

# Entry and Ramifications of Neo-Liberalism for Education in Tanzania: What is the Possible Alternative?

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## Abstract

What takes place in an education system is influenced by, among other things, ideologies that exist in society. In recent years, the ideological influence on education in Tanzania has changed from *Ujamaa* thinking to neo-liberalism. This paper traces the entry of the latter into Tanzania's education and its ramifications. The paper is based on a study whose objectives were to establish how neo-liberalist ideas entered Tanzania's education system; identify the ramifications and impact of neo-liberalism on the provision of education in Tanzania; and trace the possible ideological alternative for Tanzania's education. It is argued in the paper that neo-liberalism has been responsible for the introduction of problematic cost-sharing policies in education, the under-financing of education, and attenuation of education quality. On a wider scope, ideology has also caused the failure of locally produced goods, the market for agricultural products to diminish, agricultural crop prices to plummet, the number of youth petty traders to increase in urban centres, and many to lose their jobs. Since Tanzania needs to address the negative impact of neo-liberalism, the paper proposes what could be a suitable alternative ideology for education in the country.

*Key words:* Neo-liberalism, Education, Tanzania

## Introduction

In recent years, a seemingly predominant ideology has been overwhelmingly penetrating the affairs of different countries. This is neo-liberalism, which is triumphing over other ideologies a country can follow. The ideology is now a global political economy that came to the rise in the latter years of the twentieth century and has indeed become dominant at the global level (Harvey, 2005). Neo-liberalism refers to an ideological set of social, political and economic ideas which, inter alia, stand for free markets or market deregulation, greater openness to international trade and foreign investment, market expansion and government decentralisation. Neo-liberalism also has to do with reducing public expenditure on social services, privatising state-owned enterprises and/or increasing the role of the private sector in socio-economic endeavours, competition between entities, and individual entrepreneurship (Chomsky, 1999; Martinez and Garcia, 2000). In the 1980s, these ideological ideas were adopted in Tanzania which had previously followed *Ujamaa*, whereby a socialist philosophy of education, Education for Self-Reliance (ESR), was adopted. Based on this background, a study was conducted to examine how neo-liberalism entered the country and what has been the impact of this ideological change. The study then sought to establish what could be the alternative philosophy for education in Tanzania.

## **Neo-liberalism and education**

Theoretical and empirical literature claims that neo-liberalism has had numerous impacts on education, some of which are undesirable. For instance, when education, and higher education in particular, adopted neo-liberalism, it brought about marketization and/or commercialisation of university research, entrepreneurial universities and academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie, 1997; Bok, 2003; Kenway, Bullen and Robb, 2004; Canaan and Shumar, 2008). Such changes have been vividly seen in the USA education system and elsewhere (Giroux, 2002), and, as Lynch (2006) cautions, neo-liberalisation and the marketization of education further weakens the value the public places on those who acquire university education, although a democratic welfare state depends on such people to be able to provide social services for all.

Moreover, neo-liberalism has posed dangers such as sacrificing education for public morality and civic responsibility in favour of financial capital interests and profit-making, valuing research because of the potential profit that can be derived from it instead of its contribution to the public good, changing academics from being disinterested truth seekers into operatives for business interests, undermining academics' collegiality (especially due to restrictions on Intellectual Property that it poses), and preventing valuable research results from reaching the public.

Further, previous studies have found that neo-liberalism has had a negative impact on various socio-economic issues as well. For instance, Giroux (2002) identified that the socio-economic and political dangers of neo-liberalism involved replacing political sovereignty with market sovereignty, replacing democratic values with commercial ones and terminating every practice that does not correspond with private interests. Giroux (*ibid*) concludes that the most dangerous contemporary ideology in the contemporary world is neo-liberalism.

However, few previous studies have explored what happened to education when neo-liberalism was imposed on low-income countries such as Tanzania. It is for this reason that this paper seeks to contribute to our understanding of neo-liberalism in education by examining what is happening in Tanzania.

## **Study Methodology**

This paper is based predominantly on a desk study that employed documentary review, on the assumption that ideologies are traceable in policy documents and statements that ushered in ideological changes because the proceedings are recorded in them. The documents that were reviewed are national and institutional policies, as well as strategies and plans that guide education in Tanzania. The documents that were reviewed are; The Tanzania Development Vision 2025; The National Research and Development Policy; National Information and Communication Technology Policy; National Science & Technology Policy; National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty; Higher Education Development Programme, 2010; and the National Higher Education Policy, 1999. Institutional policies that were reviewed are

University Intellectual Property Policies; University Research Agenda; and Five-Year Rolling Strategic Plans.

Apart from the desk study method, more data were collected from two selected higher learning institutions in the country, whereby interviews with education (higher education in particular) stakeholders were also used because education stakeholders and practitioners have experienced the effects of the ideology. In this context the stakeholders are university academics, administrative officials and students. Stratified random sampling was used to select participants in the study. The strata were different university units (colleges, schools or faculties) from the University of Dar es Salaam and Sokoine University of Agriculture (the oldest universities in the country). A total of 50 respondents participated in the study. Critical Discourse Analysis was used to analyse policy excerpts with the aim of identifying the effects and how the policies could have been alternatively stated, and then proposing an agenda for change by showing what could have been opted for, an alternative to neo-liberalism in education. Interview data were analysed thematically in relation to the objectives of the study.

## **Study findings and Discussion**

### ***Entry of Neo-liberalism in Tanzania***

The interviewees and the documents that were reviewed for this study explain, among other things, the reason for the entry of neo-liberalism in Tanzania, when it came in and its enactment in policies. This is revealed, for instance, in policy statements, which show the paradigmatic shift in Tanzania from treating education as a public good to serving the market through learning from and targeting market demands. One such statement is found in the University of Dar es Salaam Five-Year Rolling Strategic Plan, 2010, pp.2-3, which reveals the ideological change that took place in Tanzania in the 1980s. It shows that, since then, what is favoured in the country is a decentralised market-oriented economy (neo-liberal) rather than centralised and/or corporatist economy. The statement reveals the political economy influence on education in Tanzania, which came along with the introduction of privatisation (an element of neo-liberalism) and therefore private schools/universities. The statement reads:

Since 1985, Tanzanian society has undergone significant political and economic changes. The economy changed from a centralized to a more market-oriented one. The political and social economic changes taking place, the formation of two additional state universities, the policy decision in favour of the establishment of private universities and other related developments called for a comprehensive review of the University of Dar es Salaam mission, status, objectives and functions as well as the legal status of the University (*UDSM Five-Year Rolling Strategic Plan, 2010, pp.2-3*).

The statement basically refers to what happened in Tanzania from 1985, when the second phase government (1985-1995) came to power and accepted the Structural Adjustment Facility (SAF) suggested by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It was at that time that more doors were opened for the private sector. It is pointed out clearly in the statement that Tanzania's economy is now market oriented, which is the type of economy favoured by neo-liberalism. Thus, neo-liberalism changed the mission, status, objectives and functions of education in Tanzania and

has influenced universities' institutional transformation programmes (comprehensive review of university functions).

Indeed, when the first phase government of Tanzania (1964-1985) ended and the architect of *Ujamaa* and Education for Self-Reliance, founding president of the country, Mwalimu Nyerere, stepped down from leadership, this marked the beginning of *Ujamaa's* end. His successor, Ali Hassan Mwinyi, accepted privatisation and liberalisation of the economy through complying with economic reform packages proposed by the IMF, in an attempt to resolve the 1970s economic crisis. The state now refrained from taking economic control and allowed the market to take over. The IMF packages were as follows. The first package was the introduction of the 1986–1995 Structural Adjustment Facility; the second was the 1996-1999 Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility (ESAF); the third was 2000-2003 Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) I, and the fourth package is the IMF Policy Support Instrument (PSI) from 2007 onwards (Roger et al., 2009). Basically, the IMF packages mentioned above ushered neo-liberalism into Tanzania. They proposed that Tanzania should devalue its currency, deregulate the economy, and liberalise the market. It is noteworthy that, as pointed out by Stiglitz (2002), neo-liberalism is the guiding economic philosophy of the Bretton Wood institutions (the IMF and World Bank). The second phase government therefore was marked by the increased role of international agencies in formulating education policy in the country, while cooperating with the ministries responsible for education (Buchert, 1997).

Further, this phase allowed the introduction of cost-sharing and intensive privatisation in education. For instance, a cost-sharing policy that was dropped in 1974 was reinstated in Tanzania's higher education in 1992 (Ishengoma, 2004). Following the policy, university students and their families were required to meet some of the costs which had previously been met by the government. Moreover, the policies and the legal framework of the country now supported the establishment of an increasing number of private education and/or training institutions at all levels (primary and secondary schools and colleges). This phase, and the ones that followed, also promoted an increase in the number of universities in the country, from 2 at the end of 1991 to more than 40 universities and university colleges in 2015.

Today, neo-liberal ideas continue to drive Tanzania's education policies and practices. As explained in MoEVT (2007), the thrust of the current Tanzanian education policy initiative is to facilitate the liberalisation and privatisation of education, as opposed to state ownership of schools and facilities and services being solely provided by the government. Specifically, the country's policies today emphasise the creation of partnerships between the state and other providers, including private institutions and individuals, encouraging them to establish and manage educational institutions. This is revealed, for instance, in a statement from the 1999 National Policy for Higher Education that declares the country's determination to invite the private sector to be involved in the privatisation of education. The statement reads as follows;

Policies [have] to encourage the private sector to support higher education ... strategies ... to encourage private organisations, individuals, non-governmental organisations and

communities to take an active role in establishing and maintaining institutions of higher education (*National Higher Education Policy*, p.23).

Moreover, the 2010 National Research and Development Policy explains how neo-liberalism continued to penetrate Tanzania through further economic reforms that took place in the 1990s. The reforms allowed further liberalisation of the economy. Since then the private sector has been a major contributor to the national economy. The statement (presented below) portrays that the intention of the national research policy is to have the private sector and related economic reforms reflected in research endeavours. It is impliedly telling the government of Tanzania to tune all its policies to be in harmony with the principles of neo-liberalism. The statement reads;

Social economic reforms of the 1990s in Tanzania resulted in the formulation of various policies which embraced a liberalized socio-economic system. These policies focused on the promotion of the private sector as a major contributor to the national economy singly or through public- private partnership. Unfortunately the socio-economic reforms have not been undertaken in tandem with the required reforms in the R&D systems (*National Research and Development Policy*, p.8).

A further revelation of Tanzania's decision to opt for neo-liberalism is presented in the country's deliberate visionary shift from the initial outlook. This is pointed out for instance in the Tanzania Development Vision 2025, statement that reads:

... the government had realised that earlier development policies and strategies were not in consonance with the principles of a market-led economy and technological development occurring in the world (*Tanzania Development Vision 2025*, p. ix).

The statement criticises previous development visions of the country for their lack of the principles of a market-led economy. It implies that upon enactment of the Vision 2025, Tanzania changed its economic ideology from *Ujamaa* to a market-led economy, causing education provision to embrace neo-liberal principles as well. The statement, however, through its use of the phrase 'occurring in the world', explains that essentially the source of the departure from *Ujamaa* to liberalisation in the country was not internal factors but global trends. This adoption of neo-liberalism by Tanzania as a result of external pressures is further explained by the National Research and Development Policy in a statement that reads:

... The increasingly globalised world requires nations to create an enabling environment that will facilitate active participation of the private sector in improving their respective economies (*National Research and Development Policy*, p.8).

The statement clearly explains that it is the requirement of the globalised world that the private sector (a neo-liberal component) should be given more room rather more power in a country's economy. In other words, neo-liberalism entered Tanzania as an external imposition disguised an imperative requirement of globalisation if economies wanted to improve. This imposition disregarded the fact that while an economy can statistically seem to improve through active

participation of the private sector, neo-liberal economic principles make the rich richer and the poor poorer (Martinez and Garcia, 2000).

Further analysis of the documents reviewed for this study indicates that the adoption of neo-liberal ideas in Tanzania is not only an external imposition but an imitation of foreign countries. This is revealed for instance in the 2008 University of Dar es Salaam Policy on Intellectual Property. In the document, a statement shows the paradigmatic shift in education, in terms of shifting from knowledge production for knowledge sake to knowledge for the purpose of supporting the economy, whereby the universities are functioning as entrepreneurial or market institutions. The statement shows that commercialisation (a neo-liberal idea) of research is a major source of income for universities in developed and emerging economies. The statement implies that commercialisation of research is therefore a practice worth copying by Tanzanian universities. This is an attempt to justify serving the interests of the market in that well-to-do economies have also commercialised higher education research and the universities are benefiting from it. The statement reads:

Commercialization and/or licensing of such research findings to industries and other users in one of the major sources of revenues of many Universities in the developed and emerging economies (*UDSM Intellectual Property Policy*, page vii)

Furthermore, in Tanzania's documents, some of the guidelines for courses offered in higher education institutions also relate to the influence of ideas on regional and global competitiveness. This is seen in a statement from *Vision 2025*, p.5, reading:

[Tanzania aspires to be] a nation with a high level of education at all levels, a nation which produces the quantity and quality of educated people sufficiently equipped with the requisite knowledge to solve society's problems, meet the challenges of development and attain competitiveness at regional and global levels.

The statement is built on a semiotic myth that educated people bring competitiveness [competitiveness is also an element of neo-liberalism]. The statement chooses the term competitiveness, rather than cooperation in society. It also presupposes that there is competition in the region and globally in which Tanzania must take part. Ideologically, therefore, the choice of the discourse 'competitiveness', and not regional or global cooperation, reveals the neo-liberal ideological orientation in the statement and therefore in the country's vision. Such an ideological orientation further pushes Tanzania towards neo-liberalism,

The entry of neo-liberalism and its attainment of hegemony in Tanzania's education system is partly manifested through the country's agenda of using higher education for developing a knowledge-based economy (KBE). KBE's pillars and discourses both appear in Tanzania's policies and are predominantly attached to neo-liberal ideas. Arguably (as indicated earlier), the serving of the neo-liberalist agenda through higher education in Tanzania does not start with the introduction of the KBE idea. KBE is instead a perpetuation of the agenda. Although the literature suggests that there are different ideological approaches to the construction of KBE

(see Kahangwa, 2013), Tanzania has categorically followed the neo-liberal path in its attempt to pursue KBE. Through analysing the KBE discourse articulated in the documents that were reviewed for this study, it can be seen that, amidst the attempt to develop KBE, the predominant ideology in Tanzania's policies is neo-liberalism. Taking for example Tanzania's policy on Information and Communications Technology (ICT, which is a key pillar of KBE) shows that ICT has been developed in a neo-liberal manner in the country. A statement from the National Information and Communications Technology Policy, p.6, reveals:

The remarkable improvements in ICT key statistical indicators partly result from significant government reforms, privatization, telecommunication sector liberalisation, the emerging private sector and entrepreneurship, and official development assistance.

Based on the statement, Tanzania's policy for ICT is taking pride in achievements that have come about in the sector, particularly 'tremendous ICT improvement' due to the introduction of liberalisation and privatisation policies. However, these achievements are merely based on statistical indicators, which may not necessarily mean that Tanzania is benefiting from such achievements, but rather from what Trowler (1998) calls blind growth fanaticism (a neo-liberal element), whereby investors in ICT are the main beneficiaries of the achievements. The statement implicitly praises neo-liberalism (privatisation and liberalisation).

Such support for neo-liberalism leads to the cherishing of profit-making interests of the capitalist (Levidow, 2002) and neo-liberal ideas, particularly through how KBE discourses are articulated in policies relating to education. For instance, in some statements in which KBE economic discourses such as competition are found, ideas that appear to be adhered to, are those of the neo-liberalists. An example of such statements is found in the Vision 2025, p.5.

Tanzania should have created a strong, diversified, resilient and competitive economy which can effectively cope with the challenges of development and which can easily and confidently adapt to the changing market and technological conditions in the regional and global economy (*Tanzania Development Vision 2025* p.5).

At manifest level, the ideological influence is invisible, but an analysis of the statement shows that the statement chooses to use the word 'competitive', rather than alternative words such as cooperative, to express the kind of economy Tanzania aspires to build. The competitive economy opted for is the one favoured by neo-liberalism, and so its choice puts forward the neo-liberal agenda. Moreover, the statement uses terminologies such as 'markets' and 'global economy', which the Tanzanian economy should be able to adopt. These terminologies further depict the influence of neo-liberalism (Trowler, 1998) on Tanzania's education-related policies. They also depict how the neo-liberal global economy has been made a determinant of what is taking place in the country. The use of the terms further gives the global market and/or global economic trends power over Tanzania's economic fate. In this way, global neo-liberalism seizes ideological dominance over Tanzania's policies for education and development.

Neo-liberalism is also traceable in Tanzania's programmes for education sector development. It is noteworthy here that neo-liberalist thinking supports education for human capital (Hyslop-Margison and Sears, 2006), as opposed for instance to education for democracy, citizenship, personal development and social cohesion. Such ideological orientation is reflected in a statement from the Higher Education Development Programme, p.9:

These targets are not accidental. They are meant to provide the Nation with the critical mass of human capital required to realize the vision 2025 objectives of making Tanzania a medium level developed country through MKUKUTA (*Higher Education Development Programme*, page 9).

The statement argues that, for Tanzania to realise its Vision 2025, it needs a critical mass of human capital. The used term 'critical mass of human capital' is not only a discourse of KBE but also one of the favourite ideas of a neo-liberal outlook on education (Dale, 1989 cited in Hyslop-Margison and Sears, 2006). The statement also makes reference to the poverty alleviation strategy (proposed for low income countries by the IMF), declaring that the strategy is worth pursuing. It is worth recalling here that the IMF has been responsible for turning Tanzania's economic ideology towards neo-liberalism.

Neo-liberalism's influence also appears in policy statements that bear discourses on KBE, particularly the discourse on Intellectual Property. An example of such statements is found in the National Research & Development Policy;

The failure to utilize research results can be attributed to several factors, including inadequacy of important elements for accelerating their uptake. These elements include the absence of an adequate number of incubation centres and clusters; science and engineering entrepreneurship centres; venture capital; management of intellectual property rights (IPR), and mechanisms for standardization of research products. Other factors are inadequate participation of local industries in research activities. (*National Research and Development Policy*, p.17).

This statement is about elements lacking in the acceleration of research results uptake. The elements are incubation, entrepreneurship, venture capital and management of IPR. These are made to stand out as important issues and solutions to research dissemination problems. IPR is one of the KBE discourses drawn from neo-liberalism (see Drahos, 2002). Thus mentioning it as one of the lacking elements makes the proposition that it should be taken on board, and by so doing, the neo-liberalist agenda permeates the research endeavours of research institutions.

Moreover, in another statement from the same document, p.17, counter measures are suggested to address the problem of failing to use research results. The measures sought are connecting research institutions with industry, making researchers market seekers and commercializers, and inviting the private sector to support the research endeavours of research institutions. All these counter measures are related to neo-liberalism.



Furthermore, in institutional policy statements directly stating KBE, the influence of neo-liberalism is also evident. An example of such statements is found in the 2008/2009 – 2012/2013 University of Dar es Salaam 5-year Rolling Strategic Plan, p.11. The statement uses the term knowledge society, which as explained by Stehr (1994), is sometimes used (wrongly) as an equivalent of KBE, but it is broader than knowledge economy (Giddens, 1991; Knorr Cetina, 1999), although the latter is hegemonic over the former (Jessop, 2008). The statement also chooses to use the term 'competitive' (which as pointed out earlier is one of the terms used in neo-liberalism), as an aim which Tanzania should strive for through retaining ICT professionals. It does not choose to encourage, for instance, cooperative or collaborative areas in knowledge. Further ideological signs in the statement are in the phrase 'ICT professionals', which signifies a neo-liberalist bias towards achievers (Mueller, 2009), whereby neo-liberalism does not consider any individual who is not professional to be an achiever.

The construction of the neo-liberalist agenda through the use of higher education to attain KBE in Tanzania was also pointed out by the education stakeholders who were interviewed in this study. Drawing on the experience of the country, the participants explained that since the country entered the neo-liberal phase, higher education has been forced to serve the interests behind this ideology rather than continuing to serve the interests of the public, as was the case during *Ujamaa* and the Arusha Declaration whose policies and values shaped the vision of the country. The purpose of higher education has turned from ensuring people's well-being to material well-being. As one of the interviewees explained;

After the Arusha Declaration, the emergence of World Bank influence, the Structural Adjustment Programmes [SAP], that is why we start seeing now the ... I can say the relative demise of higher education in terms of building the skills and knowledge you can see, because now higher education is being guided and directed by labour market signals, directed by neo-liberal market policies and not the quest for social development or the quest for looking after the people (*Interview with an academic*).

Clarifying the triumph of neo-liberalist influence on Tanzania's higher education and the argument that neo-liberalism does not appear to be appropriate for the country, the education stakeholders argued that neo-liberal ideas have been imposed on Tanzania with the claim that they might lead the country to prosperity. The stakeholders were concerned that neo-liberalism is instead ruining Tanzania's higher education and the economy in general by extending imperialism, and depriving the majority of Tanzanians of the benefits of higher education. They claimed that in this context, university graduates are increasingly becoming servants of neo-liberal institutions instead of serving society. The stakeholders were therefore of the opinion that Tanzania should have opted for a better course to take. One of them explained this as follows;

... [Take] the example of Malaysia, you cannot understand the rapid advancement in the development of Malaysia without asking yourself, what has been the role of the state in that endeavour. In Malaysia the state has been at the centre of development supporting education and protecting its own people. Take China, China has never agreed to liberalise its currency or its banks, and until as we are talking today it is a strong economy. So, in our

case, Tanzania, it is very important to ask ourselves what is the role of the state in this context? Here, the state is told to keep out and allow everybody to take charge, in the name of privatisation, liberalisation and whatever. (*Interview with a postgraduate student at one of the universities in Tanzania*).

Indeed the discourse relating to KBE as it is used in Tanzania's education policies and explained by education stakeholders, is favouring and perpetuating neo-liberalism in the country.

### ***Ramifications and Impact of Neo-Liberalism on Tanzania***

Ever since neo-liberalism was introduced into Tanzania, it has had several adverse impacts on the country. The documents that were reviewed for this study express these impacts. For instance, in the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty, p.15, it is indicated that neo-liberalism has brought about the introduction of cost-sharing policies in the education and health sectors (which made it difficult for many to access them).

Again, neo-liberalism has been responsible for the under-financing of education in Tanzania. The IMF's SAP that was accepted by the country included, among other things, fewer public funds being disbursed to the education sector. This is explained in the 1999 National Higher Education Policy, p.15;

In recent years the education sector has been marginalised due to macro-economic policies that came with the structural adjustment programmes of the 1980s. These policies emphasize that allocation of resources should be to productive and economic enterprises. As a result the education sector as a whole is now under-financed. (*National Higher Education Policy*, pg.15).

The statement explains clearly that Tanzania's adherence to SAP resulted in the marginalisation of education in the country in terms of the sectors that receive public funding, which is a neo-liberal idea (Chomsky 1999).

Another effect of neo-liberalism on education is in terms of the further attenuation of education quality, as it allowed the free establishment of learning institutions, some of which are/were below standard. This effect is presented in a statement from the *National Higher Education Policy*, p.25.

The consequences of this state of affairs are the following; uncoordinated establishment of higher education institutions which neither met the social demand for higher education nor labour market expectations for the growing local and global economy.

Another impact of the ideology is revealed in the National Science & Technology Policy, in which there is a statement on p.50 (presented below) that explains how liberalisation has been responsible for the failure of locally produced goods in the internal market, because imported goods are considered to be of better quality and are cheaper. The statement also refers to the belief that imported goods are better than locally produced ones. Such beliefs further facilitated

the spread of liberalised trade in the country. Moreover, the statement not only declares the presence of liberalisation but also gives a hint of the effect of liberalisation on the import and export of technological equipment in Tanzania, whereby foreign technology is overwhelming local technology. Arguably, while liberalisation is a blessing for foreign companies from which imported goods come, it is a severe disadvantage to domestic companies, which means that intervention is needed by the government (according to the statement) so that indigenously produced technology can be put to use. It is worth noting here that this statement through its use of words 'competition', 'innovation' and 'technology' gives a clue that the discourses relating to KBE were present in Tanzania's policies before some KBE policies were introduced.

The statement reads:

The liberalization policy has opened doors for technological competition between locally produced and imported products. Often imported products appear to be of better quality and cheaper than the indigenously developed products. Support must, therefore, be provided through fiscal and other measures for a limited period with the view of promoting innovation and inventions, increasing the use of indigenously developed technology and enhancing in-house research and development in industry (*National Science & Technology Policy*, p.50).

Neo-liberalism has also been responsible for diminishing the market for agricultural products. This problem is listed among others in a statement from the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty, p.15. The effects of neo-liberalism on Tanzania's agricultural sector in terms of the plummeting of agricultural crop prices in the country are stated in the Sokoine University of Agriculture Research Agenda, p.3;

With liberalization of trade and disintegration of many cooperative movements, prices of most agricultural crops have been falling and both internal and external markets have been erratic and elusive (*SUA Research Agenda for 2005–2010*, p.3).

Another undesirable impact of neo-liberalism in the country, according to the documents, is the increase in the number of youth petty traders in urban centres. This is explained in a statement from the *National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty*, p.7

Trade liberalisation has prompted an influx into urban areas of a vast number of petty traders mainly youth aged 20-29. The PHDR (2002) estimates 95 percent of these have primary level education but no formal skills training. (*National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty*, p.7).

According to the statement, neo-liberalism has turned (and possibly continues to turn) the originally rural poor Tanzanian youth into victims of urban abject poverty. Furthermore, neo-liberalism has been responsible for the loss of jobs of many. This is stated again in the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty, p.15:

There are concerns about the pace, manner and circumstance in which privatisation and trade liberalisation has been carried out, e.g. loss of jobs, loss of markets or sales as a result of cheap imports, specific sector reform such as cost-sharing in health or education. The majority of people in rural areas also pointed to problems in agricultural marketing. But

there are also others who see opportunities in trade liberalisation and other market reforms. Nevertheless bureaucratic barriers still stand out as main impediments to entrepreneurship, particularly of the SMEs. (*National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty p.15*).

Thus, the negative effects of neo-liberalism on people are numerous as the private sector continues to enjoy the benefits of extending its seizure of the market by employing few workers to minimize costs and maximize profits. Yet (according to the statement) the private sector still desires that bureaucracy should work more in favour of privatisation.

Moreover, neo-liberalism has been found to be of no help in solving Tanzania's social and economic problems. Instead it has made some of the sectors even worse than what was the case before the sectors were privatised. The 2009 University of Dar es Salaam Business School Research Agenda reveals this on p.12;

Despite the involvement of the private sector in the provision of some economic infrastructure services such as utilities and logistics (ports and railway services), the quality of the services has continued to deteriorate. While in the urban areas there is increasing congestion, some rural areas are disconnected from the market during the rainy season. (*University of Dar es Salaam Business School Research Agenda p.12*).

Generally, the policy documents recognise the adverse impacts of neo-liberalism on Tanzania. Yet neo-liberalism is embraced by the same policies through, for instance, arguing for developing KBE using the neo-liberal model. This partly shows how complex policies can reject and accept issues at the same time.

### *An ideological alternative to Neo-liberal oriented education in Tanzania*

The dangers of cherishing neo-liberalism in education cannot be overstated. Based on its adverse impact on Tanzania and elsewhere, it is obvious that neo-liberalism has proved non-beneficial and destructive for low income countries like Tanzania. It has been responsible for deviating education from paying attention to the local development needs of the country and interests of the public, to the needs and interests of private institutions and foreign ideas. There is a need therefore (as proposed by Lynch, 2006) to seek or develop an alternative hegemonic political economy to neo-liberalism.

Lynch (*ibid*) suggests that the alternative to neo-liberalism should be able to adhere to principles of democracy and equality and ensure that education is in the public interest. Moreover, Levidow (2002) argues that the search for counter strategies and alternatives to neo-liberal ideas can start by looking at the justifications for its proposals. The work of Chang (2002) as well as Chang and Grabel (2004) attempts to refute the justifications (for neo-liberalism) and proposes an alternative.

In the course of analysing data for this paper, the justifications for neo-liberalism were noted. One of the justifications for neo-liberal ideas relating to the development of KBE through higher education concerns the purpose of education, that is, education has to meet the demands of the market, produce individuals who meet the requirements of employers and develop the skills required by a liberalised economy, and the academy is there to support productive sectors. With this outlook, training for economic production is put forward, whereas training in awareness of democratic citizenship and personal and social development and/or other purposes that training can serve is sidelined. Such justification can be refuted by arguments which view that the purpose of education is much wider than economic motives. Thus, there has to be proper articulation of the purpose of education to replace neo-liberalism. In the author's view, an alternative to neo-liberal, market and profit-focused education can be that the purpose of education is for understanding, excellent training for work, for running personal and social life, and for sustainable management of the environment, not necessarily according to what the labour market requires or essentially for employment. Likewise, research should be for human development not merely for industries but the entire human race, as opposed to being for the economic gain of a powerful minority. After all, no education or training guarantees employment. Moreover, training people for employers' interests cannot always be a good idea because an employer might be interested in something immoral, humiliating or against human dignity.

Another justification for neo-liberalism in the documents reviewed is that marketability is a measure of success or failure of a research project, and that for risk management in a university, research has to be marketable. This can be refuted by arguments that research is not for the market but essentially for advancement of human knowledge and for development. Again, in the documents, commercialisation of research is justified by the claim that it is a major source of income for universities in high-income countries and emerging economies. It can be argued against this that commercialisation is not the reason why those countries attained their current level of development, and apart from the fact that there are many ways to achieve development, low-income countries are not obliged to follow what has been done in the so-called 'developed countries.'

Moreover, the involvement of the private sector in areas such as education once dominated by the public sector is justified by the claim that it contributes to resolving the education financing deficit. It is also justified by the argument that public-private partnership leads to innovation. These justifications are not backed up (in the documents that were reviewed) with evidence that privatisation has managed to resolve problems, but instead in Tanzania's case (possibly even in other low-income countries) it has led to among other negative repercussions a widening gap between the rich and poor. Besides, neo-liberalism supports the freedom of the market, which can neither be fair nor free, - as a market free of government monitoring is likely to be unfair. Thus, for the sake of fairness in education and other social services, state regulatory powers have to be retained.

Further, in the documents that were reviewed, neo-liberalism is presented as an imperative under globalisation if a country wants to improve economically. However, neo-liberalism is not necessarily the best system for today's world, as there can be other ways to economic prosperity. After all, economic growth (in unfair systems) is not synonymous with people's development. Moreover, what is currently being globalised is not the best of what society needs.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The study has shown that neo-liberalism entered Tanzania mostly as an idea embedded in the changes that were proposed to the country by outsiders, and that it has brought about undesirable outcomes in education and elsewhere. The study shows however that Tanzania could opt for an alternative ideology. Neo-liberalism is not the only ideological approach to achieving educational endeavours. The author therefore recommends that Tanzania (and other low-income countries) should make a well-thought choice of their ideological approach to education. Subject to further research, the neo-communitarian approach that combines the efforts of the state, the community and private institutions could be suitable for Tanzania.

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