

Abstract

Human capital plays a vital role in the economic development of a country. The provision of education is one among the several strategies to ensuring a developed and competitive human capital. At an initial stage, primary education is a necessity for the population. Thus several factors such as developed infrastructure, better learning environment, availability of equipped and well trained teaching staff and so forth are crucial to ensure the provision of education. This research aims to critically analyse how the perceptions of efficiency and accountability of the public service within the public education sector influence the enrolment and pass rate. Thus the main research question is *“how do the perceptions of efficiency and accountability in the public service within the public education sector influence the enrolment and pass rate at the primary level education by drawing a comparison between South Africa and Tanzania?”*

This research is an explanatory case study taking a qualitative approach. The main tool for data collection was an open-ended questionnaire which was distributed to the selected samples. The unit of analysis in this study is a selection of key public primary schools and public office divisions in the selected municipalities. Moreover, the main theoretical framework that shapes this study is the theorisation of the Old Public and New Public Management model.

The findings from the selected samples in the municipalities indicated that the perceptions of efficiency and accountability within the public service have an average influence towards the enrolment and pass rate at the primary level education. Thus recommendations to enhance the perceptions of efficiency are; emphasise on practices that ensure increased result orientation, the government should facilitate arrangements that increase flexibility, enhance methods for strengthening competitive pressures amongst educators and address non-monetary incentives. Furthermore, recommendations to enhance the perceptions of accountability are; school principals or head teachers should take on an active role as managers for the public office they oversee, emphasis on transparency in the allocation of funds, formulation and implementation of policies, effective and responsible usage of the social media platforms and provide the right information to the public.