duration are established: institutional-based studies and school-based practice (Meena, 2009). In the former, student teachers are placed in a college where they learn most of the theory part of the program, and in the latter they are placed in schools where they do teaching practice (Mushi, Penny, Sumra, Mhina, & Barasa, 2004). This mode of educating teachers is usually adopted as an intervention to cover the shortage of teachers in schools; and most of the time it is criticized when quality is considered (Komba, 2010; Mosha, 2004). However, both meanings of the two-tier system are adopted. My main focus is on the first meaning, i.e. the two routes of teacher education.

For political and administrative reasons and government structures, the two routes of teacher education, college-based teacher education and university-based teacher education, sometimes have been operating under different ministries. The former has been under the Ministry of Education and Culture, and the latter under the Ministry of Science Technology and Higher Education (Babygeya, 2006; URT, 1995). In 2005, political changes were made. As a consequence, all matters related to education were shifted and integrated into only one ministry: the Ministry of Education and Vocation Training (Ishumi, Lihamba and Mtaki 2005). This movement was interpreted by teacher education professionals as an opportunity for enhancing quality through cooperation and partnerships between the two routes, which were thought to be easily established. However, the reality indicates that this expectation did not materialize (see also Meena, 2009).

Galabawa and Agu (2001) underline the need for teachers as actors and practitioners in the field of teacher education to co-operate and share ideas, experiences and challenges they face in order to improve the quality of their teaching. They further emphasize the importance of teacher educational institutional management to reinforce the culture of co-operation for mutual benefits of individuals and institutions. It is through exchange of experiences from different teacher training programs that one can explore the possibilities of solving quality problems in the field of teacher education.

2.2 Teacher education programs

The discussion in 2.1 was centered on a system of teacher education in Tanzania. In particular the two-tier system of teacher education has been highlighted. In this part, analysis of teacher education programs in terms of the structure and content is provided in order to portray a comprehensive picture of how teacher education is organized.

A teacher education program is a multifaceted concept. In this context, however, teacher education program refers to a plan of study lasting over a specified period which leads to a degree, diploma or certificate qualification (TCU, 2004). In other words, a teacher education program is a structure and content for educating teachers at a certain level, which comprises a defined curriculum and courses related to academic and professional components that are taught by a teacher education institution over a specified period of time.

The structure and content of teacher education programs in Tanzania vary and are established in line with the two tier system. There are programs that are conducted within the college based system and others are offered by a university-based system of teacher education. The variations of the programs can specifically be considered in terms of the status of institutions that conduct the program and professional qualifications offered by a particular program. I will briefly describe these programs in line with their establishment and attachment to the existing two tier system of teacher education.

College-based teacher education programs

The college-based system of teacher education provides mainly two types of programs: a program for primary school teachers and a program for lower secondary school teachers. Primary school teachers are awarded an official document called '*Grade A Teacher Certificate*' upon successful completion of the course, and lower secondary school teachers are awarded a document called '*Diploma in Education*' (MoEC, 2009, 1995). The Diploma in Education is a teacher qualification level which falls below the bachelor degree of education but is higher than Grade 'A' Certificate. Entry qualification to the Grade 'A'

Teacher Certificate course is a pass in ordinary Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE), while for Diploma in Education the entry qualification is a pass in the Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (ACSEE) (MoEC, 2011). Form four and six national examination results are graded into five grades (mentioned in order from the highest to the lowest): division one, two, three, four and zero (NECTA, 2006).

Prerequisites for the entry to both certificate and diploma programs are stated. According to MoEVT (2011) the minimum qualification for entry into a teacher education course is a pass of division three in CSEE and ACSEE for certificate of primary education and diploma in education, respectively. Final examinations for both Grade 'A' Certificate course and Diploma in Education are set and conducted by the accrediting institution, which is known as the National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA) (MoEC, 1995). It is the same institution which examines and accredits CSEE and ACSEE. The duration of both programs, Grade 'A' Teacher Certificate and Diploma in Education, is two years (MoEVT, 2010). Within the two years of study, student teachers learn theories from their respective subjects, educational science, and they do teaching practice.

In conclusion, both the Grade 'A' Teacher Certificate and Diploma in Education programs discussed above provide a teacher education qualification below the level of bachelor's degree. In other words, it means the route of college-based teacher education in Tanzania in terms of its structure and content is a non-degree granting system. As the demands of the school system and society in general are increasing and becoming more complex, these programs seem to be inadequate. As a result, the ambition to upgrade these programs to university based teacher education is becoming evident. The transformation of Dar-es-Salaam Teachers College and Mkwawa High School into university colleges of education, for example, express this ambition (see also Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005; Mhando, 2012) This could be compared with countries in the European Union, e.g. Finland, where teacher education is based on a full master's degree (Jakku-Sihvonen & Niemi, 2006).

University-based teacher education programs

In Tanzania, university based teacher education comprises programs offered by universities and university colleges of education (Ishumi, 2010; MoEVT, 2010). The status of the university and university colleges differs, but the education provided by both is referred to as university-based teacher education. University colleges are not independent institutions; they are connected to the mother universities. The ambition of establishing university colleges is to nurture them to grow to fully flagged universities in the future (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005).

Tanzanian university teacher education provides mainly three categories of teacher education programs: bachelor, masters and doctorate. Bachelor programs are provided to undergraduates who join by using qualifications in the Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education Examination or equivalent qualification approved by either the National Examination Council of Tanzania or Tanzania Commission of Universities. Bachelor teacher education programs include pre-service and in-service trainees. Undergraduate programs last for three years (UDSM, 2010). Student-teachers who pursue and obtain B.A (Ed), B.Sc (Ed) and B.Com (Ed) degrees specialize in two teaching subjects and are posted to teach in secondary schools upon successful completion of their studies (UDSM, 2009, 2010; Meena, 2009). Those who pursue and obtain B.Ed degrees specialize in education and one extra teaching subject and they are posted to teach in teachers' colleges. Others who opt for an adult education program are posted to work in departments and institutes of adult education (UDSM, 2009).

The institution's approval for offering teacher education programs and other conditions for joining in all levels of university-based teacher education in both public and private universities are stipulated and monitored by the Tanzania Commission of Universities (TCU, 2007). This institution is responsible for the quality control of education in higher learning institutions, and therefore includes university-based programs of teacher education. Entry qualification to undergraduate teacher education is a high pass in the ACSEE or other qualifications that are accepted as equivalents. In addition, sometimes these qualifications are supplemented with matriculation through entry examination to the program (TCU, 2004).

Master's and doctorate degrees are post-graduate programs that are also offered in teacher education in this route. Masters programs normally last for 18 months and doctorates extend beyond three years. The majority of graduates in these programs teach at university-based teacher education programs. However, some master's graduates also teach in advanced secondary schools and teachers' colleges (MoEC, 2011).

As compared to the college-based system, the university-based teacher education system plays an extended role. It is the route which by virtue of its establishment is claimed to play three main roles common to all universities: teaching to prepare and develop staff in education, conducting research to generate knowledge, and provide educational consultancy services to society (Mosha, 1995; Babyegeya, 2006; UDSM, 2007). According to Abagi and Sifuna (2004) university-based teacher education is expected to intellectually nurture the teaching profession and be a centre of education innovation in Tanzania. This is reflected in, among other functions, production of journals such as *Papers in Education and Development* produced by the School of Education at UDSM and *Huria* which is prepared by the Open University of Tanzania. According to Sumra et al (2002), research and publication is at the heart of academic and professional scholarship in this system of teacher education. In brief, it can be

emphasized that the three roles of university-based teacher education noted above are crucial criteria for appreciating quality in the whole system of teacher education.

The following figure presents schematically the types of programs (indicated on the left) and the institutional focus where graduates are considered to be placed (on the right). The bolded box indicates the program of my focus. The broken arrow shows that few persons with that qualification are teaching in those focused institutions.

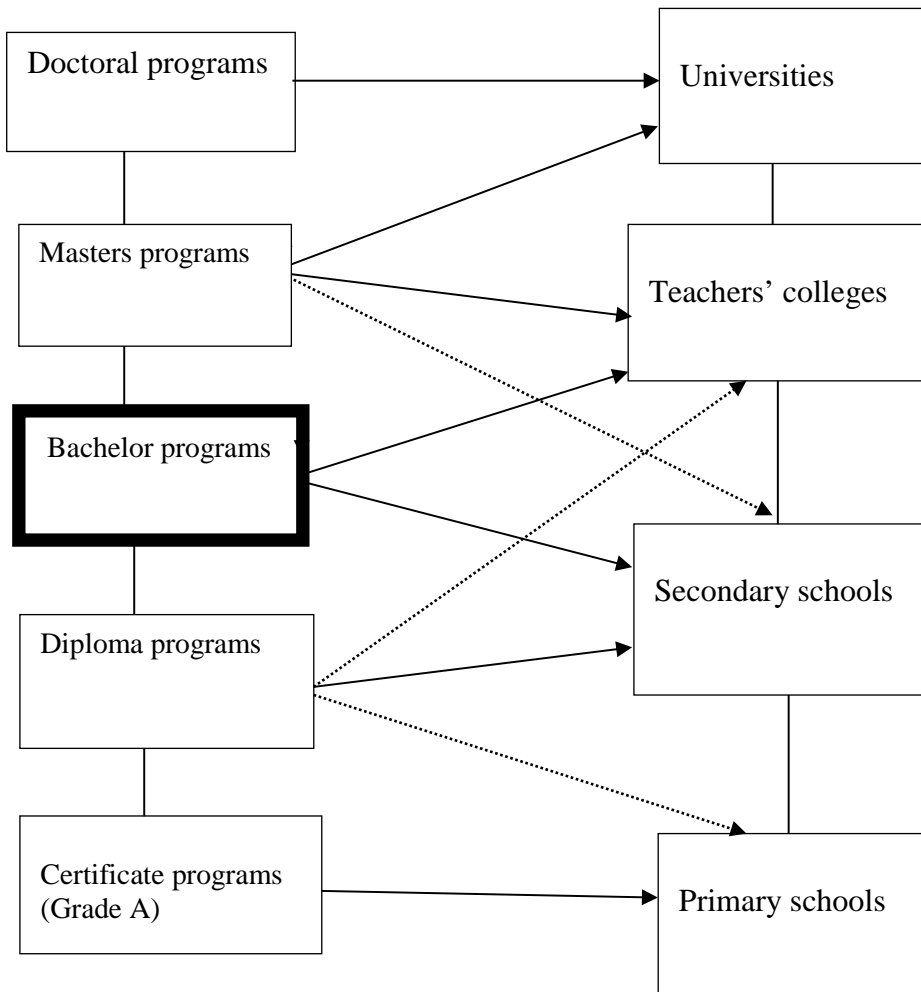


Figure 1 Teacher education programs in Tanzania

How does the teacher education program relate to quality? Using the input-process-outcome model of examining quality in education, Temu (2007) observes that different teacher education programs that have existed in Tanzania account for a great variation in teacher quality. This claim is based on the

assumption that the nature of the teacher education program determines the entry qualification, academic background, process and the anticipated outcome. According to Evans (2002), teacher education is a continuum with two extremes: those with low expertise on one side and those who are well equipped and qualified on the other side. In fact, there is a disparity in expertise and professionalism among teachers, depending mainly on the nature of the programs that qualify them.

In Tanzanian teacher education, the disparity diverges from grade C, those who are holders of merely primary education certificates, to highly educated teachers who work in university education departments. Temu (2007) reveals that Grade 'B' and 'C' teachers have 7, 8 and 10 years of formal schooling at the level of primary education plus between 2 and 4 years of professional training. The variations in number of years are connected to the variations of schooling in primary education and teacher training at different periods. There are two groups of grade B and C teachers: those who were trained in residential colleges and those who were trained through the distance method. Komba (2007, p.12) writes:

Some studies like that of Omari (1995) attribute the deterioration of quality education in the country to the prevalence of grade 'B' and 'C' teachers, a situation which has made it possible for a failed class seven learner to teach an upcoming class seven.

However, the programs for preparing Grade C teachers were phased out in the 1980s, and grade B in the 1990s. Thereafter, a compulsory in-service upgrading course for all grade B and C teachers to grade 'A' was introduced (Temu, 2007). However, up to the moment there are still a few who have not yet managed to attain grade 'A', which according to MoEC (1995), is a minimal qualification for a primary school teacher.

Briefly, the system of teacher education in Tanzania was established to serve the school system that existed then. Since society and the school system have been changing, teacher education has also to change in order to accommodate the new demands that are emerging. In an effort to achieve this ambition, strategies for improving the quality of teacher education, including transformation of college-based into university-based teacher education are established. These emerging demands perhaps are motives that express the need for redefining a new system of teacher education that can cope with global trends in teacher education.

3 Teacher Education and Quality

The discussion in this chapter is focused on three main phenomena: the concepts of teacher education, the notion quality and the criteria assumed necessary for enhancing the quality of teacher education. Possible facilitating and inhibiting factors regarding the quality enhancement of both teacher education programs and the professionalism of educators are also presented and analyzed. However, the discussion focuses on general perspectives, but Tanzanian teacher education in particular is incorporated in order to contextualize the analysis.

3.1 Perspectives of teacher education

The aim here is to describe different concepts of teacher education, to analyze the relationships between them, and to scrutinize how these concepts relate to quality in the Tanzanian context.

The way teacher education is organized differs from one context to another and from one time to another. Consequently, a variety of perspectives can be used to describe the concepts of teacher education. The focal point for the discussion is on the structural organization and basic elements or dimensions constituting the content of teacher education.

In view of the *structural perspective*, teacher education concepts can be considered to entail two ideas. One is about the structure of the institutional organization. This addresses the organizational structure of the institution that hosts the programs of qualifying and developing teachers. It delineates the divisions of the institution in terms of various units that deal with management and execution of the programs of teacher education. Hansén, Forsman, Aspfors and Bendtsen (2012) identify at least three structural concepts of teacher education by using three models: *integrated model*, *asymmetric matrix model* and *matrix model*. Here, therefore, the notion model bears the same meaning as concept.

In an *integrated model*, a strong and independent unit of teacher education which is integrated to the degree system is established under a big institution that offers university education including teacher education. In this organizational model, teacher education is characterized as a complex and multidisciplinary organization which, because of its influences, contributes to develop a strong teacher identity. In the *asymmetric matrix model* part of teacher education is placed in a unit of teacher education and part of the program is organized outside the unit, particularly in subject matter departments. This model unlocks the possibility of utilizing the academic subject-matter competence outside the core unit of teacher education. In the *matrix model*, teacher education is extremely decentralized to different subject matter-departments. Only an administrative

unit of teacher education is established for coordination purposes. As a consequence, subject matter competence is given a crucial position, while teacher education tends to be marginalized (Hansén et al, 2012).

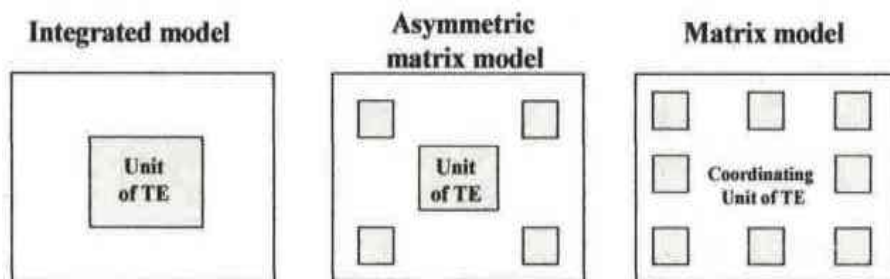


Figure 2 Models of teacher education in higher learning institutions

(Source: Hansén et al 2012)

The other idea of structural perspective of teacher education focuses on duration and cycles of the programs. For example, according to the Bologna Declaration, the degree structure of teacher education in EU countries is 3-2-3 i.e., three years of study for the Bachelor's degree, two years of study for the Master's degree and three years of study for the Doctoral degree (Jakku-Sihvonen & Niemi, 2006). This means the organizational structure also states the duration of and cycles of programs for educating teachers in a particular institution.

Why use structural dimensions to conceptualize teacher education? The educators and learners involved in the teaching and learning process are strongly tied up with the institution to which they belong. They are not free to do whatever they want; there are certain conditions, responsibilities, and duties that come along with the established structure according to the context (Kansanen et al, 2000). This means that even the instructional process is carried out according to a particular institutional structure.

Cole (1999) observes that institutional structures and politics have a tendency to influence the programs for educating teachers positively or negatively. In this sense, the three models of teacher education presented previously directly and indirectly exert influence on the strengths of programs, teacher educators and other resources related to the provision of teacher education. For example, because, in an integrated concept, teacher education is characterized by strong emphasis on subject didactics, the qualification process enhances teacher identity. In contrast, in the asymmetric matrix and matrix concepts, where subject matter studies are decentralized to different departments and given more weight and emphasis, the qualification process is likely to enhance subject oriented identity (Hansén et al, 2012). For that reason, the latter entails the risk of fragmentation (see also Hansén & Forsman, 2009). Fragmentation has a

tendency to weaken the strength of the programs and hence lower the quality of teachers who graduate from those programs.

The other perspective of conceptualizing teacher education, as mentioned previously, is based on *content perspective*. Teacher education is perceived in terms of its constituents. Part of teacher education constitutes a unit which is concerned with knowledge generation in a specific subject discipline. Osaki (2001) calls this constituent an academic content, which, according to Babyegeya (2006), is a body of subject matter knowledge also including educational foundation subjects or general pedagogy/didactics (Sjöholm & Hansén, 2007, 2009).

The content perspective further constitutes the transformation of subject matter knowledge into pedagogical discourses. It is a body of knowledge about instructional process, i.e. subject didactics, as Hansén and Forsman (2009) express. This translates didactics into a specific subject discipline such as history. In certain circumstances, it is called, for instance teaching methods of history and biology. Specific subject didactics deals with the application of instructional methods and techniques in a particular subject. For example, using a 'study trip' to teach about the 'Ruaha Irrigation Scheme' in geography to students in Tanzania, illustrates the concept of geography didactics. In this context, the quality of a geography teacher and hence teacher education can be examined by analyzing how the teacher applies geography didactics in facilitating teaching and learning of the subject.

Focusing on the content view, teacher education can be considered as a multidisciplinary concept with its own body of knowledge. Intentionally, teacher education is an intellectual venture, which is valued because of the service it provides to society in generating knowledge in different subject disciplines and about teaching and learning (Babyegeya, 2006). It is through this function that teacher education can become an autonomous and trusted branch of producing scientific knowledge through research (Evans, 2002, Kansanen, 2005). Production of knowledge through empirical studies is increasingly being regarded as one of the critical strategies towards improving quality of teacher education (Murray & Male (2005).

The structural and content perspectives in the Tanzanian context

In the preceding discussion the structural and content views on concepts of teacher education have been presented on general level. The discussion has focused on general ideas illustrating how structures and contents can be used to appreciate various concepts of teacher education. Here, the intention is to appreciate their relevancies to the present context.

To start with structure perspective: how do the integrated, asymmetrical matrix and matrix concepts of teacher educational institutional structures relate to

Tanzanian teacher education? No simple and direct answer can be made to this question. Teacher education in higher learning institutions is provided in two contexts: universities and university colleges of education. The former provides teacher education among other professions, while the latter concentrates only on teacher education. As Hansén et al. (2012) observe, teacher education is multidisciplinary in nature; and therefore there is a problem of locating precisely teacher education in Tanzania in one of the concepts or models.

However, in universities with a strong school or faculty of education (such as University of Dar-es-Salaam, University of Dodoma) and university colleges of education (such as DUCE and MUCE), teacher education can closely be regarded to be in line with either the integrated model or asymmetrical matrix model. But the problem of how to systematize and avoid overlaps among the three models of teacher education is evident in various elements. In many cases, the established structures of departments and other units in teacher education institutions tend to differ from actual practice. For example, pure subject matter departments have a tendency to exert strong influence on the integrated model and therefore pull the model between the integrated and asymmetrical matrix models and in an extreme case to the matrix model. In certain circumstance, this rivalry struggle can develop antagonism which may result in influencing quality.

How does Tanzanian teacher education relate to the content view of teacher education concepts? As other systems of teacher education outside, one of the units comprises pure academic or core knowledge of the specific disciplines of study, and the other part deals with the transformation of core knowledge into pedagogy and subject didactics, i.e. professional subjects (Osaki, 2000; Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010; Schulman, 1986; Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000; Kimaryo, 2011).

To conclude, the discussion has been focused on analyzing the structural and content perspectives of conceptualizing teacher education. The inner elements of each perspective and their implication to quality have been explored, and in particular the two perspectives in the context of Tanzanian teacher education. The structure and the content of teacher education programs are closely related to quality issues. A certain structure will contribute to the framing of the content, thus influencing what elements will be prioritized or devaluated, hence increasing or reducing the possibility for quality enhancement.

3.2 Quality in teacher education

In the introductory discussion a short tentative description of the complicated phenomenon quality has been provided as a first guide (1.1). The aim of this part therefore is to identify and discuss in detail some perspectives of conceiving the notion in general and finally contextualizing it in teacher education.

Most of what is done in education, when we for instance changes of the structure of teacher education within a higher education institution or develop the content of the education programs, is concerned with quality issues. The intention is to develop and improve the welfare and living conditions of human beings. Efforts to improve quality are implicitly imbedded in notions like school, education and teaching because they connote progress and improvement in relation to prevailing conditions. The notion quality deals with characteristics that are highly valued in a particular context. Quality is thus a value-laden notion and cannot therefore be measured according to objective criteria. Etymologically, quality means organizing into categories or to separate characteristics. The desired characteristics in a phenomenon exist to a higher or lower extent or are missing (Hamilton, 2004). In this sense therefore, to study the quality of teacher education, for example, means to investigate and define the extent to which the desired characteristics of teacher education exist (Hansén & Sjöberg, 2006).

As an educational phenomenon, quality has become a debatable concept because of the difficulties in capturing, concretizing and operationalizing its meaning emanating from different discourses and paradigmatic standpoints (Sheridan, 2009; Jidamva, 2012). Furthermore, the concept is claimed to be complex and challenging because its definitions differ according to purposes, stakeholders, time and contexts (Liston, Borko, & Whitcomb, 2008; Marope, 2000, Sallis 1993). Lack of educational benchmarks which are comparable over time and across borders is alleged to increase the complexity of the notion (Mosha, 2000). Quality remains anyway an elusive notion, but regardless of its elusiveness and complex nature, practitioners and other stakeholders in education today are trying to capture and measure it with the purpose of promoting progress in education (Botas, 2008; Meena, 2001). The notion becomes more and more widely used and has been adopted in the common vocabulary in the educational industry today.

The literature about quality is extensive and several models or typologies are provided. Harvey and Green (1993), for instance, provide a typology in higher education which characterizes quality in five categories or characteristics, namely quality as exceptional, perfection, fitness for purpose, transformation and value for money. Exception refers to something which is of exclusive high class or which passes a set of required standards (cf. Ololube, 2006). Perfection means exactly right without any fault. Fitness for purpose means meeting the needs of the customer and the fact that quality is meaningful if it achieves the purpose or mission of establishment (Jidamva, 2012). Value for money relates a phenomenon to its cost of existence or production (Botas, 2008).

Another closely related typology capturing quality is that of Lomas (2002). It distinguishes four characteristics, namely quality as excellence, quality as fit for purpose, quality as transformation and quality as value for money (Lomas, 2002). I will basically rely on Lomas' typology, but also utilize characteristics

from Harvey and Green's typology. For my purposes quality as excellence, as fit for purpose, and as transformation constitute the basic categories of quality characteristics. Value for money will be paid attention to as an integrated characteristic in the three categories. The reason is that the focus of quality in the Tanzanian education system has been adapted and placed on stakeholders' evaluation of institutional performance, transparency and accountability to society and cross-border harmonization of performance standards (UDSM, 2007).

Three reasons have contributed to the selection of Lomas' typology of quality. One is that it covers the entire topic and the stated general aim, i.e. teacher educators' conceptions and experiences of quality and of quality enhancement. It concentrates on teacher educators as classroom practitioners who primarily deal with academic activities. Production of knowledge through research, teaching and learning, development of teacher education programs, professional development and the related academic practices are the targets of my investigation.

Another reason relates and has close connection to the first one. The typology offers a simple but convenient tool to handle a complicated topic. The characteristics of appraising quality outlined are easy to connect to quality practices in teacher education. Moreover, the characteristics selected are in line with the criteria used by other researchers (Mosha, 2000; Marope, 2000; UDSM, 2007; Sheridan, 2009) in studying quality from a classroom instructional point of view.

The third reason is that it provides a structure for dealing with the valued qualities. The characteristics that are used in this typology: excellence, fit for purpose and transformation are qualities in nature and therefore they provide a structure of dealing with conceptions and experiences of teacher educators that are addressed in the study. In what follows, the three elements that characterize Lomas typology of quality are discussed.

Quality as excellence

Quality as excellence perspective weighs quality against the prescribed merit of excellence. Mosha (2000) conceptualizes quality in education as the level of excellence in performance. Quality in this perspective can be measured by establishing acceptable benchmarks of good performance. He further observes that in daily life practices, and particularly in education, criteria of merit constitute the dimensions along which an individual or an organization system of education has to perform well in order to achieve overall merit. Basically, he conceives quality as a high standard of merit or performance.

In the same line of thinking, Ingvarson (1998) points out that a standard teacher or tutor where quality is concerned is one who demonstrates confidence, knowledge and capability to perform what is expected to do. This implies

meeting generally agreed focuses, and denotes a certain amount of merit that meets prescribed particular purposes (Richardson, 1994). In many contexts, standards for teachers or teacher educators comprise competencies in content knowledge, pedagogical skills, reflective skills and other related ones.

How are standards established? Normally, standards of excellence or merits are set by authorities, experts, customers or by general consent of the relevant participants (UDSM 2007; Mosh, 2000). Standards of excellence are used for appraising or grading the ascertained quality and can be fixed or flexible. Hence, an agreement must be reached before they are used. When standards are too low, practitioners may be content with mediocre performance. Similarly, if standards are too high, achievement might be impossible to realize. This can result in disenchantment and sometimes despair. Optional standards can be set by banking on the knowledge of experts and inputs from stakeholders and a survey of what is generally accepted globally as being indicators of excellence. However, the problem that still prevails is that standards and criteria may vary according to the objectives, cultures and disciplines of the institutions (Zhou, 2006).

Defining quality of teacher education with this perspective means comparing the input, process, outcome (Temu, 2007) and other qualities of teacher education practices such as research and reflection (Kansanen, 2005) alongside the prescribed ideal merit of excellence. Different dimensions such as programs, professionalism of teacher educators, other resources, and performance in teaching and learning can be used to determine quality of teacher education (Mosh, 2000; Lomas, 2002). In this approach standard criteria of characteristics and performance of teacher education have to be established and used for appraising the ascertained quality.

Ingvarson (1998) elaborates that a standard in quality, of teachers or teacher educators for instance, refers to what teachers or teacher educators are expected to know and be able to perform. Most standards for teachers and teacher educators cover a number of competence areas such as content knowledge (Abel, 2007; Kimaryo, 2010), which is about academic knowledge of a specific discipline, pedagogical skills that address instructional techniques (Hansen & Forsman, 2007) and reflective skills, which concern an individual's attitude to reason critically before making a decision or acting (Bjarnadottir, 2006; Ojanen & Lauriala, 2006) and which are assumed to be built in their general academic and professional qualifications.

Is it necessary to establish standards in determining excellence of quality of performance in teacher education? In defining quality by using the excellence approach, standards of performance or qualities have to be established because they provide a vision of good teaching and learning that guides the quality enhancement process. The term standard denotes a tool of measure which is used in making judgments about different phenomena in many areas of life and work (Ingvarson & Rowe; 2008). It is a reference point on which judgment can be

made about the efficiency and effectiveness or performance of an individual, institution and system (Mosha, 2006). Standards, therefore, may provide the necessary context of shared meanings and value for fair, reliable and useful judgments to be made.

Developing standards for teacher educators, for instance, may not only serve in providing insight on who teaches teachers, but also serve as a catalyst to initiate debate and discussion on the definition, roles and expectations of teacher educators. Standards are also helpful in designing professional development programs (Fisher, Short, McBee & Venditti, 2008). A standard in the sense of a measure is one of useful criteria which have been established as the basis for significant improvement in educational areas, including teacher education (Ingvarson & Rowe, 2008)

In Tanzanian teacher education, for instance, while the minimal qualification for a teacher educator in teacher colleges is stated to be a Bachelor's degree in education (MoEC, 1995, 2008), for staff who teach undergraduate students at university or university college it is a Master's degree. Those who teach and supervise postgraduate students have to hold a PhD, as well as demonstrate professional research, publications and an expertise record (TCU, 2007). These conditions, regardless of how they are established, are used as criteria for determining the quality of teacher education. However, as highlighted earlier, Mosha (2000) points out that standards of excellence or merit are usually set by authorities, customers or by general consent of the relevant participants. In the case of teacher education at universities, the standards can be established by FOE bodies and senate (UDSM, 2007).

In summary, establishing standards as a means to determine, monitor and enhance the excellence of quality in teacher education not only serves to decide on the quality of teacher educators, but also in other areas such as course programs, entry qualifications, selection criteria, assessment and evaluation of the students. In these circumstances, regardless of the dynamic nature of standards in teacher education, it is important to have guiding standards which safeguard and determine the excellence and development of teacher education as a profession.

Quality as fitness for purpose

The perspective originates from the manufacturing industry and aims at assessing a product against its stated purpose (Harvey & Green, 1993; Lova, 2002). Campbell and Rozsnyai (2002) describe fitness for purpose as one of the possible perspectives which may be used to establish whether or not a certain educational institution or a specific program meets quality. It measures a performance or a product along with what is assumed to be prescribed as an ideal goal or merit of the unit. Basically, this perspective considers quality as fulfilling a customer's needs, requirements and desires. In education, fitness for

purpose is generally measured against the ability of an institution to fulfill or act in accordance with the missions of the institution or program of study. In other words, this perspective assesses whether an institution or a program achieves its objectives (Harvey & Green, 1993; Botas, 2008).

Fitness for purpose further stresses the importance of conforming to acceptable standards, such as those prescribed by accreditation or quality assurance agencies (Vlăsceanu, Grunberg & Pârlea, 2004). This is similar to the outcome-based perspective on quality which focuses on conformance to mission specifications and goal achievement (Winn & Cameron, 1998). Munroe-Faure (1992) argues that quality means producing output in conformance to the customers' requirements.

In higher education, for instance, goals are articulated at a general institutional level through the organization's mission statement, and at a more precise academic level through a particular program's aims and learning outcomes (UDSM, 2007; Williams & Loder, 1990; Campbell & Rozsnyai, 2002). The stated goals, aims and learning outcomes provide relevant information to prospective students and employers to judge whether their needs and requirements are likely to be met. In higher education, quality is concerned with teaching effectiveness and teaching efficiency. According to Galabawa (2000) teaching effectiveness is linked to the meeting of course aims and objectives, while teaching efficiency is linked to the resources that are used in order to meet the stated aims and objectives. Quality therefore is demonstrated by achieving the mission and objectives of the institution or a program. Focusing on the instructional process, Babyegeya (2006b) states that quality is the answer to what extent the teaching and learning process ensure achievement of the learning objectives set.

The major challenge of this perspective of quality in education is that students in most cases are not accessible to the forums of who establishes the needs and therefore the mission of the institution or program. It is either the government or funding agencies that determine the needs of which the institution adhere to. In other cases it is the professors and other instructors in their respective institutions or departments who determine the needs and establish the mission of the institution or program (Harvey & Green, 1993).

Defining the quality of teacher education by using this perspective means measuring the ability of an institution or a program of teacher education to fulfill or act in accordance with the mission and to decide if it achieves the objectives stated by interest groups (Harvey & Green, 1993; Botas, 2008). However, in the case of quality in higher education and therefore teacher education quality as fitness for purpose is complex (Tudor, 2006) because its meaning is subject to a person's perceptions.

In this context at least two ways of perceiving quality as fitness for purpose can be identified: the intrinsic and extrinsic qualities. The former focuses on values

and ideals such as the search for truth and scientific pursuit of knowledge. In teacher education this perspective emphasizes the philosophical and highly theoretical knowledge that identifies teacher education as a discipline. The latter focuses on extrinsic qualities in which the emphasis is given to the capacities of teacher education to respond to the changing needs of society. The focus of attention on quality in teacher education therefore will vary according to whether the emphasis is on intrinsic quality, i.e. the development of a well-educated class of individuals who are fascinated by knowledge for knowledge's sake, or on extrinsic quality, i.e. the development of individual teachers directly responsive for the education in schools and for socio-economic needs of society (UDSM, 2007).

The shift in emphasis of the purpose of higher education from an intrinsic to an extrinsic perspective has recently increased. Higher education institutions are today perceived as industries: they sell goods and services including training in order to foster the economic income of their respective institutions (UDSM, 2007). The quality of such goods, services and training have to be assessed and verified by professionals to see if they meet the set standards. This change has also affected the policies and objectives of teacher education. Quality as fitness for purpose in this context addresses the question of what measures are taken by a teacher education institution to satisfy and to demonstrate to its clients that the education provided to prospective and serving teachers fit the prescribed and desired societal purpose. Teacher education is expected to display its ability to prepare and deliver quality educational services at the desired standards as stated in its establishment (see also UDSM, 2007; TCU, 2007).

Moreover, quality as fitness for purpose emphasizes the necessity to conform to acceptable standards such as those prescribed by accreditation or quality assurance agencies (Vlăsceanu, Grunberg & Pârlea, 2004). In teacher education quality means achieving the objectives of preparing and developing teachers who can provide quality teacher education that will lead to the availability of competent teachers who can manage to guide teaching and learning processes in schools (MoEC, 1995, 2005). The question at interest here is how fitness for purpose can be judged.

However, various dimensions can be used in evaluating the quality of teacher education; but the following two are of great importance. The first relates to the relevance of the content of higher education programs with respect to the need of students, employers, and of society at large. Relevance in education and hence teacher education means the ability of its programs to meet the aims for which its education package was designed (Fredriksson, 2004; Babyegeya, 2006b). According to this perspective the measuring of the relevance of teacher education means assessing the ability of the learners, after exposure to the package, to conform to the expectations built into the package. The curriculum therefore remains a tool for bringing about teacher education quality through relevance (Ocheng, 2001; Marope, 2000).

The second relates to the organization and delivery of such a program (Tudor, 2006). Fitness for purpose in this context addresses the following questions: Do the programs of teacher education fit the purpose of preparing good teachers, researchers and consultancy service providers in the educational sector? How are teacher education programs delivered?

Quality as transformation

The transformative perspective of quality in education focuses on the positive changes obtained through various educational programs. The central attention is on empowering the learners with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes that will enable them to live and work in the knowledge society (Vlăsceanu, Grunberg & Pârlea, 2004; Harvey & Green, 1993). Empowered people are better equipped to understand realities and therefore able to transform their society (Jidamva, 2012). Added value is a simple term which can be used to express the measure of quality in terms of the extent to which the educational experience enhances the knowledge, abilities and skills of the learners (Government, 1991; HMI, 1990).

Quality in this context not only denotes change, but also signifies development in terms of additional value. Learners are empowered by developing critical thinking or metacognition. It is about a learner having the confidence to assess and to develop appropriate knowledge according to the demands of society (Harvey, 2004; Biggs, 2001). In almost the same line of thinking it is argued that transformation is achieved through inquiry and excellence (Bradley, 1994). Inquiry refers to critical thinking and excellence means good performance criteria (Mosha, 2006).

Teaching and learning in terms of transformation go beyond imparting new knowledge and skills: they encourage active participation of the concerned. Challenging strategies requiring students to learn a body of knowledge and developing critical and analytical skills are needed. Whitcomb, Borko and Liston (2008) argue that teacher education can facilitate teacher candidates' transformation by posing critical questions about what they value and how they ought to live. Graduates of teacher education programs need to develop competencies that will enable them to perform roles related not only to teaching, but also other societal roles in community where they live.

Mosha (2000) points out that since society bears the burden of running teacher education, there is a need for evaluating its quality in terms of the service it provides to society. The teaching profession is regarded as a potential agent of development in society. Likewise, professionals in this field are expected to be in the forefront to initiate, develop and enhance positive changes. The transformation perspective of quality in the context of teacher education therefore focuses on the quality of teaching and learning brought about by a teacher education program to enable the recipients to play socially expected

roles and meet the needs of society. Hence, in this context quality is perceived in terms of its impact or the added value of the program of teacher education (Bradley, 1994) and not only in outputs which focus on scholastic achievement, which sometimes are earned through cheating to pass examinations (Mosha, 2012).

In conclusion, however, each of the three perspectives has its own emphasis, but basically all are not mutually exclusive. They supplement each other and, in this case, quality is perceived as a combination of two or more of the perspectives. The integration of different perspectives is a realistic way of appreciating the quality of teacher education, rather than focusing on one dimension. It provides critical, though not sufficient information about indicators that can be used to establish an appropriate conception of the quality of teacher education. From this discussion, therefore, the quality of teacher education can be conceived as a concept which refers to improved features and performance of teacher education that fulfill the expectations and needs prescribed by society.

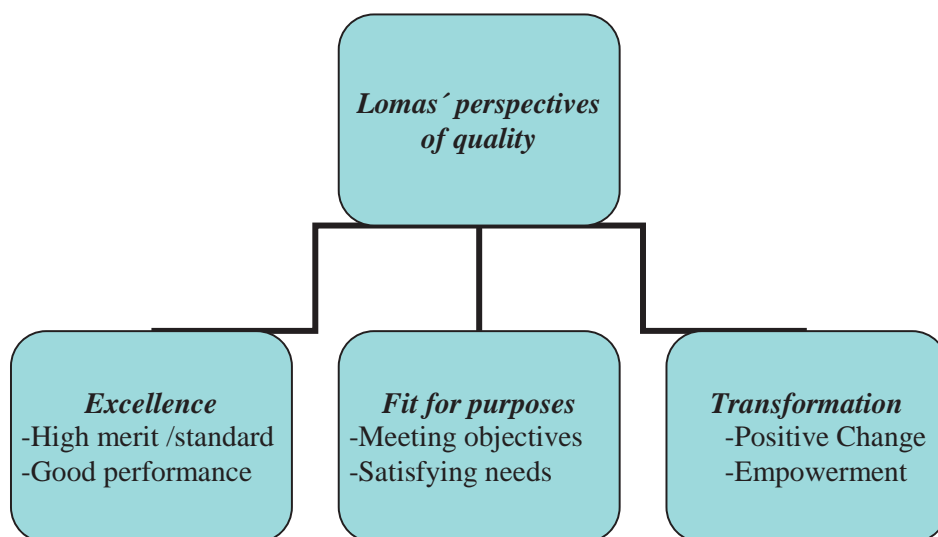


Figure 3 Illustration of Lomas' perspectives of quality

3.3 Criteria for quality enhancement in teacher education

In the previous sub-chapters the notion quality has been discussed with focus on two areas: education and teacher education. Here, the discussion is focused on identifying criteria that are considered as necessary for ensuring quality enhancement in teacher education. The discussion further reveals possible constraints to quality enhancement that might result from failure to comply with the considered quality improvement criteria. Possible strategies that can be

employed to enhance the quality of programs of teacher education and the professionalism of teacher educators are also highlighted.

Conditions for quality enhancement of teacher education programs

One of the fundamental approaches of addressing quality of teacher education is to scrutinize the programs in which teachers are prepared and developed. The concept of teacher education program as defined previously (2.1) refers to a structure and content of educating teachers towards a certain level of professionalism or qualification. It comprises a defined duration of time, curriculum and courses related to academic and professional components that are taught by a respective teacher education institution.

However, in certain cases the concept teacher education program is used interchangeably with curriculum and course. Nevertheless, in this study as is stated above, the concept assumes a broader perspective, which comprises curriculum and course.

A curriculum is defined as a composition of several subjects that are taught in an institution (such as a school, a college or a university) that offers a certain type of training or education (TCU, 2007; Thungu, Wandera, Gachie & Alumande, 2010).

A course is defined as one or more components which constitute a subject. For instance, geography consists of the following courses: physical geography, map reading and research. Furthermore, a syllabus is defined as a plan that states exactly what students at an educational institution should learn in a particular subject (TCU, 2007). These definitions are also adopted in this study.

The influence of teacher education programs on quality is great. Its influence is based on the fact that the programs determine the curriculum contents and other prerequisites such as the duration of the training and the procedure for evaluation and accreditation (Darling-Hammond et al, 2005). In addition each program often establishes a framework which acts as guideline to maintain the standards of its daily operation in order to ensure that its outcomes meet the expectations of stakeholders (TIE, 2006). Furthermore, the course programs state explicitly what prospective teachers and in-service teachers ought to know and be able to do (Katz & Raths, 1985). Implicitly, the criteria for students' entry and educators' recruitment and working qualifications are also stipulated.

The above descriptions indicate that the process towards teacher education quality enhancement through its programs is complex and demanding in nature. Several criteria and conditions need to be considered. Some are related to institutional management and finances. However, the focus of the next discussion is on the following criteria: curriculum balance and integration, the level and duration of the program and, the overall organizing theme of a particular teacher education. These criteria are selected because they are directly

connected to classroom practice, which is the focus of the study, and thus considered to exert more influence on the implementation the programs, and therefore quality of the programs and teacher education profession at large.

Teacher education curriculum

The curriculum is one of the important criteria that determine the quality of teacher education. As stated earlier, quality as fitness for purpose according to Lomas (202) is generally measured against the ability of an institution to fulfill or act in accordance with the mission of the institution or program of study. It is the curriculum which translates the mission in order to achieve the intended goal. Hence, the content of the curriculum is a central factor for determining quality enhancement.

There are many orientations of conceptualizing the curriculum contents of teacher education programs (Hansén & Forsman, 2009). However, the curriculum of teacher education is mostly considered to consist of two components: the academic and the professional (Osaki, 2000; Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010). While the academic component deals with pure subject matter of a specific discipline, the professional component deals with general pedagogy and subject didactics (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010; Schulman, 1986; Beijgaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000).

Pure subject matter centres on the mastery of specific core subject matter knowledge. This kind of knowledge is crucial for quality enhancement. Teachers ought to possess thorough and conceptual expertise of their respective subject (Kimaryo, 2011; Abel, 2007). It is through teachers' expertise in their subject areas that improvement of students' understanding and knowledge in specific subjects can be attained. A strong foundation in subject matter knowledge signifies an orientation towards the academic disciplines, such as humanities, mathematics and science (Sjöholm & Hansén, 2007).

On the one hand general didactics refers to common issues related to teacher professionalism constituting the teacher's work of teaching and the learning process (Kansanen, Hansén, Sjöberg & Kroksmark 2012). This transcends the boundaries of subject didactic specific areas and it comprises broad functions and competencies of teaching and learning in a wide range. Parallel to general didactics is pedagogy, which according to Kansanen et al (2012), cannot be clearly distinguished from the former, but its difference is based on the general coverage of education activities in the teaching profession. On the other hand, subject didactics is connected to the subject areas teachers are teaching. In the didactic approach, emphasis is on the creation of a learning environment in which the teaching-learning process, including planning, execution, assessment and evaluation, is at the core of the teaching activity (Dohanue & Stuart, 2008)

Since quality in teacher education is subject to both mastery of academic subject matter and professional competencies, the balance between the two is necessary

(Osaki, 2000) for quality enhancement. In this context, therefore, teacher educators who are the main actors in the development of the teacher education curriculum by virtue of their roles, have the responsibility to ensure that there is a balance between academic and professional components. Giving fair weight between the two components of the curriculum in teacher education is one of the conditions for achieving quality under the fitness for purpose perspective (Lomas, 2002). When the curriculum for a teacher education program is balanced the possibility to meet the needs of the stakeholders and achieve the goal becomes high; hence, quality as fitness for purpose can be realized (see also Jidamva, 2012).

In contrast, the possibility of constraints that inhibit quality enhancement is likely to be high when the balance between academic and professional subjects is not assured. It is argued that in many developing countries (Mosha, 2004; O'Sullivan, 2010; Osaki, 2000) and developed ones (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010) there is a concern in the curriculum to overload academic subject matter at the expense of professional content. Drawing from Weimer (1990), Mosha (2004) states that university teacher education programs are often overcrowded by subject content, as decision making on education programs has always been made by people who are not professionals of teacher education and therefore place higher value on subject content. This implies that for quality enhancement the curriculum practice of placing more weight on one of the components has to be addressed. However, the challenge with regard to the balance of the two components is evident. The challenge is connected to two questions. One: what has to be the appropriate balance between the academic and professional components in the program? Two: how can the balance of the two components be achieved? The answers to the two questions might not be straight; because the balance between the academic and professional components varies depending on the context of the program of a particular teacher education.

Integration of different components of the curriculum content

Teacher education is a multidisciplinary phenomenon in which curriculum content consists of different elements. The integration of all elements constituting the content of teacher education is assumed to be crucial for enhancing quality. A fragmented curriculum, regardless of its balance in weight, may cause lack of connection and coherence of different elements that combine together to enhance quality. To reinforce curriculum integration, subject matter pedagogical courses can, according to Shulman (1987), be taught simultaneously with academic subject matter. This integration is considered to be helpful to student teachers, as they study subject matter and classroom instruction concurrently (Dohanue & Stuart, 2008). Strategies for reinforcing the integration of theory and practice are essential if the quality of teacher education is to be attained. The experience from many teacher education systems shows that key elements in teacher education programs are disconnected. Coursework is

separate from practice teaching, and professional skills are segmented into separate courses (Darling-Hammond et al, 2005).

Enhancement of quality in teacher education can be feasible through integrating field experience throughout the implementation of the programs (Ojanen & Lauriala, 2006). If this observation is valid, then one may argue that theory has to be linked to practice in all stages of teacher preparation. For example, planning of teaching practice may be connected to both pedagogical and subject matter courses. Close connection between theory and practice is important because it supports a student teacher in making critical pedagogical decisions. As argued above, and also emphasized by Kansanen (2003), a fragmented curriculum with loose connection between different elements is a constraint to quality enhancement.

Level and duration of teacher education programs

One of the conditions of enhancing quality of teacher education as suggested by, for instance, Townsend and Bates (2007) is that programs of teacher education in general should be university-based. The global trend towards enhancing quality for a long time has been to make a bachelor degree the minimal level teacher qualification (Gimmestad & Hall, 1995).

In support of the argument of making teacher education university-based, Ng'wandu (2006) further argues that one of the functions of university institutions is to generate knowledge and train highly educated and skilled manpower for society. In this respect it can be claimed that a university-based teacher education is a viable means of enhancing quality as it is expected to educate and produce highly educated and skilled teachers. This point of view is in line with Hansén, Rosengren and Stolpe (1996), who assert that the process of universitization of teacher education, for instance in Finland, has led to high expectations of improved quality and raised the status of schools and teaching. Teacher education in Finland is a university-based program and it has been incorporated into the university system since the 1970s (Eklund, 2010; Sihvonen & Niemi, 2006).

Making teacher education a university-based program means making educational science and research important aspects in the programs of teacher education (Eklund, 2010). University-based teacher education is expected to prepare a scientifically educated teacher who is well-equipped to meet the challenges that the changing society and school are presenting (Husso, Korpinen & Asunta, 2006). In Finnish teacher education, for instance, student teachers at both Bachelor and Master of Education levels pursue research-oriented studies that aim at educating them in how to conduct a research process and write a scientific thesis (Hansén & Wenestam, 1999; Hansén, 1995). This is claimed to enable student teachers to develop and deepen knowledge understanding and a

scientific attitude, which are important aspects of a professional and reflective teacher (Eklund, 2010). In turn, these criteria count for quality enhancement.

Through the research orientation of the studies and thesis writing, student teachers get acquainted with the scientific tools to carry out empirical studies and the whole process of making meaning out of empirical material (Westbury, Hansén, Kansanen & Björkvist, 2005). As a consequence, Kansanen (2005) comments that a good teacher education curriculum ought to be research-based in order to assure a high quality of teachers and hence good teaching. This is because conducting empirical studies and analyzing the findings, which is at the core of research-based teacher education, is a basic tool to solve problems that might constrain the quality enhancement process.

The duration of a teacher education program and its time on task is also considered crucial for qualifying quality teachers. In contrast, inadequate time seems to be a problem for teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond et al, 2005). In Tanzania, for example, as a strategy to produce a large number of teachers, teacher education programs were restructured to meet the goals stated in primary and secondary education development programmes (PEDEP and SEDEP). In teacher education programs for the certificate for primary education and diploma in education, the duration for college-based components was reduced. Instead of studying for two years at the college and attending a located period of teaching practice, student teachers had to stay one year at college and one year at school for teaching practice. It is further noted that financial and professional support for student teachers during their placement at school has been inadequate and such practices are detrimental to quality enhancement (Mushi & Penny, 2003).

For the same reasons the duration of bachelor degree programs in Tanzania has been reduced from four years to three years (Babyegeya, 2006; Wedgwood, 2007). Parallel to the reduction of the duration for conventional programs, a crash program approach for initial teacher preparation was introduced (Wedgwood, 2007). The crash program approach for initial teacher preparation was a strategy adopted in Tanzania for providing short training for secondary school leavers with the potential to qualify for teacher education programs and recruit them into the teaching profession under the title of licensed teachers. The approach focused on exposing the prospective teachers to only the basic functions of a teacher and lasted for a period of nearly one and half to two months.

One of the goals of PEDP and SEDEP, as stated in relevant documents, focused on enhancing both the quantity and quality of the teaching force (MOEC, 2008; Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005; URT, 2006). In contrast, the adopted approach to achieve this goal seems to be questionable in terms of the ambition to enhance the quality of teachers. Crash programs have a tendency to eliminate or undermine some of the educating activities that student teachers are expected to do or practice. Ishumi (2010) observes that the duration of programs that qualify

teachers in Tanzania is one of the challenges that need serious attention for the purpose of quality enhancement.

Why the duration of teacher education programs be considered as a critical criterion for quality enhancement? There is a mutual relationship between the level and duration of teacher education program. Higher level programs last for a long time and vice versa. The emphasis on this criterion, therefore, is to develop programs of teacher education whose level and duration is reasonable enough to ensure the enhancement of quality. For the case of many developing countries, including Tanzania, this observation poses a challenge to the programs that offer teacher education at the level of the certificate and diploma, which last for two years, and according to the current global trend are perceived to be of a low level (see also Townsend & Bates, 2007; Gimmestad & Hall, 1995).

Organizing themes of teacher education

The ambition of all systems of teacher education is to strive for the improvement of quality. However, to attain quality a clear organizing theme is needed in order to direct the process of quality enhancement. Based on various ideas in different countries, several themes which organize teacher education can be identified (Jyrhämä, Kynäslähti, Krokfors, Byman, Maaranen, Toom & Kansanen, 2008). A theme is formed by a combination of various integrated components ideas, theories, principles and beliefs. The weight and emphasis on the components tend to vary. This variation results in the identification of a certain theme as a main organizing theme of a particular teacher education system (Osaki, 2001). Consequently, the main organizing themes establish pre-requisites and other necessary principles that guide the practices of striving towards the quality enhancement.

For instance, while research based education is the organizing theme of teacher education in Finland (Kansanen, 2003; Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010), in Tanzania it is competency-based (Meena, 2009; Mhando, 2012). In the next part of the discussion, I use the experiences of Finnish and Tanzanian teacher education systems to illustrate the two themes. My choice of these is determined by two criteria; the first is that research-based education is currently taken as an appropriate approach to quality teacher education worldwide (Jyrhämä et al, 2008; Vogrinc & Krek, 2008; Meena, 2009). Moreover, research-based education is a popular theme of guiding teacher education in different countries, particularly in the EU, and specifically in Finland (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010). This motivates the selection of Finnish teacher education to illustrate research-based teacher education practices. The second reason is connected to the fact that competency-based education is the main organizing theme of teacher education in Tanzania (TDMS, 2007; Mafumiko, 2010). Tanzanian teacher education is the context in which this study is conducted.

Researched-based teacher education

As stated earlier, research based education seems to be an appropriate and popular approach towards quality enhancement. It is a system of teacher education in which research is the overlapping and main organizing idea (Kansanen, Tirri, Meri, Krokfors, Husu & Jyrhämä, 2000). It is an inquiry-oriented philosophy (Zeichner, 1983; Noffke & Zeichner, 2005) whose aim is to develop teachers who will base their pedagogical decisions on rational arguments as well as experiential arguments (Westbury, Hansén, Kansanen, & Bjorkvist, 2005). On the one hand, research on teaching and teacher education which focuses on teachers' thinking, knowledge, beliefs, and classroom practices is the main characteristic of this theme of organizing teacher education. On the other hand, its features are crucial for quality enhancement.

Drawing from Askling (2006), Wikman (2010) identifies at least three contexts in which researched-based teacher education is likely to be realized: a) the university teacher educators are connected to research and they do research, b) the student teachers can participate in research and c) the teaching is characterized by a research orientation in which curiousness and problem-solving activities as within qualified research is predominant. In parallel, Vogrinc and Krek (2008) argue that the effectiveness of teaching in schools can substantially be improved if the qualification of teachers is research based and if educational practitioners play a central role in carrying out relevant research. In the research-based approach to teacher education, teachers not only conduct inquiries but also read critically educational academic literature; hence, according to Jyrhämä et al (2008), teachers become both producers and consumers of educational scientific knowledge, a practice which is likely to enhance quality.

Evaluation projects (Jussila & Saari, 2000; Niemi, 1999) have shown that research plays an essential role in enhancing the quality of teacher education. In addition, other scholars have expressed the view that the integration of research studies with other components of teacher education research methods and the writing of a master's thesis are among the best features of primary school teacher education in Finland (Niemi & Kohonen, 1995). In parallel, Kansanen (2003) argues that the goal of research-based teacher education for future teachers is to impart reflective teaching attitudes which will help the new teachers solve the problems they may face in practice, through autonomous thinking and logical argumentation. It assists prospective teachers to become self guided practitioners (Ojanen & Lauriala, 2006).

Through researched-based teacher education, teachers learn essential aspects of scientific approaches on how to justify their decisions and actions. The approach has greatly influenced the current conceptions of quality education in many European countries. In Nordic countries (e.g. Finland) teacher education is based on the belief that teachers should be acquainted with the latest research in the

fields of teaching and learning. Against this argument, teacher education is expected to impart in its prospective professionals the ability to translate research results into sound practice (Ojanen & Lauriala, 2006). To adopt a research-based teacher education approach is a process and it is connected to other factors.

For example, the road towards research-based teacher education in Finland started when the academic status of teacher education was increased along with a major renovation of Finnish higher education (Westbury, Hansén, Kansanen, & Björkqvist, 2005; Jakku-Sihvonen & Niemi, 2007). This means research-based teacher education is one of the features of university-based teacher education. Studies show that children in Finnish schools are doing well because of quality teachers who are qualified under the theme of research-based teacher education (Eklund, 2010; Hansén & Forsman, 2009). From this observation, it means at least a Master's degree level program of teacher education is assumed reasonable for research-based teacher education as this also is potential for quality enhancement. In summary, research-based teacher education is a system of teacher education that focuses on integrating teaching and research. Its value is recognized through enhancing reflective practices, generating knowledge and using knowledge for the purpose of maximizing quality teaching. These features that characterize researched-based teacher education are essential elements of a teacher's professionalism and hence a necessary determinant of quality enhancement. Therefore, adopting a research-based philosophy of organizing teacher education may be considered to be one of the instrumental approaches of enhancing quality in the field.

Competency-based teacher education

Teacher education in Tanzania can be categorized as competency-based (TDMS, 2008). In competency based teacher education the emphasis is on pragmatism in determining the content of the programs, its potential for improvement through research, and its systematic approach to preparing teachers. The program requirements are derived and based on the practices of effective teachers. Its programs consider what teachers should know, be able to do and to accomplish, with graduation requirements based on such outcomes (Houston, 1987). Spasovski (2010) defines competence as a dynamic combination of knowledge, understanding, skills, abilities and values. In the program context of teacher education, competence refers to the ability of student teachers to accomplish tasks adequately, to find solutions and apply their skills in classroom or work situations (Tilya & Mafumiko, 2010).

In the competency-based teacher education approach, great emphasis is placed on performance-based and consequence-based competencies rather than on cognitive-based objectives. The requirements of this approach are stated as competencies. They describe what the student must demonstrate for a successful completion of the program. Such requirements employ observable verbs such as

‘arrange’, ‘organize’, while avoiding covert verbs such as ‘‘understand’’ and ‘‘perceive’’. For performance-based competencies, the learner demonstrates that he or she can do something rather than know; the criterion of success is not what one knows, but what one can accomplish (Tilya & Mafumiko, 2010). A teacher’s competence is, for example, assessed by examining the achievements of pupils being taught.

Competencies are defined prior to program implementation and are made known to learners. The major criterion for including content and activities in a specific instructional program is the question of to what extent this will contribute to the demonstration of program competencies. Instruction not directly linked to competencies is eliminated from the program (see also Viebahn, 2003; Tilya & Mafumiko, 2010).

In competency based teacher education, assessment of student teachers is exclusively based on program competencies. Student teachers are not expected to complete requirements other than those specified as competencies. In theory, and in a few instances, competency statements include a criterion level so that assessment determines whether or not the learner has demonstrated a competency to the degree previously established. Because of the emphasis on performance and consequence competencies, according to Caul and McWilliams (2002) traditional written tests are less important than performance measures.

In traditional courses, a student who excels in one phase of the course can compensate for weaknesses in other phases, ultimately earning a passing grade. In contrast, in competency based teacher education, students are expected to meet at least the minimum standards for each competency required in the program (Tilya & Mafumiko, 2010). Hence, if a student teacher fails a certain subject, he or she has to sit for supplementary examination regardless of high scores in other subjects. This approach shifts the emphasis in evaluation from how well a learner does in comparison to other learners, to how well a student does in demonstrating specified outcomes (see also Houston, 1987).

To conclude, it can be argued that different traditions of organizing teacher education develop according to the context. For instance, the development of research-based teacher education in Finland may be explained in parallel to the academic and professional qualifications of teachers. Higher academic qualification is requisite for one to qualify as teacher. Conducting research and writing research report is one of the requirements in both bachelor and masters teacher education programs.

From the discussion on research and competency-based teacher education, it is clear that the components of both themes are crucial in enhancing the quality of the teaching profession. There is theoretical and practical relevance for each theme in the daily practice of striving for good quality in teacher education. In this sense, therefore, the two organizing themes are not contradictory in nature.

Instead, they are interrelated and can supplement each other in facilitating teacher education quality enhancement.

The discussion on research and competency-based teacher education is summarized in the following table by presenting the main features that characterize each theme.

Tabel 2 Main features of research and competency-based teacher education

Research-based teacher education	Competency-based teacher education
Inquiry-oriented and emphasizes pedagogical decisions which are based on research and rational arguments	Pragmatic in nature and hence focuses on performance and consequence rather than theoretical knowledge
Encourages active participation in producing and consuming research-oriented knowledge	Prioritizes technical application of education knowledge and therefore reflects a tendency of recipients being passive
Recognizes and nurtures the approach of a reflective practitioner in handling issues of teacher education	Competencies are clearly stated in advance and each one has to be mastered by a student teacher at least at the level of minimal standard
Enhances general understanding of research methods and inculcates a positive attitude towards research.	Based on behavioral theories of learning and capitalizes on behavioral objectives.

Prerequisites for enhancing the quality of teacher educators

Another fundamental approach of addressing quality of teacher education is to focus on the professionalism of teacher educators who facilitate teaching and learning in programs that educate teachers. This part, therefore, concentrates on exploring roles that teacher educators are expected to play in the teaching profession. Furthermore, it identifies criteria and strategies that can be considered necessary for maintaining and enhancing the quality of teacher educators.

Snoek, Swennen and Van de Klink (2010) observe that the profession of teacher educator is not popular and has been given little attention as compared to the profession of teachers. It is also defined differently in different countries, and even within the same country or the same institution (Swennen, Jones, & Volman, 2010). Definitions of who is a teacher educator vary. Different academics are linked to the profession of teacher educators. The wider view

comprises all facilitators of learning and professional development of student teachers, teachers in induction phase and in-service teachers.

The European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) has outlined the profile of teacher educators to include: a) academic staff in higher education who are teachers of education b) academic staff in higher education who are teachers of school subjects c) education researchers d) academic staff in higher education who teach didactics and pedagogy e) trained and experienced teachers supervising practice in schools and f) tutors (mentors, counselors, coordinators etc.) supervising prospective teachers at the induction phase (ETUCE, 2008). In this sense, teacher educators are a heterogeneous group of academics who possess different types and levels of competencies and/or qualifications related to preparation and development of teachers.

In a holistic, but narrow view, teacher educators can be described as academics who actively facilitate the formal teaching and learning of student teachers and serving teachers in educational institutions (preferably universities and teachers colleges) which run teacher education programs, thus comprising those who are involved in initial teacher education and in-service teachers (ETUCE, 2008, Snoek et al, 2010). However, this definition seems to be narrow to cover the concept of who is a teacher educator, but comprises important elements of who is regarded as a teacher educator in the current study, and therefore this definition summarizes the discussion of who is a teacher educator in this context.

The issue of defining teacher educators is also connected to the question of standards of the profession. For a long period of time, in many countries, there have been no clear teacher educators' national professional qualification or standards stated (Koster & Dengerink, 2001). However, the general expectation is that all teacher educators have a higher education qualification and reasonable experience which leads to appropriate facilitation of teaching and learning to the target group. They need an extensive and intensive knowledge base of schooling and teacher education. In England, for instance, all teacher educators teaching in programs of initial teacher education are certified school teachers with a significant career record of successful practice in primary or secondary school (Murray & Male, 2005).

Nevertheless, currently stricter standards for teacher educators in many countries are being established; for instance, the standards for teacher educators in the Netherlands (see Koster & Dengerink, 2001; Koster, Korthagen, Wubbels & Hoornweg, 2005) and in the United States (Murray & Male, 2005). Amongst other reasons, these standards are established in order to ensure the quality of the teacher educators' profession, which accordingly determines the quality of teacher education. The established standards are not developed arbitrarily. They are carefully selected on criteria based on facilitating the roles that teacher educators are expected to play in the profession of teaching.

Generally, teacher educators are expected to play two main roles. First, they are expected to manage their own professional development. According to Rasmussen and Dorf (2010), one of the critical elements that determine the quality of teacher education is the professionalism of its educators. Teacher educators are the main actors in the process of preparing and developing the teaching force. The quality of graduates of teacher education programs depends on the quality of these professionals (Buchberger, Campos, Kallos & Stephenson, 2000). Conducting research is, as earlier discussed, considered as an important route to continuous professional development and knowledge generation. Teacher educators in, for instance, master based teacher education programs, are expected to engage in research enterprises and to deepen knowledge about teaching and learning in general, in subject didactics, and in all elements constituting teachers' work (Murray & Male, 2005; Koster & Dengerink, 2001).

The second role for teacher educators is, through teaching, to process the knowledge discussed, together with student teachers. It is through this process that students and in-service teachers learn and further develop their pedagogical knowledge and subject content (Buchberger, Campos, Kallos & Stephenson, 2000). Teacher educators are entrusted with the responsibility for preparing and developing becoming teachers who can facilitate teaching and learning in schools.

What are strategies that can be instituted to maximize the possibility of enhancing the quality of teacher educators? In the next discussion some strategies and criteria are suggested to be used in order to ensure quality of teacher educators.

Setting and observing criteria for teacher educators

One of the criteria that can be set and perhaps used to assure the quality enhancement of teacher educators is the entry qualification into the profession. High academic qualification is assumed to be a necessary criterion for quality. According to Temu, (2007) entry qualification into teacher education programs is one of the indicators of quality. However, the entry qualifications of educators in teacher education vary from one country to another. According to Rasmussen and Dorf (2010), the formal qualification for lecturers in teacher education in Nordic countries, for instance Finland, Norway and Sweden is a Master's or Doctoral degree.

In Tanzania a person recruited as a teacher educator needs to have scored an upper second class grade in general performance in the bachelor degree (UDSM, 2010). Alphonse (2004) argues that there is a need to establish a clear policy of grooming potential teacher educators and other academic staff who can obtain the necessary professional competencies under the mentorship of senior

academic staff. He argues in favor of teacher education grooming its educators from the pool of those who demonstrate competencies in their bachelor studies.

The second criteria that can maintain the quality of teacher educators is related to the various professional competencies. According to Koster and Dengerink (2001), the competencies that are considered important for teacher educators to function effectively for quality improvement are based on content, pedagogy, organization, group dynamic, communication and development and personal growth. It is also expected of teacher educators that they exercise inter- and intrapersonal intelligences, are empathetic and courageous, assertive, committed and tactful in working with students and colleagues (Wenestam & Lindgren, 2011). Additionally, as highlighted previously in discussing role of teacher educators, they are anticipated to do research and add to the knowledge base on teacher education (Kansanen, 2003) and develop strong collaboration with schools to promote education in general.

Establishing teacher educators' professional development program

Another strategy for raising the quality of teacher education through teacher educators is to establish sustainable professional development programs. Snoek, Swennen and Van der Klink (2010) argue that as long as teacher educators play a key role in the quality of teacher education, the issue of their professional development is paramount. Teacher educators' professional development is the backup to their high entry academic qualification which was mentioned previously as an important determinant criterion of quality.

What is meant by teacher educators' professional development? Glatthorn (1995) argues that professional development refers to the development of a person in his or her professional role. The word development is used to mean the positive increase in one's ability or performance in the profession. According to Smith (2003), professional development means becoming the best professional one can possibly be. She further points out that there is no fixed route to be followed in professional development, nor is there an end to the development as long as teacher educators work in the profession. Focusing on the teaching profession, Ganser (2000) states more specifically that a teacher's professional development is the professional growth that a teacher achieves as a result of increased experience and the examination of his or her teaching systematically through formal experiences such as attending workshops, professional meetings and mentoring.

Furthermore, professional development has been stated to be a continuous process for an individual and the collective improvement of practice (Guskey, 1995). Day and Sachs (2004) argue that continuous professional development is a term used to describe all the activities designed to enhance the work in which teachers engage during the course of a career. They see professional development as a career-long process that assists educators to adjust their

teaching methods in order to meet the learners' needs. It is a continuous process that teachers must pursue in order to be efficient and effective in delivery. Professional development is a career-long process because the world is changing, new advances are emerging in the teaching profession and teachers need to know these if they are to perform their work effectively (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004).

Day and Sachs (2004) point out that because of the complexities that arise in education due to social, economic and technological changes; continuous professional development is no longer an option but an expectation of all professionals. According to Townsend and Bates (2007), the pressures of globalization have universally shaped governments, the teaching profession, policies for the provision of education in general and continuous professional development in particular. Several global resolutions about education necessitate teachers and teacher educators to undergo professional development in order to effectively manage the challenges that emerge in the implementation process (Hallinan & Khmelkov, 2001). Teacher educators' professional development in this context refers to formal academic and professional advancement courses aiming at equipping educators with relevant and up-to-date knowledge and competencies essential for quality enhancement in teacher education.

Why should teacher educators and their institutions strive for professional development? And how is it related to quality and quality enhancement? Smith (2003) identifies three main reasons for the professional development of teacher educators as 1) to improve the profession of teacher education, 2) to maintain interest in the profession, to grow personally and professionally, and 3) to advance within the profession through promotion.

The three reasons act as a motive behind teacher educators' professional development. Teacher educators' professional development is the soil in which the required teaching competencies are grown. Through professional development, quality will be improved as its main actors will be acquainted with current and up-to-date knowledge and skills necessary for executing their roles and improving their programs of teacher education (Day & Sachs, 2004). It is further emphasized that because of continuous development in the education sector, teacher educators need to become more knowledgeable professionals than they were before (Smith, 2003).

Furthermore, teacher educators' professional development contributes to maintaining interest in the profession and hence enhances curiosity towards innovation. Learning new knowledge and competencies strengthens interest in the profession (Mosha, 1995; Smith, 2003). Lack of new experiences or ways of doing things is likely to lead to professional boredom and dropouts, which inhibit quality enhancement. Professional development exposes teacher educators to various reflective models which focus on the need to learn from experience, to look back at the experience, to become aware of essential aspects and create alternative methods of action. It tends to stir up the necessity for a

professional to challenge his or her own practice and look for alternatives by having access to new experience. Constantly challenged professionals are less likely to suffer from burnout tendencies and express higher professional satisfaction (Eraut, 1994; Smith, 2003). This encourages opportunity for quality enhancement.

An additional reason for teacher educators to undertake professional development is related to professional advancement and promotion (Smith, 2003). Promotion as used in this context means improved employment benefits such as accommodation, higher salary and increased responsibilities. Requirements for promotions are often advanced academic degrees, including a doctorate (Hoestmark et al., 1999), which is not always an entrance requirement to the profession. In any case, teacher educators who are continuously upgrading their knowledge through ongoing learning are well-qualified candidates for promotion. The reputation of being in the forefront regarding knowledge and research adds to an academic status nationally and internationally, which is beneficial to teacher educators who are academically ambitious. Documented professional development often leads to improved academic status and job conditions.

Along with the social, political, cultural and technological changes that are constantly happening in education, the roles of schools and teachers are also changing (Krecic & Gremek, 2008). There is an increasing diversity of pupils due to the integration of pupils with special needs, social diversity and multiculturalism (Vermut & Verschaffel, 2000). These new circumstances call for teacher educators who are the main actors in the preparation of teachers to have higher level of professionalism in order to improve quality for all learners. Hence, teacher educators' professional development is a necessary condition and appropriate strategy towards quality enhancement. It has to be increasingly stressed as a means to improve quality. Establishing and implementing a professional development plan for teacher educators means instituting strategies of enhancing quality not only in teacher education but also in the whole education system.

In this chapter, the theoretical framework of quality and quality enhancement of teacher education has been discussed. Quality as a notion was described by using Lomas' perspectives of excellence, fitness for purpose and transformation. Analysis of how quality is connected to these perspectives and their relevance in teacher education has been presented. However, as pointed out in the discussion, the three perspectives relate and complement each other. Also criteria for quality enhancement in teacher education programs and educators' professional development have been outlined and analyzed.

4 Research questions, approaches and principles of data analysis

This chapter deals with the methodological design of conducting the study. It specifically states, describes and discusses the research questions, the nature of the research design and research approaches. Respondents, instruments of data collection and principles of data analysis are also dealt with. I further discuss how validity, reliability, and ethics are treated.

4.1 Research questions

Stemming from the background, motives and general aim stated in Chapter 1 the following two research questions were established to guide the process of empirical data collection:

- 1) What are Tanzanian teacher educators' conceptions of quality in teacher education?
- 2) How do Tanzanian teacher educators experience quality enhancement in the newly established system of university college-based teacher education?

In research question 1 the task is to investigate the conceptions of teacher educators about quality in teacher education. The focus is to reveal different ways of conceiving quality from what Marton (1986) calls a second order perspective, i.e. teacher educators' conceptions. Understanding how teacher educators conceive quality is important because conceptions have a tendency to influence practices (Gvaramadze, 2008; Kimaryo, 2011) and practices are crucial determinants of improving the quality of teacher education.

Research question 2 focuses on exploring teacher educators' experiences of quality enhancement in a newly established university-based teacher education. My interest in asking this question is to explore possible facilitating and constraining factors in the quality enhancement of teacher education.

4.2 Qualitative research design

A research design can be seen as a set of connected research tasks from the developing of a research proposal to the writing of a comprehensive research report (Kaplan, 1999). It involves setting of the general aim, developing research questions, selecting research approaches, identifying participants of the study, preparing instruments of data collection and deciding on the procedure of data presentation and data analysis (Gallagher, 1995; Binde, 2010).

In addition, Creswell (2007) explains that a research design is a plan which provides the philosophical rationale and guideline of how to go about the whole task of doing the research and writing the report of the study. I use the notion design to represent the broad view of research methodology, i.e. locating a research into its main structure. Hence, to put it simply a research design is the main framework or policy that guides the whole research practice (Gholami, 2009)

Every research design, whether qualitative or quantitative, employs different approaches and methods (Kansanen et al, 2000) depending on the nature of the phenomenon. A phenomenon can be studied by using different approaches and methods, yet the knowledge generated could be the same (see also Endacott, 2005). Despite this flexibility, certain research approaches and methods can be more appropriate than others in relation to a phenomenon in focus (Gholami, 2009). Hence, the selection of relevant research approaches is significant.

Based on the general aim and research questions a qualitative research approach was selected for the study. Scholars (Creswell, 2007; Edson, 1997; Christine, 2002; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007) assert that approaches and methods that relate to qualitative research design are more appropriate in studying conceptions and experiences. Qualitative research is characterized by in-depth descriptions and interpretations of phenomena (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Schensul & LeCompte, 1999). Hence, it provides an opportunity of gaining deep understanding of a phenomenon under study (Edson, 1997; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

In addition, this design is exploratory, flexible, soft data-driven and context-sensitive (Reiter et al., 2011). A qualitative design is inductive in approach (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). Accordingly, qualitative research design is recommended for studying problems related to social sciences, which in many cases are complex, and researchers strive for multiple solutions (Gholami, 2009; Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001; Creswell, 2003).

The choice of an appropriate and relevant research design is a crucial factor in understanding the phenomenon under study (Gholami, 2009; Endacott, 2005; Creswell, 2007). Quality teacher education, which is the target phenomenon of this study, by its nature as defined previously (3.1) is an abstract phenomenon. Abstract phenomena such as human conceptions and experiences are relatively complex to be studied by using approaches that are quantitative in nature. They cannot be easily quantified or measured (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001).

Other criteria were also considered in selecting a qualitative design. As a researcher I had to take a stand which reinforces that conceptions and experiences are phenomena that assume a dynamic nature of reality. The same phenomenon can be conceived or experienced differently by different people. The selection of a qualitative design allows a diversity of presentation of empirical data, which ultimately capture teacher educators' conceptions and

experiences of quality and quality enhancement respectively, without reducing them to numbers (Binde, 2010; Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The researcher has to forecast expected results; focusing on the mode of data analysis and presentation of the results in general (Mason, 2002; Reiter, Stuart & Bruce, 2011).

According to the arguments provided, it can be claimed that a qualitative research design is appropriate for this study, but what approaches can accomplish the tasks? Dahlberg, Drew and Nyström (2001) identify three criteria to be considered in selecting what may be assumed appropriate approaches: the research questions, the nature of the phenomenon which is studied and the aim of conducting the study. Based on these criteria, for the purpose of exploring teacher educators' conceptions and experiences of quality and quality enhancement, both phenomenographic and phenomenological approaches are considered appropriate, and therefore adopted.

The phenomenographic approach

Phenomenography is an empirical research approach which addresses individual's understandings, perceptions and conceptualizations of the world around them (Gholami, 2009; Ornek, 2008; Marton, 1981). Thus, the main interest in phenomenographic studies is to describe, analyze and understand a phenomenon in the world as conceived by others (Marton & Booth, 2000). Several studies on people's conceptions of different phenomena acknowledge that phenomenography is an appropriate research approach which serves this purpose (Marton & Booth, 1997; Eklund-Myrskog, 1996; Botas, 2008; Marton & Pong, 2005; Meena, 2009; Binde, 2010). The term conception is fundamental in phenomenographic studies (Meena, 2009; Eklund-Myrskog, 1996; Binde, 2010). It implies persons' understanding of a phenomenon (Kiley & Mullins, 2005; Petersson, 2005). A conception is not visible; it remains tacit, implicit or assumed, unless it is thematized by reflection (Johansson, Marton & Svenssons, 1985). When it is thematized by reflection, as Eklund (2010) points out, it can be seen as a qualitative relationship between an individual and a phenomenon.

Marton (1981) identifies two perspectives of studying a problem in the phenomenographic approach: the first and second order perspective (see also Sjöström, Dahlgren, 2002). In the first order perspective, an individual orients towards the world (the problem) and makes statements to describe it (Gholami, 2009; Dahlin, 2007). The phenomenon is directly described by using personal experiential knowledge of the experiencer (Sheridan, 2009; Creswell, 2005; Dahlin, 2007). In the second order perspective the orientation is towards other people's ideas or experiences about the world (problem). Statements of the phenomenon are made depending on their ideas or experiences (Gholami, 2009). It is a perspective in which researchers create the meaning of the phenomenon by drawing it from the point of view of the participants (Meena, 2010; Dahlin, 2007; Creswell, 2005).

In this study, teacher educators' conceptions of quality in teacher education are investigated from second order perspectives. As Meena (2009) remarks, the categories of descriptions in phenomenographic studies are established by the researcher, based on respondents' views of conceiving a phenomenon; this has been the case for the current study. The categories of description of quality in teacher education originate from teacher educators' points of view captured in interviews; and therefore they fall in the second order perspective.

Investigating conceptions of quality from second order perspectives, i.e. teacher educators' point of view is one of the reasons that justify the adoption of a phenomenographic approach in this study. There is a logical alignment between the task of the current research and the principles that characterize the phenomenographic approach. The task of investigating teacher educators' conceptions of quality has been used as one of the criteria for selection of the phenomenographic approach.

The other reason which characterizes phenomenography and justifies its selection is built on the assumption that the conceptions of a single object differ among people (Botas, 2008, 1994; Marton & Booth, 1997; Eklund, 2010). Differences in conceptions are explained by the fact that different people have experiences due to their different relations to the world (Sheridan, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). They make varying analyses and arrive at different knowledge about the object concerned (Curtise & White, 2005; Goodchild, 2011). The variation in conceptions of the same phenomenon characterizes phenomenographic studies. Consequently, quality, which is the focal object of the current study, is expected to be perceived differently by teacher educators.

Phenomenography is characterized by the use of interviews as the main instrument of data collection, and categorization as the main approach of data analysis (Binde, 2010; Marton & Booth, 1997). In line with these criteria, I have employed interviews for collection and categorization for analysis of the data. Categorization refers to the process of identifying similarities and differences, i.e. variation in meaning between individual statements to generate the categories of descriptions (Cohen, Morrison & Manion, 2007). In this sense, categories of description depict different ways in which a particular phenomenon is conceived; and on the other hand they are the main findings of the study (Meena, 2009). In addition, the categories of description have to reflect the aim of the study and each category has to hold a specific distinct meaning of a phenomenon (Evans 2002). This criterion in the current study is reflected through development of categories that summarize the main findings of the study and which are mutually exclusive from each other. In summary, it can be stated that use of the phenomenographic approach has shaped and hence facilitated understanding of the knowledge claimed.

Currently, phenomenography is further being developed into what is called variation theory. This theory investigates both the variation among different ways of expressing a phenomenon as observed by the researcher, and the

variation among critical aspects of a phenomenon itself as stated by the experiencer (Pang 2003, Meena, 2009). According to Marton and Pong (2005), variation is at the heart of phenomenography and therefore variation theory is an extension of phenomenography. Since this study is not interested in variation theory, it is not my intention to engage in detailed discussion about this new approach.

The phenomenological approach

Phenomenology can be considered both as a philosophy and a research methodological approach (Husserl, 1970). As a philosophy, phenomenology focuses on studying concrete and lived existence in the world (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001; Van der Mescht, 2004). It claims that true knowledge of a phenomenon can be explored only through the lived experience of the participant's voice (Van Manen, 1997). Based on this assertion, then, the main concern of phenomenology as a philosophy is to describe a phenomenon from the human lived experience point of view (Wilson & Washington, 2007; Husserl, 1970). The notion phenomenon is a central concept within phenomenology; and it refers to an object, a thing or a part of the world, as it presents itself to, or as it is experienced by, a subject (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). Specifically, the present phenomenon which is addressed is quality in teacher education.

As a methodological research approach, phenomenology is inductive and descriptive (Husserl, 1970; Giorgi, 1997; Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). Embedded in its philosophy is the study of human experience from the first order perspective (Wilson & Washington, 2007). Direct experience taken at face to face value is emphasized and advocated in this approach. The phenomenological approach regards behavior as a phenomenon determined by experience rather than by any other external described reality (English & English, 1958; Van der Mescht, 2004). The primary objective in phenomenological studies is to attempt to gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon from the point of view of those who have concrete lived experience of the phenomenon in question (Reiter, Stewart & Bruce, 2011).

In this study phenomenology is adopted to explore teacher educators' experiences of quality enhancement in teacher education. While teacher educators are considered to have concrete lived experience of quality in teacher education, in turn their voice is assumed to be an appropriate source of true knowledge of quality enhancement in this context.

Phenomenological approach has been taken as a point of departure in investigating teacher educators' experiences of quality enhancement in teacher education, as stated in research question 2. Its principles were adhered to during the whole process of empirical study of this research question. In the next

discussion, detailed explanations are provided to illustrate how these principles are treated.

Interviews, which are usually a recommended technique for data collection in phenomenological inquiries (Reiter, Stewart & Bruce, 2011; Creswell, 2007; Van der Mescht, 2004) were employed. As compared to other techniques of data collection in phenomenological studies, such as observation and video, interviews were preferred because they adhere to descriptions of the participants' responses rather than making open interpretations, which sometimes may not reflect reality (van der Mescht, 2004; Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). In presentation of the empirical findings, I strive to describe the results relying on the respondents' own descriptions of their experiences of quality enhancement than making my own interpretation. Although it is a challenge to draw a clear demarcation line between description and interpretation, the emphasis is that the phenomenological approach favors more the respondents' description than the researcher's interpretation (Van der Mescht, 2004; Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001).

It is important to note that "the description ought to be as precise and detailed as possible with a minimum number of generalizations or abstractions" (Giorgi, 1997, p. 243). This means the researcher has to avoid making greater reduction of the respondents' responses during data interpretation; instead he has to allow each datum to speak for itself (Binde, 2010). Acting consciously, with a phenomenological approach perspective placed in focus, in presenting empirical data I attempted to describe the findings by adhering as much as possible to the original meaning provided by the respondents. To validate this claim, exhaustive excerpts from the respondents' statements have been presented parallel to the descriptions to illustrate the abundance in the description to the respondents' original meaning (See Chapter 5). Adhering to this principle of description has in consequence served the purpose of bracketing (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). Bracketing is an essential principle in qualitative research in general, but it is emphasized especially in the phenomenological approach (Wilson & Washington, 2007; Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001).

Bracketing is the attitude of the researcher in remaining neutral and avoiding establishing early judgment based on pre-conceptions (Creswell, 2005; Binde, 2010; Meena, 2009). It is a strategy to promote valid interpretation (Wilson & Washington, 2007). Thus, researchers are urged to restrain their pre-understanding that otherwise would mislead understanding of the meaning of the phenomenon studied (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström 2001). Pre-understanding can be manifested in the form of theories, assumptions, (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001), values, beliefs and experiences (Wilson & Washington, 2007). To achieve bracketing, what is given should be presented as it is given. It is not the researcher who gives a phenomenon its meaning, but the meaning is disclosed in the researching act (Giorgi, 1977). As argued in the description, the researcher attempted to record, transcribe and describe the empirical data in

adhering to the respondents' views. Openness was aimed at throughout the process of inquiry.

Szklarski (2007) argues that in phenomenology the focus is on the 'essence' of the investigated experience. Essence in this context refers to the crucial core constituents of an experience (Van der Mescht, 2004; Spiegelberg, 1982). According to Van der Mescht (2004), every phenomenon or experience has two types of constituents, namely essential and existential constituents. The former are constituents which are crucial components of a certain phenomenon, and the latter are components that are occasional for the phenomenon (Van der Mescht, 2004). The researcher's focus on analysis of the empirical data was based on exploring the essential constituents of teacher educators' experiences of quality enhancement in teacher education.

Phenomenography vis-à-vis phenomenology

Based on the foregoing discussion it is evident that the phenomenographic and phenomenological approaches both relate and differ (Sjöström, Dahlgren, 2002; Gholami, 2009). In this part, therefore, I attempt to identify and discuss some of the similarities and differences of relevance for my purposes. The discussion picks ideas and examples from the literature, but also draws some illustrations and clarifications from the current study. In discussing the relationships of the two approaches, reference is also made to how they have been applied; their application may provide insights into how they relate and differ.

The application of the two approaches did differ. While the phenomenographic approach was specifically used for studying conceptions of quality, the phenomenological approach was used to explore the experiences of quality enhancement. For both approaches, 'lived experience' has been a crucial factor in exposing 'conceptions' and 'perceptions' of quality and quality enhancement respectively in teacher education.

As stated earlier, the phenomenographic and phenomenological approaches share several similarities. Both approaches are relational, experiential, content-orientated and qualitative in nature (Marton, 1988). They are used in studies that aim to gain deep understanding of a phenomenon under study (Edson, 1997; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Deep understanding of a phenomenon often is attained through individuals' descriptions of the phenomenon based on their experience. Experience is therefore a main source of knowledge in both approaches. The interplay between theory and practice is a critical element of these approaches. Sjöström & Dahlgren (2002) observe that in both the object of research is human experience and awareness.

Basically, there is no specific phenomenographic or phenomenological instruments for data gathering. As a result, these approaches are expected to use

all types of data gathering instruments found in everyday life and in other research approaches (Dahlberg, Drew and Nyström, 2001), but the two mostly use similar instruments of data collection: often individual interviews (Marton, 1994). This reality is also evident in the current study, where individual interviews were used in gathering empirical findings jointly for both research questions 1 and 2. However, in practical terms, it is difficult to demonstrate exactly how the shift from phenomenography to phenomenology was done during interview. In clarifying this complication, Gallagher (1995) observes that it is rather a conceptual operation than a practical one. Moreover, empirical data from both research questions 1 and 2 were analyzed by using categorization, which is a common principle of data analysis for both approaches (Creswell, 1998).

Even though the preceding discussion shows that phenomenographic and phenomenological approaches overlap, a need to delineate the difference is important; otherwise, there will be no genuine reason for adopting both. Drawing from Giorgi (1985, 2000), Sjöström and Dahlgren (2002, p.340) state that:

Although phenomenography shares many similarities with phenomenology, it differs in purpose. In phenomenology, the search for essence or the most invariant meaning of a phenomenon is central, while in phenomenography the aim is not to find singular essence, but the variation of the world as experienced. The focus of phenomenography on differences makes it basically different from phenomenology, where similarities are focused on in order to permit a description of the essence of a phenomenon.

The kind of findings which phenomenography seeks is inconsistent with the goals of phenomenology (Gholami, 2009). On the one hand in phenomenography the researcher aims to study the respondents' conceptions of a phenomenon which is being investigated. A phenomenon is studied from the second order perspective, as stated by Marton (1981). On the other hand phenomenology is concerned with entering the individual's unique concrete lived experience, the real life world experience (Dahlin, 2007), where an individual's perception of experience taken from face value is taken for granted (Husserl, 1970). While in phenomenology the researcher's interest is to explore how a phenomenon 'really is', in phenomenography the researcher's primary interest is in how a phenomenon is conceived of; hence the variations in people's conception (Sjöström & Dahlgren, 2002). To state clearly the apparent distinctions of the two related approaches is not unproblematic. They are related and problematic to distinguish in theory. Nor is it easy to delineate a clear line for pragmatic application. Some respondents' statements regarding the two research questions seem to overlap. There is no clear line between statements revealing conceptions and experiences, since conceptions also develop from experiences. During the analysis I discovered that respondents' statements of conceptions of quality were backed up by another statement portraying experiences.

The aim and findings of the study can further illustrate the distinction between phenomenography and phenomenology. Research question 2 of this study focused on investigating how individual teacher educators experience quality enhancement in teacher education. The findings reveal certain similarities of some teacher educators' experiences, but still individual unique experience is recognized as a fundamental factor in the empirical results. The extracts that are presented parallel to the researcher's descriptions to support the claims were provided specifically to reveal individual teacher educators' unique experience. It should be noted that the similarities that become clear are coincidental because each respondent expressed his or her personal experience in the absence of the others. In consequence, these personal experiences of each respondent resulted in the discovery and classification of opportunities that facilitate, and constraints that inhibit the development of quality enhancement in teacher education.

In summary, it can be contended that phenomenology is interpreted as a broader methodological philosophy approach which embraces phenomenography. Its general feature is emphasis on the interplay between theory and practice. Phenomenography therefore can be argued to be a mini-philosophy which has developed from phenomenology, but which only focuses on understanding a phenomenon from other people's points of view, i.e. second order perspectives. In the introduction (1.3), the epistemological point of departure and ontological knowledge ground is mentioned to be subjectivist. Phenomenographic and phenomenological approaches that aim at detecting peoples' ways of conceiving and experiencing phenomena are subjective in nature. Interpretation and description of empirical data which are made by the researcher are subject to personal and various ways of understanding. Likewise, my research design is open and flexible to various ways of understanding. This, therefore, necessitates the importance of describing the research process in a reliable and trustworthy way.

The following figure, in summary, illustrates the similarities and differences between phenomenology and phenomenography.

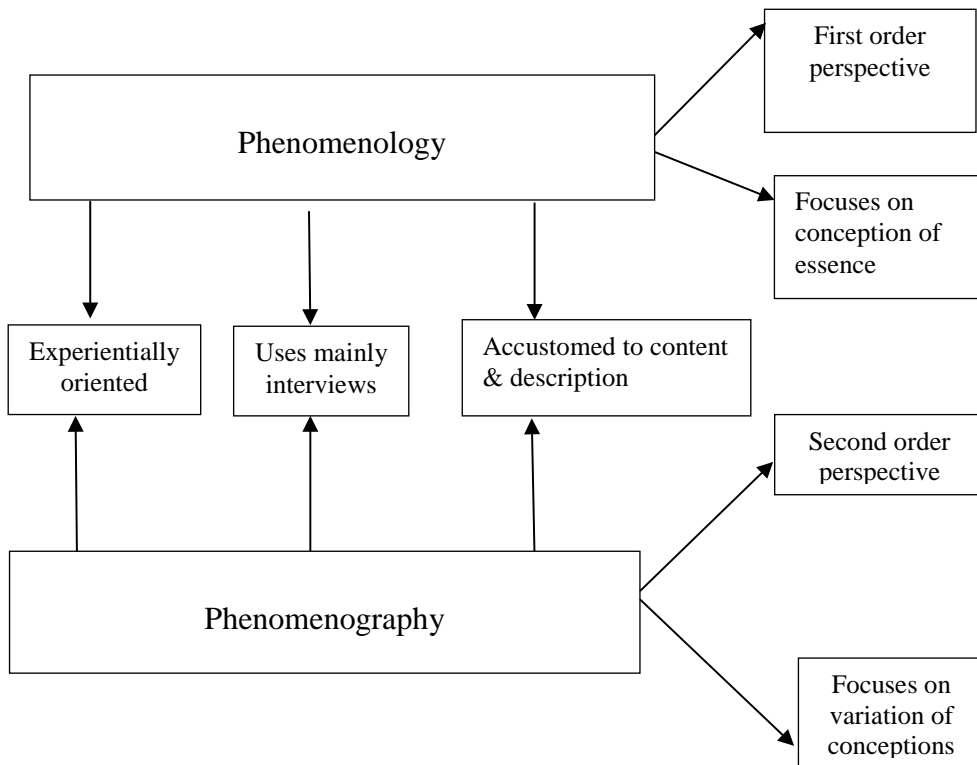


Figure 4 An overview of the relationship between phenomenography and phenomenology

4.3 Data and instruments

In this part, I discuss the selection of respondents, the instruments and procedures of data collection, the principles of data analysis and the procedure of data presentation.

4.3.1 Respondents

Based on the aim of the inquiry, research tasks, and the two qualitative research approaches, the respondents were strategically selected. Researchers in qualitative studies (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström 2001; Gholami, 2009) recommend a sampling procedure that leads to identification of potential respondents who are considered knowledgeable and experts of the phenomenon under study. For phenomenological studies in particular, it is further claimed that the respondents should have a living experience of the phenomenon (Wilson & Washington, 2007).

To achieve the aim of identifying potential respondents, a purposive or non-probabilistic technique was employed (Gholami, 2009; Patton, 1990). In this technique each respondent is selected on the basis of meeting pre-determined criteria which correspond to the targets of the study (Cohen & Manion, 2007; Creswell, 2007). Another significant consideration in this sampling technique is the focus on the possibility of maximizing the variability of the sample, rather than considering representation of the population (Binde, 2010). In a qualitative research approach, frequencies are rarely significant because one frequency of the data might be useful as many others in achieving the aim of the study. This is also connected to the qualitative research principle of focusing on meaning as opposed to making generalized hypothesis statements in a quantitative approach (Charmaz, 2006).

The choice of respondents, as mentioned before, has to reflect the research tasks. The research tasks as outlined in Sub-Chapter 5.1 is to a) investigate teacher educators' conceptions of quality in teacher education and b) explore experiences of teacher educators of quality enhancement in new university-based teacher education. Drawing from these tasks, the source of empirical findings for the study was chosen to be teacher educators in new university-based teacher education, i.e. teacher educators from Dar es Salaam and Mkwawa University Colleges of Education. A teacher educator in this context refers to a person who is a teacher by profession and teaches in the new university-based teacher education. Teacher educators in these institutions were thought to be appropriate and likely to have rich information about the study of quality and quality enhancement in Tanzanian teacher education in general and the new university-based teacher education system in particular. Subject experts who also teach in university-based teacher education but are not teaching professionals were not selected, regardless of their teaching experience.

In phenomenographic and phenomenological studies, large sample size is not necessary, but in-depth data are important (Reiter, Stewart & Bruce, 2011; Gallagher, 1995; Wilson & Washington; 2007). However, determining the exact number of respondents in this type of study is tricky; and in fact there is no clear formula for calculating it as in quantitative research. However, Mason (2010) points out some criteria which are used as guidelines in determining the sample size of the respondents. Some of these criteria are the scope of the study, the study design, requirement of the sponsors and authority bodies, types of data collection methods, nature of the topic of the study, resource, time and saturation (see also Creswell, 1998; Morse, 2000; Bowen, 2008; Charmaz, 2006).

The concept of saturation in determining the sample size is debatable, and seems to be little understood, and above all controversial in practical terms (Mason, 2010). Briefly, saturation means a point in the data collection or interview process where the informants are providing data that are repetitive and no new information is obtained, and therefore there is no need to continue interviewing other respondents (see Charmaz, 2006; Bowen, 2008; Manson, 2010). While this

could be an ideal to identify an appropriate sample size, it is impractical, because the researcher is controlled by other factors such as resources and time. Hence, some scholars suggest numerical guidance. According to Mason, (2010) a range of 20-50 respondents is reasonable for a qualitative research project including Ph.D. dissertation. At the beginning, it was difficult for me as a researcher to establish an exact number of respondents, when after preliminary analysis, I had estimated a sample size of about 30 informants. However, the process is determined otherwise. This is in line with the observation of Mason (2010), who asserts that since qualitative research is exploratory by nature, sometimes even the number of respondents is established in the process and not at the inception of the study.

Based on the established criteria, 25 teacher educators were finally identified as respondents of the study after a first visit to the institutions for the same purpose. This number of respondents was considered realistic in terms of the researcher's time frame and costs. The two institutions where the study was conducted were located far from the researcher's work station. As a result, traveling and living costs during the collection of empirical data were also considered. The number of respondents, however, was carefully decided on to eliminate the possibility of deteriorating the process of data collection and therefore diluting the knowledge expected to be generated. The criteria and the process for identifying the respondents are discussed next.

What criteria were used to select the respondents? Since the study deals with conceptions and experiences of quality in teacher education, teaching experience was considered a crucial criterion in the selection of the respondents. Teaching experience in this context refers to knowledge, skills and attitudes of teaching which are subjected to two contexts. One of the contexts is the general experience a teacher educator has accumulated in his or her teaching career. It is the package of the three domains of learning outcomes as classified in Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, i.e. knowledge, skills and attitudes (see Bloom, 1981) in relation to the number of years of teaching experience in the teaching profession. In fact, this is the basic criterion which is categorically stated not to be less than three years.

The second context of teaching experience is related to the context of the new university based teacher education system. This experience is not a basic criterion, but a necessary one because it connects the general teaching experience to the new university based teacher education system, which in this study is also termed transformational context. Gholami (2009) underlines the importance of teaching experience in determining teachers' conceptions of their careers. Drawing from this observation, teacher educators with not less than three years of teaching experience were selected to be respondents. This means any teacher educator who had at least three years in the teaching profession and was teaching in the new university based teacher education system qualified to be selected as a respondent based on the criterion of teaching experience.

However, it is emphasized that what is investigated in this study is the teacher educators' conceptions and experiences of quality and quality enhancement in teacher education in general and not only the practices reflected in the program of new university-based teacher education system. The conceived and perceived outcomes of teacher educators are expected to transcend the context of transformation.

The other criterion aimed at was subject specialty. In my initial plan I thought of selecting teacher educators with enough teaching experience from both college-based teacher education and university-based teacher education, across the subjects. Unfortunately, it was not easy to access enough teacher educators with the pre-determined criteria across subjects. Teacher educators from the college-based teacher education system were not incorporated automatically in the new system, for various reasons. Only a few teacher educators from college-based teacher education were found to be teaching in these university colleges. Lack of qualifications and other conditions related to the employment scheme of services were possible reasons (Personal communication with head of department, curriculum and teaching). As a result, the majority of the teaching staff in subject matter specialisms were either newly recruited or part time or non-teaching professionals. Confronted with this problem, I could not act strictly in accordance with the criteria but had to act according to the situation.

In qualitative research, the researcher is not tied to following the methods rigidly; instead, there is the flexibility to adopt another stand when necessary (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström (2001). It is, however, important that the alteration is done consciously (Gallagher, 1995; Gholami, 2009). To achieve the aim, I decided to focus on general education instead of subject specialty.

The main specialization of the majority of teacher educators was found to be education, focusing on pedagogy and/or didactics. However, some of the teacher educators were also teaching other subject matter in relation to their academic background, though not their main specialization. These respondents had experience of both education and their respective subject matter. They were also selected under this criterion of specializing in education and, in addition, teaching another subject specialism. But still I selected those subject specialists who were available, i.e. eleven respondents. I did this purposely to increase the variability of the sample of my study. In the sample, therefore, four respondents overlap between two subject specialties. Gender was not considered a crucial criterion in the selection of the respondents; however, both females and males are included in the sample. The process finally ended by identifying 25 respondents.

Tabel 3 Respondents' background attributes

Characteristics	Profile	Number
Teaching experience	3-5 years	5
	5-10 years	8
	10 -15 years	8
	+15 years	4
Subject specialization	History*1	2
	Kiswahili	2
	English*1	3
	Geography*1	3
	Biology	1
	Developmental Studies	2
	Education (General)	5
	Subject Didactics	9
ICT*1	2	
Gender	Female	10
	Male	15

Note. *1-indicates the number of respondents who overlap

4.3.2 Instrument of data collection

Individual interviews were selected as the instrument for data collection. Interviews are an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest. The interview focuses on the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situatedness of research data (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Using this technique, the interviewer and interviewee, through dialogue, construct knowledge. The interview provides an opportunity for the participants to express and share views on a certain phenomenon from their own perspectives (Kvale, 1996). This was an appropriate technique for exploring conceptions and experiences of teacher educators on quality enhancement in teacher education.

Although I adopted both phenomenographic and phenomenological approaches, the individual interview was the only instrument used for data collection. Dahlberg, Drew and Nyström (2001) state that there is no phenomenological methods for data gathering per se; and therefore the researcher can make use of all types of data gathering techniques found in other research approaches. However, phenomenography and phenomenology can use other instruments, as Dahlberg, Drew and Nyström (2001) argue, but the interview is considered relevant in investigating conceptions and lived experience (Creswell, 2005). It

provides an opportunity for the researcher to go deeper into the phenomenon through interrogating the respondents. Using this technique, the researcher can ask for clarifications and exemplifications in order to deepen the understanding of the phenomenon from the respondents (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001)

Interviews further provide an extra input of allowing the researcher not only to capture the language through conversation, but also action through face to face contact (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001; Maykut & Morehouse 1994). In certain circumstances during the interviews, through the facial expression of the respondents, I was able to note certain unexpressed feelings. Utilizing this advantage, I asked follow up questions to uncover the respondent's hidden feelings. In addition, some respondents supplemented their oral responses with signs of approval or rejection expressed by body language. In the Tanzanian cultural context, certain body expressions in certain circumstance portray the message more effectively than words. For example, a person may say 'yes' as a response of approval to a certain argument just to please the other side, but at the same time express a 'hypocritical smile' that symbolizes disapproval. Consciously, I exploited this cultural experience and carefully utilized it during the data collection and interpretation process to enrich the data. For instance, in certain interview excerpts presented, an exclamation mark is used to illustrate the emotional expressions of the respondents.

4.3.3 Process of data collection

The process of data collection was divided into two phases. The first involved and was preceded by pre-testing of the instrument of data collection. The pre-testing of the interview guide was conducted between January and February 2008. The interview guide consisted of a relatively brief series of topics or questions guiding the conversation (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). It ensured that the interview was kept on track with the phenomenon in question (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). The pre-testing of the interview guide and sharpening it for the second phase of empirical study involved also scrutiny by experienced researchers and my fellow doctoral students during seminars at Åbo Akademi University in Finland and Bagamoyo in Tanzania. Their valid inputs were accommodated and led to adjustment of the instrument. In both phases of the empirical study, data was collected through physical face to face conversation.

The first phase of data collection extended from April, 2008 to February, 2009. In this phase I conducted interviews with all 25 respondents of the study. The interviews were conducted informally in teacher educators' respective institutions and offices. Researchers in qualitative studies strive for maintaining a natural context, as it is believed that human experience is affected by context (Meena, 2009; Kincheloe, 1999). Using the open-ended interview guide I asked the respondents questions that related to both research question 1 and 2. In the first research question my interest was to find out teacher educators'

understanding of quality in teacher education. In the second research question my focus was to discover the quality enhancement practices in the new university colleges of education.

To optimize the use of time and the possibility of getting relevant information, I tried as much as possible to ask questions adhering to the interview guide. As my interest was to capture in-depth information, I supplemented the interview guide with questions with follow-up or probing questions. Probing questions are interview tools used to go deeper into the interview responses for the purposes of eliciting more information from the respondents (Patton, 1990; Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). I asked follow up questions to seek clarifications, or additional information. For instance, I used phrases such as “Do you mean reflection is an indicator of quality? ...and if teachers do not reflect; what does it mean in terms of their quality?”. These phrases illustrate additional questions asked to let the respondent exhaust the explanation or approve my interpretation if I was in line with what she or he intended.

Interrogating the respondents to provide data and capturing them is sometimes difficult. To assure that information provided by respondents was grasped accordingly, I used a tape recorder and note books. All the conversations were tape recorded and, in addition, field notes were taken simultaneously. In addition to recording the main ideas in summary form, note taking was meant to capture non-audio features that also carried information (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). One of the strengths of interviews is to provide an extra input of allowing the researcher not only to capture the language through conversation, but also to act through face to face contact (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994).

From March to August, 2009, I analyzed the empirical findings from the first phase study. The preliminary results, on the one hand, indicated that certain significant ideas of teacher educators’ comprehension of quality were becoming apparent, but they were vaguely presented. On the other hand, the preliminary results displayed that the findings on teacher educators’ experiences of quality enhancement exposed several problems that hinder their ambition towards the realization of their goal; however, these findings lacked details of evidence of specific problems. The statements that revealed significant ideas of understanding quality and portraying experiences on quality enhancement, but were either not exhaustively illustrated or raised another challenge, were noted in order to earmark the respondents for further follow-up.

Stemming from these preliminary results that needed more exploration, 12 respondents were selected strategically to participate in the second phase of data collection, for further investigation. Among them, 7 were from MUCE and 5 from DUCE. The basis for their selection was their statements in the first phase interviews which needed further elaboration. For example, one of the respondents had argued that ‘one of the reasons that I think contributes to constrain the integration of theory and practice is the over-ambition of the policy’ makers, RP 24’. In analysis it was not clear how the over-ambition of

policy makers affected the integration process of theory and practice. In the second phase the statement was elaborated, and it was clearly known that there was over-enrollment of student teachers and therefore it was not easy to get space and enough time for practical teaching by using demonstration school.

The empirical study for the second phase was conducted between February and May 2010. The second phase of data collection was conducted simultaneously with verification of the results from phase one by cross checking the interpretation of data made by using some respondents. My main focus in the second phase of data collection was to deepen the description of the earmarked responses and find additional empirical data that could contribute to answering the two research questions of the study exhaustively. Even though empirical data from both research questions 1 and 2 were used as criteria for the second phase of data collection, the majority of the statements (30 out of 43) that were used as criteria for the second phase of data collection were greatly related to research question 2. The same interview guide used in the first phase of data collection was shaped to capture detailed information that was not captured in the first phase (See Appendix 1A and Appendix 1B).

During the second phase of interviews, as opposed to the first one, I used follow-up and probing questions more often to explore unrevealed information and search for clarifications of vague responses (Patton, 1990; Creswell, 2008). However, I was using a general shaped interview guide i.e. Appendix 1B, but in the course of conversation and probing questions, I was focusing on individual cases. I asked several questions reflecting the respondent's responses in the first phase.

Using probing questions was deemed necessary not only for answering the two research questions of the study, but also for providing better understanding of the whole research problem and generating new knowledge (Creswell, 2008; Smith & Flower, 2008). The follow-up questions engaged the respondents in reflection and critical thinking, which resulted in high quality data. In comparison to phase one of the data collection, in the second phase I spent more time. Almost one hour and half was used for each conversation session in the second phase, as compared to an average of one hour per conversation session in the first phase.

The next figure concludes the discussion on this section, by schematically illustrating the time frame of the data collection and analysis.

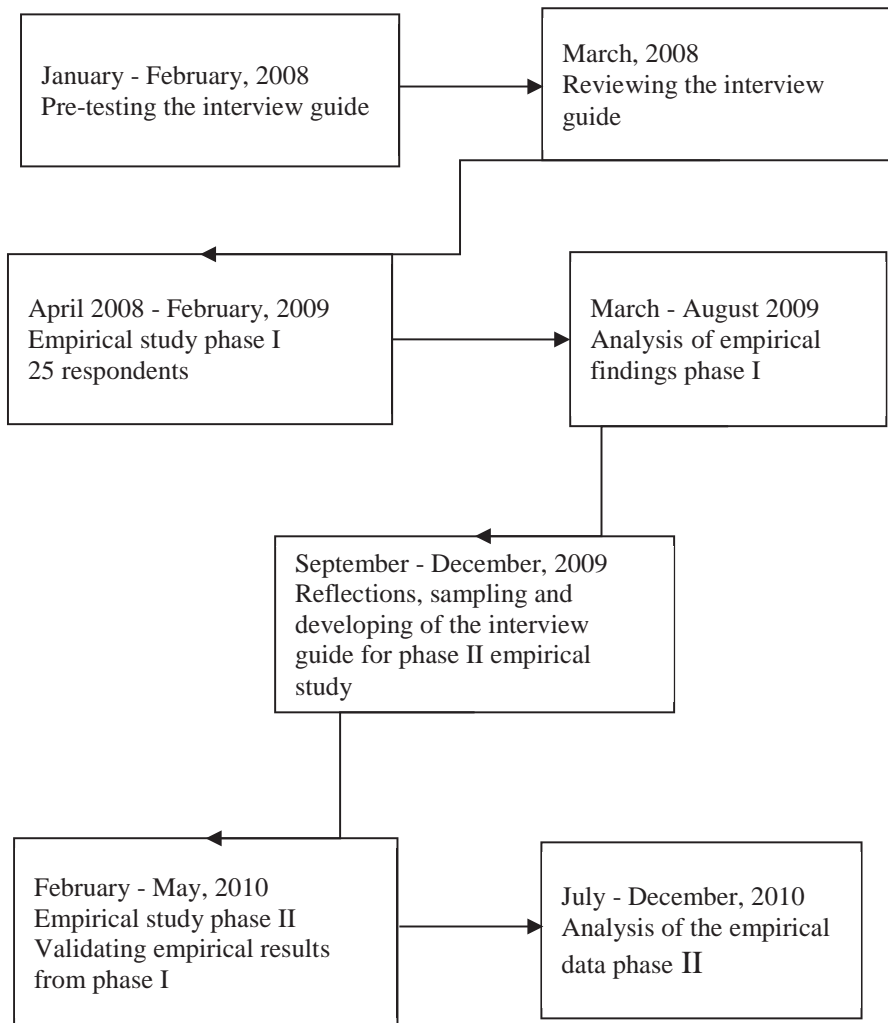


Figure 5 Empirical study time-frame

4.3.4 Principles of data analysis

After collection of raw data from the field, the main task of the researcher is to organize this information in order to make sense. My central purpose of data analysis was to develop variations of teacher educators' conceptions of quality and describe their experiences of quality enhancement in teacher education. This could be achieved through organizing the data in the way that would answer the two research questions. As it was for data collection, the analysis was also done

in two phases, and the same procedure was applied for both phases; only that the second phase encompassed a comparison with the first phase.

As was stated earlier, the interviews were tape-recorded. The first step of data analysis therefore was to transcribe the audio-taped interviews into a written text (Kvale, 1996). To optimize the possibility of having quality data, I attempted to make sure that the written text as much as possible would reflect the ideas expressed by the respondents. During the interviews I noted certain interviewees' gestures reflecting additional information of emphasis or emotional disapproval of what they verbally expressed. These were noted in the note books, because they could not be captured by tape recorder. When researchers describe informants' lived experience, they should be aware of the strengths and limitations of language, as it is not just verbal but also non-verbal. They should not miss meanings expressed in any form (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). A written text has to reflect all the features expressed by the respondents. To achieve this mission I supplemented the audio tape with the notes which I was taking during interview.

The second step was to re-read the written text of the interviews. My intention was to obtain the general meaning of the participants' responses. My approach to data analysis was based on content. I categorized the statements of the respondents in relation to the meaning of the content. After reading several times and identifying at least the general meanings of each respondent's responses, I started to code. Coding in this sense refers to the conceptual process of trying to make interpretation of data available and put them in groups according to the existing relationships (Alvesson & Sknöldberg, 2000). In practical terms, it represents the operations by which data related to teacher educators' conceptions of quality and experiences of quality enhancement were transformed (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). With the aid of the interview guide I sorted out statements from the transcribed interviews to establish meaningful concepts that were used to develop categories. In this stage I was doing open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), and it involved labeling. Open coding is the initial step of the coding process, whereby concepts are identified, developed, labeled and grouped to form categories of particular phenomena. A category is a qualitatively different way of conceiving a certain phenomenon (Eklund-Myrskog, 1996). Open coding involves labeling.

Labeling was based on identifying the most idiosyncratic features that could illustrate and clarify qualitative differences among the categories that describe how teacher educators conceive quality in teacher education and experience quality enhancement (see Marton, 1988). In labeling the categories, sub-categories and aspects, three approaches were used. One was to use the names originating from the respondents' statements. For instance, the name of category 'B', which is labeled 'professional scholarship', originates from RP5's (respondent number 5) statement. However, in certain circumstances, the names were shaped to meet the demand of scientific language. In the second approach,

labels originating from names or concepts from the theoretical framework of the study were adopted. The theoretical framework presented in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 consists of, among other ideas, concepts appropriate to be used as labels of categories. This rich reservoir was used to pick labels considered appropriate. The third approach was to use my own initiatives based on reflection of the main theme of the statements. A sub-category such as 'overlaps' is an example of labels employed under this approach.

The third step was to make a critical analysis of the preliminarily established categories in order to form more general categories. This is what is called axial coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The main role of the researcher at this stage or type of coding is to make connections between preliminary categories and subcategories in order to discover related ones. I critically examined concepts and preliminary categories to identify possible similarities. The concepts and small categories that were found to have similar meanings were integrated to form new and more general qualitative categories of descriptions (Marton & Both, 1997).

4.4 Validity, reliability and ethics

In addition to what has been described earlier, this part explicitly illustrates how validity, reliability and ethics have been addressed in this study.

Validity and reliability are crucial criteria in appraising any scientific study (Gay & Airasian, 2003; Omari & Sumra, 1977; Eklund-Myrskog, 1996; Gallagher, 1995). While validity addresses the question of how well an instrument measures what it is meant to measure, reliability deals with the consistency and repeatability over time of the result obtained from the instrument and respondents (Aspfors, 2012). In the current study validity and reliability are criteria that question if educators' conceptions and experiences of quality and quality enhancement of teacher education identified as outcome space are credible and trustworthy (see also Ärkerlind, 2005; Flick, 2006).

However, the notions validity and reliability seem to be more related to quantitative than qualitative research (Gallagher, 1995; Omari & Sumra, 1977; Silverman, 2006). In the next part I further discuss the affiliation of these notions to quantitative research, and their application in qualitative research, which is also the nature of this inquiry.

As a result of relating the notions validity and reliability to quantitative research, pioneers and advocates of qualitative research, and in particular phenomenographers, opt for the use of credibility and trustworthiness as appropriate terms to replace validity. In addition, dependability and transferability are being used to replace reliability (see also Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Ary, 2002; Airasian, 2003; Ärkerlind, 2005; Flick, 2006; Gay & Airasian, 2003). Yet it is observed that, regardless of which notion is used, the basic value

of these notions as canons of assessing the quality of knowledge generated through research remains the same and unharmed (see also Gallagher, 1995; Binde, 2010). It is important to act with honesty and integrity in the whole process of conducting research. Based on this point of view, to substantiate the credibility and dependability of the results of this study, the choice of using the notions from both quantitative and qualitative research designs simultaneously is opted for. Parallel to this option, Aspfors (2012) reveals that certain researchers operate in between the two research traditions. In this case, therefore, it means they can even use the notions from both quantitative and qualitative.

My decision to use the notions from both research designs is rooted in two reasons. The first is the fact that validity and reliability are generally addressed within educational research in the Tanzanian context. By using these common notions, the other notions of credibility, trustworthiness, dependability and transferability can be clarified to Tanzanian readers.

The second reason is to tune my conceptual framework in order to exploit the strengths available in each paradigm's notions and be cautious of some possible threats. It is asserted that any freedom provided by the left hand in qualitative design is taken away by the right hand in quantitative design (see also Gallagher, 1995). My decision, therefore, is based on assumption that acting in the middle of the two philosophies is likely to produce more justice than operating within one philosophy. In this sense, therefore, my intention is to maximize the exploitation of opportunities and minimize the possible threats that may prevail in using notions that are affiliated to both qualitative and quantitative designs.

Validity in research addresses the extent to which the empirical findings of the study are true. Binde (2010) points out that the criteria against which research findings can be judged have many dimensions because there are different types of validity. One of the criteria in which validity can be expressed is to assess the extent to which the findings correctly describe the phenomenon under study. Omari and Sumra (1977) argue that when we address validity, we ask the question of whether we are really hitting the phenomenon we claim to investigate.

Hence, the empirical findings of the study will be considered credible and trustworthy or valid if they represent the actual state of the investigated phenomenon. Credibility and trustworthiness refer to both correspondence and coherence of the findings and the phenomenon being studied. What criteria can be used to judge the credibility or validity of the empirical findings? I will try to respond to this question by using illustrations from this study. Validity is tested by examining the findings about teacher educators' conceptions and experiences of quality and quality enhancement as per general aim (Chapter 1) and research questions (Chapter 4).

To be precise, validity questions if the results of the study really stand for a) teacher educators' conceptions of quality in teacher education, b) teacher

educators' experiences of quality enhancement, and c) if the teacher educators' conceptions and experiences expressed in a) and b) correspond to the real experience and practice of quality of teacher education on the ground. The prevalence of correlation between the results and the variables (phenomena) in a), b) and c), validate that the results are credible and trustworthy.

What measures have been taken to ensure the credibility and trustworthiness of the study? No straight answer to this question is in place. Nonetheless, I explain next the measures that were taken to ensure that validity is guaranteed. One of the measures was the use of triangulation in the collection of data (Groenewald, 2004; Binde, 2010). Triangulation in this study is manifested in the employment of two phases of data collection, as discussed in Sub-chapter 4.3. The main purpose of employing the second phase of empirical study was not only to deepen the data that were identified as potential in the first phase, but also to compare and contrast the empirical findings if they produced similar results. The use of both tape recording and note-taking to capture the data during interviews is also a strategy of validating the findings as it provided an opportunity for cross-checking the accuracy of the recorded interviews (Groenewald, 2004). In this context I treat it as one way of triangulation.

The other measure of ensuring validity employed was the use of follow up questions. Employing probing questions (Gallagher, 1995) during interviews for the purpose of clearing up vagueness, verifying precision and deepening of the data are significant measures for ensuring that validity is maintained in the study, as it assists in obtaining the quality data necessary for the authenticity of the knowledge generated (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The second phase of data collection was accompanied by some respondents' preliminary results from phase one being crosschecked. The respondents were asked whether the interpretation I had made represented their conceptions and experiences. This approach is also called member checking (Gallagher, 1995). The whole process of employing multiple means of collecting and verifying data plays an important function in enhancing the quality of the data collected.

As compared to quantitative studies, qualitative studies have a high risk of trapping the researchers in subjectivity, which distorts the credibility of the research results. Hence, it is important to take precautions in order to avoid this risk, which might affect the authenticity of the study. To reduce this risk, I strived to support my interpretation of the data and development of categories of description by using detailed excerpts from the original statements of the respondents. Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström (2001) assert that for validity and clarity reasons, it is advisable to illustrate the analysis with excerpts from the data. In presentation of the results, I have aimed at presenting the qualitative empirical data from the respondents without significant alteration, as can be seen in Chapter 5 (see also Binde, 2010; Gallagher, 1995).

During the research process I tried to be conscious of and assume a stance of neutrality throughout the process. Wilson and Washington (2007) argue that to strive for a valid interpretation, researchers are advised to be reflective in their approach. Self-reflection can be perceived as self-awareness, a sense of keeping a critical eye on oneself (Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001).

In short, triangulation, the use of detailed respondents' excerpts, and assuming the position of neutrality were measures taken to ensure internal validity. By internal validity, I refer to the degree to which the scientific observations and measurement are authentic representations of the original reality.

Measures to guarantee reliability were also observed. To ensure reliability I involved three experienced researchers as co-judges for the purpose of getting inter-subjective reliability. Other researchers (Binde, 2010; Gallagher, 1995) call this method peer review or debriefing. The three co-judges were given the statements and the categories to re-read and make critical reflection on to see if my analysis and development of categories were free from personal bias. The co-judges went through the statements independently and raised some observations that I accommodated in shaping the study. For example, from their comments, certain categories that were seen to have common meanings were combined. Also the labels of certain categories were shaped to acquire qualitative names in line with a qualitatively oriented study.

Another important measure of scientific study is the observation of research ethics. Research ethics is defined as a system of moral principles or rules that controls the conduct of the study (Cowie, 1989). It covers several issues, including ensuring the welfare of the informants, informed consent, maintaining honesty in conducting research, and handling data provided by the participants with the utmost anonymity and confidentiality (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Field, 2004; Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Consideration of research ethics is one of the scientific practices which are given due attention to because of the need today for trust between science and society (Aspfors, 2012). In an effort to ensure that ethical issues are taken care of in this study, certain measures have been taken deliberately.

First, I consulted the Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH) for their informed permission to conduct the study. COSTECH is an institution that has legal mandate to coordinate and oversee research activities in Tanzania. I applied for permission and was awarded it (see Appendix 1 attached). Parallel to the permission of COSTECH, I further consulted the management of the two respective institutions where I conducted the study. In one of the institutions, permission was provided orally. While in the other institution permission was provided in writing (Appendix 2). This variation in providing permission is a common phenomenon. Sturman (1999) describes that in research ethics are mainly handled through negotiations between the researcher and the researched, and the agreement may vary from formal contract to informal agreement.

Second, informed consent from the participants before engaging them in the study was sought. In a preliminary discussion with each respondent, I revealed the objectives of the study and notified them that their participation was voluntary. Scholars (Kvale, 1996; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Wilson & Washington, 2011) argue that informed consent is associated with informing the participants about the objectives of the study, the main characteristics of the methodology employed, plus other anticipated risks and benefits that are connected to the study. They were further assured that no kind of pressure was to be imposed in order to force them to participate or continue in the study. It was further stipulated to the respondents that they were free to withdraw at any time if they were not satisfied with the conduct of the inquiry (Groenewald, 2004). It was further emphasized to the respondents that their information would be used only for research purposes and would therefore strictly be anonymous and treated confidentially.

To guarantee anonymity, on the one hand I employed artificial identification of the respondents instead of their real names. The names that are used are coded by initials 'RP' followed by a certain number. On the other hand, to maintain confidentiality the individual interview was conducted informally in places where freedom and confidentiality were assured. In addition, it was even easier for me to guarantee social rapport with my respondents, as they were my fellow teacher educators and some of them were known to me before.

The ultimate responsibility for ensuring ethics in research lies with the individual researcher (Anderson, 1998). It is hard to lay down precise rules for ethical issues, as ethical matters are contestable (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). The discussion on validity and reliability presented before also accounts for ethical issues, as it reveals some aspects of honesty which are necessary for achieving the most authentic outcome.

5 Presentation and analysis of the results

In this chapter I present, describe and discuss the empirical data. The presentation of the data follows the order of the research questions. The first part (5.1) deals with the empirical findings of research question one which is about teacher educators' conceptions of quality and the second part (5.2) is focused on research question two, which deals with exploration of teacher educators' experiences of quality enhancement. The presentation of the data is supported by excerpts from the respondents' statements; and the name of the respondent that provided the excerpt is mentioned adjacently. In addition, as highlighted earlier (4.4), the names of respondents are coded by an abbreviation 'RP' followed by randomly assigned number of identification. For instance, RP 2 means respondent number 2.

Three levels of category of description have been established: categories, sub-categories and aspects. The relationship of the three levels can be illustrated deductively or inductively (Gallagher, 1995). Approaching the relationship deductively means assuming that the categories are divided to form sub-categories and the sub-categories are split into aspects. The opposite view is approaching the relationship inductively, i.e. imagining that the aspects are connected to form sub-categories and the sub-categories are integrated to establish categories (see also Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001). In principal, an inductive approach of developing categories and presenting the results is recommended in phenomenographic, phenomenological, and qualitative approach in general (Husserl, 1970; Giorgi, 1997; Dahlberg, Drew & Nyström, 2001; Reiter, Stewart, & Bruce, 2011). I adhered to this principle in developing the three levels of categories, as explicated in the process of data analysis (4.3.4), but in presentation of the results I approached it deductively. I started by introducing the category system, followed by sub-categories and lastly ended with the aspects. I did this for the purposes of maintaining logic and coherence to the reader. I thought it was reasonable and coherent to start with the main heading and divide it to the lower headings at the middle level of sub-categories and aspects at the lowest level. I have adapted this approach even in other chapters; for example, in Chapter 1, I started by introducing the main heading 'Introduction' before introducing sub-chapters. It is a common tradition adapted for text writing, which may pose a challenge to the traditional qualitative research approach.

5.1 Conceptions of quality in teacher education

The answer to research question one has been organized in two categories of description. A category represents a certain qualitative different conception on quality of teacher education. The following table illustrates the categories identified.

Tabel 4 Overview of teacher educators’ categories of conceptions of quality in teacher education

Category A	Category B
Outstanding academic scholarship	Adequate professional scholarship

The term scholarship as used in naming the two categories refers to engagement in quality or enhanced academic and professional activities such as learning, teaching and inquiry.

5.1.1 Category A: Outstanding academic scholarship

The notion outstanding academic scholarship refers to the pursuit of enhanced theoretical and practical subject matter knowledge of academic disciplines relevant to teacher education. It further refers to both professionals’ or practitioners’ engagement and commitment in enhancing the mastery of the knowledge base of a specific discipline of academic subject matter such as geography, history, civics, and economics.

The responses to teacher educators’ conceptions of quality show that they conceive quality as a high degree of performance or merit which demands intellectual abilities. Critical analysis of the statements resulted in the identification of two sub-categories through which teacher educators conceptualized quality of teacher education: excellence and positive transformation. The table below illustrates.

Tabel 5 Sub-categories of outstanding academic scholarship

Main category	Sub-categories
Outstanding academic scholarship	(A-1) Excellence
	(A-2) Positive transformation

(A-1) Excellence

The dictionary meaning of the notion excellence is the state of a phenomenon being excellent, having great merit, superiority, and high quality (Cowie, 1991). This meaning is in line with the central focus of teacher educators’ conceptions on quality as excellence. Teacher educators’ thoughts on quality as excellence comprised two main criteria that were established at the level of aspects, namely in-depth mastery of subject matter and high academic status of the institution.

In the first aspect of *in-depth mastery of subject matter*, the focus on quality is based on the ability to demonstrate profound mastery of content knowledge of a particular academic subject. The respondents explained quality as a state of having an excellent level of academic qualities or success or performance in subject matter knowledge. They placed emphasis on mastering content knowledge of a particular discipline. This is evident in the statement of one of the respondents:

It is the state of high performance in academic studies related to teacher education. You know, you attain quality when your performance in subjects such as Mathematics, Biology and English, for instance, is excellent. If teachers are excellent in their mastery of the subjects they teach, really conversant in what they teach in each topic, so very likely students also will achieve in their examination and life too (RP 13, 4 years' experience, Biology Department).

The belief of conceptualizing quality in terms of in-depth mastery of subject matter is also a manifestation of putting more weight on the academic than the professional component in determining the quality of teacher education. In addition to the explained statement above, this is also reflected in the following statement:

The basic indicator of quality in teacher education is the academic part of it, the subject matter. In my thinking, therefore, quality in teacher education is indicated by the demonstration of excellence in this part. To achieve quality means achieving highly in subject matter. This becomes possible if student teachers and lecturers seriously engage in their specific subject matter to pursue the knowledge. You know the target of teacher education is to prepare teachers who can manage to handle these subjects in the schools (RP 2, 5 years' experience, History Department).

Another evidence that contributes to the illustrations of conceiving quality as an in-depth mastery of subject matter is reflected in the emphasis given by respondents to this phenomenon:

In my experience, I know there are a lot of complaints in schools; the teachers skip some of the topics because they cannot manage! Yes, some of the topics in the secondary curriculum are very tough. My belief is that if efforts are made to ensure content knowledge is mastered, the problem of low quality will be tackled (RP 13, 4 years' experience, Biology Department).

What is the implication of conceiving quality as excellence, and particularly as an in-depth of mastery of subject matter? Two implications can be drawn from this perspective, which considers quality as excellence with focus on in-depth mastery of subject matter. The need for deep mastery of disciplinary subject matter in teacher education is considered to be crucial for quality. Scholars (such as Abell, 2007; Gimmestad & Hall, 1995; Osaki, 2001; Kimaryo, 2010) underscore the need for teachers to have an in-depth knowledge of the subject matter they will be teaching. As highlighted before (Chapter 3), subject matter knowledge is the amount and organization of knowledge per se in the minds of teachers (Shulman, 1986). Conceptualizing quality this way is a positive outlook

and is a key towards development of strategies that can enhance the competencies of teachers both in schools and the teacher education system.

Another implication of in-depth mastery of subject matter in teacher education is the over-emphasis of subject matter knowledge at the expense of professional subject. This way of thinking perpetuates the wrong belief that claims that, in teaching, pure subject matter content knowledge is the most important and comes first before subject matter didactics (Binde, 2010). This outlook sometimes has been extended to propose that any one with good mastery of subject matter can teach (Darling-Hammond, et al, 2005). The two, however, are supposed to be integrated in teacher education (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010), but they differ. As already discussed (Chapter 3), pure subject matter knowledge is the knowledge that a teacher needs to have in order to organize the concepts, facts, principles and theories of a given discipline (Abell, 2007; Ryder, 2001). In contrast, subject didactics, which belongs to professional subjects, refers to knowledge of instruction (Hansén & Forsman, 2007; Kimaryo, 2010). It is the science and art of delivery which blends content and pedagogy (Tambyah, 2008) and hence actualizes the real teaching process as a profession.

The two implications of teacher educators' conceptions of quality discussed above i.e. need for deep mastery of disciplinary subject matter and its emphasis at the expense of professional subject count for quality. While the former seems to facilitate, the latter is likely to impede the quality enhancement process. Rasmussen and Dorf (2010) comment that a teacher education program that concentrates on academic subject at the expense of subject didactics is at risk of preparing teachers of low quality, as academic subjects do not provide student teachers with the needed teaching competence.

In the second aspect of excellence, i.e. *high status of academic institutions*, teacher educators' conceptions connect quality to the level of the institution that runs the programs of teacher education. The respondents argued that quality as excellence can be attained if it is organized by a reputable institution which is recognized by its academic status. The respondents clarified the connection between the conversion of Dar es Salaam Teachers' College and Mkwawa High School into university colleges of education in relation to the ambition of quality enhancement. They observed that it was a rational decision and appropriate strategy towards quality enhancement. It was clarified that the decision aimed to strengthen the provision of teacher education.

The respondents further commented that the programs, particularly those which qualify secondary schools teachers, should be fully integrated into higher education. This is supported by the following excerpt from one response:

Look! With the rapid expansion of public and private universities in Tanzania, do not be surprised that the quality of other institutions which train professionals below degree level is soon going to be questioned. I think it is high time for the programs which are preparing secondary school teachers to be fully integrated into higher education (RP 8, 12 years' experience, Education Department).

The idea of equating quality to the academic level of the institution that organizes the program is further illustrated by another respondent, who states that:

I think quality in teacher education cannot be easily captured in a few words. It is a moving target. For example, without any scientific evidence people tend to associate quality with the academic or professional level of the graduates. Even myself I have the assumption that a holder of a B.Ed. is better than a diploma holder. Yes, this is what I believe! ...in this sense, therefore, my stand point is that the decision to transform this institution into a university college was the appropriate approach to improving the quality of teacher education (RP 4, 10 years' experience, Education Department) .

Parallel and in addition to the above way of thinking, another respondent observes:

To build confidence in enhanced quality among ourselves, stakeholders and the clients of teacher education, I have an idea that we need to link teacher education programs to higher learning institutions. I think that the status of the institution that offers or oversees the program influences the quality of that program (RP 15, 16 years' experience, Education Department).

How do these findings relate to a wider context? Two assumptions can be advanced. One is that teacher education, regardless of the level of the programs, should be offered or connected to higher learning institutions. In this assumption, quality is anticipated to be improved or attained by virtue of being attached to a higher learning institution. The trust probably is in management, well-educated manpower (Ng'wandu, 2006), academic culture (Michalak, 2010) and other resources attracted from higher learning institutions which cannot be accessed by lower level institutions.

Drawing from Adams (1993), Khan and Saeed (2010) argue that one of elements that determine quality programs that qualify teachers is the reputation of the institution. Certain institutions practice such an approach. Kyambongo University in Uganda is one of them. In addition to bachelor's and masters' programs, it conducts certificate programs in teacher education through an affiliate or connected teacher college; and it is considered to produce primary school teachers of high quality (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005).

Another assumption is that the minimal qualification level of a teacher education program is a bachelor degree, provided in higher learning institutions. In this conceptualization, teacher educators equate quality with the qualification level of the teacher education program. Hansén and Forsman (2009) assert that one of the aspects being considered for Finnish quality performance in the school system is the qualification of teachers, which is master degree-based and integrated into universities.

Teacher educators expressed this ambition in many ways. Apart from the evidence captured above, the discussion in research question 2 will further clarify this issue. The need is also reflected in the literature. Mosha (2004)

suggests new reforms in terms of raising the teachers' academic level in Africa and Tanzania in particular, because he claims that the current trend, where many teachers have only secondary education, is inadequate to attain quality.

The need is further expressed by others in different ways. Transformation of teachers' colleges into university colleges of education (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005) is another means in which this need is reflected. The ambition is further to transform Mtwara Teachers' College (Visitation Team, 2008). Moreover, it was suggested that all diploma teachers colleges be converted to university colleges. However, the government has been cautioned that this movement needs piloting and gradual institutionalization (MoEVT, 2008), probably because of quality vs. quantity dilemma. Quality in teacher as excellence is outlined in two lines of thinking, as demonstrated in the next figure.



Figure 6 Teacher educators' conceptions of quality as excellence

(A-2) Positive transformation

Positive transformation is the next sub-category that illustrates teacher educators' thoughts on quality in connection to the developmental changes that an individual acquires as a result of engagement in a certain teacher education program. Transformation in this context therefore refers to a kind of qualitative change that assumes a tendency of development towards better or improved state or performance. According to teacher educators' thinking, quality of teacher education has to be considered adjacent to the whole academic development map from *input, process and outcome*. Three types of conceptions illustrating quality as positive transformation have been used as aspects to develop this sub-category.

The first aspect is *excellent input*, which specifically focuses on academic background and entry qualification of those who join teacher educational

courses. The respondents assumed that the quality of teacher education is partly determined by the background academic strength of the candidates who are enrolled to pursue the studies:

There is a saying which states ‘garbage in, garbage out’. If you enroll candidates with a weak academic base, you are likely to get teachers of low quality. I see this as a big challenge in our country’s system of teacher education. The problem is likely to be reflected in certificate teacher education programs, where academic entry standards several times have been compromised for several reasons, including political ones (RP 14, 8 years’ experience, Education Department).

In the same observation of conceptualizing quality by capitalizing on academic strengths of those who are recruited in teacher education programs, another respondent states:

Our experience of enrolling ex-standard seven in the teaching profession in the mid-1970s after launching UPE in 1974 is still in the minds of many. Its impact in teacher education is still living today. Do you remember the sarcastic interpretation of UPE to “Ualimu Pasipo Elimu”². Entry qualification should be carefully set and observed (RP.15, 16 years’ experience, Education Department).

What does it mean to conceive quality as excellent input? The central thought of teacher educators in this conception focuses on the entry grade qualification of applicants in the programs. According to the findings, reasonable entry qualifications are important for ensuring quality graduates of the programs. Likewise, Mosha (2012) argues that the quality of students admitted in secondary, teacher or general university education programs is one of the determining factors for quality outcomes. He contends that an education program without a good and careful selection of students for admission is likely to suffer from low quality.

Næss (2006) emphasizes the quality of enrollees in teacher education by stating that a student’s grade-point average is of major importance for admission and success in completing the studies. However, studies show that teacher education is facing a challenge in recruiting student teachers of good quality. Andersen (2008) contends that since the mid-1990s teacher education students in Denmark have had a lower grade-point average than their high school cohort as a whole. It is further pointed out that currently in some Nordic countries nearly all qualified applicants, even those at cut-off points, are accepted (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010).

In Tanzania, as in several other countries, the same challenge prevails. Standards for entrance in programs of teacher education are established, but they are not maintained in practice. In the college-based teacher education route sometimes a deliberate decision to lower entry qualification is made for the sake of quantity at the expense of quality because of political interests. Mosha (2012) asserts that despite the fact that political will and support is essential in successful implementation of any education program, it has to avoid meddling with the

² Kiswahili phrase which means teaching without education.

professional set standards. Temu (2007) concludes that failure to maintain established standards is one of the reasons for low quality of teacher education. Other reasons that relate to input and are considered causes of low quality of teacher education in Tanzania are: entry with only secondary education (Mosha, 2004), and cheating in examinations and forgery of certificates in CSEE and ACSEE (Meena, 2009).

The second aspect is an *effective process*. Some of the respondents conceived quality in connection to what happens in the *process* of teaching and learning in the programs of teacher education. They pointed out that the quality of teachers to a great extent depends on the quality of instruction that takes place in the lecture rooms. This is obvious in the following respondents' statement:

You can't expect to have good teachers if your process of preparing them is not good. Teaching methods that enhance critical thinking and encourage deep understanding of learning are crucial aspects of the process of preparing a learned teaching force (RP 3, 8 years' experience, Education Department)

Further observation was made by another respondent who conceived quality of teacher education focusing on the instruction process. The respondent's reflection was directed to teacher educators' ability in mastery and handling of subject didactics. The respondent seems to emphasize the use of teaching methods that stimulate and enhance student active learning. This is reflected in the following text provided by a respondent:

If the teaching is characterized by teacher educators who are transmitters of knowledge to the students, its outcome is to get teachers of low quality. My personal understanding on this matter convinces me that teaching in many classes is characterized by a lecture method whose approach is characterized by transmission...it is either chalk board, projector or power point approach (RP 7, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

This observation is further supported by another respondent who expressed almost the same view, but with additional information of comparison. The respondent reflected his former experience of teaching in the college-based teacher education system. In his reflective comparison, he seems to favor the quality of instruction in college-based over his respective university college. He made this comment about using interactive and non-interactive instructional methods:

Teacher educators mainly employ non-interactive teaching methods which do not provide rich soil to enhance critical thinking. The lecture method dominates in classes. Compared to the instruction in diploma and certificate teacher education programs, where I was teaching before, the quality of instruction in this university college falls below it. Transformation is needed! (RP 15, 16 years' experience, Education Department).

The respondent further observed that partnership between university-colleges of education and teachers' colleges could bring mutual benefits to both sides, if it was established and effectively enhanced:

I think TEP (Tutors' Education Program) did a creditable job in establishing and enhancing interactive methods of teaching and learning. There are good instructional practices which our system of teacher education in universities can adopt from the diploma and certificate system of teacher education. This could be possible if the partnership and cooperation between the two systems of teacher education could be initiated and strengthened (RP 7, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

Another observation was provided by another teacher educator, who, however, acknowledged the domination of low quality instruction, but she attributed the problem to shortage of teaching and learning facilities and the large number of students in classes:

The reasons for low quality of instruction may be many, but in my belief this is somehow attributed by over-enrolment, shortage of teaching and learning facilities...not enough classes, books, offices, chemicals in laboratories, computers and even lecturers themselves. Under such circumstance the use of the lecture method which results in low quality of teaching and hence learning may be opted for as it reduces the burden and inconvenience to the respective teacher educator (RP 16, 5 years' experience, Developmental Studies Department).

How does this way of thinking reflect the quality of teacher education? The quality of teacher education is partly determined by teacher educators' expertise in integrating subject matter and pedagogy (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010). During the teaching and learning process the inputs of the educational program are transformed into learning; and according to Verspoor (2008), no curriculum program can be implemented effectively without competent educators who can successfully integrate the two. For quality teacher education, the instructional process has to employ methods that encourage learners' active dialogue, reflection and critical thinking (Vuzo, 2010; Kitta & Tilya, 2010) and ultimately result into meaningful learning (Koskinen 2011). The respondents' observations that teaching in classes is dominated by non-interactive methods reflects the results of studies conducted in the school system in Tanzania. In their study to assess the effect of the competence-based curriculum, Tilya and Mafumiko (2010) conclude that despite several interventions which have been instituted to address instructional problems, teaching has continued to be teacher-centred.

Making a connection between this result and the instruction in teacher education programs, one can claim that this trend has a negative effect on the quality of teachers and hence instruction in the school system. The weaknesses that teachers in schools demonstrate may be rooted to the programs that qualify them. Over-enrolment and shortage of teaching and learning materials as disclosed by the respondents perhaps may be contributing to inadequate preparation of teachers. Illustrating teachers' incompetence in using learner-centred instructional methods in one secondary class, Tilya and Mafumiko (2010, p.37) state:

The catch-phrase in teaching is so-called '*participatory methods*'. It is common in in-service training workshops and schools where student teachers go for

teaching practice. Though the method is held in high esteem, its implementation in schools is depressing: it is invariably reduced to putting learners in groups to discuss something vague such as 'find the mean of a data set'. The groups formed lack organization and are nowhere close to what is propounded by constructivists.

Other respondents conceived low quality of instruction in teacher education program attributed to the use of part-time lecturers. The respondents also revealed that the times allocated for instruction were not observed. They stated that the university colleges were using part time lecturers who normally arrange teaching sessions according to their convenience without adhering to the formal time table. They revealed that part-time lecturers were traveling a long distance from Dar es Salaam to Iringa, almost 400 kilometers. This is obvious in the next respondent's statement:

...as they arrive they condense the sessions as much as possible, they do not follow the normal time table, they arrange according to their convenience and teach consecutively so that they finish and leave early. It is like a marathon! I am not used to watching the way they do in the process, but I think they use non-interactive methods (RP 20, 8years' experience, Education Department).

The problem of part-time work in Tanzanian higher learning institutions is a critical issue for quality. It is observed that part time employment has a tendency to disrupt established processes and the functioning of institutions of higher education (Alphonse, 2004). This claim seems to be true because the findings showed that part-time lecturers did not follow the normal established time table. Instead, they arranged classroom sessions according to their convenience. The problem of part-time lecturers is caused by a shortage of these experts. University colleges of education are not an exception in this case. Alphonse (2004) cautions that relying on part-time and other contractual employment, without efforts to recruit, develop and retain young academics, many higher learning institutions are at risk of more difficulties in the future. It is considered that to improve the quality of the instructional process, permanent qualified teacher educators are inevitable.

The variation in teacher educators' conceptions of quality as an effective process is somehow based on years of experience. Those with long experience attribute the low quality of teaching to the inadequate competencies of the instructors. They revealed that instructional skills were inadequate among teacher educators and therefore the lecture method was commonly used in classes. Those with short experience projected the problem to the shortage of teaching and learning resources such as computers and classrooms. They argued that teacher educators opted for lecture methods because of limited resources and high level of enrollment of students.

The last aspect in positive transformation is named *functional outcome*. The majority of the teacher educators conceived quality in relation to fitness for purpose. They claimed that the judgment of quality has to focus on the outcome if it meets the anticipated expectations. The contribution of a graduate of a

teacher education program in the society where he or she lives was thought to be significant in conceiving quality. Their observation was that quality has to be evaluated by focusing on the outcome. The following respondent's statement illustrates this view:

We should ask if the learning outcomes of a prescribed teacher education program reflect the objectives stipulated earlier. The objective normally aims at imparting knowledge, skills and attitude that enable one to manage teaching in the classroom. In addition, we have to assess if these learning outcomes reflect also the ambitions of society at large (RP 8, 12 years' experience, Education Department).

In addition, the respondents observed that the expectations of the teacher education program, which are normally stated in terms of objectives, were not enough to cover the concept of quality. It was claimed that teachers were expected to play other social roles which were not necessarily described in the program or profession. This is evident in the following:

You know, our society expects much from a person who graduates as a teacher. His or her academic ability is always overestimated... and this is the challenge that quality teacher education has to strive for! Society's expectations go beyond the prescribed objectives of the programs and even the teaching profession itself (RP 1, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

In accordance with this aspect of functional outcome, other teacher educators conceived quality in terms of empowerment. They pointed out that an effective program has to empower an individual and enable him or her to function in the society. As part of conceiving quality as transformation, they observed that the functional outcome has to empower clients of teacher education to be self aware and confident in their undertakings. Students and serving teachers are expected to participate in various spheres of life. They should demonstrate confidence in their practices such as decision making, teaching, playing social roles and self efficacy. The next excerpt justifies this:

As a discipline, an institution, training program, teaching force or development program, teacher education has to impart awareness and confidence to its clients. It has to undergo changes; and we expect to see differences! (RP 23, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

It is further extended by another respondent, who observes that:

It has to make the clients powerful not only in professional activities, but also doing other social activities. It has to heighten individuals' self belief and let one be proud as a potential professional who can undertake serious matters in society such as leadership and conflict resolution. Empowered teachers are also responsible (RP 14, 8 years' experience, Education Department).

What is the essence of this aspect, functional outcome, in the context of quality in teacher education? Conceiving quality in terms of functional outcome is parallel to the approach which conceives quality as fit for purpose. It is a standpoint which determines quality of teacher education in terms of learning

outcome. The findings identify at least two main areas of teacher's responsibility that can be used to illustrate quality as functional outcome. The first one is the primary role of teaching and the second is playing other roles.

In the first role, where teaching is the primary role of a teacher, quality is determined by observing the outcome of teachers' core activity. Based on this observation, it can be assumed that every teacher education program primarily is responsible for preparing student teachers to manage core functions of teacher's work, i.e. teaching. Wikman (2010) cites examples of core knowledge for teachers' work to be knowledge about planning, teaching methods, classroom management, evaluation and assessment. In parallel, the respondents pointed out that quality of teacher education has to be assessed adjacent to teaching which is composed of various types of knowledge, including those mentioned above. Using learners to appraise teachers' quality is an approach which is outcome-oriented.

On the other side the respondents conceived quality as a functional outcome in connection to other roles that a teacher is supposed to play in society apart from teaching. The respondents mentioned awareness, confidence, leadership and conflict management as examples of other roles a teacher can perform. In their conceptions, quality of teacher education has to be reflected in the way teachers demonstrate ability of awareness, confidence, leadership and other roles essential in society. In general, they overestimate the outcomes anticipated from a graduate of a teacher education program. This approach of overestimating the quality outcome of teacher education is in line with other researchers' observations. Alphonse (2011) points out that people's expectations of what education can accomplish in society are mostly greater than what could ever be realistically achieved by it. When it comes to social outcome of quality, teacher educators' conceptions of quality seem to be very demanding and may be difficult to achieve. Achieving this conceived societal learning outcome might be one of the challenges that teacher education is facing and perhaps can strive for.

Marope (2000) argues that the learning outcome of a program may include enhanced cognition, skills, affections, esteem, fulfillment, confidence, efficacy, positive dispositions and the contribution of a graduate to economic, social and political development. These can be attained if the relevance of the program is ensured (Fredriksson, 2004). Relevance in education means meeting the aims for which its curriculum was designed (Ocheng, 2004). Hence, the curriculum is the main tool for bringing about education quality through relevance (Marope, 2000). He holds that quality education effectively meets the basic needs of the beneficiaries. Lindgren and Wenestam (2011) discuss several types of competencies that need to be developed in order to play other societal roles apart from teaching.

Kemmis (2005) asserts that teaching is a social practice because it is shaped by the expectations, intentions and values of clients in society. In the same way of

reasoning, Mosha (2000) points out that since the government finances teacher education, therefore its quality cannot be judged only in terms of instructional process, but also in term of service in society. Hence, quality in the field of teacher education as a transformation is conceived in multiple dimensions. Its conception is not bound to core function of teaching alone, but it transcends to other roles expected by members of society.

In brief, the respondents' conceptions of quality as transformation have been expressed in three aspects. But the aspects are integrated, not mutually exclusive, and each one influences the other. Ignoring one of the three elements dilutes the quality of the whole program. The following figure shows how these elements are related.

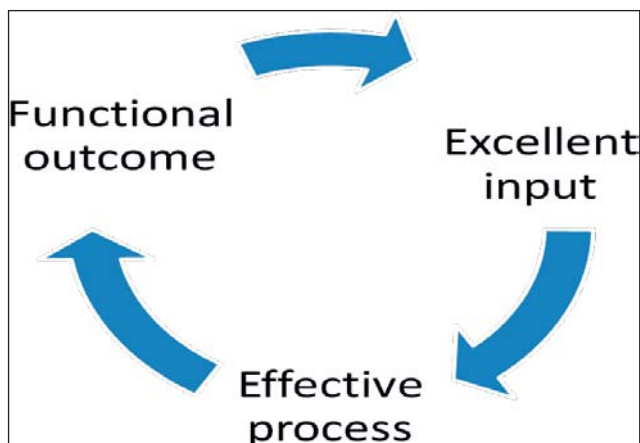


Figure 7 Teacher educators' conceptions of quality as a positive transformation

5.1.2 Category B- Adequate professional scholarship

Another expression of quality in teacher education as conceived by teacher educators is adequate professional scholarship. As opposed to the previous category of outstanding academic scholarship, which relates quality to pure academic subject knowledge, this category relates quality to the competencies that are considered necessary for the teaching profession. The central focus here is to relate quality to basic competencies which qualify teacher education as a profession, rather than a mere academic field. According to Hansén and Forsman (2007), as a profession teacher education transcends the academic discipline.

Three different qualitative sub-categories are used to develop and demonstrate this conception of quality: improved teaching competency, conscious research orientations and enhanced ability to reflect.

Tabel 6 Sub-categories of the category of adequate professional scholarship

Category B	Sub-categories
Adequate professional scholarship	(B-1) Improved teaching competency
	(B-2) Conscious research orientation
	(B-3) Enhanced ability to reflect

(B-1) Improved teaching competence

Quality at this level is thought of by the respondents in terms of enhanced teaching competency. It refers to the presence of the ability or skills that facilitate the performing of teaching professional tasks such as teaching, guiding learning and playing other social roles.

This sub-category of improved teaching competence was generated from two patterns of quality conceptions at the level of aspect. The first is named *developed instructional skills*. Quality is thought as the ability of a teacher to demonstrate a high mastery of the necessary instructional skills. The respondent clarified as follows:

Teaching is a skill-oriented occupation. If different teachers teach the same topic to students of the same class, under the same class environment, what will make the difference is the skill of classroom instruction which each one possesses. It is this kind of skill that determines the quality of teaching. A strategy for enhancing quality will be unproductive if it does not enhance teaching skills. High level skills are crucial for the facilitation of quality teaching and learning (RP 8, 12 years' experience, Education Department).

Another respondent emphasized the need for teacher education programs to incorporate competencies that are assumed crucial for a teacher to perform the career role successfully. However, doubt is raised on how these competencies can be implanted and developed to the expected level:

The programs of teacher education should be designed in a way which ensures that the graduates demonstrate adequate ability or skills that can facilitate the teaching and learning process. However, the challenge here is how to ensure that graduates of teacher education complete their course successfully with the required teaching skills...to me skills, ability and competency mean the same, and the basic word is skill (RP 9, 4 years' experience, Education Department).

However, several respondents were not specific in identifying the competencies needed, few of them at least pointed out specifically what is thought to be basic skills that a teacher needs to have in order to accomplish the teaching work:

I think there is a need to emphasize the practical development of planning skills in subject teaching methods. During teaching practice, some of the students face serious problems in lesson planning. They cannot interpret the syllabus and

produce schemes of work and extract topics from the scheme of work to make into lesson plans. You know what they do is to copy the plans of experienced host teachers. There is a need to develop these skills of lesson planning. As a strategy to reinforce these skills, they should be carefully evaluated and assessed (RP 7, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

In parallel to the above thinking, another respondent also points out specific competencies that are considered necessary for a student or serving teacher to manage the basic work of teaching, as reflected in the next statement:

Inadequate lesson planning skills leads to ineffective teaching and learning. This is reflected during teaching practice: you may find a student teacher carries a variety of teaching materials to the class, but you don't see them being used. When the period is nearly over is when you can find the poor, inadequately prepared student taking them and just showing them to the learners; this is just to persuade the assessor to give extra scores. I think they are not properly prepared and they lack the skills of what, when, and how to use teaching materials (RP 15, 16 years' experience, Education Department).

What is the significance of developed instructional skills as far as quality is concerned? This aspect connects quality to competencies of delivery or the teaching-learning process. Educators' conceptions on quality competencies focus on skills or the ability to conduct teaching in areas other than those of the teacher's competencies. As emphasized by one of the respondents, the above programs of educating teachers should ensure that teachers demonstrate sufficient skills and ability to facilitate the teaching-learning process.

Nevertheless, the concept teaching competency is not unproblematic. The complexity of the concept teacher's competence was discussed previously (3. 3). In this discussion, as noted above, the focus is on competencies related to facilitation of the instructional process. The conceptions of teacher educators show that the focus of teacher's instructional competence concentrates on subject didactics. The findings do not reveal other necessary competencies needed for successful instructional process.

However, subject didactics competence is not the only approach to conceptualizing quality of the instructional process. Campos (2010) outlines at least four areas of learning outcomes that have to develop teacher's competencies related to the instructional process, namely, a) discipline subject matter b) education in general or pedagogy, c) specific subject didactics, and d) teaching practice.

As opposed to the teacher educators' approach, Rasmussen and Dorf (2010) regard teachers' instructional competencies to be a combination of competency in mastery of subject matter and subject teaching didactics. The dependency of the two is a crucial aspect in the whole process of quality enhancement in teacher education. Other scholars (such as Lockheed & Levin, 1993; Nelli, 1988; Block, 2008) support this claim by emphasizing that both subject matter knowledge and pedagogical skills count significantly in quality. In this context

the emphasis on the teacher's competence is mainly associated with teaching rather than other responsibilities and functions that a teacher performs (see Wenestam & Lindgren, 2011).

Therefore, in addition to teacher educators' focus on subject didactics as crucial teachers' competencies, other areas as outlined by Campos (2010) are also important for quality delivery. Pedagogy and teaching practice develop knowledge and practice of integrating subject matter and subject didactics. The aspect of developed instructional skills therefore focuses on the competencies that a teacher may possess, and consequently a teacher education program can incorporate subject matter content and pedagogical content knowledge.

The second aspect is *reduced teaching competence*. Closely related to the first aspect, the respondents expressed quality as a phenomenon which is connected to other competencies that a teacher is assumed to possess in order to play other social roles. The data indicate that teacher educators conceived teaching competencies to incorporate other attributes beyond instructional ones. However, the respondents seemed to place less weight on these attributes.

The findings reveal that teaching competency is a generic term which encompasses several attributes, beyond those which have direct connection to teaching. As far as analysis of the data is concerned, knowledge and attitude are areas that are given less weight as teacher educators' with regard to conceptions of teaching competencies:

Teaching competency is a generic term which comprises not only skills and abilities of performance, but also knowledge and attitudes which are somehow essential for the teacher's task. Maybe the challenge to those who develop teacher education programs is to answer the question: What are these necessary competencies? (RP 9, 4 years' experience, Education Department).

It is further portrayed that:

A teacher is everything! Being a teacher, you have to respond to many issues in society; I don't know why? But there are many factors from society that are highly affecting teaching and learning in school. The teachers need to have at least certain basic competencies apart from teaching to handle some of these extra and undefined functions and issues (RP 1, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

According to the teacher educators' conception, teaching competencies are categorized into two types in relation to their relevance to teaching career: core competencies related to classroom teaching, and others which are not directly linked to teaching. Competencies that lack a direct link to a teacher's primary role of classroom instruction in this aspect are named reduced teaching competencies. Basically, these are also competencies that belong to teaching. Teaching is a multifaceted career which deals with various functions. For one to perform teaching accordingly, these competencies are needed, too. The data indicate that teachers are entrusted to play other social roles in society.

Teacher educators' perception that places less weight on competencies which are relevant in playing other social roles beyond teaching is not a particular case. Wikman (2010), focusing on the Finnish context, concludes that the capacity of Finnish teacher education to prepare teachers for duties in society outside the school is given less weight.

Since teachers are expected to play other social roles apart from teaching, then it is important that the programs of teacher education integrate these extra competencies which are also essential for quality. Previously, in the first category of research question, sub-category A-2, teacher educators conceived quality as functional outcome in which quality is assessed adjacent to the contribution of a graduate of a teacher education program to society. Within this line of reasoning it is noted that other teachers' competencies apart from instructional ones are important and have to be developed in order to ensure the quality of teacher education.

However, data-based evidence that indicate the type of extra competencies needed by teachers to play other roles is limited. Compos (2010) suggests competencies related to globalization, ethics and civic aspects of modern problems such as terrorism. Lindgren and Wenestam (2010) observe that a list of teachers' competencies is less important; what is crucial is that society is changing and teachers with a variety of competencies to meet the changes are needed. This means the context of a particular teacher education will determine the type of extra competencies that its professionals may possess. In the Tanzanian context, for instance, competencies related to leadership, conflict management and entrepreneurship may be considered important in response to the current needs of society.

(B-2) Conscious research orientation

In this sub-category, teacher educators conceived quality in connection to research orientation. Three qualitative different ways of conception, which were formerly established at the level of aspects, have been used to illustrate this conception. The first one focuses on engagement in conducting and using research results. It is, therefore, labeled *active participation in research*. In this aspect, the respondents conceived quality as conscious engagement in research for the purpose of identifying and solving problems related to the field of teacher education. It was mentioned during the interviews that research was a viable strategy for achieving quality as it deals with investigation of teaching and learning in education in general and teacher education in particular:

You are likely to attain quality in teacher education if professionals engage in conducting, disseminating and using research results to solve the problems. We are used to silencing each other in hot discussion by using the common saying 'no research, no right to talk! It sounds a funny phrase, but it is deep rooted in emphasizing research-based evidence of claims. I wish this could be a guiding

principle of our professional practices (RP 7, 10 years' experience, Educational Department).

During the interviews, it was noted that, apart from associating research with all teachers in general, that the respondents emphasized the need for teacher educators to actively engage in research. They argued that teacher educators' participation in research is one of the indicators of quality. This excerpt strengthens these arguments:

We have to ask ourselves the following question: does each teacher educator participate in academic activities such as conducting research and integrating research results in his/her daily teaching? Not all teachers can do research, but we expect that teacher educators by the nature of their academic level be able to do research and present the findings in journals. My feeling is that our journal *PED* is not active. I have the belief that their engagement will not only provide a good model for student teachers and teachers in the field, but also enhance quality (RP 21, 5 years' experience, Education Department).

In the same line of thinking, but in a more focused comment, another respondent argued that:

I have the idea that to strengthen practical knowledge and skills of doing research, student teachers should be assigned to do action research when they go for teaching practice, instead of the normative report they are used to write (RP 23, 6 years' teaching experience, Developmental Studies).

In this aspect the respondents linked quality of teacher education to engagement in research. Their observations show that they were trying to establish research-related criteria which can be used to make reference to the quality of teacher education. They further reflected what is prevailing in their respective university colleges of education in relation to research practices.

Scholars acknowledge that the quality of teacher education and teaching in schools may be enhanced if teaching is a research-based profession and if educational practitioners engage in carrying out educational research (Vogrinc & Krek, 2008; Zeichner, 1983; Kansanen, 2003). As a research-based profession, teacher education is investigation-oriented (Zeichner, 1983; Noffke & Zeichner, 2005) with the main focus on preparing and developing professionals who will base their pedagogical decisions on rational arguments as well as experiential arguments (Westbury, Hansén, Kansanen, & Björkqvist, 2005).

Teacher educators' engagement in research, apart from being a good model to other teachers and students, will serve another considered function of knowledge production (see also Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010). However, this need is not well reflected in the data, but in using one of the respondents' reservations that the journal *Papers in Education and Development* is not active, I can claim the prevalence of the need. *Papers in Education and Development* is the only journal of the Faculty of Education, now School of Education at the University of Dar-es-Salaam (Ishumi, 2010), which is also the mother university of DUCE and MUCE. According to my analysis, on the basis of volume serial numbers,

Papers in Education and Development is produced once or less per year (see Galabawa, 2007, p. ii; Ishumi, 2010 p.ii.). If I use this as obvious, but not sufficient evidence, I can claim that teacher educators' engagement in research and hence production of knowledge is minimal. Scholars (Sumra, 2003; Townsend & Bates, 2007) point out that one of the main tasks of a university-based teacher education is to conduct research that serves as a base for knowledge generation and informed decision-making.

The second aspect of conscious research orientation sub-category is called *explicit research policy*. Quality is conceived in connection to the existence of open guidelines leading to promote research practices. Teacher educators pointed out that quality may be attained if in teacher education institutions there is an explicit policy that guides the conduct of research:

It is through research one can explore problems and come up with solutions. Research stimulates motives for inquiry and a scientific approach to decision-making. In turn, a scientific approach is a road toward higher quality. But this is only possible if you have a clear research policy in place and research is integrated in the programs of educating teachers. Teacher education institutions should consciously take this as an important agenda in planning (RP 7, 10 years' experience, Educational Department)

Additional support:

Established guidelines will not only serve the purpose of transparency, but also the sources and procedure for applying for research funding. It can also spell out conditions of accountability and dissemination (RP 23. 6 years' experience, Department of Developmental Studies).

Teacher educators' conceptions of quality as explicit research policy concentrate on the demand for establishing research policies that will safeguard the process. The findings reveal that apart from ensuring that education research is an integral component in the programs of teacher education, a clear research guideline was also inevitable. Different levels of guidelines can be found in teacher education institutions. Lundström (2010) states that there are guidelines in terms of policies at higher level, broader program goals and specific instructional course objectives. In the Tanzanian context the establishment of higher learning institutions is backed up by legal acts and laws, which may be used also in safeguarding and giving the research policy legal authority (TCU, 2007).

The above different mentioned guidelines at the level of policy, goals, and objectives can be used as criteria for quality on the one hand. But on the other hand, they can also be used as the basis for demand for the same if it does not exist, and needs arise. The respondents argued that explicit research policy was necessary in creating a conducive environment for enhancing research practice among student teachers, teacher educators and other practitioners. In reinforcing criteria for quality enhancement, in higher education in the EU, for instance, it is stated that in the ongoing reforms, the competencies needed in each academic

area are clearly stated. And as a strategy they are given emphasis at policy level by the Educational Council of the EU (Campos, 2010).

Why does research need a policy backup in improving the quality of teacher education? Doing research requires funds and other resources which can be better negotiated under the support of those guidelines.

The last aspect of conscious research orientation subcategory is *reduced research practice*. It was learnt during the interviews that some of the respondents felt that research as a component in the teacher education program was not given due weight. They pointed out that only theories of research methods were considered to be taught accordingly. They further revealed that that little or no practical research projects and writing of research reports were conducted:

There is limited or no practice of research. Only theory of education research methods is given emphasis and I think effectively taught in UDSM and here. Students should not only be exposed to theory alone, but also be assigned certain research projects as part of their coursework. This will reinforce their knowledge of doing research in teaching, learning and teacher education in general. I think this will add value to their quality as teachers (RP 17, 8 years' experience, Education Department).

The respondents further observed that precautions should be taken in the process of implementation of teacher education reforms that aim at quality enhancement. The observation was made to illustrate that reduced research practice was associated with other factors connected to transformation. This is portrayed in one of the respondents' utterances:

Despite the ambition of improving quality of teacher education through transformation, some of the adjustments that are being made in the modality of delivery are detrimental to quality enhancement. In our time, doing research and writing a complete research report was compulsory to all students doing the bachelor of education degree at the University of Dar es Salaam. According to my understanding this is not the case now! And it may result in the production of teachers of low quality (RP 23, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

The major concern about reduced research practice is the lesser weight and emphasis given to research practice orientation in the new university-based teacher education programs. As the findings reveal, doing research and writing a research report is not compulsory. The respondents think that this discrepancy may lead to low quality of teachers qualified through these programs. They therefore underline the importance of research practice orientation in the preparation and development of teachers. Likewise, Kansanen (2003) asserts that good teacher education programs must be research-based in order to guarantee a high quality of teachers and teaching.

As discussed earlier in the theoretical framework, a research practice orientation is regarded to be an instrumental tool for enhancing practitioners' reflective skills. Reflective skills are one of the indicators of teachers' quality. It is

therefore recommended that it has to be extended across all subjects (Campos, 2011). Similarly, Sjöholm and Hansén (2007) argue that one focal point for both general didactics and subject specific didactics in the Finnish curriculum for teacher education is the research orientation. They further state that the curriculum starts out from the principles of research orientation and research-based education. This implies that knowledge of and skills in conducting research to generate and use knowledge is essential for achieving quality teacher education.

The achievement of the ambition can be possible if student teachers are given an opportunity to engage in a research project during their study period. Despite the respondents' observations and concerns about reduced weight and emphasis on research practice, promising signs are noticeable as research studies by teacher educators are evident in Papers in Education and Development (Komba, 2007; Kitta & Tilya, 2010). This may imply that the new university-based teacher education stimulates and enhances research-based orientation in the field of Tanzanian teacher education.

(B-3)Enhanced ability to reflect

Teacher educators conceived quality teacher education as connected to the skills of reflection. In this context reflection as stated in Chapter 3 refers to awareness and self-criticism for the purpose of improving practice. During the interviews the respondents associated reflection with quality teacher education, in the sense that reflective skills were necessary for teachers and teacher educators. Critical analysis of the respondents' statements led to the identification of two slightly different ways of thinking about quality; as a result, two aspects were found and used to compose this sub-category.

One of the aspects of enhanced ability to reflect is *substantial thinking tool*. In this aspect the central focus of the respondents' thinking is connected to the importance of reflection as a means of reaching a reasonable decision. They conceptualized reflection to be a tool for practice as opposed to wishful thinking in making decisions related to teaching and learning. This is exposed by one of the respondents, who states that:

If the main practitioners in the field of teacher education have limited or no reflective skills, then it becomes difficult to achieve quality. Teaching is a reflective process and it requires teachers to scrutinize their practices and make decisions based on reason. Production of knowledge through research depends on one's ability to reflect. Unless teacher education promotes this attitude among its practitioners, attaining quality is likely to be just wishful thinking (RP 7, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

Another respondent takes the idea forward by explaining the importance of reflective skills in dealing with students of different attributes by arguing that:

Reflection means self-critique on what you do and how you do it. It is very important for teachers as professionals who deal with learners with homogeneous attributes. If reflection is done with a good heart it is a good way of learning new ideas that improve practice and unlearning outdated beliefs that might hinder improvement (RP 6, 16 years' experience, Education Department).

In this aspect, teacher educators conceived quality as a substantial thinking tool. The respondents stated that reflection is self-critique whereby one assesses one's strengths and weaknesses. In their observation, the respondents pointed out that reflection is a means of learning new ideas and rethinking outdated beliefs. The main concern in reflection is scientific reasoning. Conceiving quality in this way means assessing the value of teacher education in comparison to the ability of the teachers to reason critically.

The respondents revealed that reflection is an important component which facilitates the production of knowledge through research. The process of generating knowledge through research is complex and achieves its goal if the researcher is skillful in reflection. The respondents emphasized that teacher education has to promote this skill in order to attain quality. In support of this observation, writers (Bjarnadottir, 2006; Ojanen & Lauriala, 2006) state that a teacher's reflective skills are very essential elements for quality teaching and are expected to be integrated into teacher education programs. By integrating reflection in the programs of educating teachers, teachers will be in position to develop the skills of critical reasoning and hence become reflective practitioners.

The respondents also revealed that reflection was an important element in facilitating research in teacher education. This conception is also reflected in other research. Research based teacher education, which also prioritizes in reflective skills among teachers is becoming popular (Campos, 2010, Kansanen 2003; Veiga, Simao, Flores, Morgado, Forte & Almeida, 2009). Research and reflection seem to influence each other.

Why are reflection and research emphasized and how do they relate to the quality of teacher education? Research and reflection are regarded as two principles with a mutual relationship in improving critical reasoning, which is assumed to be an important indicator of quality in teacher education. By the virtue of her role, a teacher is conceived as a reflective practitioner and an informed expert who is guided by scientific reasoning. The general assumption is that the teacher is expected to play more extended roles, which may include developing the curriculum to suit the context, evaluating and mentoring new teachers. These professional tasks demand an ability to conduct research and make reflection.

The respondents' observation that teaching is a reflective process and requiring teachers to scrutinize their practice and make decisions based on reason emphasizes critical reflection on issues related to teaching. In the Tanzanian education system, for instance, Komba (2007) observes that curriculum reforms are made several times, but no essential quality impacts are noted. This implies

that decisions are not critically scrutinized. Hence, from these findings it is recommended that there is a need to promote reflection as a means to improve decision-making practice in curriculum reform and the quality of teacher education.

Another aspect of enhanced ability to reflect is *means of problem solving*. Close to the conceptions of quality in the first aspect of substantial thinking tool, the respondents conceived quality of teacher education in relation to the skills of problem solving. They argued that reflection was a means of solving problems. It was revealed that if objectives or missions were not achieved, reflection could be used to find another alternative to approach the problem:

I think that in reflection a teacher finds an alternative of how to do his work and get a better result, if what he did did not achieve the goal. This is an important element for quality improvement (RP 9, 4 years of experience, Educational Department).

From the result it was also noted that reflection is a means of raising quality through making critical decisions that will not cause or entertain problems. Reflection is considered a tool for making and reviewing the decision in order to prevent or solve problems. The respondent who made this observation was arguing that many reforms and changes that are made in Tanzanian teacher education lacked the element of critical reflection either before being introduced or during implementation:

The issue is not how many times we reform the programs and curriculum, but rather how critically we reflect on those changes (RP 7, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

Reflection as means of problem solving was conceived by teacher educators as a diagnostic tool for quality and quality enhancement. The argument raised here was that some of the problems in the system of teacher education were unnoticed because of lack of ability and criteria for identification. So they suggested that quality has to be conceived in relation to standards from other systems of teacher education. Practitioners have to reflect on local teacher education practices and compare with practices from other parts of the world, and when necessary incorporate good practices for resolving current problems and hence enhance quality:

You know, knowing your own quality problem is not always natural. Sometimes you need to think...it is my opinion that our programs of teacher education should be reviewed regularly to incorporate best practices from other parts of the world and respond to the emerging needs of the profession and society at large. There is a need to critically reflect on our local practices and compare to others if we have to strive for quality (RP 10, 6 years' experience, Kiswahili Department).

How is reflection as a means of problem solving related to the quality of teacher education? In the theoretical framework it is acknowledged that one of the components of a teacher's competency is the ability to reflect. Bjarnadottir (2006) argues in favor of a holistic view of professional competence by

emphasizing that teacher education programs integrate reflective competencies in addition to instructional and other foundational competencies. Reflection as a tool for solving problems is considered an indicator of quality teacher education.

Reflective skills are built in theory and practice and therefore they are internally integrated and develop through continuous interaction. Bjarnadottir (2007) argues that students should learn to study and reflect on their work and themselves with the eyes of a researcher. In the same way of thinking, teacher educators emphasized that teacher education programs enhance the reflective skills of its clients for the purpose of helping them to make a rational decision and hence reduce problems. Curriculum change in teacher education programs, for instance, was mentioned by the respondents as an example of decisions that call for critical reflection to avoid causing confusion.

The findings underscore the need for preparing teachers as reflective practitioners who can employ this skill to address problems related to low quality. A teacher with reflective orientation is one whose practice is not guided by routine or intuition. Instead, her or his work is guided by scientific principles. In reflection a practitioner makes a critical evaluation (Laursen, 2006) and uses the principles of research in making decisions. In teacher education this means studying research methodology from the very beginning to the end, with research integrated into all study periods, and teaching practice supported by and integrated with theoretical studies and discussions (Kansanen, et al., 2000).

From the category of teacher educators' conceptions of quality of teacher education as adequate professional scholarship, three main elements were identified. The preceding discussion has illustrated in detail each element which is presented at the level of subcategories. The following figure illustrates in summary these main areas of conceptions.

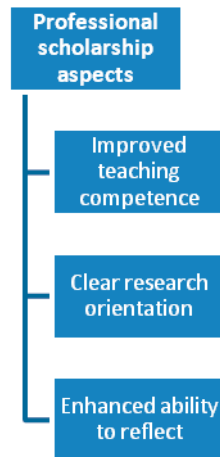


Figure 8 Adequate professional scholarship subcategories of quality of teacher education

5.2 Teacher educators’ experiences of quality enhancement

The analysis of respondents’ statements related to research question number two resulted in the establishment of two categories of description. The two categories were formed as a result of combinations of participants’ responses at the level of sub-categories and aspects. The overview of categories and its sub-categories are illustrated below.

Tabel 7 Illustration of teacher educators’ experience of quality enhancement in teacher education

Category	Sub-category
Insufficient programs of teacher education	C-1 Overlaps
	C-2 Adequate coverage of content
	C-3 Inadequate practicum
	C-4 Disconnected curriculum
Unsatisfactory educators’ professional development	D-1 Clearly defined recruitment criteria
	D-2 Self-directed motives

5.2.1 Category C: Insufficient programs of teacher education

Teacher educators' responses on their experiences of quality enhancement in the new transformed system of university-based teacher education were used to establish the category of insufficient programs of teacher education. The category was established from four different sub-categories.

(C-1) Overlaps

Based on the findings, in this sub-category, some of the courses in bachelor teacher education programs are not well scrutinized, and as a result overlaps exist among them. An overlap in this context refers to excessive repetition of subject matter topics across program courses.

Two aspects were used as bases for development of this sub-category. The first aspect is *duplication of themes*. The respondents argued that the prevalence of overlaps among different courses was not only a waste of resources, but also a barrier toward quality improvement as it causes tediousness. This is evident in the following statement:

There are courses in the Kiswahili Language Department which are completely a replica of others. I can cite examples of these courses which have similar contents. Kiswahili syntax: Theories (OSW 301) and Theories of syntax (OSW 302). These courses, I tell you! They not only resemble their course title names, but also they completely resemble the contents. It is a duplication of each other. In addition, both, as you can see, are taught in the third year. You cannot believe it! Wastage of resources! (RP 12, 5 years' experience, Kiswahili Department).

The respondents expressed concern about inconsistent and bureaucratic mechanisms for course review as constraints to enhance quality. The respondents were asked to explain which body was responsible for the development of the course program and how subject teacher educators were involved in the process. One of the respondents contended that:

For some reasons, including shortage of experienced professors, we have adopted courses from UDSM. You know, the procedure of which body develops a course is not well defined. The expert professor in a specific department does it. The risk is that a professor's point of view sometimes becomes a course program. This might be one of the reasons for overlaps and other weaknesses. The participation of other course instructors is minimal and the procedure for course review is complex (RP.10, 6 years' experience, Kiswahili Department).

What are the causes and effects of overlaps in programs that qualify teachers? Overlaps in Tanzanian teacher education programs may be seen as a common phenomenon (see also Meena, 2009), but excessive overlaps are detrimental to quality. Their presence is a reflection of weakness and therefore inhibits efforts towards quality improvement. Overlaps in programs of teacher education may be caused by either inadequate knowledge of the curriculum or fragmentation of the curriculum development process.

To reduce or avoid overlaps in programs, Kimaryo (2010) claims that teachers ought not only to know the curriculum objectives of their individual subject alone, but also should be knowledgeable about the curriculum of the whole program. If a curriculum or course developer has inadequate knowledge of the curriculum and lacks reflective skills, overlaps are likely to emerge.

Overlaps may lead to content overload, which is a common complaint of teachers in the school system in Tanzania (Tilya & Mafumiko, 2010; Mosha, 2004). The problem seems to be common in Tanzanian teacher education. In a study on curriculum innovation in Tanzanian teacher education, overlaps in programs for certificate and diploma teacher education were found. The prevalence of these overlaps in the programs of teacher education lowers learners' motivation (Meena, 2009) and ultimately lowers quality. To address this problem critical scrutinization and reliable reviews of courses in teacher education programs are essential.

The second aspect is *undermined professional autonomy*. The respondents revealed that the adoption of the course subjects and programs from UDSM reduced their autonomy and to some extent their creativity in integrating current and relevant issues of teacher education:

Of course, there are certain degrees of flexibility for a teacher educator to integrate certain issues of interest, relevance and current, but it should not be too much. We have to abide by the written curriculum. This concern has been raised several times, but neither course review nor any resolution has been reached. It undermines our credibility and creativity (RP 12, 5 years' experience, Kiswahili Department).

Another respondent observes that:

There is a need to widen the scope of instructors' participation in developing the course objectives and contents. This will serve two purposes: mentoring new practitioners and enhancing professional autonomy of the executors (RP 10, 6year's experience, Kiswahili Department).

The result indicates that teacher educators demand participation in developing course objectives which they associate with professional autonomy. As stated above, lack of involvement in developing the course programs reduces the academic and professional status of these practitioners who implement the curriculum. This claim is a parallel story to what Evans (2003) complains about: that this tendency reduces the status and autonomy of a teacher to a mere technician. Reduced status and autonomy of practitioners is a threat to quality enhancement because it may lead to what Sjöholm and Hansén (2007) consider a mechanical approach to curriculum implementation. This approach has a tendency to overlook critical thinking and reflection. For effective curriculum implementation, there is a need for teacher educators to be involved in the development of the courses. This will facilitate and promote the creativity and flexibility of planning and conducting the lessons according to the context (Giroux & McLaren, 1987).

The respondents perceived lack of participation in developing course content as a denial of their professional autonomy; a circumstance which ties up their freedom. Kansanen, Tirri, Meri, Krokfors, Husu and Jyrhämä (2000) underline the importance of educators being pedagogically innovative. They emphasise that educators' curriculum decision making has to be rational and consider the connections between the objectives of the curricula, school context and learners. The participation of course instructors in developing the course objectives will not only deepen their understanding, but also inspire them to exercise their professional autonomy which is important for quality enhancement.

(C-2) Adequate coverage of content

The majority of respondents in this sub-category expressed positive experiences of quality enhancement in teacher education through content coverage. They expressed that there is enough content coverage in the programs and course subjects that prepare and develop teachers. Previously, they were asked to explain and comment on their experiences of the contents of the programs and subject courses in relation to quality enhancement. Two aspects have been used to demonstrate this sub-category.

The first aspect is *exhaustive course program*. The respondents were asked to identify the main components of the curriculum of teacher education in their respective university colleges of education and comment on its adequacy. They stated three main components of teacher education programs, namely general education foundation courses, teaching method courses and academic discipline oriented courses. This is justified by the following excerpt:

Depending on the program of specialization, a student teacher studies one or two academic subject(s) of specialization, teaching methods of specialized subject(s) and educational subjects. In addition to that, student teachers do supervised teaching practice. I can show you they are evident here, in the prospectus. As you can note, it is a comprehensive curriculum with almost all essential contents of teacher education! (RP 13, 4 years' experience, Biology Department).

A detailed clarification of what entails education subjects is provided by another respondent:

Educational subjects include philosophy of education, educational psychology, sociology of education, research measurement and evaluation, curriculum and teaching, education administration and management and information communication technology (RP 24, 16 years' experience, Education Department)

In addition, another respondent expressed:

Those who specialize in the Bachelor of Education major in education and study one subject. The rest pursue two subjects and they also study general educational subjects (RP 19, 8years' experience and department).

What is the relevance of the exhaustive course program aspect to quality enhancement? The relevance is based on two assumptions. One is that teacher

education programs are perceived to be adequately developed to cover the essential competencies needed to be grasped by student teachers. The findings show that the current curriculum of teacher education in bachelor degree programs adequately covers the important contents regarded necessary for preparing quality teachers.

The results are in line with other researchers (Ben-Peretz, 1995; Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010), who identify four components of programs of teacher education, namely subject-matter studies, educational science, professional studies such as method courses and the teaching practice. An exhaustive course program is a facilitating factor for improving quality (see also Bjarnadottir (2007).

The second aspect which illustrates teacher educators' perceptions of quality enhancement as adequate coverage of content is *better subject content*. While the first aspect, i.e. *exhaustive course program*, focuses on the coverage of the content of whole program, the second concentrates on coverage of an individual subject. There is a slight difference between the two. In coverage of the content of the program, the focus is on several subjects that are adopted across the teacher education program. It refers to subjects such as academic knowledge, didactics, subject didactic and teaching practice. The course program is at a higher level and comprises the course subject.

In this second aspect, named better subject content, teacher educators perceived quality enhancement in connection with the content coverage of specific subjects. Here, the concern is on topics that are included in a certain subject if they meet the need of developing teachers' competencies considered basic for quality enhancement. This is elucidated in the next respondent's observation:

My opinion on the contents of course subjects is quite straight. I have confidence that the contents are adequately taken care of. I am specializing in three main areas of subjects: English language, English language methods and educational management and administration. I think they are adequately prepared, comprising almost all essential topics. To my knowledge I am pleased and satisfied (RP 6, 18 years' experience, Education Department).

Clarification of this aspect is provided by another respondent, who states that:

The coverage of the content in my subject of my specialization is good. The knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are integrated are comprehensive. If they are fully taught, analyzed and translated into practical terms, they may increase the possibility of producing quality teachers. In ICT, for instance, the basic components that a teacher is supposed to know are well covered. However the practical side of executing the course subject is hampered by a shortage of computers and other related facilities (RP 21, 6 years' experience, Education Department).

Another comment which approves satisfactory coverage of specific subject contents is given by a respondent, who observes:

In geography didactics, for instance, approaches of teaching almost all topics in secondary education syllabus are outlined in the course contents. As a

consequence, student teachers are exposed to different ways of teaching a certain topic (RP 3, 7 years' experience, Geography Department).

The teachers' professional competencies which are necessary for enhancing quality are inbuilt in student teachers through individual subjects. According to Bjarnadottir (2007), individual subjects in teacher education are based on either academic or professional orientation. The student teachers are exposed to and master different types of knowledge and competencies connected to subjects taught in schools, pedagogy and subject didactics. According to teacher educators' perception, the contents of these subjects comprise almost all the topics needed to qualify teachers to fit the purpose of enhancing quality.

The results of this study, if related to previous research, seem to indicate improvement. Previous research in Tanzania and abroad (Temu, 2007; Lewin & Stuart, 2003; Zeichner, 1993) claims that some of the programs of teacher education are conducted by using irrelevant and superficial program and subject course curricula. In contrast, the findings of this study show that the content of individual subjects in the new university-based teacher education is comprehensive and adequately covers basic competencies of quality teacher education. This strength is a crucial and therefore a resource for enhancing the quality of teacher education.

(C-3) Inadequate practicum

This view of perceiving quality enhancement at the level of subcategory is developed from three aspects.

The first aspect is named *intended practice*. The respondents stated that teaching practice was very important and relevant as far as teacher preparation courses were concerned. During the interview, the respondents were asked to explain their experiences of relevance, the importance and practices of teaching practice in relation to quality enhancement. It becomes clear that teaching practice is an important element in the education of teachers as it provides an opportunity for student teachers to translate theory-oriented activities into teaching practice. During teaching practice student teachers try to integrate different knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to facilitate quality teaching and learning. This is illustrated by the following:

The real meaning of teacher preparation is actualized in a real natural school setting, and in particular, in classrooms, where teaching and learning processes occur...during teaching practice. It is at this time that a student teacher gets an opportunity to translate and integrate his or her subject matter knowledge, teaching methods and principles of education in action. One needs to practice for a reasonable time before one can manage to become a good teacher (RP 22, 16 years' experience, Education Department).

The emphasis on the value of teaching practice to student teachers is given by another respondent, who provides an example of classroom and school experiences:

I used to tell my students before they leave for teaching practice that in schools pupils do not role play. They live a natural school and classroom life. They fight, make trouble, fall sick, sleep during lessons, are absent from classes, tease others, and ask genuine and fake questions, and so on and so forth! It is their task to use their acquired knowledge, attitude and skills to handle those challenges in a realistic way in order to solve the problems and strive for improvement (RP 24, 16 years' experience, Education Department).

The voice of teacher educators reflected in the findings shows that teaching practice in Tanzania is perceived positively. The respondents underlined the importance of integrating teaching practice in programs of teacher education. In addition, their comments and general perception show teacher educators' devotion to enhancing good practice in improving the quality of teaching practice. Similar observations which emphasize the significance of teaching practice are made by other researchers elsewhere. Ojanen (2004) and Ojanen and Lauriala (2006) argue that teaching practice is an integral part of the program of teacher education, which is intended to prepare student teachers for maximum practical and professional orientation.

In addition, teaching practice is considered to provide an experience through participation and observation under the support of the institutions to which the students are attached and the mother institution which runs the programs of teacher education such as a college or university (UDSM, 2006). Teacher educators' description of the importance and relevance of teaching practice underline these essential intended functions of practicum. They emphasize that teaching practice is essential for providing opportunities for student teachers to put into a real teaching context the theories and principles they learn in classes. For example, theories of motivation, reinforcement, class management and counseling can be applied to solve classroom problems. The challenges of pupils' unwanted behaviors such as fighting, sleeping and playing truant call for the integration of different theories and practical knowledge. The observations provided by the respondents illustrate how different disciplinary theories are integrated in practice to handle career challenges.

On the other hand, teaching practice can shape students' theoretical orientations. Kansanen (2003) observes that one of the intentions of teaching practice is to link theory and practice in a sufficiently close connection that will assist a student teacher to solve everyday professional problems on the basis of theoretical knowledge. In this sense, however, the data do not expose it clearly, but teaching practice also provides opportunities for student teachers to use practice to reflect on learnt theories. When theory and practice are closely linked, the two fertilize each other. Hence, practice gained during practicum might result in the reinforcement or adjustment of beliefs developed through theoretical orientation.

The other aspect is *insufficient time*. Parallel to the respondents' observation on the importance of teaching practice on the one hand; on the other hand they challenged the way teaching practice was organized. In particular, they expressed dissatisfaction with the time that is usually allocated for teaching practice. They complained that the time was not enough to meet the anticipated outcome. One respondent clarifies this statement more explicitly:

The duration of one to two months for teaching practice per year is too short to provide enough time for students to practice. Sometimes there has been ad hoc cancellation for first year teaching practice or reducing the time for all students because of what is claimed by the responsible authorities to be shortage of funds and other resources...but, for whatever reasons, the price of reducing teaching practice is very high! (RP 22, 16 years' experience, Education Department).

Emphasis on the need for prolonged teaching practice in the context of programs of teacher education in new university-based teacher education was highly emphasised in the findings. The respondents expressed that the number of students enrolled was high and other available resources such as lecturers and classrooms were inadequate. This constrained the possibility of conducting practice that could be done through peer teaching during methodological periods or single lessons. They were of the opinion that this shortage could be somehow addressed by conducting adequate teaching practice, but the reality revealed that teaching practice was inadequately implemented, as stated below:

The only solution to the problem of over enrollment which results in inadequate time for peer teaching and single lesson sessions is block teaching practice. During block teaching practice student teachers have enough time to practice, as you know they are highly needed and utilized in schools. They are so many here and it is impossible for all of them to do effective peer teaching or single lessons at the college. With the current trend of over enrollment in this university college, nothing can replace the value of teaching practice period for promoting teaching practical skills (RP 24, 14 years' experience, Education Department).

Under what circumstances does insufficient time for teaching practice influence quality enhancement? The findings obtained from the teacher educators' responses stress a prolonged time as the panacea for inadequate teaching practice. However, sufficient time for teaching practice is an essential element for developing experience of the teaching profession, but prolonged practice might not serve the purpose, especially if not well supervised. The respondents disclosed several weaknesses concerning teaching practice.

The criticisms of the organization of teaching practice is not only the case of this study, it is reflected in other studies, too. For instance, Darling-Hammond, Pacheco, Michelli, LePage, Hammerness and Youngs (2005) observe that, despite its importance, in many cases teaching practice has often been disconnected from coursework, inadequately designed, and its general execution and management often does not reflect the criteria for preparing quality teachers. From this observation, we can note that the duration of teaching practice is not the only factor of quality teaching practice. Other criteria are also considered.

Although the findings do not illustrate clearly how duration and supervision of teaching practice relate to each other, nevertheless two are not independent. Teaching practice conducted during initial teacher education does not necessarily exhaust all the competencies of a teacher; gaps are likely to happen. Teaching is a life-long learning career and recognized gaps can be addressed in the process as the need arises.

According to Devetak and Glažar (2010), the gap of practice can be partly addressed by mentoring theory. Prolonged teaching practice does not guarantee quality enhancement (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010), especially in circumstance where supervision is hampered by funding problems (Wedgwood, 2007). This observation is relevant in the Tanzanian context. The experience of a two-tier system of qualifying teachers adopted by Tanzanian teacher education through the Primary Education Development Program and Secondary Education Development Program in 2002-2008 is evident of how prolonged teaching practice may be detrimental to the quality of teachers if not well supervised. The two-tier system allocated 50 percent of the course time for teaching practice, but the supervision was weak, and as a result, graduates of these programs are accused of being low quality (see also Mushi et al, 2004).

In addition, the experience from Nordic countries shows that there are two different views in connection with the length of teaching practice. One view advocates a long duration of teaching practice, while the other prefers a shorter time. With regard to the first view, teacher education is considered to benefit from being made more practice-oriented (e.g. longer periods of teaching practice or training post). Nevertheless, studies and evaluation in and of Nordic teacher education programs show that it is mostly weak students who express a demand for more practice in teacher education; strong students want a firm theoretical anchoring.

According to Rasmussen and Dorf (2010), Finnish teacher education, which is 5 year program, has less teaching practice duration than any other Nordic teacher education program and still is considered to have good quality (Hansen & Forsman, 2009; Eklund, G., 2010). The mentors are well educated and teaching practice takes place in specialized practice schools. Quality of supervision is what matters rather than the length of teaching practice. For this reason, Rasmussen and Dorf (2010) seem to be skeptical about the argument of lengthening the duration of teaching practice; instead, they trust in quality supervision.

The last aspect is *ineffective supervision*. The respondents also revealed their experiences of the supervision of students on teaching practice. They observed that effective supervision was a crucial aspect of teaching practice as it aimed at assisting students to enhance their professional practice. But they claimed that supervision of teaching practice was not properly handled, as non-teaching professionals were involved:

There have been several concerns about supervision of teaching practice. Formerly, supervision of teaching practice was done by all lecturers, including non-teaching professionals. This resulted in confusion among and between supervisors and student teachers. The matter was raised in several forums, but for different reasons it was difficult to act upon immediately. However, later on directives were provided to prohibit non-professionals supervising students on teaching practice. For us professionals this is an achievement as it leads to quality supervision! (RP 25, 18 years' experience, Education Department)

Additional observation of ineffective supervision of teaching practice is expressed by another respondent, who focuses on mentoring:

In the school where our students go for teaching practice, mentoring is limited. Of course, they get a good welcome and living support, but for sure there is limited or no support on the core function of teaching and learning process. Once they are given schedules and introduced to classes or school morning assemblies, then is over!! They are left alone until the lecturers go for what I would call assessment rather than supervision (RP, 7, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

This observation is supplemented by another respondent, who argues:

You know this idea of mentoring in our traditional teacher education and in schools is uncommon and therefore not well understood and practiced. These are some of the new practices that we are now adopting from abroad. It is difficult even to express it in Kiswahili. Do you know the appropriate Kiswahili vocabulary for mentoring? ...it is a new concept. Capacity building for serving teachers in schools about this agenda is needed (RP 15, 16 years' experience, Educational Department).

What conclusions can be drawn from the data presented above about supervision of teaching practice and how is it related to quality enhancement? Based on the findings, the supervision of teaching practice comprises two parts. One is the supervision by lecturers from the institution offering the teacher education program, and the second is supervision by experienced teachers at the host school. While the former is much more related to guidance, the latter relates to mentoring.

The respondents argued that supervision of teaching practice was an important factor for equipping student teachers with practical skills; hence, it should be given emphasis and effectively conducted. One of the reasons for emphasizing effective supervision is based on its importance in exposing students to real the educational environment: both classroom and out-of-classroom, where they will be expected to apply the simple teaching skills obtained at the university, and solve everyday problems by utilizing the theories learnt.

The emphasis on effective supervision of teaching practice recommended by teacher educators in Tanzania is not an exception. Other researchers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005) have a similar view on the effective supervision of teaching practice. They acknowledge that teaching practice occupies a central part of student teachers' experience and has a strong influence on a teacher's

thinking and practice about teaching and learning. Therefore, effective supervision is necessary.

However, the evidence from the data distinguishing teacher educators' understanding of supervision and mentoring is limited, but the two fertilize each other. Mentoring was also expressed by teacher educators as a factor in quality enhancement. Nevertheless, they reveal that in Tanzania mentoring is a new phenomenon and less practiced. The respondents argued that in order to improve the supervision of teaching practice and enhance quality, educating serving teachers to play a mentoring role was essential.

Lindgren (2005) argues that mentors play a key role in supporting the novice teachers. For quality mentoring, among other things it is necessary to be familiar with the goals of mentoring and the tasks of a mentor (Devetak, & Glažar, 2010). Volkman & Anderson (1998) argue that the mentor has to provide opportunities for novice teachers to experience classroom conflict and dilemmas of teaching. In addition, it has to be noted that there is a difference between quality teaching and quality mentoring. An expert teacher is not self-evidently a good mentor to junior colleagues (Lindgren, 2005). To enhance quality through teaching practice in Tanzania, supervision and mentoring may be integrated in order to maximize the effectiveness of the two.

For valuable supervision of teaching practice, Devetak and Glažar (2010) argue that there is a need for mentors to be properly educated on how to conduct the mentoring process for novice teachers and student teachers. The mentors ought to be knowledgeable in detecting novice student teachers' instructional problems, and intervene effectively to provide support.

Drawing from Cameron-Jones and O'Hara (1995), Devetak, & Glažar (2010) conceive that a mentor's roles include: coach, model, instructional supporter, evaluator, confidante, information source, feedback-giver, and explicator of personal teaching knowledge and beliefs. The other responsibilities are introducing novice teachers to school life, school customs, and school culture, stimulating them to reflect on their own teaching and bridging the gap between theory and practice (cf. Zanting, Verloop, Vermunt, 2001). Mentoring has to support student teachers to acquire specific competencies and also to develop more skills of teaching.

Another observation which is revealed by the results and expressed by respondents by connecting to teaching practice or field experience is concerned with a mismatch between the resources and the users because of over enrollment in new university-based teacher education programs. The quality vis quantity controversy that was raised in the background of the study is to some extent justified by the results. One of the respondents argues that:

With the current trend of over enrollment in this university college it is not easy for student teacher to be accommodated in... (RP 24, 14 years' experience).

This means over enrollment as stated before (1.1) can be detrimental to quality. Hence gradual increase of enrollment in relation to available resources is essential for quality enhancement.

Finally, and in connection with the discussion, I will argue that the literature and findings show that the management and execution of teaching practice in teacher education programs face several challenges that need to be addressed. The prevalence of these challenges signifies that there are barriers that inhibit efforts towards quality enhancement in Tanzanian teacher education. Unless these barriers are addressed, the ambition of quality enhancement in teacher education will not be achieved. Careful planning and proper management of teaching practice is highly needed in order to make it beneficial.

(C-4) Disconnected curriculum

It was noted from the data that the process of implementation disconnects the elements of the curriculum which basically are supposed to be integrated to each other. The curriculum of teacher education is claimed to be fragmented and therefore lacks integration of various elements. Teacher educators' perception of disconnected curriculum was formed by three aspects.

The first aspect is *detached theory-practice*. The respondents claimed that theory and practice in the programs were mainly treated separately:

I do not have a problem with the content coverage of the curriculum. My concern is with the organization of implementation process, it has disconnected the elements of the curriculum from each other. For instance, students learn the procedures for preparing schemes of work, lesson plans and other teaching materials for several periods. I have never seen one using them in classes except during teaching practice. You know the demonstration school is there! This disconnection hinders quality improvement (RP 6, 18 years' experience, Education Department).

Further observations of detached theory and practice in the execution of the programs of qualifying teachers were captured during the collection of data. One of the statements reveals the concern for the detachment of the two. The respondents stated that the separation of theory and practice was an obstacle towards quality enhancement:

Teaching practice is done at the end of academic year. In many cases it is organized during the vacation before the new academic year. This inhibits the effort of quality enhancement because students can not practice how to put the theories they learnt into action. To alleviate the problem, I think on certain occasions it may be organized parallel with the other training through short term teaching practices (RP 21, 5 years' experience, Education Department).

Teacher educators' perception of quality enhancement assumes that theory and practice have to be integrated. A program of educating teachers that treats the two separately is not an appropriate one. The respondents raised concern over

the lack of integration between theory and teaching practice. The data show that the organization of delivery in terms of theory and practice was not properly handled and as a result each one was organized independently.

The importance of integrating theory and practice emphasized by teacher educators is also supported by other researchers. The literature shows that by its nature theory and practice in the teaching profession form inseparable sides of the same coin (Sjöholm & Hansén, 2007). They are mutually dependent; on the one hand theories guide practice and on the other practice is a base from which theories are developed. When a professional fertilizes her theory by using the experience gained in practice and vice versa it becomes easy to solve the problems that may hinder the development towards quality.

The respondents supported the use of a demonstration school to facilitate the linkage of theory and practice. Student teachers can be given access to practical orientation through organized short-term teaching practices such as single lesson. Kansanen (2003) maintains that close connection between theory and practice is important in teacher education because it supports student teachers in making critical pedagogical decisions. A critical pedagogical decision is a decision on teaching methodology that a teacher makes under the scientific bases of theories and principles.

The second aspect is *divided subject matter and subject didactics*. Another challenge that was raised by the respondents in relation to the disconnected curriculum is based on the treatment of subject didactics and subject matter in the implementation process. The respondents pointed out that pure academic subjects were taught independently of subject didactics:

Academic subject matter is taught by different academicians, some of them are not teachers by profession, while the methodological courses are taught by professionals. They are not integrated! There is a clear division of roles between those who teach academic content on the one hand and methods of teaching on the other. Those who teach subject matter and are not professional teacher educators do not nurture the aspect of teaching methodology. In most cases they employ lecture methods to teach their subject matter (RP 19, 8years' experience, Education Department).

The data revealed that the knowledge and skills which are applied in performing teaching activities are treated independently as if they are meant to stand alone. For example, ICT was cited to be taught independently instead of being part of an integrated approach when doing methodological courses of specific subjects:

Student teachers are not given ample opportunity to apply ICT in classroom teaching...as a result, it becomes difficult for the students to integrate these skills in their teaching practice. They also continue to treat ICT and their teaching subjects as different and independent subjects. ICT, which is meant to facilitate teaching, is not used accordingly and therefore does not foster quality (RP 21, 5 years' experience, Education Department).

How do these findings relate to quality enhancement and previous research? The Nordic teacher education programs stress the importance of subject matter didactics; and in all programs, subject matter didactics are integrated into academic subjects. It is supposed that the integration of the two plus assigning a substantial amount of time to it is a major contribution to making student teachers better educators, not experts in content academic subjects, but experts in teaching subjects (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010, p. 56). According to Zeichner (1990), the quality of teaching practice is what determines the quality of teacher education. Expertise in teaching subjects encompasses mastery of both pure subject matter and subject didactics.

It is claimed that teachers should possess thorough and conceptual expertise in their pure subject matter. This is certainly important to let them be able to develop in their students understanding and knowledge of the specific discipline. Yet, if the focus is solely on the delivery of subject matter there is a risk of the teaching being a form of information transmission in which the students' learning processes, activities and their own responsibility for learning is overlooked (Löfström, Poom-Valickis, Hannula & Mathews, 2010). Didactics form the instruments or tools which enable an analysis of the relationship between theory and practice (Sjöholm, & Hansén, 2007). Contemporary teacher education research clearly agrees that students taught by teachers who are able to combine subject matter knowledge with subject matter didactical knowledge and competence achieve the best student outcome (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010).

The third aspect is *limited-subject departmental linkages*. The empirical data indicated that one of the reasons behind the disconnection of curriculum elements is the establishment and existence of subject departments. Different departments which form the curriculum program have limited communication. It was stated that though the total establishment and focus of the two university colleges is the preparation of teachers, the influence of subject matter disciplinary departments (such as biology, chemistry, linguistics and geography) which focus on the core knowledge of the specific discipline is strong:

By coincidence, this results not only in fragmentation of theoretical knowledge and practical skills in the respective departments, but also lack of a close relationship between different departments. For example, educational science departments and academic subject matter departments exist as different organizations (RP 25, 8 years' experience, Education Department).

The respondents further raised the challenge that prevails as a result of departmental settings:

It is a challenging situation; you know, on the one hand you cannot operate effectively without establishing departments that oversee the teaching and learning activities in a particular department. ...but on the other hand this goodwill strategy acts as an agent of segregation (RP 11, 5 years' experience, Geography Department).

In the same line of practice, it is noted that there are no reliable partnerships between university colleges and schools where student teachers are sent for practicum and graduates are posted to teach:

There is no reliable practical partnership between schools and the university college. Even the demonstration school whose relationship is clearly defined exists in theoretical principles, but it does not serve the purpose for which it was established. You do not find the holistic view of an integrated curriculum in this context (RP 25, 8 years' experience, Education Department).

Why establish subject departments in teacher education institutions? By its nature, teacher education is an interdisciplinary profession. Its integrity and quality depend on many disciplines which are distributed in subject departments. It might be impossible or quite difficult to operate without departments which act as coordinating units for different disciplines. Noting this reality, Hansén and Forsman (2009, p. 5) observe that there is a conceptually demanding task of how to organize different disciplines that compose teacher education in higher education institutions. They further observe that it also requires a lot of human and economic resources, which are always competed for between disciplines. Institutional management has the responsibility of coordinating and harmonizing the departmental interests for the common good. Gleeson (2004) points out that lack of collaboration between related institutions or departments is sometimes promoted by consideration of power, control and protection of interests.

The primary role of establishing departments is to facilitate implementation and hence achievement of the organization objectives. Bjorklund (2008) asserts that collaboration is possible when the involved participants trust each other and they are committed towards working towards a common goal. The challenge of limited departmental linkages is an issue that needs to be addressed in order to harness the available resources from the established departments to enhance quality. One of the approaches of addressing limited departmental communication is to integrate subject matter and subject didactics, as discussed in the previous aspect.

To conclude, teacher educators' perceptions of quality enhancement as a disconnected curriculum are illustrated diagrammatically in the following diagram.

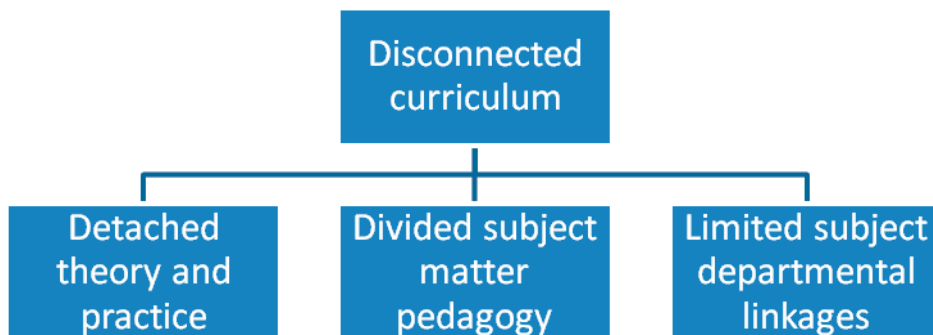


Figure 9 Overview of areas of curriculum disconnection

5.2.2 Category: D: Unsatisfactory professional development of teacher educators

The general focus of the findings in this category is based on teacher educators' professional development. In particular, the data reveals respondents' experiences of recruitment and career development practices. During the interviews the respondents were asked to explain their experiences of recruitment and the professional development process in relation to the ambition of quality enhancement in teacher education.

After analysis of the respondents' statements at different levels, two sub-categories were established based on the similarities and differences of their responses.

(D-1) Clearly defined recruitment criteria

The findings depicted that the respondents were well informed of the recruitment criteria. In addition, they expressed satisfaction with the professional development process and practices of teacher educators to meet the desired qualifications. Two aspects were used as bases for development and illustration of this sub-category.

The first aspect is *potential qualification of teacher educator*. The respondents identified at least three categories of teacher educators and their qualifications, namely tutorial assistants or holders of a Bachelor's degree, assistant lecturers or holders of a master's degree, and lecturers who have a PhD. They further disclosed that the main prerequisite for recruitment is the performance in the Bachelor degree. The findings further revealed that to be recruited one has to have a minimum of 3.5 general points average (GPA). According to the

Tanzanian degree grading system, in the Bachelor's degree the GPA of 3.5 falls in the upper second class. The findings extrapolate that holders of a Bachelor's degree are recruited as tutorial assistants, while those with Master's degrees are recruited as assistant lecturers.

This is evident in the next statement:

It is quite clear that the main criterion for teacher educators' recruitment for this university college is an average of 3.5 GPA and above in the Bachelor's degree. Even if you have a Master's degree you have to meet the criterion of a minimum of 3.5 GPA to get recruited (RP 21, 5 years' experience, Education Department).

The respondents declared that the university colleges were facing a big shortage of teaching staff. Despite advertisements to invite applicants with suitable qualifications to fill the vacancies, they were not found. To remedy this plight a strategy of 'a training post' has been established. Under this approach the university colleges recruit suitable holders of a Bachelor's degree as tutorial assistants and soon take them for Master's studies to meet the required qualification. In this case, therefore, the identification of needs for professional development, which is a prerequisite for quality enhancement, is determined just from the time of recruitment. This approach aims not only at solving the shortage of qualified educators, but also enhancing quality. The following excerpt verifies this claim:

Holders of a Bachelor's degree with a minimum of upper second class are recruited under a post called 'training post'. They start to work as teaching staff under the title of tutorial assistant to address the shortage. And soon they get sponsorship for further studies to achieve the basic qualification and build the capacity for raising the quality of their teaching (RP 2, 4 years' experience, English Department).

Is the approach of employing tutorial assistants in line with the ambition of quality enhancement in teacher education? The recruitment criteria that are used for selection of tutorial assistants seem to be appropriate for getting competent teacher educators who are eligible for further professional development. Therefore, the recruitment criteria are established in line with the ambition of quality enhancement. The respondents acknowledged that the selection criteria and the procedure were transparent to ensure a high possibility of employing staff with a fair academic background.

In respect of recruiting tutorial assistants who are just graduates with a bachelor's degree and developing them to the required level, the approach is not only recommended by the respondents. Alphonse (2004) also defends this approach by arguing that it provides an opportunity for grooming potential academic staff that can get the necessary professional competencies under mentorship of the senior academic staff. He further argues that tutorial assistants are traditionally the lowest standing cadre of academic staff, who as apprentices get the tools of the trade on the job from working closely and under-studying more senior members of staff. Mentorship is described to be one of the viable

strategies of promoting the commitment of new professionals and enhancing their quality (Lindegren, 2005; Alphonse, 2000). In this sense, mentorship has to be given due weight in Tanzanian teacher education as a strategy for creating a positive attitude towards the teaching profession and consequently promoting quality through commitment.

The second aspect is *positive management will*. The respondents asserted that the management of the two university colleges of education was keen on facilitating the professional development of teacher educators who are recruited as tutorial assistants with a Bachelor's degree and encouraged to attain a master's:

With all the claims of shortage of funds, when it comes to the professional development of tutorial assistants, the priority is very clear. A very large number of teacher educators who have been recruited as tutorial assistants are now pursuing their Master's at UDSM (RP20, 8 years' experience, Education Department).

Another respondent was impressed with the procedure for tutorial assistant professional development:

The procedure is quite transparent regarding professional development for holders of a Bachelor's degree to Master's level. As you get recruited and sign a contract with the university college, within a year you get full sponsorship for your studies for a Master's degree (RP 15, 16 years' experience, Education Department).

The respondents also pointed out that there was a deliberate effort of the university colleges' management to facilitate tutorial assistants in pursuing their master's studies even under circumstances when the funds were not available:

Sometimes the university college has been running short of funds for tutorial assistants who have secured admission for Master's studies. Under such circumstance, the management has been helping them to get loans from the higher education loan board and then the university college commits itself to paying the loan for them. This is great! At least a deliberate effort is noted in developing this category of teacher educators (RP 1, 6 years' experience, Education Department).

Why does the management of the university colleges support teacher educators in pursuing studies leading to the Master's degree? One of the reasons may be the fact that the master's degree is a basic qualification for teacher educators who teach in bachelor programs of teacher education (TCU, 2004). This criterion is in line with the observation that formal competence for lecturers in teacher education in Nordic countries is Master's (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010).

Another reason may be connected to the recognition of the influence of educators in providing quality teacher education. As Day et al (2007) argue, teachers matter in the provision of quality education in the context of the school system; teacher educators also matter in the context of the teacher education system. Teacher educators exert a strong influence on quality. This is a reason

why the management in university colleges demonstrates the willingness to sponsor their professional development. Without their competencies and commitment no innovation for improvement can achieve success. Realizing this reality, the management of the university colleges strives for the professional development of its practitioners at least to meet the basic qualification requirements which are also considered necessary for quality enhancement.

(D-2) Incompatible dual motives

The respondents in this sub-category expressed their experience of professional development in relation to motivation. Both intrinsic and extrinsic sources of motivation for professional development were portrayed. It was noted that teacher educators' self-motivation towards gaining a PhD was high. In contrast, the commitment of the university college management to facilitate realization of this motive was expressed to be inadequate.

Two aspects have been identified to illustrate the sub-category of incompatible dual motives. One of the aspects is *heightened personal motives*. The respondents further disclosed that the majority of teacher educators in the two university colleges were young men and women of about forty years and hence still energetic and determined to climb the academic ladder to the top. They also disclosed that they were worried about the future with regard to the rapid expansion of universities in Tanzania. They forecast that a PhD was soon going to be a necessary qualification to work as an academic in higher education institutions. This is a motive that inspires them to strive for high academic qualification, which on the other side serves the purpose of quality enhancement:

The mushrooming of universities in Tanzania is significantly changing the academic trend. We need to have doctorates in order to compete in the employment market and ensure quality improvement of teacher education. The majority of us who are employed in this university college are still young, about 40 years, and everyone is very ambitious for PhD studies. Unfortunately, the university college is not positive in meeting this need (RP 11, 5 years' experience, Geography Department).

Parallel to the above, another respondent observes that a PhD qualification is a necessary requirement for quality enhancement and higher promotion which is associated with better payment and other benefits:

As you know, the promotion criteria in these institutions of higher education are academically sensitive. You are not eligible for promotion unless you have developed as an outstanding academic. I am not only striving to get a PhD for the sake of the certificate alone, but also for better professional competencies, salary payment and other related living benefits. These in turn will increase my motives to work hard and strive for quality enhancement (RP 18, 4years' experience, Education Department).

According to Komba (2010), an individual's personal motivation towards career growth is an important factor in professional development. It inspires one to

exert mental and physical energy to successfully accomplish the program. Joining professional development courses because of pressure from management tends to lower the effectiveness and efficiency. An individual's intrinsic or extrinsic drive towards self career growth is a resource that facilitates achievement of the objective. The findings show that teacher educators are personally motivated to upgrade their academic level to PhD so they can compete in the market and attain substantial competencies for improving quality.

The PhD, according to the Tanzanian University Commission, is an academic requirement which qualifies an educator to teach and supervise research studies in higher learning institutions (TCU, 2004). Rapid expansion of institutions of higher education offering teacher education has been noted in Tanzania (MoEVT, 2010). This will press demand for PhD qualification and therefore inspire potential academics to strive for it. Despite the fact that Master's level is a basic demand for teacher educators, the current trend worldwide shows that the number of PhDs is increasing, and in other countries is becoming a necessary qualification. This is also caused by the concern for enhancing quality in teacher education to enable it to prepare teachers who can meet the challenges of the new knowledge society.

In Finland, for instance, a country which is considered to have a high quality of teacher education, the competence demand for lecturers is a PhD. In other Nordic countries as a mechanism to ensure having PhD holders in teacher education, a recommendation in terms of a ratio has started to be established. In Norway, at least 20 percent, and in Sweden 50 percent of teacher educators are proposed to be holders of PhDs (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010). This is a strategy for ensuring quality enhancement, which Tanzania teacher education can adopt and aim at. Previously, in the discussion about research question one it was argued that a research orientation in teacher education was one of the necessary indicators of quality. In addition, the emphasis on teacher educators possessing a PhD, which is a recommended qualification for supervising research studies, as stipulated by the Tanzania Commission for Universities, reinforces their motives to strive for doctorate studies. A research orientation plays an important role in quality enhancement.

Another aspect of incompatible dual motives is *less priority for doctorate studies*. The respondents also expressed their concern about inadequate support for professional development to the level of PhD. They argued that very few scholarships were provided for studies leading to award of doctorate:

It is very discouraging for PhD scholarship. I have the feeling that this is not the priority of the university college. The university college does not offer scholarships for doctorate studies. The priority is on master's scholarship, which is a minimal qualification. How can you achieve quality if you are operating under minimal qualification? (RP 5, 4 years' experience, Education Department).

The findings in this aspect indicate concern about less priority being given by the management to facilitate teacher educators to pursue studies leading to the

award of doctorates. The respondents stated that not only were the scholarships very few, but also they were unequivocally discouraged by the university college management to find admission abroad. Instead, they were encouraged to find admission at local universities. The majority of teacher educators in one of the university colleges expressed this observation with great concern.

In relation to scholarship, the findings reveal that the majority of teacher educators are interested in pursuing their studies abroad where they claim to be exposed to new and international experiences. According to their perceptions the new experience from abroad is considered significant for individual professional growth and quality enhancement of teacher education. This is supported by the following excerpt:

Despite the fact that scholarships for PhD are very few, still we are highly discouraged to seek admission abroad. Of course, we do not undermine our local universities, but studying abroad exposes one to new perspectives and experiences which are not available in our country. I also believe that new perspectives are also important for personal professional growth and for quality improvement in teacher education (RP 16, 4 years' experience, Education Department).

As stated earlier, a higher education qualification is assumed necessary for quality improvement as was emphasized by the teacher educators. This observation is also supported by policy document and research. TCU (2007) stipulates that high academic qualification to the level of PhD is a crucial criterion for a teacher educator in university-based programs. TCU (Tanzania Commission for Universities) is the organ which is responsible for the registration and monitoring of higher learning institutions in Tanzania. Its primary objective is to ensure quality in programs that provide education at this level.

The emphasis on higher academic qualification for teacher educators to ensure quality enhancement is reflected in research conducted abroad. Focusing on subject specific didactics, Hansén and Forsman (2009) argue that an advanced academic competency up the level of professorship in respective departments is considered important for quality in Finland. It is further observed that the excellence of any higher education institution is inseparable from the excellence of its faculty. Institutions of this level cannot provide quality education of high caliber exclusively from its faculty (Bland & Schmitz, 1990). Based on teacher educators' experiences of professional development, the trend of studies to the level of PhD is not convincing. The higher learning institutions that run teacher education programs in Tanzania, therefore, are pressed by this need to prioritize and devote their resources towards educating their own educators to the level of PhD as a strategy towards enhancing quality.

Writing from the Tanzanian context, Alphonse (2004) observes that it takes an average of 10 years to educate a member of staff to PhD level after completion of a bachelor degree. This means a deliberate long term plan is important for

quality sustainability in the field of teacher education. Otherwise the problem of low quality will prevail for a long time. Initiatives to solicit funds from different sources for financing teacher educators' professional development are called upon. As pointed out earlier, without higher teacher educators' competencies and commitment, the effort towards quality of teacher education enhancement cannot be possible.

As a conclusion of this chapter, it can be argued that the results of the two research questions which guided the study have been presented and discussed. In the first research question, teacher educators conceived quality of teacher education in two main categories: outstanding academic scholarship and adequate professional scholarship. The two categories provide deep explanation of the concept of quality as related to teacher education. Based on these conceptions, criteria for quality have been suggested. The results of the second research question expressed experiences of quality enhancement of teacher education in two main areas: insufficient programs of teacher education and unsatisfactory professional development of teacher educators. In both areas facilitating and inhibiting factors towards improvement are explored. The next chapter concludes discussion of the results and examines their implications.

6 Concluding Discussions and Summary

The aim of this study was to investigate and analyze teacher educators' conceptions of quality and experience of quality enhancement. The results have been presented, described and discussed in Chapter 5. The focus of this chapter is to analyse the results with a broad perspective and critically discuss the implication of the results of the study.

6.1 Teacher educators' conceptions on quality

What are the main findings and conclusions of teacher educators' conceptions of quality in teacher education? As explained earlier, the point of departure for investigating how teacher educators conceived quality in teacher education was stated in research question number 1. The analysis of the results indicates that variation of conceptions among respondents was recognized. Two main categories of descriptions, namely outstanding academic scholarship and adequate professional scholarship were developed.

6.1.1 Quality teacher education as outstanding academic scholarship

How is quality teacher education conceptualized as outstanding academic scholarship? The results portray that one way of conceiving quality in this approach, is in terms of *excellence*. According to the results, excellence is reflected in two different aspects.

The first aspect is *in-depth mastery of pure subject matter*, in which teacher educators consider the mastery of pure subject matter knowledge as a criterion for quality of teacher education. This conception which regards quality as mastery of pure subject matter is somehow controversial. The findings show that those who conceive quality in this stand point, are of the opinion that pure academic subject matter is the most important factor and it can serve the purpose of ensuring quality independently of professional expertise. As opposed to these teacher educators' conceptions, my experience, which is supported by research (Bjarnadottir, 2007; Binde, 2010), is skeptical of this perspective of quality in teaching. The reason behind this is that it puts less weight on other competencies that are linked to professional components such as pedagogy and subject didactics.

In the Tanzanian teacher education context the notion pedagogy as stated previously (see 3.2.1 and 5.1.1) means general theory of education, which includes educational psychology, philosophy of education, sociology of education, educational administration and management, and curriculum and teaching. Subject didactics is commonly known as teaching methods of a specific subject matter (see also Rasmussen, 2008; Meena, 2009). The

skepticism towards this approach of emphasizing pure subject matter is based on fact that quality teaching can be achieved under circumstances where both academic, i.e. pure subject matter per se, and professional components (pedagogy and subject didactics) are adequately addressed and integrated.

The balance of integration of the two, academic and professional components, and in particular the emphasis on pedagogy and subject didactics, is even more important in the Tanzanian context, where the main organizing theme of teacher education is *competency-based*. This theme primarily focuses on the ability to deliver effectively than to master theoretical knowledge. Hence a view of focusing on mere mastery of subject matter by itself to ensure quality in teacher education is inadequate because it contributes to weakening the strength of the profession. Its impact is to reduce the integrity and credibility of the teaching profession, an event which is likely to impair the effort of quality enhancement.

The second aspect defines quality of teacher education in terms of *academic qualification level* of the program and the status of its respective institution. Teacher educators conceive that the minimal program qualification level for quality teacher education, especially for secondary school teachers, is a Bachelor's degree, and therefore awarded by higher learning institutions. In Tanzania, however, this ambition is facing several challenges and not yet well formalized, but it prevails. It is expressed indirectly and sometimes with uncertainty in the following settings: the transformation of Mkwawa and Dar es-Salaam teachers' colleges document (Ishumi, Lihamba & Mtaki, 2005), the gradual process of upgrading all diploma teachers colleges into university colleges of education (TDMS, 2007), and the rapid increase of universities and university colleges offering teacher education programs at degree level (MoEVT, 2010).

This ambition of upgrading teacher education programs to a minimal level of Bachelor's degree and placing it in higher learning institutions, as expressed by the respondents, is also in line with the transformation. The transformation process which aimed at upgrading the programs of teacher education from Diploma level, which were offered by teacher colleges, to Bachelor's degree offered by university colleges of education, was considered a strategy of enhancing quality. The assumption behind this was that quality relates to the level of programs that qualify teachers.

The global trend also substantiates this view of improving quality of teacher education through placing teacher education in higher learning institutions, particularly in universities (see also Townsend & Bates, 2007). In Finland, for instance, teaching is university level education, is research-based and extends to Master's degree level (Sihvonen & Niemi, 2006; Eklund, 2010). By making teacher education a university program with a minimal of Bachelor's degree, Tanzania will be trying to adopt and cope with the current world trend of teacher education, a development which essentially strives for excellence in teacher education. Quality as excellence advocates raising standards (see also Jidamva,

2012; Mosha, 2012). Hence, conceiving quality of teacher education as excellence implicitly illustrates the ambition for professionals' capacity development to the acceptable standards.

Another way of conceiving quality of teacher education as outstanding academic scholarship as expressed by teacher educators is *positive transformation*, which as explained previously (5.1.1), refers to qualitative development towards better or improved state or performance. According to this way of thinking, quality as positive transformation is conceived to be reflected in *input, process and outcome*.

Input refers to the candidates who apply and join teacher education, their academic and professional background. It also includes other resources that are needed to run the program. *Process* is the execution of teaching and learning activity to develop in entrants the desired attributes and competencies. It is in this juncture where the transformation of the student teacher takes place. *Outcome* is the end result, i.e. the effect and contribution that the graduates of the teacher education program bring to the society in which they live (see also Temu, 2007). Based on input, process and outcome quality indicators or dimensions, three aspects are established to express quality as positive transformation, namely *excellent input, effective process* and *functional outcome*.

In conceiving quality as *excellent input*, the respondents emphasized the need to observe the established entry qualifications of student teachers and teacher educators. Their concern was with failure to observe the defined criteria for those who enter teacher education, especially in the route of college-based teacher education. The phrase 'garbage in garbage out', as was used by one of the respondents, is a tone which reflects a negative attitude towards malpractice in the selection of candidates who are enrolled in teacher education programs.

The findings indicate that academic entry standards often are compromised for various reasons, including political ones. This is evident in the discussion of the results (5.1.1), where the dilemma of quality vs. quantity has been pointed out. It has been stated that often the political approach towards educational phenomena tends to favor quantity at the expense of quality. Unfortunately, teacher education by its nature is a political phenomenon (Aspfors, 2012). This, therefore, probably can be addressed carefully in order to provide an opportunity for quality enhancement.

In order to achieve quality in the Tanzanian teacher education context, perhaps political interference may be reduced. A great opportunity is to be provided to professional mandates to guide practice. Otherwise, the quality of teacher education in Tanzania will continue to deteriorate and result in low quality of education in the whole school system. In consequence, the political ambition stated in *The Tanzania Vision 2025* of attaining high quality life of its citizens through the provision of enhanced quality education in all levels will not be realized. *The Tanzania Vision 2025* is the main policy which guides the

development of the country in all spheres of life. According to Ndibalema (2011), in many respects education has become the rallying point for political legitimacy, and it holds out the hope of economic development and social cohesion. Therefore, further deterioration and low quality of teacher education and the school system will reflect failure to attain quality as excellence and fitness for the purpose, as pointed out in quality perspectives (Loma, 2002; Jidamva, 2012).

The other aspect of quality as positive transformation according to teacher educators' perspective as mentioned above is *effective process*. In this aspect, teacher educators' thoughts on conceiving quality were focused mainly on the teaching and learning process. According to teacher educators, an effective process of teaching and learning was determined by educators' competencies in handling the instructional process. They argued that the instructional process ought to enhance critical thinking and deep understanding. As opposed to non-interactive approaches which encourage transmission of knowledge to the learners, interactive strategies which encourage active participation and critical thinking of learners were considered necessary for quality teacher education. It is within this line of thinking that quality as fitness for purposes can be assessed.

Does the teaching profession needs its professionals to be critical thinkers? The general objective of teacher education in Tanzania, as stated in the theoretical framework, is to develop in prospective and serving teachers (teacher educators included) quality competencies essential for the teaching force to manage teaching and learning processes in schools (MOEC, 1995, 2005). Achieving this aim of developing capabilities needed to perform teacher's work is in line with the perspective of conceiving quality as fitness for purpose (Lomas, 2002; Warn & Tranter, 2001). In this perspective, the quality of teacher education is measured along the established objective or intention of developing relevant competencies. Some of these competencies relate to the use of different teaching strategies in classrooms during the teaching and learning process.

However, the results show, in contrast, that teaching in teacher education classrooms is characterized by non-interactive approaches which do not encourage critical and reflective thinking. This, therefore, implies that one of the constraining factors of quality enhancement is inadequate instructional competencies that hinder the actualization of quality as fitness for purpose.

The last aspect of quality as positive transformation is *functional outcome*. This is in line with quality as transformation (see also Harvey & Green, 1993; Jidamva, 2012). Quality teacher education in this conception has to produce a functional outcome. A respondent's statement illustrates this argument;

It has to heighten individuals self-belief and let one be proud as a potential professional who can undertake serious matters of the society (RP 14, 8 years' experience, Education Department).

The majority of the respondents seem to focus on outcome as a benchmark for quality, but the conceptions of other respondents who focus on input and process is of great value, too.

Why place consideration on input and process when is not expressed by the majority? Because the criteria for quality of teacher education cut across the whole continuum from the enrollment of candidates with adequate entry qualification, the teaching and learning processes and the far-reaching effect of the graduates on their respective society. This means the integration of the three elements, *input, process and outcome*, complement this view of quality as a positive transformation. Ensuring quality of the inputs, i.e. the qualification and other attributes of students and teacher educators, the process and the outcome is a necessary condition for achieving it. Nevertheless, the challenge that teacher education in Tanzania is facing is how to ensure that the established standards for entry qualification in teacher education programs is maintained (Mosha, 2004). Experience shows that teacher education policy to maintain quality is in place, but the problem lies in its implementation (see also Temu, 2007).

6.1.2 Quality teacher education as adequate professional scholarship

The second identified category of teacher educators' conceptions of quality is adequate professional scholarship. It is difficult to draw a clear distinction between academic and professional scholarship. Nevertheless, professional scholarship as stated in Chapter 5 is used to mean a state of abiding to scientific grounded standards in carrying out teaching professional tasks. It includes the application of professional competencies such as that of doing research, reflection and teaching and learning instructions, which are embedded in and developed through teacher education professional subjects such as pedagogy and subject didactics. Rasmussen and Dorf (2009) emphasise that professional subjects are the core of the profession and ensure the cohesion of teacher education. My approach to professional scholarship, therefore, is based on knowledge and competencies that originate from pedagogy in general and subject didactics.

In this category the respondents expressed three quality criteria for adequate professional scholarship. The first is *teaching competency*. Different teachers' competencies are developed and integrated to enhance professional scholarship. The respondents expressed the importance of inculcating appropriate and relevant professional competences or skills for quality teaching. The following statement illustrates:

The programs of teacher education should be designed in a way which ensures that the graduates demonstrate adequate ability, or skills that can facilitate the teaching and learning process (RP 9, 4 years' experience, Education Department).

It can therefore be acknowledged that teaching competency is one of the indicators of professional scholarship, which in turn determines quality in

teacher education. In this way of thinking, teacher educators' conceptions of quality focus on the competencies that a teacher is supposed to possess, and consequently a teacher education program is ought to incorporate. However, the findings identify only a few competencies; Wenestam and Lindgren (2011) argue that the concept of teacher competency consists of a variety of knowledge, skills and attitude. As an integrated body of knowledge, skills and attitudes in its holistic nature, teaching competency facilitates an individual to act in a purposeful and acceptable way in a teaching context. The results substantiate the view that through the adequate acquisition and development of appropriate teaching competency, the quality as fit for purpose as expressed in Lomas' (2000) typology can be achieved. These professional competencies are necessary for effective teaching and are developed through professional subjects, namely pedagogy and subject didactics. In the same line of thinking, Botas (2006) affirms that effective teaching is not only an essential component of promoting learning, but also a key towards quality teacher education.

Professional competency, which is a criterion for professional scholarship, is crucial for the quality of teacher education. However, in contrast to this standpoint, there is a prevailing misconception among policy makers and other stakeholders that almost anyone can manage to teach provided he or she has a mastery of subject matter. The respondents pointed out that the quality of teaching is deteriorating because non-professionals are also teaching. This is justified in the following phrase by one of the respondents:

The problem of low quality in teaching is partly contributed to by non-professionals who lack professional competencies, but they teach in teacher education programs and schools. ...there is also misconception that any academic expert can teach (RP 8, 12 years' experience, Education Department).

In Tanzania the recruitment of non-teaching professional academics, to teach in teacher education programs and in the school system is a common practice and is adopted as a strategy of addressing the shortage of professional teachers. The findings justify the employment of the above mentioned strategy where non-professionals are recruited to teach pure subject matter in academic subject departments of respective disciplines. Despite its goodwill the strategy is detrimental to quality.

The prime responsibility of teacher education and teachers in particular in an education institution remains teaching, and therefore a teacher ought to have an appropriate competency of his or her core function. Andrew, Cobb, and Giampietro (2005) observe that good teaching is a complex interaction of a wide range of teachers' characteristics, abilities, dispositions, knowledge of the subject field, experience and pedagogical knowledge. These factors interact with particular school cultures, sets of educational goals and children to produce effective teaching (Khan, & Saeed, 2010). The question to be posed here is how can these competencies be acquired and developed in an individual? Is it not through a formal teacher education program?

The second criterion that illustrates adequate professional scholarship of teacher education is *conscious research orientation*. While in the first criterion of teaching competency the focus was on instructional process, here the attention is geared to engagement in research about and in teacher education. The respondents conceived quality in teacher education in terms of practitioners' engagement in research. They observed that apart from ensuring that education research is an integral component in the programs of teacher education, a clear research guideline was also vital for smooth operation. They argued that a clear research orientation was necessary in creating a suitable conducive environment for enhancing research practice among student teachers, teacher educators and other practitioners.

The respondents specifically emphasized the active participation of teacher educators as role models to student teachers in carrying out research projects:

Not all teachers can do research, but we expect teacher educators to do it and publish the findings in journals. This will provide a good model for student teachers and teachers in the field (RP 21, 5 years' experience, Education Department).

By participating in research teacher educators will contribute to producing and disseminating knowledge that will serve the purpose of maintaining professional standards and hence quality. Teacher educators ought to participate in research (see also Koster & Dengerink, 2000; Smith, 2003) and function as models to other stakeholders, particularly student teachers and other serving teachers in schools so that they can emulate them and engage in small research projects that will familiarize them with generating and consuming knowledge: a practice which is not yet well developed in Tanzania. How is involvement in research by teachers and teacher educators relevant to the current trend of teacher education and in particular quality teacher education?

At an international level, the tendency of involving practitioners and in particular teachers in research to study their own practice has recently gained broad acceptance and is regarded as one of the movements towards democratization of enquiry and hence quality improvement in the field of teacher education. It gives teachers authority and control over knowledge about practice in the profession. In addition, the movement bridges the gap of teachers' missing voice in teacher education literature which is written by academic researchers and other educational theorists, who sometimes lack real and current teaching experience in the school setting (see Reis-Jorge, 2007; Korthagen, 2004; Kansanen, 2003). The school setting is a crucial factor in determining what constitutes quality in teacher education.

During the interviews the respondents pointed out that research was a viable strategy in the process of improving quality as it deals with investigation of issues of quality education in general and teacher education in particular. This is illustrated in the following excerpt:

You are likely to attain quality if you clear policy of research in place. Through research you generate knowledge, explore problems and come up with solutions, but the policy is lacking (RP 7, 10 years' experience, Educational Department).

When analyzing the teacher educators' statements, it became evident that the absence of clear research guidelines and clear policy is a barrier to achieving quality professional scholarship. Why and how do teacher educators in Tanzania conceive quality of teacher education in connection with research guidelines and policy? The two count for determining quality. It is clear guidelines and policy that will not only lay down and reveal conditions and procedures for organizing research, but will also work out possible strategies for initiating research schemes that can solicit funds, which are identified by the respondents to be a serious barrier in our local teacher education system.

The importance of research and therefore clear orientation has been emphasized by several scholars in wide global perspectives of teacher education. Strong attention has been drawn to strengthening education research as an instrument of improving quality of teaching and learning (Smith, 2003; Hudson & Zgaga, 2008; Hallinan & Khmelkov, 2001; Kansanen, 2003). It is through research that practitioners in the field of teacher education in our local setting can improve their professional practice and hence achieve quality.

In the context of new development of teacher education in Tanzania through transformation of college into university college-based teacher education, it is expected that this new innovation will stimulate the practice of research orientation. Scholars (Kansanen, 2003; Townsend & Bates, 2007) have pointed out that one of the main tasks of a university is to conduct research that serves as a base for knowledge generation and informed decision-making. However, on one hand the results reveal some weaknesses as outlined in (5.1.2), such as reduced research practice, lack of clear research policy and lack of a formal framework for upgrading the program of teacher education to Bachelor's degree level.

On the other hand the findings illustrate that teacher education in Tanzania is gradually being affiliated to a research orientation, an aspect which is inevitable in universities and determinant of quality. Establishment of accredited journals, transformation, increase of teacher education in higher learning institutions and teacher educators' ambitions towards doctorate level for example, signify this new development in teacher education. The actualization of this ambition will be an opportunity for teacher education in Tanzania to cope and benefit from the world trend of teacher education, where global teacher quality is one of the education priorities and is growing rapidly.

To reinforce research studies and the dissemination of findings in teacher education in Tanzania, action research in joint projects between schools could be one of the ways of achieving the intention. New university colleges of education which have the ambition of growing to fully fledged universities also ought to widen the scope of research orientation and strengthen their operations in teacher

education programs. What specific mechanisms should be instituted to address the existing weaknesses and promote research orientation remain critical questions to be addressed.

The third criterion of quality teacher education as adequate professional scholarship is *enhanced ability to reflect*. There is a slight difference to the previously conceived criterion of conscious research orientation which focused on research practice; here, the focus is on the ability to reflect. Reflection as a professional competency is closely related and depends on research. The respondents emphasized the need for teachers to have reflective skills:

Research provides a basis for critical reflection, and the two are independent of each other. You need research findings to reflect accordingly...but also you need reflective skills to interpret research findings (RP 9, 4 years' experience, Educational Department).

However, the respondents pointed out that research and reflection are closely related and depend on each other, but they differ to a certain extent. Reflection is like the skill of an attitude, which a teacher or practitioner uses to handle different matters. One needs reflective skills to either solve a certain problem or find a new alternative.

How is enhanced reflection connected to professional scholarship and quality of teacher education? According to the respondents, conceiving quality in terms of enhanced ability to reflect is expressed in two aspects: a substantial thinking tool and a means of solving problems. In the former aspect, the central focus of respondents' conceptions is connected to reflection as a tool for reaching a reasonable decision. The respondents conceptualized reflection to be one of the indicators of professional scholarship and consequently quality. A practitioner who maintains professional scholarship in this context demonstrates an ability to reach a solution through scientific reasoning. Reflection becomes a tool for practical decision making:

Teaching is a reflective process and it requires teachers to scrutinize their practices and make decisions based on reason (RP 7, 10 years' experience, Education Department).

In the latter aspect, the respondents' conception of quality as enhanced ability to reflect is focused on the use of reflective professional knowledge to find solutions or alternatives to solve a particular problem:

I think that in reflection a teacher finds an alternative of how to do his work and get a better result if what he did did not achieve the goal (RP 9, 4 years' experience, Educational Department).

The respondents further expressed that reflection was important for detecting and solving quality problems. They pointed out that through reflection a comparison of practices between our local teacher education in Tanzania and other parts of the world could be done:

You know, knowing your own quality problem is not always natural. There is a need to critically reflect on our local practices and compare to others, if we have to strive for quality (RP 10, 6 years' experience, Kiswahili Department).

Critical reflection of experience from others, at local and international levels, provides an opportunity for self-critique to identify possible prevailing weaknesses and subsequently measures to address them. Under what circumstances are reflective skills useful in the teaching professional? A teacher as a reflective practitioner is conceived as an informed expert who is guided by scientific reasoning. She is expected to play more extended roles, which may include developing the curriculum to suit the context, evaluating and trying to improve one's own practice, and mentoring new teachers (Lewin & Stuart, 2003). In other words, a reflective practitioner is one whose practice is not guided by routine or intuitions, but instead, by scientific principles. In reflection a practitioner makes a critical evaluation (Laurson, 2006). It is within this base that the respondents conceived enhanced ability to reflect as an important element in maintaining professional scholarship and quality of teacher education in general.

To sum up teacher educators' conceptions of quality in teacher education, it can be argued that quality in teacher education is a complex notion. It is a concept that stretches from academic to professional components of the field. In both categories: quality as outstanding scholarship and quality as adequate professional scholarship, teacher educators provide crucial insights into what the notion quality consists of in the context of teacher education. Consequently, these constituents may be used as characteristics or criteria for appraising quality in this discipline. Their conceptions are in line with Lomas' perspectives of quality.

6.2 Experiences of quality enhancement of teacher education

The analysis of the findings related to research question two shows that the teacher educators perceived quality enhancement of teacher education in two main categories of description: the first one is insufficient teacher education programs and the second unsatisfactory teacher educators' professional development.

6.2.1 Insufficient programs

What are the major findings and remarks that can be drawn from the results of teacher educators' experiences of quality enhancement through teacher education programs? The analysis of the results indicates that their experiences comprise both restraining and facilitating factors towards quality enhancement. I

start to analyse and summarize the factors that inhibit the process and end with the facilitating ones.

Overlaps were identified by teacher educators as one of the restricting possibilities for quality enhancement. The data verify the existence of duplication of themes in different courses. The following respondent's statement illustrates:

These courses, I tell you! ... are a duplication of each other..., both, as you can see from the codes they are taught in third year...wastage of resource (RP 12, 5 years' experience, Kiswahili Department).

The curriculum is one of the basic cornerstones of quality in any program of teacher education. It is expected that the curriculum has to meet standards of the prescribed program. The question of interest in this context is how overlaps in curriculum influence the quality enhancement of teacher education. The results demonstrate that overlaps are perceived by teacher educators as constraints towards quality enhancement. Why is this? The concern is based on the reality that the repetition of content among different courses of the same curriculum in a program of teacher education is a reflection of weakness. As curriculum practitioners, the respondents expressed that overlaps reduced their professional autonomy. This is asserted in the following statement:

This concern has been raised several times... it undermines our credibility and creativity (RP 12, 5years' experience, Kiswahili Department).

Awareness of teacher educators that overlaps reduce their professional autonomy may lower their motivation. Low motivation is a barrier towards quality enhancement. While the findings show that overlaps lower educators' motivation and are a waste in terms of time, human and other physical resources; in almost the same line of thinking, Meena (2009) argues that they have the same effects on the learners, too.

Why do overlaps exist in teacher education programs? From the results, I can summarize four reasons: shortage of experienced professors, lack of well-defined procedures and bodies responsible for course development and inadequate involvement of other course instructors. Another reason is the adoption of course subjects and programs from the mother university, UDSM.

Other possibilities for overlaps in teacher education programs, though are not exposed clearly by the findings, but just highlighted indirectly are likely to be: fragmentation of course development, which may result from insufficient coordination and cooperation between and among different departments, and inadequate knowledge of the curriculum. The respondents stated this argument when they were discussing inadequate departmental linkages as a reason for curriculum disconnection:

It is a challenging situation ...you cannot operate effectively without establishing departments ...but on the other hand this goodwill strategy acts as agent of segregation (RP 11, 5 years' experience, Geography Department).

Inadequate knowledge of the curriculum as a barrier to quality enhancement is inferred in the following:

Enough knowledge and critical reflection is necessary for designing a curriculum or course content which does not accommodate overlaps RP 10, 6 years' experience, Kiswahili Department).

This means in circumstances where there is limited critical knowledge of the curriculum, overlaps are likely to occur. Hence, a deliberate effort to build capacity in terms of course program developers and establish coordinating units for course development is needed. It is through coordination and cooperation between and among departments that course objectives and contents can be harmonized and hence minimizes the possibility of overlaps occurring (see also Kimaryo, 2011).

Looking from the other angle of interpretation of the results, it can be observed that the limited involvement of junior teacher educators in developing courses limits their opportunity to be mentored. Since mentoring is an important aspect in ensuring quality enhancement of teacher education, lack of or inadequate mentoring is a hindrance towards quality enhancement. However, the critical concern is what should be done to alleviate the existing plight. As a solution to this problem, it was suggested from the findings that:

There is a need to widen the scope of instructors' participation in developing the course objectives and contents. This will serve two purposes: mentoring new practitioners and enhancing the professional autonomy of the executors (RP 10, 6years' experience, Kiswahili Department).

Mentoring is one of the recommended strategies for preparing and developing new professionals in acquiring the necessary competencies (see also Lindgren, 2005; Devetak, & Glažar, 2010) that can facilitate the attainment of enhanced quality in teacher education. In this context, is it necessary for senior and experienced professors who design course programs to mentor junior educators in their respective departments with the purpose of building capacity and preparing junior educators to develop a critical eye in scrutinizing the curriculum contents. This will results in avoiding not only overlaps, but also other shortcomings. Senior educators are expected to nurture their junior colleagues in the profession. Alongside these results, overlaps in Tanzanian teacher education are also noted in the curriculum for certificate and diploma teacher education programs (Meena, 2009). This signifies that the problem cuts across from college to university-college based teacher education. Overlaps are perceived negatively by teacher educators and therefore measures to bring the problem to an end are needed.

Inadequate practicum was perceived by respondents as another obstacle to quality enhancement. In particular, it was pointed out that practicum, or teaching practice as it is commonly called in Tanzanian teacher education, was held back by insufficient time and ineffective supervision. Time allocated for teaching practice was perceived by teacher educators as not enough to enable student

teachers to acquire enough field experience. The following respondent's observation substantiates this argument:

The duration of one to two months for teaching practice per year is too short to provide enough time for students to practice...but, for whatever reasons, the price of reducing teaching practice is very high! (RP 22, 16 years' experience, Education Department).

In examining the empirical data, it was learned that sufficient time for teaching practice was emphasized by teacher educators as the most crucial factor for developing field experience in the teaching profession. Although the findings do not illustrate clearly how the duration and supervision of teaching practice relate to each other, the two are dependent on each other and they are internally connected to each other. Despite the fact that duration seems to be given enough support by the findings as the determinant factor of effective practicum, the findings also underline that teaching practice supervision is not properly managed and therefore result in various problems which impinge quality enhancement. The following excerpt validates this assertion:

There have been several concerns about supervision of teaching practices (RP 25, 18 years' experience, Education Department)

The issue of supervision of teaching practice in Tanzania seems to be problematic in nature. This is because the general concern and emphasis of practitioners, student teachers, policy makers and other stakeholders tends to focus on duration rather than supervision, a view which is controversial. The experience of the two-tier system of educating teachers in diploma and certificate programs from 2002-2008 is evidence of how a long duration of teaching practice alone might not assure quality improvement. The two-tier system allocated 50 percent of the course duration to teaching practice, but it has been observed that this approach led to low quality of teachers (see also Mushi, Penny, Sumra, Mhina, & Barasa, 2004; Wedgwood, 2007).

Parallel to this line of thinking, it is stated that quality supervision matters more than prolonged duration of teaching practice. In comparison, Finnish teacher education programs are cited to have less teaching practice duration than any other in the Nordic countries (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010), but still is considered to have good quality (Hansén & Forsman, 2009; Eklund, 2010). One of the reasons for good quality, and in particular development of novice teachers, is scholarly supervision and mentorship. The supervisors who are also mentors by virtue of their roles are well-educated and placed in specialized practice schools where student teachers are posted for teaching practice (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010).

From this experience it is advisable that teacher education in Tanzania adopts this perspective of strengthening supervision by preparing competent mentors in schools where student teachers do teaching practice. The empirical data show, however, that mentorship is still an uncommon practice in our context:

You know this idea of mentoring in our traditional teacher education and in schools is uncommon (RP 15, 16 years' experience, Educational Department).

Since effective practicum is an important factor towards quality enhancement, what should be done to strengthen students' supervision in order to attain the goal? Strategies for educating serving teachers to provide effective supervision are supposed to be initiated. This is emphasized by Devetak and Glažar (2010), who assert that there is a need for mentors who provide supervision to be properly educated on how to conduct the mentoring process for novice teachers and student teachers. It is through this strategy that programs of teacher education can enhance quality throughout one's teaching career, instead of aiming to lengthen the duration of teaching practice. This is because teaching is a lifelong learning process as is also mentorship.

The other constraint to quality enhancement in programs of teacher education as perceived by teacher educators is *disconnected curriculum*. The data illustrate that the curriculum of teacher education is fragmented and therefore lacks an important component of integration, which is a crucial ingredient for quality enhancement. Three areas of curriculum disconnection at the level of aspects were perceived by teacher educators.

The first is *detached theory-practice*. The results clearly indicate that theory and practice in the programs of teacher education are treated in isolation. For instance, it was noted that student teachers learn the procedures of preparing schemes of work, lesson plans and other teaching materials for several periods without using them in the real classroom context until during teaching practice. This means during the normal periods of teaching and learning at the institution, even the short term demonstration lessons which provide an opportunity for student teachers to link theory and practice are not conducted. This is illustrated by the following:

My concern is for the implementation process: it has disconnected the elements of the curriculum from each other. Theory and practice are not integrated (RP 6, 18 years' experience, Education Department).

In Tanzania, as in many other countries, institutions that offer teacher education have specialized demonstration schools to cater for the need of integrating theory and practice easily. But according to the findings it seems that this is not the reality in practice. The results show that there is a detachment of the two:

Teaching practice is done at the end of academic year. In many cases it is organized during the vacation before the new academic year. I think on certain occasions it may be organized parallel with other training through short term teaching practices (RP 21, 5 years' experience, Education Department).

On what basis is the integration of theory and practice important for quality enhancement? In the teaching profession, theory and practice form inseparable sides of the same coin. They are mutually dependent, and a sharp distinction between these elements is not realistic (Sjöholm & Hansén, 2007). In this sense, it can be argued that quality practice in teaching profession is based on quality

theory that provides guidelines. While theories guide practice on the one hand, practice is a base on which theories are developed on the other hand. The base of professional scholarship lies in one's ability to integrate theory and practice.

Failure to observe and/or integrate theory and practice, whether deliberately or not, seems to lower the professional scholarship of teaching, its consequence of which is to inhibit quality enhancement. According to Temu (2007), the low quality of teacher education in Tanzania is partly attributed by failure to observe the established criteria in processing the curriculum. He further argues that the guiding theories are well developed, but not integrated in practice. This observation implies that mechanisms that will reinforce the integration of the two have to be instituted and close follow-up has to be established. Kansanen (2003) emphasizes the close connection between theory and practice in teacher education programs because it reinforces student teachers in making pedagogical decisions based on scientific theories and principles, which in turn is a key towards quality enhancement.

The second area of curriculum disconnection is *divided subject matter–pedagogy*. The respondents expressed that pure academic disciplines (subject matter) were taught independently of subject didactics. Illustrating the separation, the findings demonstrate that there is a clear division of roles between those who teach academic content on the one hand and methods of teaching on the other.

While in Tanzanian teacher education programs, pure academic subjects are taught independently of subject didactics, Nordic teacher education programs integrate them. In addition, there is a substantial amount of time assigned to these combined subjects to enable student teachers to become better educators, and not experts in content academic subjects alone, but also experts in teaching subjects (see also Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010). This kind of experience is good and it is important that is emulated.

The process of enhancing quality through programs of teacher education can be actualized if teacher educators who facilitate teaching and learning are knowledgeable in both academic subject matter and subject didactics (Löfström, Poom-Valickis, Hannula & Mathews, 2010). Contemporary research done in other part of the world supports that student teachers taught by educators who combine knowledge and competencies of the two components achieve the best outcome (Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010). Based on this fact, it is important that Tanzanian teacher education programs adopt and strengthen the approach of teaching subject matter and teaching methods integratively. Through this strategy the problem of fragmentation will be addressed and therefore foster the quality of teaching, which ultimately defines the quality of teacher education.

The findings also indicate the disintegration between ICT as a general instructional skill and subject didactics. It was noted that the knowledge and skills applied during the instructional process were taught independently instead

of integrating them in methodological courses of specific subjects. This is elucidated in the following statement:

Student teachers are not given ample opportunity to apply ICT in classroom teaching...as a result, they face difficulties in integrating these skills in their teaching. They also continue to treat ICT and their teaching subjects as different and independent subjects (RP 21, 5years of experience, Education Department).

ICT is an instrumental tool for effective delivery in programs of educating teachers. The use of technology in discharging teaching and learning activities enriches the process and contributes to quality enhancement. Disconnection of the technology and the subject methodological courses exposed in the results is a barrier towards quality teaching. Just as it is important to integrate subject matter and subject didactics in order to enhance the quality of teaching, so it is also for ICT and subject methodologies.

The use of ICT in teacher education and its contribution is apparent at local and global level. While in this study the emphasis is focused on the use of ICT in the instructional process, nevertheless its influence on quality enhancement goes beyond this. It is an instrumental tool for internalizing and globalizing teacher education. Tanzania is a part of the global community and it cannot isolate itself from it. Mushi (2006) argues that the faith in using ICT in education is based on its capacity to bring practitioners and other stakeholders together as they access literature and disseminate research findings and on building educational and research partnerships and collaborations through web or internet communications. In brief, despite the shortage of ICT facilities in Tanzanian teacher education programs, the current trend of using ICT is increasing and hence the integration of ICT and subject didactics will contribute to the enhancement of quality in teacher education programs.

The third area of curriculum disconnection which also has a close relationship to the previous one is *limited-subject departmental linkages*. While in the previous area of disconnection the focus was on division between subject content and didactics, in this part the focus is on departmental networking. In order to achieve the purpose of enhancing quality, the departments that are established to offer teaching and learning services in teacher education programs have to operate cooperatively. Conversely, the empirical data indicate that different departments which accomplish the curriculum programs of teacher education have limited interaction and communication:

Educational science departments and academic subject matter departments exist as different organizations (RP 25, 8 years' experience, Education Department).

According to the respondents this is a challenge, because the intention of departments is to maximize coordination and supervision to facilitate the smooth running of the programs, but unfortunately it changes to be a barrier on the other side:

You cannot operate effectively without establishing departments that oversee the teaching and learning activities. ...but on the other hand, this goodwill strategy acts as agent of segregation (RP 11, 5 years' experience, Geography Department).

To address this problem, one of the approaches is to strengthen the integration of subject matter and subject didactics, as discussed earlier. In Tanzanian teacher education, departments are established on the basis of subject specialization. Therefore, strengthening integration between and among subjects gradually will weaken the disintegration of departments and therefore maximize linkage, which is an opportunity for quality enhancement. In addition, there is a need to establish inter-departmental collaboration in developing and moderating the curriculum and course objectives across the programs. The adaptation and adherence to integrated and asymmetrical matrix model structures of organizing teacher education discussed in theoretical background (3.1) can be a viable solution to the problem of curriculum disconnection.

In the same line of practice, it is noted that there are no reliable partnerships between university colleges and schools where student teachers are sent for practicum and graduates are posted to teach. The data further revealed that even the demonstration school whose relationship and role is clearly defined does not exist in practical terms.

Even the demonstration school whose role is clearly defined exists in theory, but it does not serve the purpose for which it was established. You do not find the holistic view of integrated curriculum in this context (RP 25, 8 years of experience, Education Department).

To maintain and enhance the quality of teacher education in Tanzania, it is imperative that the partnerships between institutions offering teacher education and schools are strengthened. Through school partnerships, current school practice can be easily integrated or accommodated in the programs of teacher education. Globally, a university-school partnership is emphasized as a means of sharing experiences and improving practice. In some places it is strengthened by the initiation of university-school partnership educational projects, which provide a good forum for teacher educators and teachers to share experiences that might be used in solving existing problems and enhancing quality (see also Ginsberg & Rhodes, 2003).

Parallel to the constraining factors, teacher educators also expressed facilitating factors towards quality enhancement. While the constraining factors are considered weaknesses, the facilitating ones are regarded as strengths in enhancing quality. The respondents identified *adequate coverage of the content* as a facilitating factor towards quality development. They explained that the programs of teacher education were exhaustive and comprised the necessary competencies needed by a professional teacher:

A student teacher studies one or two academic subject(s) of specialization, teaching methods of specialized subject(s) and educational subjects. In addition,

he or she does supervised teaching practice (RP 13, 4 years' experience, Biology Department).

However, the curriculum of pre-service teacher education programs has a tendency to vary from one institution to another, but many programs share common curricular characteristics. The curriculum of teacher education programs seems generally to consist of four components, namely subject-matter studies, educational science, professional studies such as method courses and teaching practice (Ben-Peretz, 1995; Rasmussen & Dorf, 2010). In line with this perspective, the respondents revealed that the current curriculum of teacher education programs, which is the same for the new transformed university colleges of education and their mother university, adequately covered the essential contents needed for preparing and developing quality teachers. This therefore is a strength and opportunity for quality enhancement. To maintain this relevance, periodical review according to the needs that emerge in the profession and society at large is emphasized.

In the same way, strength is noted in the coverage of the contents within individual subjects. While in the previous analysis the focus was on the coverage of the course program, in this part attention is paid to coverage within the individual subject. In this view, teacher educators perceive quality enhancement in connection with the content coverage of the specific subjects. The data verify adequate coverage of the content in specific subjects. Generally, it is evident that there is a positive experience of the content coverage in both programs and subject courses.

In conclusion, however, the analysis shows certain strengths of programs, but the weaknesses and threats override. Therefore, in order to enhance the quality of teacher education programs, continuous evaluation and review of the curriculum is essential in order to meet the needs that are emerging and to cope with global trends of teacher education developments, which in addition to other ambitions, strive for quality enhancement.

6.2.2 Unsatisfactory professional development of teacher educators

The analysis of quality enhancement through programs of teacher education in the first category was focused on the curriculum package and how it is implemented. The existing strengths and weaknesses were specifically outlined and summarized. In this part, i.e. second category, teacher educators' perception of professional development is focused on. The analysis is anchored on the influence of educators' professional development of quality.

When examining teacher education quality enhancement, it is difficult to draw a sharp distinction between the influence of the curriculum as discussed earlier and educators' professionalism, because the two relate to and influence each other. But despite overlaps, the central intention here is to analyze how educators' professional development relates to professional scholarship, which,

according to teacher educators' conceptions (as discussed in 5.1.2 and 6.1.2), is one of the basic characteristics of quality in teacher education. Ultimately, the connection between and among professional development, professional scholarship and quality enhancement of teacher education is aimed at.

As a result of data interpretation and analysis, two sub-categories of description emerged. These are a) clearly defined recruitment criteria, and b) incompatible dual motives. While the former pays attention to teacher educators' basic recruitment prerequisites and procedures, the latter addresses the issue of their motivation and support for professional development.

The subcategory of *clearly defined recruitment criteria* is classified into two aspects, namely potential qualification of teacher educators and positive management will. It is revealed by the findings in the first aspect of *potential qualification of teacher educators*, that criteria for recruitment and other prerequisites are transparent and clearly stipulated. The potential qualifications for one to be a teacher educator are openly stated.

What are these basic qualifications, and how do they relate to quality enhancement? The findings identify three types of teacher educators' basic qualifications for recruitment into university colleges of education: tutorial assistants, assistant lecturers and lecturers. The data pointed out that the laid down procedure for recruitment was helpful to identify one's professional development needs from the start of employment.

The procedure is quite transparent ...hence, the identification of needs for professional development is determined at the time of recruitment (RP 2, 4 years of experience, English Department).

The result suggests that tutorial assistants were facilitated to undergo professional development as soon they were recruited:

When you get recruited and sign a contract with the university college, within a year you get full sponsorship for your studies for a Master's (RP 15, 16 years of experience, Education Department).

Looking at these results from another angle, it means teacher educators who are recruited as tutorial assistants lack potential qualification. This is the reason why they are facilitated to attend professional development studies leading to award of master's degree as soon as they are recruited. The results are in line with the observation that was pointed out in the background of the study (1.1), stating that one of the criticisms of teacher education in Tanzania is lack of desired qualification for some teacher educators. To ensure quality enhancement, transparent criteria in the recruitment of teacher educators have been developed. As a result, only potential candidates with good academic records in their bachelor degrees are recruited and facilitated to pursue a masters qualification.

Why establish prerequisites for recruitment and how is this approach in line with the intention of quality enhancement? The assumption behind setting recruitment criteria is to ensure that those who are recruited possess a basic academic

background which is not only an important factor for professional scholarship, but also a potential for professional development. It is a strategy of striving towards attaining excellence (see Lomas, 2002; Jidamva, 2012). In the same vein, Babyegeya (2006b) emphasizes the establishment of minimal merits for recruiting teaching staff in universities and university colleges as a means of ensuring a high quality of educators, who are also suitable for further development. Teaching is a lifelong learning career and therefore professional development is essential for improvement.

The other facilitating factor for teacher educators' professional development as expressed by the respondents at the level of aspect is *positive management will*. The respondents asserted that the management of each university college was keen on facilitating the professional development of teacher educators who are being recruited as tutorial assistants with a Bachelor's degree to attain a Master's degree.

With all the claims for shortage of funds, when it comes to the professional development of tutorial assistants, the priority is very clear (RP20, 8years' experience, Education Department).

The good will of the management towards developing teacher educators who are recruited with minimal qualifications is expressed in the following:

As you get recruited, within a year you get full sponsorship for Master's studies (RP 15, 16 years of experience, Education Department).

Facilitating educators with minimal qualifications to upgrade their academic and professional level is a matter of necessity in enhancing the quality of instruction in any education institution. The basis of this argument lies in the reality that the quality of the institution is inseparable from the quality of its faculty. In understanding this reality, the management of each university college of education under this study, strives to develop its' teacher educators to meet the basic qualification requirement which is also considered necessary for quality enhancement. The results show a deliberate effort is being made to solicit funds for this purpose. The teacher education institutions are investing in their staff with the expectation that they are going to increase their capacity and later on improve their performance and thus enhance quality in their respective disciplines.

The other respondents' perceptions of teacher educators' professional development as expressed in the results is *incompatible dual motives*. The sub-category of incompatible dual motives comprised of two aspects: heightened personal motives and less priority for doctoral studies.

In the first aspect, *heightened personal motives*, the individual's motive is stated as a contributing factor towards educators' professional development and quality enhancement. The respondents' main focus on this view is concerned with the relationship between the individual's motivation and professional development. Both intrinsic and extrinsic sources of motivation are expressed. It was noted

that teacher educators' self-motivation for professional development towards gaining a PhD was high:

We need to have doctorates in order to compete in the employment market and ensure quality improvement of teacher education (RP 11, 5 years' experience, Geography Department).

Implicitly, this means teacher educators have a need to improve and maintain good standards of professional scholarship. This lays down a good foundation for development courses that aim to maintain professionalism through keeping the professionals well-informed and updated with new changes that emerge.

In the Tanzanian teacher education system, as in many other developing countries where forums for short courses like seminars, symposiums and workshops are limited, a formal, long professional development is important to serve the purpose. The success of this approach, however, depends on individual motivations. A personal motive is an appropriate platform for professional development because; according to Komba (2010) it inspires one to exert mental and physical energy that is likely to result in successful achievement of the intended goal. It is through professional development that teacher educators can improve their academic and professional scholarship, which ultimately results in improved instructional process in teacher education programs, which, in turn, is also a facilitating factor toward quality enhancement.

According to the results, in contrast to the two previous perceived opportunities for professional development of teacher educators as stated in the preceding aspects, there are barriers expressed in the next aspect. One of the barriers is inadequate support for professional development to the level of PhD, which is identified in the aspect *less priority given to the doctorate studies*. In this aspect as stated in the background to express deficiency in professional development, the respondents argued that very few scholarships were provided for studies leading to the award of doctorate:

The university college does not offer scholarships for doctorate studies. The priority is on scholarships for the Master's degree, which is a minimal qualification (RP 5, 4 years of experience, Education Department).

Quality teacher education is considered to be achieved through, among other strategies, making teacher education research-based. For teacher education in Tanzania to adopt this orientation, one of the biggest challenges is the shortage of academics with appropriate qualifications. It is therefore necessary that enough resources are devoted to educating teacher educators to the level of PhD so as to meet the desired standards. According to TCU (2007), a PhD is a potential qualification for a teacher educator to supervise scientific research inquiries. Scientific research is a main component of research-based teacher education, which is assumed to be a potential organizing theme for quality enhancement.

Experience from developed countries underscores the movement of educating teacher educators to the level of PhD. The recent teacher education trend, worldwide, illustrates that in other countries a PhD is becoming a necessary qualification for a lecturer. In Finland, for instance, the competence demand for a lecturer is a PhD. Gradually; this qualification seems to be growing into a condition of employment on a permanent basis in Iceland (Rasmussen & Dorf 2010). Likewise, Hansén and Forsman (2009) argue that an advanced teaching competency up the level of professorship in subject specific didactics is considered an important factor for quality. It should also be noted that these countries have a strong policy of enhancing quality of teacher education

Through pursuing professional development studies leading to the award of PhD, teacher educators in Tanzania will develop appropriate professional competency (in pedagogy and subject didactics), which is a necessary constituent of professional scholarship and ultimately a main facilitator of quality enhancement. In addition it will inspire teacher educators to continue with their career as it is also connected to promotion as discussed previously in theoretical framework (3.3).

Generally, the results of teacher educators' experience on quality enhancement indicate that the quality of teacher education in its totality is influenced by both programs and teacher educators, and the two influence each other. A comprehensive program of teacher education, which is implemented under a well-developed curriculum, and appropriate and reliable professional development programs of teacher educators are necessary prerequisites for quality enhancement. To maintain good quality of teacher educators, their professional development is not an option, but a compulsory strategy. It is through adequate teacher education programs and relevant educators' professional development programs that teacher educators and Lomas' perspectives of quality as fitness for purpose can be achieved (Lomas, 2002). The objectives of the discipline and society in providing quality education will be attained and hence satisfy the needs.

6.3 The results in relation to quality characteristics

The results of the study have been presented and analyzed exhaustively in the previous discussion. Here, I want to synthesize the results and briefly analyze how they are reflected in the three characteristics of quality according to Lomas' typology, i.e. excellence, fitness for purpose and transformation.

As stated earlier in the theoretical framework (3.2), the characterization of quality as *excellence* focuses on examining to what degree a phenomenon represents desired characteristics or a certain level of performance. Features of quality as excellence, such as high academic qualification, high mastery of academic subject matter and professional subjects, critical reflection and active

participation in research for knowledge production purposes are identified. These features manifest a high level of academic and professional standards and therefore excellence, though not to any ultimate of perfection as expressed by Harvey and Green (1993), but at least to acceptable benchmarks of good performance as Mosha (2000) proposes.

Quality as excellence is also visible in the results of teacher educators' experiences of their professionalism. Necessary qualifications, transparent recruitment procedures and the motive for professional development to the level of PhD, for instance, seem to constitute the criteria of attaining excellence. Teacher educators' ambition for doctoral studies might signify an effort to become qualified researchers who can enhance the status of teacher education to high academic standards. From the data it is, however, not possible to get more information about the driving force behind this. Was excellence mainly attached to the task of enhancing quality of teacher education or was the motive primarily related to personal career ambitions?

Quality as *fitness for purpose* is reflected in different kinds of contexts. The results show the need for teachers to attain teaching competencies necessary to accomplish teachers' work. Instructional and other competencies are identified as important to the teacher in order to properly accomplish her or his work. Likewise, a teacher educator ought to possess the ability to master and employ different teaching strategies, skills of lesson preparation, guidance and counseling skills and leadership skills. Similarly, quality as fitness for purpose is lucidly illustrated in the expressed needs for an integration of the curriculum. The criticism raised against what I have labeled as a disconnected curriculum, concerned the fragmented and weakly connected parts of the curriculum program, which illustrates teacher educators' perceptions of making a curriculum meet the demand of the profession.

The view of quality as *transformation* represents a social view of education, which of course also requires a transformation of individuals. Education is regarded as an agent of change towards improvement of the life of a society. The quality of teacher education, for instance in this case, will be counted in connection to its contribution to the society. Teacher educators perceived the task of teachers to be extended in relation to the roles they were expected to play in society. Teacher education had a responsibility to empower and enhance individuals' capabilities, for instance to facilitate the process of sustainable development.

The discussed three characteristics of quality: excellence, fitness for purpose and transformation relate, as shown, both to intrinsic and extrinsic aspects of quality. The former is visible in teacher educators' way of viewing values and ideas such as the pursuit of theoretical knowledge concerning excellence and fitness for purpose. This perspective emphasizes the philosophical and theoretical knowledge that identifies teacher education, particularly as an academic

endeavor. The latter focuses on extrinsic qualities in which the emphasis is given to the capacities of teacher education to respond to the changing needs.

6.4 Implications of the results

The results point out several ideas that seem to have implications for the field of teacher education in Tanzania and for the education sector and society in general.

Research is considered as one of the basic characteristics of quality in teacher education. Quality enhancement is, though, constrained by restricted possibilities for teacher educators to enhance quality by continuing with post graduate studies. Research also is not given due attention in the programs of qualifying teachers. Teacher educators called for initiatives to institute strategies to address this gap. Hence, one of the practical implications for policy makers is to devise appropriate strategies to address the need for educators' professional development through post-graduate studies. The other possible strategy can therefore be to integrate research in teacher education programs and initiate national teacher educators' research conferences to open up possibilities for participation in research. Practitioners' involvement in generating and using knowledge has, according to countries which have adopted a research based approach, the potential to enhance the quality and raise the status of the teaching profession.

Also the dilemma of quality in relation to the number of student teachers has been pointed out. There appeared to be a mismatch between the number of student teachers enrolled and the available resources. Rapid expansion of admission into teacher education programs was mentioned as the cause of this plight. The study thus can be used as a highlight to planners to take into consideration the ratio between the available resources and the number of candidates to be enrolled. Gradual expansion of admission and increased effort to solicit resources can be a viable means of addressing the problem.

Pure subject matter is emphasized at the expense of subject didactics. The consequence of this practice is (as stated in Chapter 3) considered detrimental to the quality of teacher education in general. One reason for problems here is obviously related to the way teacher education is organized. As discussed (in 3.1) the way teacher education is organized within higher education institutions will enable or constrain possibilities for interaction between pure subject matter studies and subject didactics. If a close connection between subject matter studies and subject didactics prevails, as in the integrated or to some extent also in the asymmetric matrix model, the potential for quality enhancement is good. Attention is needed by practitioners in teacher education to establish a structure of teacher education which will ensure a reasonable balance between pure academic subject matter and subject didactics.

Having discussed its implication, the closely related question is: *can these results be generalized?* This study was grounded on a qualitative approach. The basic idea of a qualitative approach is not to generate knowledge that can be generalized, but to provide deep insights into a limited group of respondents' ways of perceiving specific phenomena. It was not the ambition of the study to generalize the results, but rather to deepen the understanding and knowledge of conceptions and experiences of quality and quality enhancement of teacher education.

In conclusion, the investigation was conducted in line with the principles of qualitative research design and the context of teacher education in Tanzania. Teacher educators' conceptions and experiences of quality and quality enhancement were studied. The results therefore have to be interpreted and treated in that context and in particular the context of transformation of teacher education from college to university college-based teacher education. Otherwise, it will de-contextualize the study, an act which may result in dilution of the validity of the knowledge generated. Hence, these results can not be generalized; instead, they can be carefully transferred to other situations of a similar context. Nevertheless, the results and conclusions drawn are not fixed, but are relative and therefore open to criticism and interpretation from other points of view.

6.5 Concluding remarks and suggestion for future research

In the current study, an attempt was made to investigate teacher educators' conceptions and experiences of quality and quality enhancement. The study was set up and conducted in the context of transformation, in which two former teachers' colleges were converted and upgraded to university-colleges of education in Tanzania. The ambition of the researcher was to produce comprehensive descriptions of the concept quality as related to teacher education, and explore practical experiences which can lead towards quality enhancement.

Generally, the empirical results provide a platform for further exploration of the concept quality and quality enhancement practices in teacher education. Specifically, the findings of the first research question reveal possible dimensions or criteria that can be used as benchmarks for defining and hence appraising the quality of teacher education. *Research* and *reflection* are outlined among others as essential constituents of quality teacher education. Research-based teacher education, in which research and reflection are given due attention, seems to be a popular theme of organizing teacher education worldwide. In parallel, the results show that teacher education in Tanzania is gradually developing towards a research-based orientation. Signs of this development are expressed on a general level by the teacher educators, while quality of teacher education is conceived as professional scholarship.

Investigation of how teacher educators conceive research and reflection as tools for quality enhancement in teacher education was not well covered and hence not clearly reflected in the results. To address this gap, I recommend that future research should address this matter. The study can further investigate the possibility of teacher education in Tanzania adopting and practicing research-based orientation.

Based on the results of this study another suggested area for future research is teacher educators' professional development. It was stated earlier that the selection of the respondents and the general approach of the whole study were narrowed down to reflect the context of transformation of college-to university based teacher education. Hence, one of the obvious limitations of this study is based on the experiences of the respondents. The majority of respondents had fair experiences, but not fully adequate. As a consequence, perhaps, the results of teacher educators' experience of professional development may also in one way or another be influenced by this context in particular, rather than teacher education in general. I therefore suggest that a similar study on teacher educators' professional development, which is not bound to the transformation of college to university-based teacher education, be conducted to explore possible opportunities and threats.

Returning to the overall aim, the study conducted has revealed teacher educators holding manifold view of constraints lining the road towards maintaining and promoting quality. Beside this view teacher educators have revealed a rich set of visions of what quality is and on how quality can be enhanced in Tanzanian teacher education.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 A: First Interview Guide

A. Introduction

-Description of the researcher and the purpose of the study

B. Preliminary information of the respondents: Establish background information of the respondents focusing on:

- Work experience in terms of duration
- Department and subject of specialization
- Professional background in terms of academic qualification and professional education.

C: Research Question 1

What are teacher educators' conceptions of quality?

- 1) How do you understand quality in teacher education?
- 2) In connection to 1) above, what are the areas of focus that you use to define quality in teacher education?
- 3) What are other aspects that you consider necessary in defining the concept of quality in teacher education?
- 4) How are teacher education programs in your individual subject related to quality in teacher education?
- 5) What is your personal view of the position of teacher educators in determining the quality of teacher education?

D: Research Question 2

What are teacher educators' experiences of quality enhancement in teacher education?

- 1) How do you experience quality development in teacher education?
- 2) What is your view about the programs of teacher education?
- 3) Do you think the programs of teacher education in the new transformed system of teacher education comprise essential elements of teacher education?

- 4) How do you comment on the curriculum relevance of teacher education in connection to the ambition of quality enhancement?
- 5) From your experience of working in teacher education and in particular the new established system of teacher education under transformation, what is your opinion on teacher educators' professional development?
- 6) What experience do you have of what the university college does to ensure that the quality of teacher educators is observed in the following process:-
 - Recruitment (What are the compositions? of teacher educators in general, who teaches what under what criteria/qualification?)
 - Professional development (What kind of professional development courses are offered?)
- 7) What is your general experience of the quality enhancement of teacher educators in this university college?

Appendix 1B: Second Interview Guide

A. Introduction

Explanation to remind the respondents about the first phase interviews and the purpose of the second phase interview

B. Preliminary information of the respondents: Establish background information of the respondents focusing on:

- Work experience in terms of duration
- Department and subject of specialization
- Professional background in terms of academic qualification and professional education.

C: Research Question 1

What are teacher educators' conceptions of quality?

1. In the first phase of the interviews, one of the questions was how you understand quality in teacher education. During the discussion some respondents explained quality of teacher education in connection to the ability to make reflection. By using your own experience can you explain what reflection means in teacher education and how can you relate to quality of teacher education?
2. Teacher's competency has been identified in the first phase of our interviews as one of the determinant of quality. What indicators are connected to teachers' competencies and therefore for quality of teacher education?
3. Research was mentioned by many respondents, probably including yourself, as an important aspect for quality in teacher education. What is your experience of research activities in this institution as related to teacher educators' participation? What do you think should be done to improve tutors' participation in research?

D: Research Question 2

What are teacher educators' experiences of quality enhancement in teacher education?

4. What are the weaknesses of the current teacher education programs that you are running now in this institution? Are there any other problems that are facing the process of educating teachers?
5. In the first interviews it was learnt that the institution management was very positive and therefore very supportive to sponsor teacher educators for Master's study. In your opinion do you think this strategy is enough to ensure the availability of quality teacher educators who deserve to teach at the level of University College? What else should be done?
6. Teaching practice is said to be not well conducted to ensure acquisition of field experience needed by student teachers. What do you think is a problem? Can you provide suggestions on how to solve the problem?
7. It was noted from the findings of the first phase interviews that there is a lack of cooperation and/or communication between different departments that are educating student teachers. Is this true according to your experience? And if it is true, what do you think are the causes and how should the problem be addressed?

Appendix 2

TANZANIA COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (COSTECH)



Telegrams: COSTECH
Telephones: (255 - 022) 2775155 - 6, 2700745/6
Director General: (255 - 022) 2700750&2775315
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Ali Hassan Mwinyi Road
P.O. Box 4302
Dar es Salaam
Tanzania

RESEARCH PERMIT

No. 2009 -155- NA-2009-65

Date 17th July 2009

1. Name : Colonel D. Chambulila
2. Nationality : Tanzanian
3. Title : Addressing Quality in Teacher Education: The Experience of Transformation of College to University based Teacher Education System
4. Research shall be confined to the following region(s): Dar es Salaam, Iringa and Mtwara
5. Permit validity 17th July 2009 to 16th July 2010
6. Local Contact/collaborator: Dr. Deodatus C.V. Kakoko, Muhimbili University of Health and Allied Sciences, P.O. Box 65015, Arusha
7. Researcher is required to submit progress report on quarterly basis and submit all Publications made after research.




M. Mushi

for: DIRECTOR GENERAL

Appendix 3



DAR ES SALAAM UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

A Constituent College of the University of Dar Es Salaam



Tel 022-2850978
Fax 022-2850952
E-mail: principal@duce.ac.tz

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY PRINCIPAL ACADEMIC

PO Box 2329,
Dar es Salaam,
Tanzania.

REF: DUCE/OF/R2/5/

6th April, 2010

Mr. Cornel Chambulila
Nachingwea Teachers College,
P.O. Box.39
Nachingwea

RE: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT DUCE

Reference is made to your letter dated 26th March, 2010 and also a research permit from Tanzania Commission for Science and Technology (COSTECH), dated 17th July, 2009 with reference No.2009-155-NA-2009-65.

You are hereby informed that permission has been granted to you to conduct interview for your research proposal at DUCE on "*Quality in Teacher Education: The Experience of Transformation of College to University based Education System*".

Also note that the permission period for your research should not exceed 17th July, 2010. While you will be at DUCE, you may consult the office of Deputy Principal, Academics for any assistance.

Wishing you all the best,

Shaaban Mtengeti
For: Deputy Principal Academic

cc: Principal, DUCE
cc: Deputy Principal (Academic)
cc: Deputy Principal (PFA)
cc: Deans of Faculties
cc: Director General (COSTECH).

Colonel Chambulila

Quality Enhancement in Teacher Education

Tanzanian Teacher Educators' Conceptions and Experiences

In this study the author has investigated Tanzanian teacher educators' conceptions and experiences of quality and quality enhancement within teacher education. The results show that quality is conceived in terms of excellence, fitness for purpose and transformation. Excellence is expressed in terms of high academic and professional qualification. Fitness for purpose is illustrated in the mastery of teaching competencies and curriculum integration, and transformation is stated in terms of the capacity to empower individuals to respond to the changing needs in society. The curriculum of teacher education programs and the professionalism of teacher educators are perceived as factors which influence the process of quality enhancement.