

## Reflection on Education for Self and National Reliance: Challenges of Access, Equity and Quality in Higher Learning Institutions in Tanzania<sup>1</sup>

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### Abstract

This paper argues that liberalization, and with it the introduction of Private Higher Education (PHE) institutions in Tanzania, has diluted the achievement of the Arusha Declaration, which tried to deal with issues of access, equity and quality in education. Though the PHE institutions in Tanzania outnumber public ones, they enroll less than 22 percent of the total number of students in a year. With majority of Tanzanians living below the poverty line, they cannot finance their higher education and that of their children. The paper contends that though quality is an elusive concept, the present liberalization system in higher education coupled with underfunding of higher education have threatened access, quality and equity in education. In addition, the considerable public subsidy for higher education in Tanzania benefits the already socio-economically well to do families with connections, and that the Universal Primary Education (UPE) needs reconstruction in order for it to deliver good graduates to higher education in the liberalization environment. To advance these arguments, this paper uses secondary data such as documentaries, journal papers and edited books to trace and reflect on the history of education in Tanzania in the lenses of Plato's theory of education, with emphasis on the Arusha declaration as a landmark that introduced education for self and national reliance, to the present time of quasi-capitalism. The author concludes that though PHE institutions are good and needed, their modus operandi further increases the gap between the haves and the have-not and compromises the quality. The paper proposes a need to revamp the education system in the line of Ujamaa need-based Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) to prepare people to work among different classes as analyzed by Plato. Also, a need for Higher Learning Institutions to offer ethics and critical thinking that would make graduates responsible citizens who understand that what matters is what they can do for themselves and for the nation after acquiring education, and not only the titles and certificates that come in the process.

**Key words:** *Private Higher Education, Self-reliance, access, equity and quality, Ujamaa*

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## **Introduction**

Quality education is an important factor for a nation to make a leap forward in globalization. It is essential for building an open, democratic society, for upholding social cohesion in any country, and for improving the quality of citizens' life. Tanzania is among the countries that have been working since the early 1990s to reform their education systems, as these countries undergo the transformation from socialist to neo-liberal, market-based systems. The aim of these reforms has been the creation of an effective, high-quality educational environment for everyone. However, the transformation to a market-based system has produced unpredicted consequences, some of which have been jeopardizing equal access to quality education and undermining open society, social cohesion, and quality of life (Budiene, 2006).

Silova and Bray (2006) argue that as a consequence of the collapse of socialism, some societies were plunged into a process of radical reorientation. While some changes were predictable, others were unexpected. Some sectors of the population greatly benefited from the changes, but many people felt penalized. Yet amidst the transformation and widespread confusion, at least one element was clear, the radical changes were unalterable and new modes of operation had to be devised, and the opening of free market economy was among the most obvious elements of the new mode of operation. In some cases, countries became social, economic, and political laboratory in which extensive experiments were undertaken with unpredictable consequences. Modern education in Japan and some other East Asian countries has greatly contributed to economic development. However, modern education in those countries has its own problems, especially the college entrance examination has caused grave social injustices and problems, such as unequal educational opportunity, lack of character education, financial burden on parents, among others.

From 1967 to the late 1970s, Tanzania boasted of education as a right of every citizen. This was a time of what Jennings (2002) called Tanzaphilia that afflicted people inside and outside the country. Under liberalization introduced in the 1990s, education became a commodity to be bought by those who could afford it. However, while the coverage and quality of education was high between the 1960s to mid-1970s, from 1979 to 1984 the coverage and quality of education, health services and water provision declined and scarcity of a number of other commodities intensified due to a number of external shocks (Gibbon, 1995). The introduction of user-fee, mushrooming of Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs), both public and private has brought back the challenges of access, quality and equity that the Arusha Declaration tried to avoid. The mushrooming of public and Private Higher Education (PHE) institutions in the era of liberalization has made education a product for sale and coupled with underfunding of higher education, threatening the central issues of access, equity and quality (Chatama, 2014). Owing to the poverty of the general population, though PHE institutions in Tanzania outnumber public ones by far, they enroll only 21.5 percent of the total number of students in a year (Ishengoma, 2008). This paper takes a historical path to analyze the education system in Tanzania from Ujamaa to

present liberalization era. It uses Plato's theory of education to examine the problems of access, equity and quality of education in the country and propose a way forward.

### **Methodology**

This is a reflection paper that draws data from different documents, books, journal papers and conference papers to analyse higher education in Tanzania using the lenses of Plato's theory of education. The paper is organized into five major sections: section one is about introduction, section two is about background to the general problem of education in Tanzania, section three concerns theoretical framework, section four shows the problem of higher education in Tanzania, while the last section involves discussion, conclusion and recommendations.

### **Theoretical Framework: Plato's Theory of Education**

Plato was a Greek philosopher who lived around 400 years before Christ. On knowledge, Plato was of the opinion that education is the remedy for all ills in the society. For Plato, function of education is not to impart knowledge but to bring out latent talents from the student. This emphasis on education came to the forefront due to the then predominant education system in Athens. Plato was against the practice of buying knowledge, which to him was a scandalous crime. He instead believed in a state control education system and education as a means to achieve individual and social justice. To Plato, individual justice can be obtained when members of the society develop their abilities to the fullest. For Plato, justice means excellence and excellence is virtue. According to Plato's teacher, Socrates, virtue is knowledge and thus required to be just (Plato, 2016; Lee, 1994; Mondall, 2019).

Plato divided the society into three classes, the guardians, the auxiliaries, and the producers (Browne, 2018). The guardians are the rulers, also known as the philosopher-kings. The guardians and the auxiliaries are the military of the city. They represent physical strength, spiritedness, and love for learning. The guardians are the highest class, they are the rulers and together with the auxiliaries, they guard external enemies and internal friends. The guardians will be most knowledgeable; they will see to the good of the nation before they see to themselves, because, essentially, they are the foundation of the nation. The auxiliaries are the nation's soldiers. They are the supporters of the guardians' convictions. The third class is of the producers, which includes the farmers and craftsmen. This final class is not a shameful position in the society. These people are as important to the nation as the rest of the classes, for if there was no one to grow food or develop material goods, the rest of the nation would surely fall like a tripod missing a leg. In other words, these three groups in the society are interdependent (Holm, 2017). Plato then argued that members of a class must remain within their class and do work for which they are best suited and thus knowledge should be given according to the needs of the class that one belongs.

Plato, furthermore, emphasized education system on early age where as children would be brought up in a well and healthy environment where ideas of truth and

goodness were to be implanted. This was to be for the first 10 years, and should be predominantly physical education. In this case, every school is supposed to have gymnasium and a playground so as to develop the physique and health of children and make them resistant to diseases. In this early age education, Tanzania we have failed as we have taken playgrounds to build a second school or secondary school, or even out rightly sold them for business ventures. Plato believed that early education should relate to literature, as it would bring out the best of the soul. Therefore, early education mostly should relate to story-telling, poetry, music and arts. In this elementary education, children should not be forced but be enticed as sort of amusement. At the age of 20, children should take an examination to determine if one should continue with higher education or not. Those who fail the exam are to work in the communities as business people, clerks, workers, farmers and the like. For those who succeed passing the exam will receive another 10 years of education and training in body and mind. Apart from physical and mathematical sciences, at this stage arithmetic, astronomy, geometry and dialectics will be taught at the age of 30, these students will take another examination, much severe than the first test. This will be an elimination test. Those who will be eliminated by this examination will become executive assistants, auxiliaries and military officers of the state (Plato, 2016; Mondal 2019).

Plato's analysis of education is in such a way that based on their capabilities, candidates would be assigned in a particular field. Those who pass this examination will again receive another 5 years of advanced education in dialectics in order to find out as to who was capable of freeing himself from sense perception. These candidates will study for another 15 years for practical experience in dialectics, and finally at the age of 50, those who succeeded will be introduced to the ultimate task of governing their country and fellow human beings, he called these the philosopher kings (Plato, 2016; Mondall, 2019). Plato believed that for a society to advance in development it needs philosophers to be kings, or kings to become philosophers.

### **Background to the Problem of Education System in Tanzania**

The education system in Tanzania has its origin in the colonial administration. This education system had its own aims and objectives, not necessarily with Tanzanians in mind. The education was given to some few who were to help the colonizers in their quest to colonize and brainwash Tanzanians to adhere to the West and its culture, and despise their own culture and traditions. In a nutshell, the colonial education alienated people and named them civilized and educated, and the rest of the society uncivilized and uneducated (Kay and Nystrom, 1971). Those who acquired colonial education were made to perceive themselves as superior to their own kinspeople. The graduates of colonial education knew more about colonial master's history, politics and geography than they knew about their own communities (Bah-Diallo, 1997).

Soon after independence, a u-turn on education system was deliberately attempted by Mwalimu Julius K. Nyerere, the then president of Tanzania, in a landmark

decision in 1967 in what was termed as Arusha Declaration. Already in 1963, Tanzania had abolished all discrimination that hindered access to education by all (Nyerere, 1967). The government nationalized all schools, and education was made free to everyone, streamlined the school curriculum and Kiswahili was adopted as a language of learning in primary schools (URT, 2000). Nyerere nationalized all the missionary schools in order to create equal opportunity for everyone in accessing education. In 1967 education was then adopted as a way to build *Ujamaa*, a system that Nyerere believed would help Tanzania achieve sustainable development, thus Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) philosophy was adopted to guide the planning and practice of education, leading to fundamental reforms in the school curriculum (URT, 2000). Education was reformed to integrate theory with practical skills; aiming to reintegrate into the societies those who were alienated in the process of acquiring it. In 1972, the government diversified secondary education into vocational biases (commercial, agriculture, technical and home economics), while at the same time established post-primary vocational centres to prepare those to teach primary schools (URT, 2000). This is in line with Plato's theory of education (Plato, 2016).

Nyerere devised a way for those who acquired education to give back to the society that sacrificed in terms of taxes and material contributions for the few to acquire education. Nyerere said that those who acquired education were like a man who had been given all the food available in a starving village in order that he might have strength to bring supplies back from a distant place. If he took the food and did not bring help to his brothers and sisters, he was a traitor. However, after worsening condition of poverty, unemployment and food shortage in the country in 1970s that came as a result of the Kagera war, the government failed revenues and crisis of balance of payment plus pressure from the IMF and World Bank, Tanzania was forced to adopt the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). With adoption of SAPs and thus liberalization in 1980s, a number of private schools mushroomed from kindergarten, primary, secondary, colleges to universities (URT, 2000). One of the major criticisms of SAPs is the glaring marginalization and negative impact on the majority who live under poverty line. After introduction of SAPs, education in poor countries has been brought into the market for sell; a commodity with different qualities. Depending on the funds available to you, you can buy one of high quality or of poor quality. Since then, there has been discussion on declining quality and access to education in the Tanzanian parliament. The abolition of school fees was one of the most important actions taken by the Tanzanian government to implement its ambitious education goals. Tanzania's 2014 Education and Training policy aimed to increase access to primary and secondary education, and to improve the quality of education. These goals were in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), a United Nations initiative which sets a target for all countries to offer all children free, equitable, and quality primary and secondary education by 2030 (Human Rights Watch, 2017). The goals are also in line with Tanzania's international and regional human rights obligations to realize the right to primary and secondary education for all. Tanzania with a population of 48 million by 2015 (NBS, 2015) has around half of it living in massive poverty. About 36

percent of the population cannot afford their basic daily needs (URT, 2000). The income divide has continued to widen with women, minority ethnic groups and people living with disabilities being on the marginalized side. Now, education has become another joined income to be another divide among Tanzanians. Scholars have indicated the importance of higher education particularly to national development in Tanzania as it is elsewhere in the globe. Some studies have concluded that knowledge and skills gained through teaching, learning, research and consultancy provided by higher learning institutions are sine qua non in developing appropriate human resources for building social, economic and political organizations and bring forward national development (Chatama, 2014).

### **Discussion on the Problem of Higher Education in Tanzania**

The educational system in Tanzania has progressed from a colonial past, through a national bourgeois-oriented educational system, to a national system of education based on a socialist Philosophy (Omari & Mosha, 1987), and to neo-liberal system. After independence, Nyerere argued that there was lack of marriage between theories and practices in education, and the system of education stressed much on individualism. Omari *et al* (1983) argued that Universal Primary Education (UPE) that was adopted in the *Azimio la Musoma* (Musoma Resolution) in 1974 was the starting point for deterioration of education in Tanzania. The resolution which was initiated by the ruling party (TANU) declared that by November 1977 all children of primary-school age should be in school. The party anticipated problems of shortages of teachers, teaching materials, and classroom facilities. Therefore, it challenged the Ministry of Education to develop and adopt innovative mechanisms for achieving the goal without involving heavy Government and community spending (Omari & Mosha, 1987). However, A closer look shows that the deterioration of our present education in Tanzania started with commercialization of education and adoption of the UPE system into liberalization. Tanzania moved in liberalization and thus commercialized its education, but took the UPE system with it, neglecting why UPE was designed and the socio-economic environment of the time it was adopted. UPE was drawn into liberalization system, ignoring the fact that there was a big difference between Ujamaa education environment and liberalism education environment. Galabawa (2001:37) argued:

Systems dependent on central management and implementation of UPE have remained unconvincing in a climate of declining resources and insensitive institutional arrangements. Top-down approaches and stereotyping in setting and implementing UPE and the Education Sector Development Programme have been common in Tanzania to the detriment of the sector. UPE is a huge undertaking and has the potential of distressing any good intentions.

UPE expanded enrolment in the 1970s through centrally directed, medium and long-term development plans. Most of the 11,409 primary schools that were in operation in the early 2000s were constructed during the 1970s. Most of the

teacher training colleges were also established during the period (Galabawa, 2001). Scholars argued that between the late 1960s and mid-1970s, the University of Dar es Salaam developed a reputation for scholarship in causes and issues related to liberation, social justice and economic development. It is claimed that in the period between 1967–75, the university developed into one of the best-known universities in Africa, if not the world (Mkude, Cooksey & Levey, 2003).

Omari and Mosha (1987) presented a number of problems about Education for Self-Reliance (ESR) and UPE, however, the problems have escalated in the present neo-liberal educational system. During Nyerere's Ujamaa, only few were selected to join secondary schools; not necessarily that majority did not pass the examination thus academically poor, but because at the time Tanzania had few primary and secondary schools, as well as HLIs (Rugemalila, 2001). UPE selected some of those who were not selected to join secondary schools and HLIs to be trained as teachers. Liberalization developed the other extreme, with mushrooming of poor qualified private and public ward secondary schools (some with only one or two unqualified teachers), Tanzania started to take into secondary school even students who lacked literary skills (UNESCO, 2011). Yet, these are the ones who were taken in to be trained as teachers for secondary schools after being fast trained for three months as teachers (famously known as Vodafasta). It has become a trend that those who did not have good passes apply to study education at HLIs. This is because experience show that those who study education were given priority in accessing students' loans. This has made the teaching profession to have low reputation as well as low quality and unmotivated people who did not want to be teachers but studied education as a way to acquire loans from the Higher Education Loans Board (HELB). Mkude, Coksey and Levey (2003) affirmed that the decline on the quality of higher education started in 1980s as issues shifted from development to power politics.

The number of educational institutions in Tanzania has grown from primary schools to higher learning institutions. In the lower level, another level which did not exist was added, that of kindergarten. Most of the primary schools have kindergarten classes before starting class one. Higher learning institutions started to grow from one institution to more than 200 institutions in 2006, with PHE institutions being more than public higher learning institutions (Msola, 2006). Statistics show that there has been a hasty increase in the number of HLIs from 2 institutions in 1991 to more than 35 institutions in 2012, with 11 institutions being public universities (Kipesha & Msigwa, 2013; TCU, 2013). Despite the increase, it is approximately only 1% of Tanzanians of relevant age were enrolled in higher education and literacy among people aged 15–24 is 77% (Common Wealth Network, 2015). However, this increase came as a result of converting a number of technical colleges and schools to Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs). Colleges such as Nyegezi, Dar es Salaam School of Journalism (DSJ), Chang'ombe Teachers College, Mkwawa Secondary School, Eckenford Teachers College, and many others were converted and registered as Universities and University colleges and started to offer degrees instead of diploma and certificates offered before. By 2019, most of the tertiary education institutions that existed in the 1970s and 1980s were offering degrees and thus leaving only few for

diploma and certificate. In addition, these few institutions offering diploma and certificates were looked down upon. However, they are important to produce the much-needed technicians.

Weiler (2009) argued that the process of transformation that underwent on the notion of knowledge has a lasting influence on our understanding of how knowledge is created, distributed, and used. In addition, it has also confirmed that there is an intimate and very consequential linkage between knowledge and power, and that arriving at a better understanding of this linkage is crucial to any attempt to formulate a political theory of knowledge production and its distribution. There are hierarchies in the production and distribution of knowledge, which are again the typical manifestation of power. They signify higher and lower ranks in a given order, domination and subordination, greater and lesser value, prestige and influence. Wherever these hierarchies occur, they reflect structures of authority and power, and thus the essence of politics. This is also supported by Grant (2014) who asserts that sometimes things change but not necessarily for scientific reasons. The key policy thrust of the Higher Education Policy (1998) is “dramatic expansion of enrolments” and “encouragement of the establishment of private institutions”. The Higher Education Policy goal is to increase higher education enrolment of students, but this compromises quality. The key strategies related to higher education enrolment are encouraging private companies; parastatal, and individuals to invest in areas near institutions of higher learning in order to develop linkages; increasing the budgetary allocation to higher education by 3 percent by late 1999; and decentralizing decision making and grant full autonomy to higher education (URT, 2000).

The greatest challenge of education in Tanzania is that of access and equity, inclusive/special needs education and institutional capacity building. Higher education in Tanzania is guided by Higher Education Policy, which addresses issues such as access, equity, quality, cost-sharing, etc. Higher education institutions are under Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) formed in 2005 from what was Higher Accreditation Council (HEAC) established in 1998 (URT, 2000). The regulatory role of TCU is to conduct periodic evaluation of universities, their systems and programs so as to oversee quality assurance systems at the universities and in the process leading to new institutions to be registered to operate in Tanzania, and the existing the institutions to be accredited, and validation of university qualifications attained from local and foreign institutions for use in Tanzania (TCU, 2015).

The number of PHE institutions has increased in terms of quantity to 67 in 2015, and out of those, only 28 are public (TCU, 2015). However, the large number of PHE institutions has also registered poor planning and poor growth in terms of enrolment (only 21.5 percent a year of the total number of those who enter HLIs). There is a number of unprofessional institutions that were registered to offer one award but went ahead to offer other unregistered courses which saw students suffering after finishing their courses only to realise that the institutions could not offer award in the field the student studied. Also, the increased number of students without increase in the manpower and infrastructure has seen the



quality of education offered going down. One of the areas that Tanzania has failed to address was the qualified university lecturers. Nearly all the universities in Tanzania suffered from lack of qualified teaching staff (Tettey, 2010), deficiency that has seen one staff teaching in a number of universities, thus lowering a quality of teaching and research capacity. Mkude, Cooksey and Levey (2003) revealed that the academic audit (1998–9) showed that the quality of teaching and research at University of Dar es Salaam was critical.

The economic difficulties among the society in Tanzania made higher education too costly for majority of the Tanzanians who are poor, thus raising the problem of access and equity. It is this reality that made the government to offer loans to students in HLIs through the Higher Education Students' Loans Board (HESLB) and the Tanzania Education Authority (TEA). The offering of loans to Higher Learning Institutions started with students studying in public universities and latter extended to students in PHE institutions as well. However, to date the loan board cannot offer 100 percent of what is needed for all the students at HLIs thus majority get only some percentage of the required fee, accommodation and living allowances. This forced students from poor families to either take money given for living allowance to pay fees or skip lecture or find time after lecture time to sell second-hand clothes, shoes, and other simple goods which affected their quality in class. The problem of Higher Learning Institutions, therefore, is in knowledge inequities, which includes notions of the unevenness of quality, relevance of education, and attainment of learning (URT, 2000).

### **Education in Relation to Plato's Theory of Education**

Plato was convinced that people are born with different abilities, not that one is better than the other but nobody fits in all the three classes (the guardians, the auxiliaries, and the producers) and individuals should not be given any type of education, but that which make them best suited to work within their class. This assumes that in order to perform a certain act, the potency which is an innate capacity or aptitude in a being to receive some perfection or perform some action (Aquinas, 1951) should be there in advance. For Plato it is a waste to give guardianship education to one with inner qualities of a producer. The three groups are interdependent, they thus need each other. For Plato, the thinking capacities of people differ. There are those with thinking capacity level of producer, those with thinking capacity level of auxiliary and those with highest thinking capacity level of guardian, and therefore giving producers education of guardians or teaching them using syllabus of guardians is to do them injustice. Justice and equity would demand that people go through a system that considers their capabilities and thus prepare them for what they can do best in life (Oruka, 1990).

The guardians are the think-tank of the society, thus education should prepare them to be philosopher kings to think of new solutions to the problems that face the society. The success of guardians depends on the two other groups, the auxiliaries and the producers. The guardians and producers also need to be assured of security for them to peacefully perform their duties and guardians

need both auxiliaries and producers to be healthy, think and put their ideas into practice. The auxiliaries need the producers for food and weapons, and producers need guardians for new ideas and auxiliaries for protection. Guardians are to be taught to think, create and innovate, while auxiliaries are to be taught physical stamina, obedience and the like, fit for a soldier. Producers are to be taught hands-on tools to repair and create different objects, these are the technicians. Omari and Mosha (1987) argue that the mere acquisition of functional knowledge and skills is not enough to produce a self-reliant individual, in line with Plato, education then must prepare individuals to do what they are best suited. Since, the classes are already in the society, they will support in providing tools required for implementing what is learnt at school, the community will accept and support the activities initiated after school and there will be ready market for whatever is produced as asserted by Omari and Mosha (1987).

Our education system with its “*degreenization*” has forced producers and auxiliaries into education path of guardians as they are made to believe that diploma and certificates are inferior to degrees. Since producers and auxiliaries are hands-on people, forcing them to be thinkers only achieves repetition of what is already there, thus copying and pasting; sometimes editing here and there, with the inner form remaining essentially the same or even destroying the internal coherence of what was before. There are evidences that research conducted by some Higher Learning Institutions in Tanzania have degenerated into consultancy services, with little new knowledge being created in the process, pointing to a sharp decline in quality of journal articles (Mkude, Cooksey & Levey, 2003).

“To educate” is an action verb. To educate is an action that anybody can do, it is to create by training and teaching; it is to refine, to be discriminative in taste or judgment. The real problem is in putting the *-ion* to turn the verb into a noun; changing the action to a person; a person who would walk the talk and not a person who cares for a certificate and the salary tag pinched to it. Prinsloo and Louw (2006: 288-289) argues:

Today, the amount of people ‘with papers’ is more than at any other time in the history of humankind. And yet, we are no longer sure whether ‘having papers’ necessarily makes one an ‘educated’ person. To the contrary, the worst atrocities in the history of humankind were most probably committed by people ‘with papers.’ Furthermore, certain papers are considered of more worth than others, depending on who issued them. And in some countries, you can buy whatever paper you want.

During the time of Ujamaa, education was about its relevance to the society and it was a right and basic need in the line of Plato’s argument (Plato, 2016), but with privatization and mushrooming of higher education institutions in the country, education has become a commodity for sale and buying. It is for those who can afford and it is more on a certificate and what is jotted on it. In today’s education system in Tanzania, Higher Education Institutions are fighting to attract customers; it is the buyer who has the last say. Buyers have voices in even what marks (grade) they can get, it is called *customer care*. The customers

determine their grades and it is called *customer satisfaction*. Students have become sources of income (Mkude, Cooksey & Levey, 2003) and their failure threatens the future income of the universities. In this scenario, the seller is left with no or little choice but to bow to the demands of the customer, thus tutors are called to standardise academic results when students do not perform well, leading to lowering the quality of education. It is what Prinsloo and Louw (2006) called the age of 'Me Inc', where courses are designed not based on what is needed for country's development but what customers want, resulting to duplication of programmes in the same university as departments fight to attract customers. This is in line with the argument of Mkude, Cooksey and Levey (2003). This trend neglects the fact stated by Plato that education should result to a good upbringing, correct social behavior and practical ability to bring solutions to societal problems.

The issue of equity raises larger questions about the interface of the institutions with the society around them. In addition, greater and inclusive participation in higher education goes far beyond the issue of social justice. Economic success in globalization depends on the ability to manage vast amounts of knowledge and technology, thus preparation of human capital (Altbach, 2015). With liberalization and the mushrooming of Higher Learning Institutions in Tanzania, people tend to think that it is better to get a degree than a diploma or a certificate, forcing everybody to a degree programme without consideration of the three classes existing in the society analyzed by Plato and Nyerere's Ujamaa principles of communitarianism. As Prinsloo and Louw (2006:290) remarked:

What results is a paradoxical situation where, on the one hand, global marketisation devalues community and communitarian values whilst, on the other hand, globalisation's effects of specificity and difference enhance these values, albeit in a reconfigured form.

Liberalization of education in Tanzania has made education expensive, yet mostly impracticable. In the Ujamaa time, knowledge was awarded to "good students", but under commercialization of education, it is awarded to individuals who can buy it. Commercialization of education has made education a commodity with buyers (customers) and sellers (producers), which jeopardizes equity and quality, as producers are controlled by the customers who are their students and the potential employers. This affects mostly the poor who are side-lined in terms of access to quality education and it affects the country as those who get education and ultimately placed in offices should have been in reality elsewhere (Human Rights Watch, 2017). Education has led to classification of "us" and "them" with a change of roles in the societies to the detrimental of the country. The commercialization has led to ones who would have been messengers toying around as the supervisors since they were able to buy good education and the ones who were to be supervisors are running from one room to another as messengers because they were too poor to afford good education. The rich and the influential buy education and get offices while the poor, however intelligent, are left to serve the rich making the dictum 'I think therefore I am' to have changed to 'I buy therefore I am' (Prinsloo & Louw, 2006). This is against

Plato's theory that advocated for education as a virtue to be awarded according to intellectual abilities and innate talents, and be prepared for what they could do best in life. A number of other problems have come up as a result of liberalization of education in Higher Learning Institutions leading further to lower quality. Morley (2012:245) contended:

...negative experiences were also widely reported including lack of, or poor-quality facilities and resources, large classes, poor pedagogy, lecturers' lack of professionalism, problems with assessment, favouritism, corruption and lack of transparency in admissions procedures and student loan entitlements.

As a response to the challenge of access and equity brought by increasing Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs) and their demands, the government responded by extending the university loan to students studying in all HLIs. This was to try to help students' access to higher education and increase equity. However, Ishengoma (2008) argues that the loan system of financing higher education in Tanzania was in dire need of being revisited to avoid further looming crises in the higher education sector. This problem was not specific to Tanzania but was common to a number of developing countries making a transition from socialism to the new, market-driven environment of liberalism, that education was exacerbating social inequities, distorting curricula and teacher performance, fostering corruption, skewing the university admissions process, and depriving the state of tax revenues. All these may indicate inadequacies in the education systems of the developing countries (ESP, 2006).

Increase of enrolment is commendable effort but alone can compromise a number of other things. Increase of enrolment should go together with an increase in the budgetary allocation and the right rigorous system to make sure that only those with right disposition (potency) should be given higher education. While higher education is good, in line with Plato's theory, it is not for everyone. Tanzania Development Vision 2025 claims to target a high-quality livelihood for all Tanzanians through the realisation of, among others, attainment of a level of tertiary education and training commensurate with a critical mass of high-quality human resources required to effectively respond to the developmental challenges at all levels (URT, 2000). The objective of any educational system is to deliver or advance a sensible people with skills of enduring in their environment and contributing meaningfully towards the survival of the society to which they belong (Onyenemezu, 2012). While this is presented in Vision 2025 nothing much was being done to attain the vision and the quality of education was steadily going down. TCU had also come up with quality assurance handbook in an attempt to make sure the quality of higher learning institutions was not compromised; however, the result had not been promising, thus calling for new answers.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The paper has presented the historical perspective of education in Tanzania and the problems of higher education in the lenses of Plato's theory of education,

analyzing the problems of access, equity and quality. It has shown how Plato's theory is in line with Ujamaa education for self-reliance and why it is still pertinent in the modern Tanzania. The problem of education in Africa is linked to the problem of development in general. Scholars such as Thabo Mbeki and Chango Macho Wóbanda advocate for what they call African Renaissance as a remedy. This philosophy calls for revival of the early spirit of nationalism planted by African leaders soon after independence. African Renaissance advocates for ditching of liberalism and going back to participatory democracy and real African history, instead of the colonial history inherited in the colonial education. Another argument is that Africa does not only need the nationalistic spirit revival but reviving nationalistic ideas and advancing them. It is here that Tanzania has an advantage in the nationalistic ideas of the first president, Julius Nyerere in Socialism and Self-Reliance and its Education for Self-Reliance policy. Education in Tanzania should again aim at producing individuals who are mature and can rely on themselves and not dependent on employment. This education policy is still valid and relevant in Tanzania, in fact more relevant today than it was before.

Tanzania might not be so much in shortage of Higher Learning Institutions (HLIs), it is instead in shortage of institutions offering quality education that the poor can access. Tanzania needs HLIs, but in addition to knowledge they offer, they should offer ethics and critical thinking to make graduates responsible citizens who understand that what matters is what individuals can do for themselves and the nation using the education they have acquired, and not the title coming with the process. Knowing that the economic prosperity of countries depends on an increasingly well-educated workforce, the access to higher education, must therefore be a national priority.

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