

The Opportunities of a Futuristic Private Secondary School Management System in Tanzania

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the opportunities to fill the demands of the contemporary futuristic school in the context of a developing nation. Qualitative approaches were used to collect data that answered a primary research question; “What are the opportunities available for strengthening the management system of private secondary schools in Iringa Region, Tanzania?”. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from school managers, head teachers, teachers, and parents that were purposefully selected, while focus group discussions were administered to students in private secondary schools. The findings indicated that among the several opportunities available, strategic geographic location of a school, and creation of better learning space and time, are key to enrolling an adequate number of students, and enable the teachers and learners to do better in a teaching and learning process. School management systems performance depended on the user-fees; therefore, high enrolment rates were related to fiscal power for survival and sustainability of private schools. While the school community support offers school capacity to implement the education curriculum, differentiated supervision of teachers assures the expected school academic achievements. Nonetheless, good country policies favoring private players investing in secondary education services, and availability of higher learning institutions to absorb adequate number of secondary school graduates offer an advantage to investors in the private secondary school sector. The findings have also indicated that adequacy of the school supplies and capacity to remunerate teachers depends on the number of students enrolled in a school year. Some recommendations are suggested for practices and further research.

Keywords: Futuristic private secondary school, opportunities, Policies for investment in education, school community support, higher education institutions, differentiated supervision.

INTRODUCTION

A revolutionary contemporary school swims in the age of advancement of science and technology imposing staffs on innovative improvisations in teaching and learning, administration of education, and management of schools. Scientific and technological inventions in education become the heart of the techniques in paradigm shifts and experiences for teachers and learners. The use of artificial intelligence (AI) in the fourth industrial revolution (4th IR) for instance is the major characteristic of the gears for transforming methodologies from ordinary to state-of-the-art hi-tech applications in teaching and learning processes on one and. On the other hand, administration and management of schools are similarly geared to unique operational mechanisms assuring effectiveness and efficiency in running the schools. One envisioning such school settings, appraises the applications of the specific software in school operations for instance, among others conference platforms such as Zoom, Google meets, and WeChat, and real-time virtual session through soft class labs such as Moodle, MLS, etc. for teaching and learning spaces, which is a stage next to the traditional ICT equipment use in physical classrooms (Bihi, 2022). In the same vein, innovations in management that upgrade the managerial practices to rely on the Management Information System (MIS) software for instance simplifies the management tasks to draw more effectiveness and efficiency.

Such applications signal that the revolution in management and teaching paradigms is inevitable in the pursuit to match with global education standards. Planners in private education institutions are obliged to revolutionize their thinking to match with new forms of operations, i.e., a shift from the traditional physical to virtual and hybrid class arrangements. The futuristic school settings allow the school managements to run the education programmes in physical separation-cum-online connections.

Innovations in the proper management system of private schools guarantee success. The system entails all types of school mechanisms used in implementing effective and efficient teaching and learning activities. It encompasses the whole effort the school management takes to integrate all necessary inputs (i.e., human and material resources) and process them into high-quality education service provision for the school as an output (Alsammarry et al., 2016).

The need for high-quality education is grounded in the understanding that education is key to human social and economic development. In response to this need, various international and national agendas have been formulated to strengthen education quality. First, the Jomtien Declaration on Education for All (1990) affirmed that everyone has the right to education, implying that every government must ensure access to education for all eligible learners (UNESCO, 1994). However, the adoption of this declaration by national governments has not fully addressed the issues of exclusion and marginalization, particularly among learners from underprivileged families. Children from poor households still lack access to quality education. In particular, low-income countries (LICs) have often failed to meet the targets set forth by such global declarations.

Evidence shows that a majority of children in these countries are unable to access quality schooling, and many communities experience high rates of adult illiteracy. This is characterized by limited access to printed knowledge, new skills, and technologies necessary to improve living standards (Zua, 2021; Mmasa & Anney, 2016; UNESCO, 1994). A key implication of these facts lies in the inadequacy of local policy responses—though they align with the declarations' objectives, they often fall short in implementation due to limited capacity (Zua, 2021; Mmasa & Anney, 2016).

Second, the Dakar Framework for Action (2000) was introduced to renew governments' commitments to achieving education for all through clearly defined goals and strategies (World Education Forum, 2000).

Despite these challenges, the education sectors in LICs still have opportunities to enhance their financial capacity through partnerships with other stakeholders, the adoption of innovative pedagogical models and curricula, and the strengthening of institutional mechanisms to meet growing demands. The private sector plays a critical role in delivering education services, especially where public institutions lack sufficient capacity to provide high-quality education to all learners. In fact, many governments with limited financial resources have increasingly involved the private sector in delivering educational services to communities. This trend stems from the persistent inability of public institutions to accommodate all eligible students—particularly at the secondary education level. For decades, access to education has remained a significant challenge in most LICs, with public systems often constrained in their ability to serve every learner.

Recent education trends show that many high-income countries (HICs) and low-income countries (LICs) are increasingly seeking private-public partnerships (PPPs) to share education costs and improve their capacity to provide quality services to all learners (Kivenule, 2015). In European countries, for instance, private entities such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and philanthropic enterprises participate in both funding and managing schools (OECD, 2012). While some countries have formalized various forms of PPPs, others have encouraged private sector involvement in education service provision by individuals and organizations acting independently.

Part of the rationale for broadening the responsibility of education beyond governments is to provide greater choice for parents and students, and to stimulate creativity and innovation within schools. This has served as a remedy to curb student exclusion, particularly in contexts where governments and public institutions are unable to ensure access to secondary education for all eligible students. Nevertheless, education and school management systems in LICs generally operate under significant fiscal and managerial limitations (Kivenule, 2015).

Despite these efforts, financially privileged families in OECD countries tend to send their children to privately managed schools more often than low-income families (OECD, 2012). One of the key reasons for this is the widespread belief that private schools offer better education, a more conducive learning environment, additional resources, and superior policies and practices compared to public schools. Such parents are often better informed or more aware of quality differences among schools.

A similar trend has been observed in Tanzania over the past two decades. Many parents prefer enrolling their children in expensive private schools, opting out of government-run fee-free schools. Several explanations for

this behavior align with findings from European countries. For example, the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results indicate that, in most countries, privately managed schools tend to have greater autonomy, better resources, and higher performance on the PISA reading scale than publicly managed schools (OECD, 2012). Well-managed private schools also have effective systems for tracking and reporting students' academic performance.

Moreover, many private secondary schools have significantly improved their facilities and are widely perceived to outperform public schools in terms of academic results, according to global trends (CEP, 2007; Chimombo, 2009; Chudgar & Quin, 2012; Day-Ashley, 2009). As a result, demand for private education has surged, with many schools charging high fees—yet financially capable parents continue to choose them, even in the presence of free public education (Mays, 2013). The increase in demand and enrollment in these private schools, particularly in Tanzania, has created pressure on available resources, contributing to variation in academic performance among private schools in national examinations.

Problem statement

Despite the significant contribution of private secondary schools to education service provision, little effort has been made to improve management systems within these schools (Alsammarray et al., 2016). The central question that emerges is how innovations in school management systems can create opportunities for investors in the education sector. Many private school establishments do not adequately strategize or adopt innovations that could enhance their management systems and address persistent challenges.

Moreover, there is a notable gap in existing research concerning how available opportunities can be leveraged to develop private secondary schools, particularly within the Tanzanian context. As such, this study focuses on an extensive examination of the management systems of private ordinary-level secondary schools, as well as the opportunities available to them in the provision of education services in Tanzania.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study is to examine the opportunities for innovations to strengthen the private secondary schools' management systems in Tanzania.

Research questions

The study is guided by the following research question: What are the opportunities available for strengthening the management system of private secondary schools in Iringa Region, Tanzania?

BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents the integrated theoretical approach to the study of the private school management systems, and empirical review on the opportunities for strengthening by innovating the private secondary schools' management systems.

Integrated theoretical approach

The integrated theoretical approach employed in this study combines the Classical Organizational Management Theory (COMT), the New Public Management (NPM) model, and the Cybernetic School Model (CSM) to frame and interpret the findings under the guiding research question. This integration aims to explain opportunities for innovation in private school management systems.

The COMT, developed in the first half of the 20th century by Max Weber, focuses on formal organizational structures and principles designed to improve managerial efficiency (Schroeder, 1998). It encompasses key components from scientific management, bureaucratic management, and administrative theory. The model is built upon six core elements: division of labour, departmentalization, coordination, scalar chain and functional processes, organizational structure, and span of control. In this framework, private schools are structured hierarchically, with work responsibilities clearly divided based on functional areas, and well-defined reporting

paths across all units. Employees are expected to report to their respective managers for both task execution and disciplinary matters.

The theory positions the school manager as having full control over subordinates and advocates for the use of enabling technologies to increase operational efficiency. It highlights the importance of structured information and coordination mechanisms within an organization, typically achieved through hierarchies to ensure performance.

COMT is particularly relevant to the study of private school management systems. Most private schools operate in a structured manner where tasks are systematically allocated and closely monitored to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of curriculum implementation. In the context of resource mobilization and deployment, integrating COMT with NPM and CSM promotes more democratic participation in supervision and decision-making processes that directly affect student outcomes.

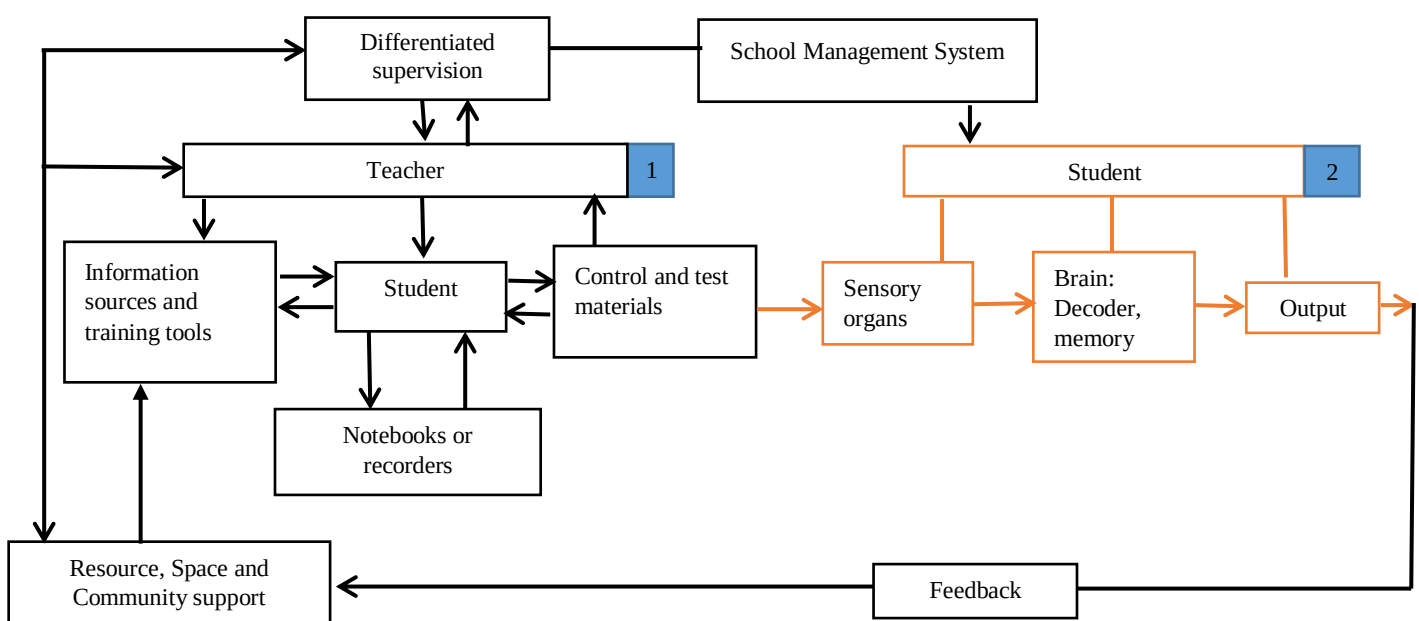
For instance, differentiated teacher supervision—rooted in these theoretical integrations—offers varied supervisory strategies tailored to individual teacher preferences, which may positively influence performance. The CSM contributes by establishing structured management information flow channels, optimizing resource usage, and leveraging community support for teachers and students. Meanwhile, the NPM model introduces principles such as increased autonomy in decision-making, market-oriented school management, outcome-based accountability, customer satisfaction, and cost-effectiveness, which are particularly beneficial in today's educational environment.

This theoretical integration is especially important in the era of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR), which includes the use of assistive artificial intelligence (AI) technologies. It enables the alignment of teacher- and student-based processes, producing favorable outputs and feedback loops that help gauge customer (i.e., student and community) satisfaction or indicate the need for external support.

The primary focus of management within this integrated model is to harmonize teaching, control, and assessment materials to enhance internal efficiency in knowledge management. These interrelationships allow school management systems to monitor the intake, processing, and output of learning information effectively—ultimately ensuring high-quality educational outcomes.

Figure 1 illustrates these interrelated components and their roles within the private secondary school management framework.

Figure 1: Applying the integrated NPM and CSM amidst COMT in private secondary schools



Source: Improved from Mayer (2021)

Therefore, the theoretical integration guided this study based on its core tenets, which emphasize the most critical factors necessary for any innovative school to succeed in its teaching and learning operations. Specifically, it provided a framework for understanding how innovative opportunities within private school management systems can influence students' academic performance, particularly in helping students excel in national examinations.

According to Mosha (2006), high academic performance in schools is essential and largely depends on effective school leadership, the availability of adequate teaching and learning materials, strong school discipline, and participatory leadership systems. These factors are crucial in supporting a high-performing school environment. The effectiveness of these elements can be further enhanced through close supervision and quality monitoring, which involve engaging stakeholders in strategic planning.

Such engagement is especially important in the mobilization and deployment of resources—an area that significantly influences the ability of private secondary schools to achieve strong academic outcomes. Therefore, stakeholder participation in decision-making processes becomes a key factor in driving innovation and ensuring academic excellence in private secondary schools.

Opportunities towards strengthening the management of private schools

The Private secondary schools offer valuable opportunities for both investors in education service provision and citizens as beneficiaries of these services. These opportunities are largely influenced by the education policy of a country, the availability of a conducive environment for schooling, and the presence of agencies or organizations that sponsor or support educational initiatives.

For example, in England, the wide diversity of private schools is supported by various associations and membership-based groups (Walford, 2009). Walford notes that a significant number of private schools receive backing from the Conservative Party when it is in power. Additionally, there are well-established mechanisms for providing sponsorship opportunities to talented students, enabling them to attend high-quality private schools regardless of their socioeconomic background (Walford, 2009).

In contrast, the situation in Tanzania reflects a different reality. While the ruling party has, in some jurisdictions, established private schools under parental councils, these institutions often face substantial constraints. The most notable limitation is the lack of sponsorship opportunities that could enable access for students from underprivileged backgrounds. This challenge is a common characteristic of private school operations in many low-income countries, where external support and equitable access mechanisms are often insufficient or absent.

Nonetheless, in most high-income countries, including the United States, many private schools—especially those affiliated with religious organizations—receive government financial support to help sustain their operations (Riley et al., 1997; Nasaw, 1989). These subsidies are disbursed from government funds based on the rationale that investment in private education contributes to national development through enhanced service delivery in terms of both capacity and quality.

This approach has facilitated the rise of charter schools in the U.S., representing one of the most recent forms of educational privatization (Nasaw, 1989). Charter schools are privately managed public schools, and they exemplify the state's outsourcing of instructional services to non-governmental entities. The concept of charter schools is grounded in two central principles: autonomy and accountability.

School management teams in charter schools enjoy a high degree of autonomy in decision-making, leadership, and day-to-day operations. At the same time, they are expected to uphold a strong sense of managerial, regulatory, and performance accountability (Berryphill et al., 2009; Cochran-Smith et al., 2017). These schools and their staff remain accountable not only to the state and supporting agencies but also to parents and students, who maintain democratic influence over the evaluation of school performance and service delivery.

In Sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries, the efficiency of school management systems is often unpredictable due to limited resource inputs to schools. A study in Nigeria, for instance, reveals that access to funding for private school owners is limited. Most private schools are small in size, lack essential teaching equipment and

facilities, and operate from makeshift houses or rented accommodations (Agi, 2013). The cost of such accommodation hampers their ability to acquire purpose-built educational infrastructure, modern equipment, qualified teachers, and other resources necessary to meet the operational standards set by the state (Odeleye & Oyelamin, 2012).

Despite these challenges, some private schools that exercise a high degree of autonomy have emerged as high-performing and attractive institutions. In Kenya, for example, studies have shown that poor parents often bypass fee-free public primary schools and instead send their children to fee-paying, low-cost private schools, perceiving them to offer better quality education (Oketch & Somerset, 2010). These parents, though economically disadvantaged, often make deliberate efforts to create favorable home learning environments for their children (Wamalwa & Burns, 2017). The perceived high quality of private schools—characterized by effective teaching, better teacher attendance, strong school performance, smaller class sizes, and good discipline—drives many parents' decisions to enroll their children in such schools (Oketch & Somerset, 2010).

In Tanzania, the rapid growth of private secondary schools over the past two to three decades offers important lessons on the influence of government policies on private education (Kivenule, 2015; Lassibille et al., 1999). The excess demand for education services since the 1980s has been a major driver of policy changes that have encouraged investment in private schools. In response, the government has removed policy barriers to private education investment. This has contributed to a significant increase in the gross enrolment ratio and a widening of access to secondary education within a relatively short period (Kennedy, 2014; Kivenule, 2015).

However, several studies indicate that despite growing demand and opportunity, private schools face notable challenges. For example, Godbless' (2014) survey of 161 respondents in Arusha City Council found that high-quality education in private schools is often attributed to the availability of teaching and learning resources, such as textbooks, qualified teachers, classrooms, desks, and laboratories. A traditional strength of private school management is their capacity to manage and sustainably utilize material and physical resources, which reflects not only accountability but also the rationales of private ownership.

Nonetheless, some private secondary schools fail to deliver quality education, experiencing low enrolment ratios, frequent teacher turnover, and poor achievement of institutional goals, leading in some cases to school closure. These failures are attributed to insufficient funding, poor administration, weak human resource management, unfavorable government policies, stiff competition from other private schools, and the employment of unqualified teachers.

In response, many private schools attempt to overcome these issues by raising school fees. However, this approach often results in the exclusion of academically gifted students from economically underprivileged families, undermining equity and access in the education system.

On a related note, an analysis by Sabarwal et al. (2020) on the potential role of low-cost private secondary schools in Tanzania reveals that the share of private school enrollment has been negatively correlated with the availability of public schools. Following the introduction of the 2016 Fee-Free Basic Education financing framework, the public secondary education system in Tanzania has faced significant demand pressures—pressures that the government, with its limited resources, has struggled to manage.

Using micro-level data from the Morogoro region, the study finds that private schools possess excess capacity, which could allow them to absorb additional students at relatively low cost through potential public-private partnerships (PPPs). Importantly, the study reports no evidence that service delivery or student performance in private schools is inferior to that of public schools. These findings offer empirical evidence supporting the feasibility of PPPs as a strategy to expand access to secondary education across Tanzania.

Without such partnerships, Tanzania risks facing significant supply shortfalls in basic education provision. Moreover, detailed micro-data reveal that private schools in the country have the capacity, quality of service delivery, parental demand, and willingness to collaborate with the government in delivering basic education services. This suggests several entry points for exploring welfare-enhancing public-private partnerships in Tanzania's secondary education sector.

However, a major limitation remains: private schools do not enroll enough students, primarily because most parents cannot afford private school fees, as the majority of students come from low-income families. This affordability challenge poses a significant barrier to fully realizing the potential of PPPs in expanding access to quality education for all.

STUDY METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach and a case study design on private secondary schools in Iringa Region (Tanzania), in 2022. The target population was school managers (SMs), school board members (SBMs), heads of schools (HoSs), secondary school teachers (SSTs), and students. Four private secondary schools were purposively selected, focusing on three groups (strata) of schools, i.e. the private co-education schools; the private single-sex schools (those for only boys or girls); and seminaries. From each stratum, one school was picked randomly to represent other schools.

The study respondents were 4 school managers, 8 school board members (i.e. two school board members from each school), 4 heads of school who were purposely involved in the study. The study also involved 8 secondary school teachers (i.e., 02 teachers from each school) who were selected as an academic master/mistress or discipline master. It also involved forty students by selecting 06 students from each school. In single-sex schools, random sampling was applied to obtain 06 students from higher classes of form three or four. Eventually, 48 participants were involved in the study as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The Sample Composition of the Study

Respondents	Schools								Total
	Seminary		CoSS		SSGS		SSBS		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
SMs	01	00	01	00	01	00	01	00	04
SBMs	02	00	01	01	01	01	01	01	08
HoSs	01	00	01	00	00	01	01	00	04
SSTs	02	00	01	01	01	01	01	01	08
Students	00	06	03	03	06	00	00	06	24
Total	06	06	07	05	09	03	04	08	48

Source: Field Data (2022)

Note: CoSS stands for Co-education Secondary School; HoS refers to Heads of School; SMs means School Managers; SSGS denotes Single-sex Girls Secondary School; SSBS indicates Single-sex Boys Secondary School; SSTs are Secondary School Teachers; and SBMs represent School Board Members.

Semi-structured interviews were used to collect data from SMs, SBMs, HoSs, and selected SSTs. Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted with selected Form III and Form IV students. Moreover, documentary reviews were conducted using documents related to private school management systems, financial management and transactions, control and auditing procedures, teachers' recruitment, students' enrolment procedures, and teachers' retention strategies. Data obtained through interviews, FGDs, and documentary reviews were analyzed through the thematic (content) analysis technique. Similar responses addressing a particular issue were grouped into one theme and subdivided into different smaller themes, which were presented in the form of quotations to illustrate the challenges, as appraised by Bihu (2024).

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

This section presents the findings on the opportunities towards Strengthening the Management Systems of Private Secondary Schools. Opportunities identified are related with several issues, among others assurance of higher students' achievements in learning outcomes, deployment of the decentralized and self-autonomous practices of management models, better teaching options and flexible routines, geographically reaching the economically disadvantaged students, and securing financial sustainability. Such opportunities are similar to

issues raised by University of Birmingham (2014) in the UK. Effective and efficient utilization of the opportunities around the schools is key for management achievement. On the one hand, the environment which surrounds the school can provide opportunities for school development. This possibility implies that the school management, which is focused on achieving the goals, should be able to identify or discover the appropriate opportunities around their school and how such opportunities can be used for the school's welfare. In this aspect, the study focused on examining whether the environment surrounding private secondary schools has an impact on enhancing the development of strong School Management Systems (SMS). To solicit information about this issue, interviews were conducted with private SMs, SBMs, HoSs, SSTs, and through FGDs with the students. The findings on the opportunities are presented in detail and analyzed in Subsection 4.1 through Subsection 4.5.

Creation of Better Learning Space and Time

One of the major limiting factors for school establishment is the availability of land for the school campus. The findings show that there are opportunities related to the availability of large land areas, which can be utilized to develop and strengthen schools. One of the most exciting opportunities in this regard is the possibility of buying and owning land for school establishment at a low cost. In the study locale, for instance, it costs up to 100 TZS per square meter to purchase land in easily accessible locations. This contrasts with prices ranging from 500 to 1000 TZS per square meter for land in other urban and peri-urban areas in Tanzania, where land is usually offered in smaller sizes. The possibility of owning a large area at the lowest possible cost is the most valued opportunity for school development in the study area. This opportunity is also linked to the favourable weather conditions in the region. In fact, one of the school managers narrated that:

“The most important opportunities which exist in Iringa Region are the availability of land and favourable weather conditions; these make the establishment of schools easier. It is possible to get large land at a cheap price because the region has plenty of open spaces, and the weather conditions support the growth of different food crops, including cereal crops and legumes. Weather conditions also provide favourable conditions for students to study comfortably.”
(Interview, School 1)

And, the majority of the students, 11 (i.e., 45.8%), who participated in the FGDs appreciated that the good climatic conditions make the environment very conducive for students to study well without experiencing any difficulties (*cf.* Attachment).

The availability of land (*i.e.* large area size) however, associated with the favourable weather conditions, presents a variety of options for establishing income generation projects for the schools. While certain projects have been used to raise finances for school expenses, the projects presents avenues for related subject contents which students learn, *e.g.*, agriculture, poultry, and animal husbandry. It provides avenues for teaching and learning by doing in that regard.

In addition, School Board Members were also interviewed about the opportunities available that can enhance the establishment of their schools. The findings also revealed that appraisal of the good land and weather was first determined by the colonialist and missionaries about a century ago. They settled in the peaks of the highlands where they utilized arable land for agriculture and establishing schools. The same weather presents an array of opportunities for agricultural projects including sunflower growing and refinery plants, cones and cassava for both consumption and commercial purpose. In fact, one of the participants presented on the issues of weather and land availability that:

This was also realized since colonial times, as colonialists and missionaries established a lot of schools in Iringa Region between 1920 and 1950. Some schools that still exist today include Tosamaganga High School, Lugalo and Malangali Secondary Schools, and Gangilonga Primary School (Interview, SBM from School 4)

Another fact is that schools with large areas of land have been using the land to cultivate the crops which they use to feed the students. They also buy food from neighboring vendors with plentiful of reserves in their stocks. This has positive concerns of economies of scales in meeting the demands of school requirements. Food supplies

to schools can be made at lowest possible costs. This opportunity simplifies the works of management as one of the most overarching issues in private schools includes sustainably maintaining high quality food menu for the students. As the climatic conditions support the growth of various food crops, food supplies for feeding the students can be obtained at very cheap prices.

Additively, the findings revealed that at the tip of the management operations is the amplification of the managerial functions through differentiated supervision of the schools by the HoSs. Differentiated supervision offers several leadership options for individual teachers to follow in achieving the desired performance results. These options include clinical, cooperative professional development, self-directed professional development, and administrative monitoring. Such options provide the teachers and schools flexibility in supervision to adapt the pre-existing teaching and learning environments.

Geographical Location of Schools as a Strategic Advantage

Iringa Region is located at the geographical coordinates at the relative centre of the Country. By implication, it is easy for schools established to serve students from different neighboring regions. It can be easily reached by highest catchment area than would be for schools in other regions. On this matter, one of the interviewees explained that:

Iringa Region has the opportunity to get enough people for manpower since the people are honest and hardworking. The region is located in a geographical position forming a strategic gateway for different regions, as it stands at the middle of the country where all highways cross. Therefore, once you establish a school, it is easy to get students from all corners of the country, such as Dodoma, Arusha, Morogoro, Dar es Salaam, Njombe, Ruvuma, Mbeya, and so forth (Interview, SM from School3)

The location of the region received much concern on the easiness of eligible students to attend schooling from far regions. In fact, 2 of the students (8.3%) who participated in the FGDs explained that the presence of roads, such as the highway from Dar es Salaam (DSM) to Lusaka, Zambia is a very important opportunity for easy transport and many students can travel and join the school (*cf.* Attachment). This is a reality enabling the region to increase its students' enrolment catchment area.

Good Country Policies Enabling Private Investment in Education

The government of Tanzania has established policies that favours investment in education by individual persons, organizations, and external investors. Some internationally high profiling schools including the International School of Tanganyika for instance are operating in Tanzania. These good policies are exercised with proper laws and regulations on the establishment of schools, and education conduct in schools. The Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 2014 identified the crucial role of the private schools and other education stakeholders and steering the development of education service provision in the country. Nonetheless, the Education Act No. 25 of 1978 guides the central and local administration of national schools, proper establishment and registration of schools, management and control of schools, provisions on teachers, and appeals boards. In certain instances, the government provides support to the private secondary schools' managements let alone the fact that it invests a lot in doing summative evaluation of education programme implementations for the schools. Such good legal provisions have overtime attracted investment in education by private players in liberal economic environment. This has in particular served big proportion of the students which the public schools have not been able to afford for the past three to four decades. Expansion of the public schools in Tanzania has been witnessed in the post-2000s with many secondary school termed as the Ward Community Schools. On this issue, one head of school commented:

Clear policies of our country are an opportunity since they allow people and private organizations to establish schools. Sometimes, the government, through the Ministry of Education, provides support to private schools to encourage them to grow (Interview, School5)

School Community Support

The success of the school systems' managements in terms of resources supply and availability may also depend on the community external to the school in terms of good relations with supporters or/and well-wishers and donors. In certain circumstances, schools derive support from the community around it, for instance, in obtaining non-ransomed support of security on its physical and infrastructural materials. One finds imperative for school managers to situate a school in good and proper terms with the surrounding communities. As a property established for the betterment of the community, schools in locale receive support from all social groups in terms of material donation to school programmes including sports and games, locomotives, and healthy labs. Certain social groups may also appear to offer specific consultations and labour to the schools for enhancing school performances. This situation is seen as the outcome of good relations with surrounding communities which create in them a sense of humanity and ownership requiring them to offer support to the schools. In fact, one of the participants argued on this case that:

The community which surrounds my school is an opportunity for my school to develop because I normally get support from them when I need it. In many cases, I use community members as security guards and for various activities that require labor. The relationships established between them and our school make them feel that the school is their own (Interview, HoS from School 6)

And, 4 (16.7%) of the students who participated in the FGDs added that The good community which surrounds the school has been a very important opportunity for school development.

Good relations with the surrounding communities offers an opportunity of surviving on opportunity costs which the school managements' do not pay for, as they do not outsource them professionally. This kind of relations is built on the traditionally accepted conditionality of the socialism and humanity among the countryside citizens. The citizenry and its philosophy is of the concern that socialism elevates a concern of common ownerships of the entities and plants offering services for the common public good. One findings the outcome of the good relations flourishing the schools most notably in underserved community areas where the government education services are not adequately met by the people. Even though some of the private schools tend to wage up the school fees higher than what normal citizens could afford, the communities around the schools play a giant role in the schools' survival. For instance, the school management board which a key advisory body for the school management to run and improve its operations comes from the neighboring community in lieu of the country law governing the management of schools. School board members make valuable advisory inputs in all areas of school management function to improve its practices. The board makes a significant professional representation of the community in the school sits for advice on critical school decision-making and development issues. This fact has gained a wide support from an extended data pattern. For instance, in soliciting more information, the teachers who were mainly in the school management team (SMT) responded about the available opportunities which can enhance private secondary schools to develop and perform well academically. One of the teachers explained that:

Our community which surrounds the school sometimes has been a very good opportunity for the development of our schools since they normally report students who try to escape from the school. But in some cases, they have been a very big threat to our schools since they collude with the students to steal school properties. Therefore, we need to be very careful as we should not trust the community one hundred percent (Interview, SST from School 8)

The excerpt is of the concern that despite the good contributions the school has seen from the community people, some of the people could not be trusted to the whole percent. One should take a note that school members find it difficult to stay in agreement with the community members throughout their career lifecycles as teachers, and other members of the organization. One line of thinking is that individual school workers may work in conflicting situations with school neighbouring communities. This has been the common issue for most of schools as it may be for many secular organisations and industrial firms or/and plants. Another line of thinking is that, it may happen that there is a conflict of interests beyond individual workers to the level of organisation's ownership of assets such as land that may subject the schools' that may subject the schools' individual workers to conflicts and mistrust with the community people. The convergence between the two lines of thinking is based not on the

quality or gravity of the conflict but on the reality that conflicts are to be meaningfully managed and resolved for organisation's betterment. Conflicts provide an opportunity for school management to understand the nature and type of community people which it relates with and bases its operations on. Effective conflict mediation practices offer a way of building and maintaining trust among the conflicting parties so that the future of school operations is secured.

Higher Education Institutions for Students Tracking-Up

The education system of Tanzania presents a unique model of schooling in which capable students from schools aim at completing a university education. Though they may pass through different routes including the tertiary education institutions such as the Teachers' Training Colleges (TTCs), the ultimate goal for majority of the students is to achieve a university education programme. The study locale presents an opportunity of several universities and TTCs available to accommodate them. Availability of the higher learning institutions adds value to the internal efficiency of the education system in producing professionals for diverse discipline. For the private schools in the locale, it motivates and encourages increase in enrolment of students starting their career journey. Many parents opt to incur high costly education services in the private schools for the purpose of securing the future of the children's academic progress and achievements for their prospective careers. In fact, 7 of the students (29.2%) who participated in the FGDs argued that the presence of higher education institutions, like universities and some colleges, in one way or another acts as a catalyst for enrolment into private secondary schools and motivates students to study hard (*cf.* Attachment).

The implicit of the event of increased enrolment and motivated learning is the aftermaths of the benefits for students and schools in reciprocity. Increased enrolment on the one hand, offers the private schools' fiscal capacity to run its operations on the basis of increased volume the user-fees. On the other hand, it opens the gateway for the majority of the students and parents to find education opportunities that can be easily monitored by the parents to effect the goals of education of the students. This kind of opportunity creates the survival channels for the schools while ensuring the future of the education of children (and the future of their careers) in the study locale.

DISCUSSION

This section discusses the findings on the opportunities for enhancing private school management systems. The findings have revealed some opportunities which exist around the private secondary schools, which may be useful in enhancing the SMS. These findings are discussed in Subsection 5.1 through Subsection 5.5.

Creation of Better Learning Spaces and Time

The findings have indicated that one of the opportunities for development of the private education service provision in the study locale is the availability of land at the minimum possible cost. The nexus to the enhancement of school development in terms of acquiring large area size for school campus is the possibility of providing the arable land for establishing the school development income generation projects. As presented earlier, one of the most challenging issues which privately owned schools in the study locale are in pursuit of resolving is the development and maintenance of financial capacity for sustainably stable school finances. Low financial capacities in schools are evident through indicators such as failure to remunerate and maintain stable staff, and operating with inadequate resources in both quality and quantity. While the availability of plenty of land provides opportunities to establish large campuses, good weather conditions offer opportunities for establishing agricultural products, including various cereal and legume crops, for income generation, in addition to providing a conducive environment for studying. These income-generating activities are crucial as they provide additional revenue for schools, subsidizing the income from user fees paid by students. This also results in the region having plenty of food, thereby keeping the costs for feeding students low. This aspect is very important as it makes the costs of running schools much lower compared to other regions.

The findings have connected good campuses and a conducive working environment, supplied with proper teaching and learning technologies, to providing options for the SMs and HoSs to grant autonomy and authority to teachers through differentiated supervision approaches. Such findings concur with analyses by Kalule and Bouchamma (2013) and Glatthorn (1984) from similar studies. It is astonishing, however, that issues of

availability of land and good climatic conditions are not reported in various studies as important factors in enhancing school management systems in the study locale, let alone the presentation by Mayer (2021) on the contribution of time and place to students' performance.

The integrated theoretical model in the current study raises concern that community support may be associated with resources necessary to implement differentiated supervision approaches, information sources, and training tools. In fact, the availability of fertile land with good climatic conditions in low-income communities has been found to contribute significantly to the development of private secondary schools. Anecdotal evidence in this case has linked the land produce to contributions towards the school and teachers' financial capacities. It is also equally important for the development and wellbeing of students through subsidizing schools' nutritional needs, thereby having direct effects on students' academic performance.

Therefore, private secondary schools flourish on plenty of fertile land with good weather conditions. It is easy to acquire land for building schools and cheaper to run schools since such areas have plenty of cereal crops, which are obtained quite easily at very low prices. Some schools may even practice farming to obtain food for their students. Thus, for the establishment, development, and management of private schools in Iringa Region, it is easier and cheaper for the aforementioned reasons. This is an obvious opportunity which school owners can utilize to develop and improve their schools in all spheres.

Geographical Location of Region as a Strategic Advantage

Data have indicated that the geographic location of schools in the region, and the region itself, offers a strategic advantage for student choice from both within and outside the region. This characteristic opportunity provides an array of advantages that favor the easy development of private secondary schools and the academic wellbeing of students. In fact, data have shown that Iringa Region lies at the central part of the country, where all the main highways pass by, making the region accessible from every corner of the country. The availability of access roads, including the highways from Dar es Salaam to Lusaka (Zambia), enables candidates to join schools from an extended catchment area. This is paramount in the business models that private schools exhibit.

Accordingly, private schools grow as they enroll students from a pool of economically well-off families, particularly those from commercial and capital cities, and from business-oriented towns and townships. This is strategically feasible as school expenses including the costs of paying teachers are raised on school fees from students and their parents. This means a good pool of households offer assurances that schools can admit students who can pay high costs of education sustainably to enable the schools to operate effectively and efficiently. Nonetheless, schools which lack the best pool of customers fail on revenues. The findings have indicated that some schools in the study locale fail and close on this reason. Such findings concur with the finding from similar research implemented by Shyllon and Joshi (2015) indicating that disproportionately 53 percent of total private school spending in Tanzania is pegged on students from well-off families which is competitively distributed on well-established schools with high financial bases. In this case, schools owned by individuals are often confronted by financial threats to stop and often closeup, compared to schools owned by faith-based organization which can offer alternative sources of fundraising.

Favourable Country Policies Favouring Private Investment in Education Service

For organizations to achieve their missions and reach their visions, their operational goals should align with the country's policies. Operations in private secondary schools are not exclusive. Data have shown that participants perceive that good country policies favor individuals and organizations to establish and own schools, and that their schools operate within clear education policies. Tanzania has prioritized investment in education for the purpose of increasing enrollment and ensuring equity in access to education services by all eligible individuals. This has been so because Tanzania believes that government-owned schools alone cannot provide all education services to the entire community. Tanzania is large and has a big population; therefore, it requires additional support from private institutions to provide education services. Due to this, Tanzania's education policy encourages private education institutions to open and run their schools in order to educate society (Kivenule, 2015).

The capital to establish a school campus is the least among the East Africa Community nations. This is practically important in areas where the government has traditionally been failing to afford the requirements for education

services for all learners. Private players' role is to offer education services similar to the standards offered in private schools. The government provides provisions on quality control and assurance, and let the private schools provide the services.

While processes in private schools are uniquely managed by private players, their performances are determined by the government bodies in summative evaluation. The processes involved are transparent and satisfied the standards of objective evaluation of public and private schools in an inclusive manner. Normally, private schools become competitive when their systems of operations satisfy the government set standards of operations. Anecdotal evidence has indicated that the provisions offered by the government and establish and running the schools including offering the teachers benefits are favourable and accepted by the private schools' managements. They are derivatives of the national education and training policies and law acts. In Tanzania, students who get education in private schools pass through a curriculum prescribed for both public and private schools, with teachers graduating from the same training institutions. Schools are similarly evaluated by the same quality assurance and control body to ensure the schools run in required capacity and quality.

As the private players make some investments in physical resources and infrastructures, their service provision undergo a liberal business model in which they wage all the costs of education plus expected profit on the education service end-users- the students. However, the government encourages such interventions especially in areas which are underserved. It is also noted however, that, the government do not find a full control over what the private schools charge as school fees. With highly raised costs in such schools, children from financially privileged families enjoy the best education services in well set schools. This implies the variations in school fees amount among the privately owned schools on the basis of investment in terms of both human and non-human capital. Some private schools underachieve in this regard. The government has responded by prioritizing in relieving their burden by offering land lease to some school owners and providing some tax exemptions on their operations. Liberalization of the education services, therefore, has provided a wider avenue for the private players to invest in education services provision according to their capacities and competences. The survival of a private school is fostered by friendly policy and legal environment.

School Community Support

Communities surrounding the schools have significant contributions to school achievements. The community provides support in various forms to the school. In this study, it has been revealed that communities around the schools provide an advantage of adequate, cheap labourers who are hardworking and honest. Once a school is established, it is easy to get support from cheap labourers for various school activities, and therefore contribute to easier running of the school. Private schools also get support on security issues through collaborative ownership of some school operations with the community and education stakeholders. The physical resources and infrastructures are embedded in the community system of ownership. As parents' children get education in those schools, the community feels a sense of ownership of the schools. This tradition in Tanzanian societies is a fading argument as the sense of socialism is losing its place in the face of liberalization of education services amidst the dominant capitalist forces due to globalization.

Notwithstanding, community support is inadequately offered due to the shortage of financial capacity among community members. Most of the schools are located in low-income communities which do not provide adequate financial support. Some schools have collapsed due to a lack of financial support amid poor surrounding communities. Based on the aforesaid findings on financial constraints, the researcher views that establishment of private secondary schools in Tanzania is still a challenge due to the majority of the community being poor. They cannot afford sending their children to private schools which demand very high school fees. As a result, the majority of private schools do not enroll enough students who can pay school fees to enable the school to meet all the necessary requirements for running the school. This implies that private secondary schools need support from the government or other non-government institutions through provision of various education resources, such as books, science and ICT facilities. They can even establish systems of providing simple loans to private secondary schools and lowering taxes for them.

On the other hand, anecdotal evidence has shown that awareness of community members and their acquisition of transparent access to school accountability frameworks, as would be expected from the New Public Management (NPM) framework, was parochial and insignificant. Schools were not accountable to the

community in the context of transparency in education management, particularly regarding the use of fiscal resources. This led to weaknesses in organizational structures and weak financial procedures, supporting Maulid's (2017) findings on similar issues in Tanzania.

Higher Education Institutions for Students' Track-Up

The education system in Tanzania includes 2+10+2+3+ Years of education for preschool, basic education, secondary education, and tertiary or university education. The 10 cluster constitutes learners who previously were identified as primary school pupils, and ordinary secondary education students. The implicit aspect of the analysis is the recognition that the current study draws from a combination of the ordinary secondary education and the advanced secondary education (re-identified as 2 years' secondary education in this analysis). For adequacy requirements and ensuring the internal efficiency of education system, eligible learners should track-up to the next higher level of learning. Learners with capacities to pursue specific disciplines are given avenues to explore their potentials in pursuing academics and their careers. Augmentation of the SCM and NPM provides student-focused intervention that assures information access, and resource supply to achieve the learning goals for track-up. In this case, closed cybernetic system consists of a teacher (a statement of learning goals and objectives, a source of education information), a student, and control-test materials (Mayer, 2021).

So, students from secondary education enroll in higher learning institutions subject to academic performance. For all eligible learners to secure places in higher learning institutions, there should be enough institutions to accommodate them. This is a major concern and the rationale behind the government granting private players opportunities to invest in education. The findings have indicated that the region has some higher education institutions, such as universities and colleges, including Ruhaha University College, Tumaini University College, Kleruu Teacher Training College, etc., which act as catalysts for lower institutions, like secondary schools, to work hard academically. Nonetheless, the findings have also indicated that some schools exhibit poor management systems that fail to attract and empower students to achieve their learning goals.

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The quality of the school management system has crucial contribution to the academic achievements of the schools and individual students. The system operations and academic achievements in terms of outputs and outcomes depend on the levels of school resource inputs, and processing segments of the school management systems. This implies schools with high financial capacity have high potential of forming high quality school management systems, and vice versa. Whilst the initial adequate input of financial resources is highly offering a competitive advantage, the management competence is a key to sustainable success in private secondary schools.

The findings have identified that the private school managements may utilize the advantage of cheap labour from the community in support of their operations. However, the courtesy is not in reciprocity in terms of transparency and accountability to fiscal resources. This implies for less awareness of community people on demanding knowledge of school fiscal capacity and support they ought to provide to the schools. The emerging picture is the possibility of existence of unfair dealings in terms of social justice between the school managements and the hardworking but inequitably remunerated labourers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The presence of the schools failing to attract more students from the economically well-off families has been noted as a major limiting factor for progresses in private secondary schools in Tanzania. On one hand, the study recommends for the school owner to assure competencies in managements as they establish the schools to avoid failure and frustration. On the other hand, the government may provide subsidies to the private schools failing to raise adequate capital to set on required pace in the service provision. The subsidies may help raising the financial efficacy of the schools and increase their competitive advantage, survival and sustainability in service provision.

The incidences of the school managements utilizing cheap labourers presents advantages to the schools establishing in the study locale. The situation has also signified that in order for the community to benefit from their labour input school management may need to be transparent in terms of their fiscal capacity to the

communities supporting them. This will give the capacity to negotiate to the community people so as to empower the financial capacity of the local people in communities around the schools.

The findings have revealed the parents' choice of the highly costly private ordinary secondary schools for their children in preference of fee-free public education in Tanzania. This is unexpectedly the reality to both the underprivileged and privileged families. Further research may focus on investigating why such unusual preferences, and explore the comparative advantages in terms of opportunities between private and public secondary schools in this regard.

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APPENDIX

Attachment: Opportunities for SMSs in School Development

No.	Students' Responses	Frequencies (%)
1.	Appreciated that the good climatic conditions make the environment very conducive for students to study well without getting any difficulty.	11(45.8)
2.	Argued that the presence of higher education institutions, like universities and some colleges, in one way or other acts as a catalyst for secondary school students to study hard.	7(29.2)
3.	Commented that the good community which surrounds the school has been a very important opportunity for school development.	4(16.7)
4.	Availability of access roads, like the highway from DSM to Lusaka, Zambia, is a very important opportunity for easy transport, and many students can travel and join the school quite easily.	2(8.3)
Total		24(100.0)

Source: Field Data (2025)