

TEACHING COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA, A STEP TOWARDS IMPLEMENTATION OF THE EDUCATION POLICY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative research was teaching council of Zambia, a step towards implementation of the education policy. Teachers in Zambia are key to the nation's economic growth and success. Therefore the whole reason why a teaching council will help the teachers achieve this role very successful. The research is based mainly on observation, experience and literature review. The research found through literature review that TCZ has ended the debate of whether teaching is a profession.

KEYWORDS: Teaching Council And Education Policy.

INTRODUCTION

Teaching council is the professional standards body for the teaching profession which promotes and regulates professional standards in teaching (TCZ, 2014). Professionalization has long been a source of both hope and frustration for teachers. The Teaching profession in Zambia, like many other countries in the region, has been under constant pressure to be more effective and responsive to the needs of the nation. Since early in the 20th century, educators have repeatedly sought to promote the view that elementary and secondary teaching is a highly complex kind of work, requiring specialized knowledge and skill and deserving of the same status and standing as traditional professions, like law and medicine. The establishment of the Teachers Council of Zambia (TCZ) in 2014 was a big boost to the status of societies which expect a great deal from their educational systems.

The Teaching Council of Zambia (TCZ) is a statutory body established through an act of

Parliament, the teaching profession Act of 2013. The council was officially inaugurated on the 27th June by the then Minister of Education, Science, Vocational Teaching and Early Education (MESVTEE), Dr. John T. Phiri, MP. At the same occasion, fourteen (14) councilors from a cross section of society were appointed in accordance with the Teaching Profession Act No.5 of 2013 part II Section 5(1).

TCZ is the professional standards body for teaching. The teaching Profession Act No.5 of 2013 mandates the Teaching Council of Zambia to perform the following functions: The role of the Teaching Council is to provide for the regulation of teachers, their practices and professional conduct; this includes establishing and promoting professional standards and supporting teachers' learning. The role of the Teaching council also provide for accreditation and regulation of colleges of Education.

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The Act further explains the importance of registration for all in the teaching profession and states that no person shall be allowed to practice as a teacher or educator unless he or she is registered with the Teaching council of Zambia.

The establishment of the Teaching council of Zambia in 2013 represented a milestone in the development of teaching as a profession in Zambia, and had been advocated for by many in Zambian education over several decades. In December, 2014, the MESVTEE appointed secretariat staff to work on attachment. Then the secretariat became operational on 9th February 2015 and moved to government stores, Mungwi Road premises after securing office space and furniture. Upon assuming office, secretariat embarked on developing operation for the execution of the council's mandate.

The vision of the Teaching council of Zambia is "A credible teaching council promoting professionalism in education.

The mission of the Teaching Council of Zambia is "To efficiently and effectively regulate the teaching profession through accreditation of colleges of education, registration and certification of teachers to promote quality education.

Towards a Teaching Council: The movement to establish a Teaching Council for teachers is not new. Education policy is governed by the Ministry of Education. The establishment of TCZ is a step towards the implementation of the Education policy of 1996 (Educating our Future). The Educational Reform noted in 1977 that in Zambia there is no professional body as such for teachers, although a strong union exists. Since then the idea of establishing a professional board for teachers, along the lines of the Medical Council for medical practitioners, has been raised periodically. An Accreditation Board would serve teachers in such a capacity. The role of the Board would be to set and maintain the highest

professional standards among teachers in the interests of the teachers themselves, and of pupils, parents and the entire community. Its functions would be to: determine the conditions for registration; establish a register for all teachers; adopt a professional code to regulate the professional conduct and behavior of members of the teaching force; institute proceedings in cases needing its attention and, on completion of the necessary inquiries that followed prescribed lines, take disciplinary action, including de-registration, where this is found to be necessary (Ministry of Education, 1996).

In the event of its being established, only teachers registered with the Board would be allowed to teach in any of Zambia's schools. Those who were de-registered, or who were never registered, would be prohibited from teaching in any school, public or private, until such time as they appeared on the Board's register (Ministry of Education, 1966).

As noted in Focus on Learning, the establishment of a legalized professional body for teachers necessitates an examination of the implications for training and certification, the requirements for registration, and the development of a code of conduct for teachers. Other complexities include the relationship of an Accreditation Board to the Teaching Service Commission and to Education Boards, the contractual implications of compulsory registration for serving and new teachers, and providing a suitable legal framework for the disciplinary procedures. The cost of establishing and running the Board also requires investigation. In principle, the annual costs should be recovered from registration fees, but this may be problematic in Zambia because of the low level of teachers' salaries. The Ministry will examine these issues with the teachers' unions and other concerned parties before preparing the necessary legislation (Ministry of Education, 1966).

Therefore this the whole reasons why TCZ is the step towards the implementation of the education policy which stated early that there was need for a professional body of teachers to be established so that there is professionalism and sanity in the teaching service.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviews the relevant literature on the study topic teaching council of Zambia, a step towards implementation of the education policy. Currently, every country has its own teaching council with specific objective to register professionally qualified teachers before they can practice. Every country has its own requirements that professional teachers should meet in order to be registered and certificated to teach.

Literature from Outside Africa

The movement to establish a Teaching Council for teachers is not new. In the period leading up to the outbreak of the First World War, separate moves were made in Britain and in Ireland to establish Registration Councils for teachers. A Teachers' Registration Council was set up in England in 1912. A similar Council, though somewhat limited in its functions and powers, was introduced for secondary teachers in Ireland as part of the 1914 Intermediate Education (Ireland) Act. While the 1944 Education Act effectively abolished the Registration Council in England and Wales, the Registration Council for Secondary Teachers still remains the competent authority for recognising the qualifications of secondary teachers in Ireland. The Department of Education in Ireland retains responsibility for determining the qualifications and for the registration of primary, vocational and comprehensive teachers (O'Toole, 1994).

The first legislative breakthrough concerning the establishment of a General Teaching Council came in 1965 when the Teaching Council (Scotland) Act was passed, thus enabling the

Scottish Teaching Council to come into operation on 1 February 1966. In the wake of the Scottish initiative, various attempts were made in England and Wales, in Northern Ireland and in the Republic of Ireland to establish Teaching Councils along similar lines to the Scottish model. Despite intensive efforts by teachers in the 1960s and 1970s to achieve self-regulatory authority no other group of teachers in these islands has managed to gain occupational control (O'Toole, 1994).

The Teaching Council was established in Ireland in 2006, under The Teaching Council Act 2001, to regulate the teaching profession and to promote professional standards in teaching. The Teaching Council supports teachers in all sectors of education in Ireland, not just at primary level. The Teaching Council's role is similar to that of already well-established professional regulatory bodies such as the Medical Council, for doctors, and An Board Altranais, for nurses. The vision of the Teaching Council is, according to its Annual report 2009/2010, to be 'at the heart of teaching and learning, promoting, supporting and regulating the teaching profession' (The Teaching Council Annual Report 2009/2010:4). The functions of the Teaching Council are, among others, to promote teaching as a profession; to maintain and improve standards of teaching, knowledge, skills and competence; to promote the continuing professional development of teachers, to regulate the profession, and to establish and maintain a register of teachers. The Teaching Council first published its Codes of Professional Conduct for Teachers in 2007 and issued a newly updated version in 2012; a copy is issued to all teachers once they complete their registration with the Teaching Council. The Codes outline the core values which underpin the profession and which span all aspects of teachers' work; they set out the standards of professional practice and professional conduct which are expected. The Registration Handbook 2011 notes that registered teachers have primary

responsibility, and are individually accountable, for their professional conduct and practice. 'As a professional, a teacher is answerable for the decisions he/she makes and the actions he/she takes in the course of his/her professional practice' (Registration Handbook, Teaching Council 2011:7).

LITERATURE WITHIN AFRICA

The establishment of the Teachers Registration Council of Nigeria (TRCN) in 1993 was a big boost to the status of societies which expect a great deal from their educational systems. New goals are being continuously set e.g. gender parity by 2005, universal basic education by 2015; life-long learning; life skills education; HIV/AIDS education; competency in the use of ICT (Fareo 2013).

The TRCN since its establishment has been working relentlessly to uphold the teaching profession in the country. Some prominent actions of the TRCN are: (a) Launching of campaign for the registration of teachers; (b) Initiating awareness and organizing continuous training and professional development programmes for teachers; (c) Holding regular and consultations with stakeholder and programmed partner (Fareo 2013).

Teachers are responding favorably to the activities of the TRCN. For instance, as at early 2005, more than five hundred thousand teachers have been registered. The council has organized many continuous training and development activities to enhance the instructional skills of teachers. As noted by the TRCN (2006:2), the themes for this past Continuous Professional Development Programs (CPDP) are: Mathematics and Sciences, Technology and Creative Arts, Teaching in English Language, Learner-Friendly Strategies, The Management of Large Classes, Gender and Child Rights Protection, Eradication of Examination Malpractices, HIV/AIDS Prevention and Management, Drug Abuse and Cultism and Professionalization of Teaching.

LITERATURE IN ZAMBIA

The teaching council was established under Teaching Profession Act of parliament number 5 of 2013. This act was assented on 21st March 2013. The purpose of the Teaching Profession Act are: a) To establish the TCZ, b) Define the functions and powers of the TCZ, c) Provide for the regulation of teachers, their practice and professional conduct, d) Provide for the accreditation and regulation of colleges and e) Provide for matters connected with, or incidental, to the foregoing (<http://www.tcz.ac.zm>).

- *Part 1 of the TCZ* gives the short title of the Act and also defines the union terminologies used in the Act. A teacher is, for example is defined as "a person who is qualified, registered and teaches or instructs, a head of a school, a principal or lecturer of a college of education or an education unit any other educational institution, other than university (<http://www.tcz.ac.zm>).
- *Part 2 of the TCZ* establishes the TCZ and specifies of its composition, functions and employment of the registrar and his or her deputy, inspectors and other staff as may be necessary. It also spells out powers of the inspectors. The functions of TCZ are: a) Register teachers, b) Regulate the professional conduct of teachers, c) Accredit colleges of education, monitor quality control and assurance of educational facilities and services d) Develop, maintain and improve appropriate standards of qualification in the teaching profession and promote CPD among teachers, e) Investigate allegations of professional misconduct and improve such sanctions may be necessary, f) Advise government on matters related to the Teaching Profession, g) Facilitate the acquisition of knowledge by teachers through the establishment of technical libraries and the provision of monetary grants, books,

apparatus, and any other facilities necessary to achieve that end etc.

- *Part 3 of the TCZ* deals with the issues of registration of teachers. It states that there will be classes of membership of teachers to be determined by the council. Each registered teacher will be issued with a practicing practising license. It stipulates qualifications and disqualifications for registration. It also deals with matters of renewal, re-registration register (containing names and details of registered teachers), and duplication of certificate, employment of unregistered teachers, offences of registered teachers, recognition of foreign qualifications and cancellation of registration (<http://www.tcz.ac.zm>).
- *Part 4 of the TCZ* deals with training of teachers. In details, it looks at in-service training, training programmes and CPD (<http://www.tcz.ac.zm>).
- *Part 5 of the TCZ* deals with accreditation of colleges of education (<http://www.tcz.ac.zm>).
- *Part 6 of the TCZ* contain disciplinary matters such as the code of ethics, describing professional misconduct and the procedures of disciplinary action. It establishes the disciplinary committee and prescribes its functions and powers (<http://www.tcz.ac.zm>).
- *Part 7 of the TCZ* contains general provisions. The schedule prescribes the administration of the council and financial provisions (<http://www.tcz.ac.zm>).

METHODOLOGY

The aim this research was to research on the Teaching council of Zambia, a step towards implementation of the education policy. The knowledge to be generated in this research would be subjective as it involved a researcher expressing his opinions and beliefs in the context of his own experience as a teacher at one point.

This places my research in the qualitative field as it is firmly grounded in people's own experiences and perceptions (Marshall & Rossmann, 1999).

SUCCESSES AND FAILURES OF THE TEACHING COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA

The Teaching Council of Zambia has now embarked on a nationwide sensitizing programme advising the nation that only qualified teachers will be allowed to practice in Zambian schools. This message is in accordance with the provisions of the Teaching Profession Act No. 5 of 2013.

The TCZ has successful also achieved the following developed a code of ethics for teachers in the country, exposed unqualified teachers in the country and fired 263 fake teachers found with fake qualifications (<https://www.znbc.co.zm/7263-fake-teachers>).

In addition the TCZ has received and processed 100, 086 Teacher Registration certificates successful in the first phase and are issuing them to teachers until 30th June 2018. Also in the second phase 27, 000 more certificates will be issued in the second phase of the procurement and delivery process (TCZ, 2018).

The TCZ is besetting the challenges that are faced by the teaching profession in order to thrive on quality and remain beneficial to learners. The TCZ has brought sanity to the teaching profession. The TCZ has put to an end the debate that has been raging over a long period of time whether teaching is a profession.

Despite the successes that that have been mentioned above the TCZ has a long way to achieve improved quality in the education system. The TCZ has failed to be transparent on how money collected from teacher registration and teacher practice license will be used.

Also despite the TCZ putting a deadline to teacher registration, a number of teachers have not

registered and nothing have been done to them. They are working smoothly.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The TCZ will make a significant contribution towards improving the quality of education by promoting teaching as an attractive and rewarding career, by protecting standards of entry into the profession, by promoting high standards of professional practice and in career development, by the exercise of disciplinary functions and in raising the morale and status of the profession. This will result in many long term benefits to the nation and should be acknowledged by a gesture of goodwill on the part of government.

Therefore the research recommends the following of the TCZ:

1. Ensure that there is transparency in the system operations and procedures of the TCZ on registration and issuing of certificates.
2. A central part of the work of most professional bodies is involvement in education and training. It is recommended that the TCZ should develop an education and training policy where they will sponsor teachers for training.
3. Since the education policy of 1966 in Zambia allowed for the establishment of TCZ and it has been established. The MOE should monitor its activities and operations so that there is equality and equity.

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