
United Republic of Tanzania: folk development colleges

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Aspects of adult education were being conducted in the country by various voluntary organizations even before independence. After independence, the provision of adult education became the responsibility of the Ministry of Regional Administration and Rural Development as well as various voluntary agencies. In 1970 the Ministry of National Education was given the task of running adult education.

The first stage of adult education was an adult literacy campaign to eradicate illiteracy by 1975. The second stage was that of consolidation, to prevent relapses into illiteracy. A number of adult education centres were established, libraries opened, and both radio and newspaper programmes provided. Relevant literature was sought and disseminated to all centres.

People's enthusiasm, which was demonstrated during the first two stages of adult education, made it necessary to think of a new special programme. The new programme led to the establishment of folk development colleges (FDCS), the third phase of adult education. They were strongly modelled on the Swedish folk high schools. Two experts were invited from Sweden

to provide advice on how best the colleges could be established. These two experts, in collaboration with party and government officials, gathered enough data to warrant the establishment of the colleges.

They were to serve as centres for development, to further the adult education campaign, the co-operative movement, socialism and rural development. The colleges could also offer courses to village leaders, concerned with the initiation and implementation of various development projects at local level. Furthermore, the colleges could enrol primary-school leavers and prepare them for various leadership roles at village level.

Folk development colleges were started with the objective of preparing Tanzanians to develop their personalities and their capacity to think, and also to try to help them understand national policies and international affairs, the need for co-operation, further education, and ways to develop their culture.

The government set an objective of establishing one FDC in each district by 1980 through co-operation with the Swedish Government. The importance attached to those colleges by the party and government in educating the masses has been great.

The following discussion of the years preceding 1980 is based on a research study carried out by a team to which the author was chief consultant. It was conducted in twelve of the fifty-two FDCs in Tanzania mainland. Only colleges that were established between

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January 1976 and 30 June 1979 and were offering courses sponsored by the Ministry of National Education were included in the sample.

Three principal techniques were used for data gathering: documentation, interviews and questionnaires.

Semi-structured questionnaires were used to supplement documentary and interview data. Respondents to questionnaires included all those who had been identified in the sample as having played an important role at various stages in the implementation of the programme.

Bodies responsible for new policy

Data from questionnaires administered to officials in the FDC Section and the Inspectorate in the Ministry of National Education show that the main bodies responsible for formulating policy for the FDCs were the Directorate of Adult Education in collaboration with the FDC Section and the Prime Minister's Office. Policy on the actual running of the FDCs emanates from the FDC Section, Directorate of Adult Education, Manpower Planning MNE, UTS, the Inspectorate and Finance Section, the Commissioner of National Education and college boards. Policy on quality control comes from the Directorate of Adult Education, Manpower Planning MNE, UTS, the Finance Section and the FDC Section.

When asked what important aspects were considered in the process of formulating new policy the following were mentioned: the goals of the FDCs, people's political awareness, need to develop adult learners, the significance of adult education in national development and the need to provide education for all (education as a basic right).

On inquiring whether policy formation involved party and government leaders and whether effort was made to educate them on the programme, it was found out that they were involved in a variety of areas.

Some party leaders are members of the college board.

District party secretaries are the chairmen of college boards in a majority of cases.

Some government leaders are members of college boards.

College plans are discussed by party and government organs.

The district administrative committee, plus government leaders, sometimes give lectures at the FDC.

Participation of party and government leaders is also made possible by the structure and responsibilities of college boards. According to the guidelines, the board should be composed of: district party secretary (chairman), DDD member, district agricultural officer, district education officer, district adult education officer, district *ujamaa* and co-operatives officer, district planning officer, district health officer, member of Parliament, secretaries of the party's affiliated organizations at the district level, and the principal, who shall also be the secretary. The board is charged with (a) endorsing the names of selected students, (b) endorsing the training programmes, and (c) advising the Ministry of National Education on the implementation of the FDC programme at the district level, education provided, and self-reliance (SR) activities.

Spreading the message to the people

When the FDC programme was launched in 1975 the primary objective was to make it well understood by the people. It was hoped that the people would understand and accept the package before implementation. Leaders at various levels were also required to understand, spread the message and consolidate the programme. The primary task of the first batch of principals and tutors was to spread the message to the people.

Most leaders seemed to be informed about the project and to agree with the aims of the programme.

However, information given to leaders was rather vague, especially the information about the intended courses. The district leaders first

were given the impression that the FDCs would run courses qualifying adults with basic literacy skills even for university entry. Information on the length of the courses was also confusing. However, as time passed this ambiguity became important, particularly after the issuing of the 1980 guidelines on FDCs. There appears still to be a need for more thorough information on the aims and on the kind of students needing training.

Establishment of the colleges

When the programme was launched the intention was to establish one college per district by the year 1980. The target was not, however, realized due to a number of reasons: (a) shortage of building materials, especially cement, (b) poor administration, due to transport problems and shortage of expertise, (c) low estimates for building materials, (d) principals submitting incomplete reports on construction or not submitting any report at all, (e) the need to consolidate the existing FDCs so that they can carry out their tasks well, (f) lack of enough money to run existing FDCs.

According to a statement by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the government began to realize that the expansion of the FDCs was too rapid and it was becoming difficult to raise enough money for recurrent expenditure. It was estimated that about 20 million shillings were needed in order to be able to run the forty-seven FDCs in 1977 alone. Parliament approved 10 million shillings, an amount that was 3 per cent less than the budget of the previous year. The rapid decline in allocation for recurrent expenditure meant that less of the college capacity could be used. Enough facilities for teachers and pupils also had to be set up in the existing FDCs before new ones were established.

An important observation worth making at this juncture is that whenever the government requests foreign aid as part of its capital expenditure for new projects, effort should also be undertaken to raise enough money locally

for recurrent expenditure to ensure that the programme is effected smoothly.

Training and needs

The principal's guide states that the main subjects that are necessary to bring about people's development in general are agriculture, domestic science, technical education and accounting. Other subjects that are to be offered so as to get an all-round student/citizen include political education, economics, culture and adult education. The courses offered at the FDCs followed these guidelines.

A major question should be whether such training met the peoples' needs. The initial syllabuses were developed in 1975; in 1978 they were changed because the initial ones were claimed to be too difficult for tutors with no teacher-training experience.

To date there has been no effort to assess village needs before planning a new programme; many people said that tutors did not visit villages in order to find out more about their problems, and did not visit and advise students. This information reveals that little effort was made to identify people's needs and village problems before organizing training programmes. Many circumstances contribute to the problem: poor transport, problems arising from the war, and lack of funds.

Lack of preliminary investigation into the people's problems might adversely affect the type of training offered, and the quality of the product, for the courses offered might be too theoretical and not geared to solving known local problems. In addition, since tutors were not being effectively used in important areas like agriculture, concrete plans should be under way to ensure that their skills are properly used when they have no work to do at the FDC. However, problems related to transportation and money also need special attention. Clear guidelines on the implementation of these tasks, good supervision and evaluation of work habits also require due consideration so that concrete plans can be devised and implemented. Criti-

cizing the tutors or college principals will not help; but making available the required materials and equipment, and good plans, and motivating the staff will enable them to function well.

STUDENT PROFILES

It is stated in the FDCs Progress Report for 1976 that the establishment of FDCs is the third stage in the implementation of adult education. The main purpose of establishing such colleges is to provide universal education to all those who have reached Stages 3 and 4 of adult education and are willing to learn more. It is further pointed out that after a time the enrolment of adults with higher education should be considered.

Statistics show that 1,403,985 Tanzanians passed the adult literacy test held in August 1975 at Stages 3 and 4. The total capacity for the fifty-two FDCs was only 3,400 places. This means that in the five years of their existence the FDCs, by solely offering short courses, could enrol only 1.2 per cent of the eligible adults.

The major expectation was that the colleges would enrol students only at Stages 3 and 4. However, out of the twelve FDCs in which the study was conducted, students other than those who had completed Stages 3 and 4 of adult education filled about 93 per cent of the vacancies.

Why, then, were students not belonging to the original target-group selected? An objective answer to the question can be provided only through close study of the following issues. First is the selection procedure.

SELECTION PROCEDURE

The FDC determines the type of students and subjects to be offered. Then, in collaboration with village leaders, it allocates the number of places according to the demands of the villages. Data from the twelve FDCs for the years 1976-79 show that about 70 or 80 per

cent of the students were selected by the village councils and the rest were selected by the FDCs themselves, or by individual applications, or through the recommendations of ward coordinators. All concerned leaders and students maintain that the selection procedure was appropriate. Although the selection procedure was good, only a few students were enrolled compared to the number of vacancies available. When asked what was the cause of the problem, village chairmen said it was due to limited places offered for the village. However, 30 per cent of village chairmen maintained that they could have sent more students to the FDC if they had been informed early enough. The second reason is related to the confusion inherent in instructions already sent to the FDCs and various other levels on the type of desired student.

It is quite clear that there is no common stand on the level of education for entry to FDCs. Thus the colleges enrolled students with different educational background. This arrangement has the following effects:

Type of syllabus. It has been difficult to devise a syllabus that can cater to all these categories of students. Differences in experience and in knowledge between those who have just completed Stages 3 and 4 and Standard 7 leavers are great. This might be one of the reasons why changes of syllabus have been recommended.

Teaching. Thirty per cent of the tutors in 1977 and 34 per cent in 1978 had no teacher-training experience. The capability of such individuals to handle the teaching of students with varying educational backgrounds, let alone mastering the syllabus, is highly questionable.

Most village chairmen who are concerned with selection of students had indicated that most of the students should be ex-primary school pupils. Meanwhile, at least half of heads of department felt the same way.

The chairmen's reasons for making such recommendations are crucial in analysing the problem. Villagers send students to colleges with the intention of getting service immedi-

ately after studies. Ex-primary-school pupils are many and efficient in this regard. The truth of the matter was revealed by the findings. A majority of students (78 per cent) were still living in the village. In the meantime 54 per cent had expectations of serving in the village.

The courses take a long time and require the student to stay at the FDC. It is difficult for married people to stay away from their families for a long time. The study findings show that only one out of the twelve FDCs was not providing boarding facilities. Between 67 and 75 per cent of the colleges were offering long courses of nine months and more in domestic science, agriculture and *ufundi*.

A majority of the village chairmen are parents who feel that training at the FDC should be provided to their children as a way of advancing their education. This was confirmed by most students, who said they joined the FDC so that they could broaden their knowledge. Although the expectation of many students is to return and serve in villages, a vast majority of the parents would like to have their children employed after training; thus there was a conflict of interest among the two groups.

Age is an important factor for an individual when compared with his family status and behaviour. Another important variable related to age is marital status. It is self-evident that a married man with family commitments and responsibilities stands less chance of being selected for long courses. However, if he is selected and joins the FDC, he has a greater chance of returning to the village than a young man without any responsibilities there. Furthermore, an elderly person is likely to be more acceptable to other villagers.

The average age of FDC students was 26.1 years for all types of courses or 25.1 years for those whose training was sponsored by the FDC. Five per cent of the students were below the age of 18. The students who remained in the village were six years older than those who left. Male students were seven years older than female students on average. Students attending short courses were five years older on average than those attending long courses.

AFTER COMPLETION

Although most students maintained that they were using the knowledge acquired at the FDC, more than half also said that they have not realized their expectations.

The major expectation of students was to return and offer service to the village on completing their studies. These expectations were a result of the special contract (between student and village) that stipulates that a villager selected for studies shall return and serve the village after completing studies and should use the skills and knowledge so gained for the benefit of the villagers. The existence of such a contract between the student and the village was mentioned by 85 per cent of the village chairmen.

Despite the existence of such a contract a majority of ex-students could not meet their expectations. Some of the major reasons behind non-realization of their expectations were lack of concrete plans, shortage of materials and equipment in some villages, students not being accepted, and low skills.

How does it then come about that the village has initial plans of using the student on the completion of his studies but subsequently fails to honour its promise? It is evident that such plans exist in thought or on paper, but when it comes to implementation a number of villages discover that they had set aside very little money for all their plans, including sending the student to the FDC, and had not carefully analysed how and to what extent the village could benefit from services provided by the ex-student. Thus making plans that cannot be implemented is like having no plans at all.

Tutors, recruitment and motivation

Each college is supposed to have tutors with skills in agriculture, technical subjects, domestic science, political education, economics, culture and adult methods (a new department estab-

lished in 1980). Since a majority of tutors can teach only one subject, the number of tutors required for each FDC is six or seven: a number that is high when comparing the number of periods taught to the size of the establishment.

The lowest acceptable level of education for all FDC tutors is a diploma. A certificate is also accepted for domestic science and technical subjects. However, future plans are that all college principals and some heads of departments will be diploma holders or graduates. Up to June 1981, these standards were far from being met.

Kibaha FDC is also a training college, a function that it has been fulfilling since 1975. For 1975 and 1976 all tutors attended teaching and administration courses. However, since 1977 only between 40 and 70 per cent of the new tutors have attended training and short courses.

There is a need to use Kibaha FDC in providing training for tutors with no teaching experience, plus conducting in-service training. The establishment of the tutor training college (TTC) is therefore a viable undertaking. Once construction work is complete and after preparing the training programme, it is expected that better tutors for the FDCs will be prepared. The Kibaha TTC should also be charged with the responsibility for undertaking research so that more realistic programmes for the FDC are designed.

Administration

Administration of the FDCs begins at the Ministry of National Education headquarters. The college principal is a representative of the Principal Secretary in the Ministry. The FDC section acts as a link between the two.

The administration of the FDCs should reflect the country's stand on collective leadership. The principal is supposed to incorporate/use the following organs and personnel in the day-to-day running of the FDC: college board, heads of departments, district leaders and college councils. Committees have to be estab-

lished at various levels of the FDC to assist in planning and implementing the programme.

About 83 per cent of heads of departments who were interviewed maintained that collective leadership was implemented at the FDC. They also mentioned that committees had been established in colleges to facilitate smooth running of the institutions.

The involvement of villagers in college administration was doubtful. Although some village chairmen indicated that they were represented in the college committees, there was no established committee structure in which villagers were members. Also chairmen who said they were invited to board meetings attended only as observers and not as members with full rights.

However, villagers were involved in providing advice on the running of the FDC through membership of district organs, through correspondence and by selecting students. Involvement of the people is important in order to know their problems and understand how the ex-students are being utilized.

On the issue of college leadership involving other ministries and public organizations in running the FDCs, there appears to be a good relationship. The Ministry of National Education did not have enough money to fill all places at the FDC. The Prime Minister's Office was one of the government ministries benefiting most from this relationship, for they used about 32 per cent of the places at the FDC. Thus there is a need for the Ministry of Education to look for the funds required in order that the college facilities may be put to maximum use.

Finance

Two major sources provided money for the FDC programme: (a) Sweden, which met almost all the development expenditure; and (b) the Tanzanian Government, which provided money for recurrent expenditure. Funds put into development projects have averaged 13.9 million shillings per year, but although the number of FDCs has increased the budget for recurrent

expenditure has been more or less the same. The consequence of this is that the FDCs have been underutilized. In 1978/79 the Tanzanian Government allocated only about 20 per cent of the funds needed for full utilization of the FDCs and in 1979/80 only about 12 per cent. SIDA agreed to have 4 million shillings transferred from the development budget to recurrent expenditure in 1979/80, thus enabling the FDCs to run their own courses also during the second part of the budget year.

The consequences of this low level of fund allocation are that if the FDCs were to recruit to their full capacity, financial resources would only be enough to feed students for two months. Another example is that lack of enough facilities and equipment might result in colleges failing to recruit enough students to fill all available places, especially in the fields of agriculture, domestic science and technical subjects, which need such facilities for the smooth implementation of instruction. Lack of enough money for recurrent expenditure has resulted in many FDCs using more money, sometimes from the SR funds for unintended expenditure. By 1980 overexpenditure of recurrent funds amounted to 1.04 million shillings, which the Treasury demanded should be recovered from the 1980/81 education budget.

Self-reliance

At the start of the project it was anticipated that the government should pay one-third of the costs, that the FDCs should meet one-third through self-reliance activities, and the villages subscribe the remaining one-third.

Of the 141 villages visited only two stated that they contributed any money towards reducing the costs of running the colleges. Of the colleges there is only one, Kibaha, which has been able to raise any substantial amount of money through SR activities. Kibaha FDC achieved close to 100 per cent of their running costs. This is due to its good background as a farmers' training centre with animal demonstration farm.

The accounts for self-reliance are however not very reliable: food produced and consumed by students sometimes is not costed, neither is there proper accounting for livestock sold. Viable self-reliance projects need continuous care throughout the year. The FDCs have never been given enough funds to run courses throughout the year.

The utilization of the FDCs

The general economic difficulties facing the nation, of course, also affect the FDCs, which, as a result, cannot be expected to be utilized to 100 per cent of their time and capacity. As has been mentioned elsewhere, the allocated money can just suffice to run the FDCs at a 20 per cent level of utilization or less if no other funds are forthcoming.

At present there are about five tutors per FDC and in order to use them fully the average enrolment should be equivalent to seventy-five students or about 90 per cent of capacity.

The amount of funds allocated and other problems have, however, not allowed the FDCs to enrol such high numbers, with the exception of a few colleges. The consequence of this has been a very low student/teacher ratio: 1:1 in 1976 and 1977, 1:4 in 1978, 2:9 in 1979, and 1:5 in 1979/90 (based on enrolment figures in courses sponsored by the FDC itself).

Lack of funds is the main reason behind the low level of enrolment, as shown by the rise in enrolment in 1979/80 following the extra 4 million shillings that were transferred from development to recurrent budget in January 1980. In comparison to the allocated budget the FDCs are overstaffed and teachers are underutilized for long periods of time.

An overview

The FDC programme has succeeded in the following areas:

Training students who on completing their studies return to the village and make use of

the skills gained, as expressed by 71 per cent of students in the sample.

Realizing most of the objectives of establishing the FDCs.

Providing leadership training to most tutors and college principals through the training college at Kibaha.

Colleges with full enrolment managing to be self-reliant up to 100 per cent (Kibaha, for example).

Generally effective administration of the FDCs. The major shortcomings in the programme included:

Underutilization of college capacity.

Misuse of scarce resources of the FDCs as enrolment is low.

A majority of tutors in most FDCs without enough work to do all year round.

Low performance in SR activities, with FDCs on average only 20 per cent self-reliant.

Grossly inadequate recurrent funds from the MNE, a factor that resulted into low use of all inputs in the programme.

Lack of full villager involvement in planning of the college programme as well as general administration of FDCs.

Ambiguous information, leading to students other than the intended ones joining the programme.

Poor linkage between the MNE and other ministries, a factor that led to students' knowledge not being put into full use on returning to the village/place of work.

Few tutors visiting villages to identify people's needs and study students' progress and problems, a factor that led to the planning of highly theoretical programmes.

An acute shortage of tutors with sound academic and professional training in most FDCs, a factor that might affect general performance and quality of outputs.

A lack of seriousness by MNE officials in solving the critical problems facing the FDC programme.

Recommendations

On the basis of our findings, analyses and discussion, the following main recommendations can be made:

1. The study showed that there was varying information on the quality of students who were supposed to be enrolled at the FDCs, especially on the level of education. The Ministry of National Education should work in collaboration with educational officers at lower levels to determine the exact qualifications and level of education for FDC students. Important observations on age, sex, length and type of courses offered, as they related to remaining in villages and using their knowledge and skills, should also be considered when selecting new students.
2. It appears that a majority of students intend to return to their village and use their knowledge, but their expectations are not met. Both district and village leaders should ensure that there are concrete plans that can be operationalized on the use of ex-students. Parents should be educated on the importance of the students returning to the village so as to change their expectations.
3. Tutors should visit villages to see student progress and identify people's problems. The colleges should also provide correct information on the use of money from the research and evaluation vote. In case money for this purpose is not enough, then means of getting more should be explored, for it is only through knowing the people's needs and problems that the FDC can develop realistic programmes geared to solving them.
4. It was also found out that there were three basic problems facing the FDCs; lack of sufficient funds, not enough work for tutors, and low enrolment. The Ministry of National Education must explore means of getting enough money to ensure that FDCs operate at full capacity, for this is one of the ways tutors and equipment at the FDC can be well used and self-reliance projects might arise. There is also a need to determine how

- to make better use of tutors at the moment, for a majority do not have enough work to do.
5. The research findings revealed that there was an acute shortage of tutors with enough knowledge and skill for teaching the principal subjects. Some tutors also lacked skill in teaching adults. Therefore, there is need to ensure that the Kibaha Tutor Training College assumes the role of training new tutors as well as consolidating those already in service.

There is also a need to re-examine the preparation of tutors for political education and economics so as to ensure that they are qualified in both subjects. Such a move would help reduce the number of tutors required to teach each subject separately.

There is furthermore a need to know the future status of the colleges, especially as regards allocation of tutors, for it appears that degree holders in science are not recruited either as tutors or principals of the FDCs.

6. There is a need to distribute the little equipment which is available to colleges with capacity to use them. When need arises for more equipment, the materials should be distributed according to specific set plans in the colleges.
7. Efforts by the Ministry of Education to consolidate the administration of FDCs seem to be producing good results and should be sustained. There is also a need to ensure that deserving principals are confirmed in their posts after the probationary period.
8. There seems to be little co-operation between the ministries concerned with rural development in discerning what institution is most suitable for preparing what change agent for what level of rural intervention. It has also been customary since independence to change the control of various institutions from one ministry to another without any guarantee that the new institution/ministry is going to perform the task better. Hence, there is need to find out which ministry is best suited to carry out such functions, and how other ministries should co-operate in realizing the most effective intervention.

9. The research findings should be discussed in detail by leaders and concerned citizens so that they can together search for solutions to the problems identified.

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