

RECONSTRUCTION OF TEACHER EDUCATION IN SOMALI: THE CASE OF GAROWE TEACHERS EDUCATION COLLEGE IN GAROWE, PUNTLAND-SOMALIA

Abdirahman Sheikhdon Ali

Abstract

One of the areas which had been discussed in terms of education in Somalia was quality of teachers after collapse of central government in 1991. It's not until 2005 after the collapse of the collapse of Somalia government that the first ever teachers' college known as Garowe Teachers' Education Centre college (GTEC) was officially established in Puntland state of Somalia. The study was aimed to discuss the reconstruction of teacher education in Puntland. The study shed light the challenges of teachers' education in Puntland and provided recommendation to address these challenges. Therefore, this study outlined reconstruction of teachers' education in Puntland-Somalia and reform of teacher education in Somali since inception of formal education in the colonial era. It includes the current teacher education system in Puntland state of Somalia as model of reconstruction of teacher education system in Somalia which has played a big in boosting training of a pool of quality qualified teachers in Somalia but it currently limited by funding most especially after the withdraw funding by SIDA which was through Diakonia. Currently the education system in Puntland has two major challenges, funding the education colleges as well as recruitment and retention of well qualified teachers, both of which have an direct and indirect implications on the education quality. Therefore, if the of Ministry of Education (MOE) liaise the international donor community to find a reliable source of funding to the college as well as find mean of recruitment and retention of well qualified teachers in schools and then the education quality in the region area would gradually improve.

2.0 Introduction

Like elsewhere in Africa, formal education in Somalia introduced by colonial powers, particularly Italy and Britain those who colonized south and north Somalia respectively (Abdi, 1998; Yahye, 1985). In Somalia, a teacher training center was established in 1946 at both north and south regions of Somalia. Yahye (1984) wrote that in 1950s, teacher training was given special emphasis by training more qualified teachers at home or abroad. The education system in Somali had undertaken many reforms since introducing formal education in Somalia in particularly teacher education system as teacher is central to every education reform process. Thus the history of formal education in Somalia can traced before and after independent.

In the current world, education has been viewed as an instrument of change and safeguarding of culture and the school system was recognized as social institutions and major agent of education as well as teachers are considered as the heart of agent of education. Thus, improving the education will increase the education of an area is the most reliable and fast method of instilling a positive changes a given society on any place in this sphere. To this end, Teachers' Education Policy in Puntland (2006) reveals that there is concerns about the children who were failing to attain a complete cycle of education as they were dropping out of schools. In abide to combat an education policy was adopted to improve quality of our students through a good quality teachers. Therefore, this paper traces the history of teacher education in Somalia and reconstruction of teachers' education in Puntland-Somalia. This would help as a guide factor not only to establish more teachers' training college but also to boost the quality for those one already in existence.

2.1 Teacher Education before Independence

During the colonial period, there were only two teacher training centers for elementary schools for the whole of Somalia (Osman, 1986). Even then, at these two centres did not produce enough teachers to commensurate with required number teachers' force to null this existing gap by at that time. One of these two centers was in north and the other was in south Somalia. El Shibiny (1970) stated that a teacher training that was in north Somalia, which was first established at Sheikh district in 1946. This was one year pre-service teacher training program to train intermediate school leavers to become elementary schools teachers, but in 1952, the program was upgraded into two-year teacher training program that was aimed to produce both elementary and intermediate school teachers. The center was transferred to Amoud and latter on it was again transferred to Hargeisa. The teacher Training in Mogadishu (the Scoular Magistrale in Mogadishu) was also established in

the same year (1946) and it worked as in-service training center to upgrade the qualification of assistant Somali teachers, but in 1951, Magistrale started two-year pre-service training for intermediate leavers to train as elementary school teachers. El Shibiny (1969) notes that the Magistrale teacher training center started with 24 assistant Somali teachers.

The two centers (Hargeisa and Mogadishu) were unable to supply an adequate number of teachers to meet the rising demand. The centers were subjected to continuous change their program (Osman, 1986). This caused schools to depend on expatriate teachers (MOE, 1964, as cited by Osman, 1986). The Teacher Training Institute produced less than half of the expected number of teachers each year (about 40 instead of 100), but the number of Somali teachers grew from about 60 in 1950 to approximately 470 in 1959. Only 290 of the Somalis had teaching diplomas, the remainder being assistant teachers. Among the non-Somali teachers were Egyptians, Italians in the south and English, and Indian in north Somalia (Dawson, 1964).

2.2 Teacher Education (1960-1969)

At the time of independence in 1960, Somalia inherited two education systems that differed radically in regards to structure, curricula, and media of instruction. In South, the education system was five-year of elementary, three-year of intermediate and four-year of secondary with Italian medium of instruction, while north Somalia, the education system was three-year elementary, four-year intermediate and four-secondary school with Arabic as teaching language of elementary schools and the rest, English was medium of instruction (Hafez, 1973; Hussein 1988; Metwally, 1967). In addition, the education philosophy was based on colonial interest. Cassanelli and Abdikadir (2007) stated that both British and Italian colonial education was elitist, aimed primarily at training small cadres of Somalis to fill positions in the colonial administration.

Somali government was aware the importance of teacher training as the result Addis Ababa conference (26-30 April, 1962) of Ministers of education of African countries that about 'improvement and expansion of teacher training'. Through, the government accepted the importance of teacher training centers, but did not create secondary teacher college till 1968. Shortly after independence, there were four teacher training centers; Amoud, Magistrale, Takhasus, and National Teacher Training Center (NTEC). One was in north and the rest were south Somalia.

Teacher training in north started with one year pre-service training at Sheikh in 1946 and two-year in 1952, then it was moved to Amoud and again it was transferred to Hageisa in 1964. In 1966/77,

it was ceased to admit new pre-service trainees (El Shibiny, 1970; Hafez, 1973). In south, the Magistrale (Mogadishu) was established in 1946 as teacher training center with one-year in-service program. In 1951, duration of the training was made three-year for intermediate school leavers. In 1965, it was stopped to provide pre-service training (El Shibiny, 1970; Hafez, 1973).

Also, there was another teacher training center called Takhasus (specialization) that provided four-year intermediate education, followed by two-year teacher training course to prepare Arabic teachers. This was affiliated to the institute of Islamic Studies. It was closed in 1967 (El Shibiny, 1969; Hafez, 1973; Melwally, 1969) and it was converted into four-year secondary school.

The problem of training and retaining qualified Somali teachers proved to be one of the most persistent challenges faced by the Somali government in 1960s. Dawson (1964) stated that in 1962, the Ministry of Education reported that 112 of 201 intermediate and secondary school teachers were expatriates, and only 89 Somalis.

In 1963, National Teacher Training Center (NTEC) at Afgio district close to Mogadishu started its training with 75 students. This was constructed by USAID and its operation undertaken by Eastern Michigan University. The aim was to train elementary teachers, but the graduates were assigned to teach intermediate schools. In the same year, the teacher training in Hargeisa and Mogadishu was increased from one years to three-year, with the first two-years, students attend their training centers at Hargeisa or Mogadishu, while the final years students attend at national teacher training center. In 1966, the Ministry of Education decided to close teachers training centers in Hargeisa and Mogadishu and all pre-service teacher training was conducted at national teachers training center, while old teachers training centers admitted to conduct in-service teacher training (El-Shibiny, 1970; Hafez, 1973; Melwally, 1967; Osman, 1986). In the same year, the ministry of education modified the admission criteria as decided to be admitted only those who score either A or B grade rather than C and D grade as before (Osman, 1986). In 1968, NTEC was upgraded to a college of education to train secondary graduate for four-year teacher education course to obtain Bachelor of Education Arts (BA.ED) or Bachelor of Education Science (BSc.ED) to teach secondary schools (Hafez, 1973). In 1966/77, NTEC was the only teacher training center in Somalia (Melwally, 1967).

Shifting teaching service was phenomena that limited number of teachers in Somalia. Osman (1986) states that a large number of teachers left teaching service and joined the civil service, as this incident, the expatriate teachers found their way to enter education system once again. This is

line with the report jointly prepared by the Ministry of Education and Ministry of Justice and labour that stated there is serious obstacles to reaching a satisfactory standard of education at the elementary and intermediate level is lack of trained teachers, while exact data is not available, it is believed that 50% of teaching force fail to satisfy the current criteria for qualified teachers, as eight years of education and three-year of training (Osman, 1986). To this end, in 1960, the ministry of education reduced duration of teacher training program from two-year to one year, but this limited the quality of teachers and did not bring enough qualified teachers. Moreover, when the Somali government announced English as teaching language of intermediate schools, it was noted that seriously affected teachers in south as the most of teachers were trained in Italian and they were unable to teach school with English medium of instruction.

Dawson (1964) wrote that in 1963, the Ministry of Education established a seven-month course for recruiting teachers of English, a six-week refresher course in English for graduates of the Magistrale in order to enable to teach intermediate schools with English as teaching language, and a two-month course in Arabic and English for elementary school teachers in the south. In the same year, the government established law for salary rates for civil servants, increasing teacher salaries by roughly 30 per cent. Hafez (1970) noted that in 1968-69 some reports estimated that 50% of elementary teachers were unqualified teachers.

2.3 Teacher Education (1970-1990)

During the military rule in Somalia, the primary school enrolment has received deeply increased emphasis and development. The significant developments including; writing Somali script, launching literacy campaign, expansion of primary schools the whole country and others. Bennaars *et al* (1996) wrote as a result of these developments, the enrolment figures for primary schools rose from 28,000 in 1970 to 220,000 in 1976 and to 271,000 in 1982. Likewise, the number of primary schools increased from 287 in 1970 to 844 in 1975 and to 1407 in 1980.

During 1968-1972, there was no any primary teacher training center in Somalia. This was resulted after the Ministry of education ceased taking new intakes for three primary teachers training in Somalia in 1967 and in 1968 National Teacher Education Centre was converted to secondary teachers college. During 1972 -1975, a two-year primary teacher program was established within the college of education (Lingappa, 1977; Osman, 1986). This program trained a total of 675 teachers.

In 1975, Halane Teacher Training Institute was established at Mogadishu to address the problem of shortage of teachers (Heinemann, 1999). The length for the training was one year after intermediate school and two-year from 1978 to 1984. Halane teachers training institute was ceased in 1985, when the Somali government set a plan to decentralize primary teacher training and to establish primary teachers in key cities such as Mogadishu and Hargeisa in 1986, Galkayo and Marka in 1987 and Baidabo in 1988 in order to supply qualified teachers to meet needs due expectation of increase of schools in the future (Osman, 1986). Enrolment in 1982-83 at Halane teacher training institute totalled 2,609 students, of them above 50% were female (Florida State University et al.1985; Osman, 1986). Only ten-day of teaching practice was including in the training program and the rest was teaching in classrooms. According to UNESCO report (1977, cited in Osman, 1986) that facilities at Halane Teacher Training Institute were inadequate due to lack of science laboratory and limited books in the library. Training for secondary school teachers were done in Lafole College of education in Afgio from 1968 to1990. This was the only teacher education college that was used to train secondary teachers in Somalia. In 1968, the college started four-year bachelor of education. Osman (1986) noted that during 1973 to 1982, the college education offered two-year program due to need to produce qualified secondary teachers within short time. In 1985, it was increased the length of the college program into four-years. According to Florida State University et al.(1985) report, lafole enrolled a total of 1,014 students in 1982-1983. The annual cost per students were 236 USD and 1016 USD that 74% and 59% were for boarding cost in Halane Teacher Training Institute and Lafole college of education respectively. During early 1970s and mid of 1980s, Somali had made massive change in primary enrolment and teacher training as 1981-82, teacher-students ratio was 1:29.

Despite this, Somali had one of the highest teacher attrition rates in the world. Over 24,000 primary school teachers were trained between 1965 and 1981, but of this number only 8,211 were still in service by 1984. This represents an attrition rate of 66 percent, or 12 percent per year as noted by the World Bank and UNESCO (1987, as cited by Seif at el, 1996). This was resulted decline about both quantity and quality of education in Somalia due to high dropout. After civil war, the education system had completely destroyed.

2.4 Teacher Education in Puntland

Puntland State of Somalia was established as a semi-autonomous state in August 1998. It is one of federal state members of Somalia government. The education system is based on an 8-4-4 system

and the medium of instruction in primary schools is trilingual (Most schools taught in Somali and Arabic, but there is very few schools use English as language of teaching), while secondary schools used English as teaching language, through some subjects (history and geography) taught in Arabic in very few schools, but Somali has only one language. Current gross rate emolument is 56% and 36% in primary and secondary respectively (Puntland school census, 2015).

The shortage of qualified teachers was major challenges of faced Somali education (Hussein, 2015). From 1985 to 2005, there was no pre-service primary teacher in Somalia. As result of lack of teacher training institute, no certificate of teacher training is required to teach schools in Somali. During 2003-2004 School Survey identified a total of 9,088 primary school teachers in Somalia; 87 percent of these are men. About 60 percent of the teachers have a secondary school education and only 15 percent have graduate degrees. More than 60 percent did not receive pre-service training. Some 24 percent have not completed more than a primary level of education (UNICEF, school survey, 2004). Up to date there is still there is lack of enough qualified teachers in Somalia. UNICEF (2012 as cited by Eno et al. 2014) revealed that the poor quality of education is mostly attributed to the poor quality of teaching,” where the teacher-student ratio in Somalia is estimated at “1:32”, with caution that this figure “varies significantly” from one administrative zone to another. In mid of 1990s, UNICEF and UNECSO had offered short time in-service teacher training in Puntland.

In 2004, Garowe teachers Education College (GTEC) was constructed and equipped by SIDA (Swedish International Development Agency) through Diakonia-Swedish NGO. In 2005, Garowe teachers Education College started pre-service teachers’ education with 46 primary teachers, with aim of strengthening primary and secondary education at Puntland. In 2007, the college has an enrolment of 135 pre-service students, 48 male and 87 female and a total of 689 in-service primary teachers (Joseph, 2007). As November 2005 to 2013, Diakonia facilitated running cost beyond cost of constructing college compound, guest house, and hostel with capacity of 64 persons, bore hall and others through SIDA fund.

At the same time, East Africa University (EAU) at Bosaso introduced a four-year bachelor of education. In 2006, both GTEC and EAU had offered first two-year in-service teacher training to certify large number of untrained teachers in Puntland through strengthening capacity of teacher training project under EU support. This training had two modalities, one was evening class that has done in urban cities and other was distance learning for teachers in rural areas for providing

face-to-face teaching during school breaks and developing and distribution of self-study modules. This project laid down marked foundation of teachers' education in Somalia, particularly in Puntland and Somaliland. In 2008, GTEC had introduced a two-year pre-service secondary education at the area of biology-chemistry, physics-mathematics, followed by history and geography in 2009 and in 2015, the college introduced diploma in English in secondary education. GTEC offers two-year secondary and primary education to address shortage of qualified teachers within short of periods. Also, it used double major system that contributes to address secondary school demand as student-teachers were trained to teach two major subjects. In 2013, Mogadishu University, Bosaso campus started Bachelor of Education at Bosaso and Puntland Science and Technology University started in-service teacher training at Galkayo. In 2012, GTEC offered a bachelor degree for its graduates to upgrade their qualification with collaboration of Islamic University in Uganda and in 2016 GTEC introduced a degree program. In 2015, the Ministry of Education in Puntland decided to centralize both primary and secondary teacher education. It had issued a decree letter that ask all education partners to conduct all teachers training at GTEC as public institution that has capacity to carried any kind of teachers training as it focuses only education program since 2005. In 2006, teacher education unit was established to manage overall teacher education training and it also teacher education policy in Puntland was drafted aimed at providing guidelines on development of teacher education. In 2012, the teacher education policy was revised. Although, the teacher policy was not fully in function and it needs to revise to address current needs of teacher education in Puntland.

Since 2005 and the college has trained more than 1613 teachers with many of its graduates working in primary and secondary schools across Puntland State of Somalia. The vision of the college is to be a centre of excellence and the leading institution in teacher's education, training and research in Somalia. The college offers a comprehensive set of courses including a bachelor of education, two year education diploma and in-service teacher's training, which all aim to assist trainees to develop the necessary skills for effective delivery of primary and secondary school curriculums.

Over the last decade, GTEC has been able to distinguish itself as the only public institution and as a premier institution for education and training of teachers in the region. Although the college continues to operate at its full capacity each year, yet there still is a severe shortfall in the supply of sufficiently qualified teachers across Somalia. In Puntland alone, if universal primary education is to be achieved by 2020, a total of 1,231 additional teachers need to be trained annually.

Similarly, if universal secondary education is to be achieved in Puntland by 2020, a total of 1,174 teachers need to be trained annually (GTEC business plan, 2014-2016).

At the beginning, the college faced shortage of enrolment due to misunderstanding of teacher education as well as low salary of teachers, but the currently, the college enrolment has increased as teacher education being more source of employment in Puntland. In addition, that the vast majority of secondary teachers in Puntland came other regions in Somalia and Kenya. Since the inception of the college, it was recognized the valuable contribution of the college to education in Puntland and Somalia as number of teachers who graduate from GTEC are currently in teaching service in Puntland/ Somalia. This is line with the mandate of the college that is “A qualified teacher for every Somali child”.

Despite these achievement, there various challenges faced by teachers education in Puntland. These challenges include lack of continuous professional development program in teachers' education that stimulates more teachers to enter teacher service and increase retention of teacher in a long time in the schools. Teacher attrition, due to looking for high pay beyond education sector is one of challenges of teacher education in Puntland. Lack of allocated budget from government budget is also is major challenges that faced by the teachers education in Puntland. This was resulted that teachers education college not able to produce enough teacher for both secondary and primary schools in Puntland. In line this that GTEC has earlier enjoyed the support of Diakonia/SIDA which used to cover all the cost of the college. This support has enabled the college to continue operating at its full capacity. However, this support came to end in 2013 and the college did not get alternative source of fund, but, still the college is operating at its full capacity to qualify of teacher training through benefit from other donors (EU, USIAD, DFID, GPE, Norad, Qatar Foundations) which sponsor a given number of trainees and pay tuition fee as well as incentives of the training, particularly those who came out of Garowe city. However, this is did not replace the support from SIDA as this limited only tuition of given numbers of teachers that could not cover all the cost of the training.

2.5 Conclusion and Recommendations

In this study, an attempt was made to discuss the history of teacher education in Somalia since introduction of formal education in colonial era and how the teacher education reconstructed after complete destroy of education system in Somalia as a result of civil and lack of affective administration that restore administrative system in Somalia. After civil war, the various efforts were made by Somali community and international community to re-construct education system in Somalia (from primary to post-secondary education) that contributed vital input which significantly socially and development contributed. In teacher education, Puntland has a significant background after civil war as Garowe Teachers Education College is premier college of education that provides both primary and secondary teachers, but yet not produced enough teachers due to lack of budget from government and others. In the light of above discussions, it will useful to analysis the reconstruction of teacher education in Somali. Consequently, teachers' education increased job opportunity of teachers as it stimulates sense of qualified teachers, but still there is vast of untrained teachers that are currently in the teaching service in Puntland. It is clear that the college cannot retain its service with proper budget. Therefore, it is recommended that the ministry of education to allocated budgets to the college that enable the college significantly to contribute quality education in Puntland. Also, it is recommended that the Ministry of Education may liaise the international donor community to find a reliable source of funding to the college as well as find mean of recruitment and retention of well qualified teachers in schools, and then the education quality in the region would gradually improve. It is recommended that the ministry of education to carry out a study across regions to examine the impact of the college.

References

- Abdi, A. A. (1998). Education in Somalia: History, destruction, and calls for reconstruction. *Comparative Education, Vol. 34, Issues3* , 327.
- Cassanelli, L. & Abdikadir, F. Sh.. (2007). Somalia: Education in Transition. *Bildhaan: An International Journal of Somali Studies. Vol. 7* , 91-125.
- Bannaars, G. A. (1996). *Mid-Decade Review Of Progress Towards Education For All: The Somali Country Case Study*. Nairobi.
- Dawson, G. G. (1964). Education in Somalia. *Comparative Education Review* , 199-214.
- El-Shibiny, M. (1970). *Somalia: Teacher Training, 21 January to 31 December 1969*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Eno, O. A. (2014). Somalia: An Overview of Primary and Secondary Education. *Journal of Studies. Vol. 1* , 11-33.
- GTEC. (2014). *GTEC Bussiness Plan: 2014-2017*. Garowe: GTEC.
- Hafez, I. (1973). *Somalia: Teacher Education, March 1970 to Noverment 1972*. Paris: UNESCO.
- Hannemann, N. (1999). *The Education System in Somalia*. Copenhagen: Danish Refugee Council.
- Huessein, S. (1988). The Transition of the Education System in the Somali Democratic Republic in the Post Colonial Years. *Proceeding of the Third International Congress of Somali Studies*, (pp. 411-416). London.
- Lingappa, S. (1977). *Education and The Socio-Economic Environment-Recent Developments in Somalia*. UNESCO.
- Metwally, A. (1967). *Somalia: English Teacher Training, 4 February 1962 to 31 December 1966*. Paris: UNESCO.
- MoE. (2015). *Puntland: School Census*. Garowe: MoE&HE.
- MoEHE. (2006). *Teacher Education Policy*. Garowe: MoEHE.
- Ndungu, J. B. (2007). *Evaluation Report of Garowe Teachers Education College*. Diakonia.
- Osman, A. M. (1987). *Teacher Training in Somalia 1950 - 1985: A Historical Account*. (Unpublished Master thesis) . The American University of Beirut, Lebanon.
- UNICEF. (2004). *Survey of Primary School in Somalia-2003/2004*. UNECEF.
- Florida State University et al.(1985). *Somali Country Plan 1985-1986:Enhancing The Efficiency of Educational System*.

Yahye, M. M. (1984). Management Education in Somali: The Case Study of SIDAM.
(*Unpublished PhD Dissertation*) . University of California, Los Angeles, USA.