

INTERVENTIONS IN BOOK

PROVISION: Suffocating Education And The Local Book Industry The Case Of Tanzania

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INTRODUCTION

- Book sector has not been developing steadily
- Rising, Falling, Rising and Falling
- Reasons
 - socio-political and economic factors
 - collapse of the economy
 - lack of a developed book infrastructure
 - low level of educational and linguistic attainment
 - government policy framework
- Government action through “negative” policy measures have been instrumental in retarding the growth of the book sector.
- This cyclical changes in government policy has continuously contributed to the stunting of the book trade in Tanzania.

Books And Education

- Books and education are inextricably linked
- Inputs necessary for quality education
 - Infrastructure, trained and motivated teachers, and teaching and learning materials
- books are the cheapest inputs that bring the biggest results in quality
- Challenges: who is supposed to provide books for education
- Private commercial publishers are best equipped and suited for the provision of quality books for education
- No evidence or history of best practise of book provision by government

The Book Chain in Tanzania

- *Authors and Authorship*
- *Interference in authorship*
- Best authors of textbooks are teachers.
- Not all good teachers are good authors!
- Without any tests whatsoever, a group of teachers is selected to write
- End product would be thrown out of the window without hesitation by any editor
- Interference is also financed by some development partners
- ‘Authors’ who cannot write even a paragraph to save their own lives are being ‘trained’ to write
- Lack of institutional memory among development partners
- Absence of an all encompassing book policy

The Book Chain in Tanzania

- *Publishers and Publishing*
- *Interference in Publishers and publishing*
- Fail to understand that publishing is a process
- Experience is irrelevant
- Textbooks will be authored and published by the institute of education
- Over 60% of the books have to be trashed
 - unfit for human consumption
- The remainder are barely usable

The Book Chain in Tanzania

- *Book Printers*
- *Interference in Book printers*
- Need to intervene in the tax regimes applicable to the printing industry
- Paper is considered as semi finished goods and attract sales and import duty
- Imported books on the other hand are free of duty
- More expensive to print locally
- Print products locally attract a VAT

The Book Chain in Tanzania

- *Book Distributors*
- *Interference in Book Distributors*
- No major book distributors in Tanzania
- Book business is not attractive due to its unreliability
- Bulk distribution thrives when the school textbook market is open
- Due to the TIE tenders of 2016, the army was drafted in to distribute the books.

The Book Chain in Tanzania

- *Booksellers*
- *Interference in Bookselling*
- Bookselling in Tanzania weak and fragmented
- Following the decentralisation of textbook procurement to the school level marked increase in enterprises dealing in books
- The number of bookshops up from about 50 in 1990 to about 380 in 2004 these have declined again in 2013 to around 50
- One bookshop per 1,000,000 people
- Majority found in major towns
- Street vendors
- Interventions in the book industry causes serious problems facing bookshops

The Book Chain in Tanzania

- *Libraries*
- *Interference in Libraries*
- No direct interference policies have affected libraries
- Library policies exist but there is no enforcement mechanisms to ensure that they are implemented
- Recent studies have shown that over 80% of the library users are children in the formal education sector
- Current textbook policies provide for textbooks for the exact number of pupils in school
- Thus even if a library wanted to buy school textbooks for libraries these would not be available.

Government Policies and Directives

- Language Policies
 - Colonial language policy Kiswahili and English
 - Medium of instruction in lower primary schools Kiswahili
 - English was a compulsory subject.
 - English was the medium from standard six
 - After independence Kiswahili medium of instruction in primary schools
 - Since the 1980s, there has been a decline in language levels among school leavers
 - Poor language skills have in turn had a negative effect on the development of authorship and editorial skills. There are few good writers, and even fewer good editors.

Government Policies and Directives

- Education Policies 1967-2014
 - Philosophy of Education for Self Reliance
 - The Education Acts of 1969 and 1978;
 - The National Examinations Act No. 21 of 1973;
 - The Universal Primary Education (UPE),
 - The Institute of Adult Education Act. No 12 of 1975 and
 - The Institute of Education Act No. 13 of 1975
 - *Changes and reforms*
 - *The Presidential Commission on Education (1981)*
 - *The National Task Force on Education (1990)*
 - *Education and Training Policy 1995*
 - *Education Sector Development Programme (2002)*
 - *Education and Training Policy 2014*

Government Policies and Directives

- Textbook Policies
 - Colonial Era
 - Immediate Post colonial era
 - 1974 policy
 - 1982 policy
 - 1991 policy
 - Education Circular No 4 of 2013

A Case for a National Book Policy

- UNESCO in the 1980's came up with national book policy.
- Challenges - who is to spearhead the councils: the private sector or the government as represented by the civil service?
- Lack of policy has contributed adversely to the development of the book sector in Africa
- Private commercial publishers believe that the role of the government is to create an enabling environment.
- Development partners by their nature always look for quick fix solutions.
- Recently (2011-2015) in Tanzania there was a book intervention project by the USAID in Mtwara Region and Zanzibar.
- One year after the end of the project, no new books have been published. No old titles have been reprinted and hence no replenishment of stocks.
- In 2017, Mtwara Primary schools were the lowest achievers
- The lack of institutional memory now under a new agreement where another US based NGO, is preparing to write, publish and distribute 826 titles of reading books (2016-2020).
- The value of the national book industry and the book chain in the provision of quality education has been underestimated

Conclusion

- In Tanzania, the Book Development Council (BAMVITA) managed to draft a national book policy.
- It is still gathering dust in the Ministry of Education Offices in Dar es Salaam.
- The Council has remained just in name.
- There is a serious need for book industry stakeholders to wake up and put their industry in order.

- Ahsante kwa kunisikiliza
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