

# Challenges Faced by Open Schools in Implementing the Concessions Model: A Case Study of the Institute of Adult Education in Tanzania

<sup>1</sup>Robert Mukasa, <sup>2</sup>Cosmas Mnyanyi, <sup>3</sup>ColethaNgirwa

The Open University of Tanzania, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

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**Abstract:** This study determined the challenges faced by open schools in Tanzania when implementing a concession PPP Model in delivering Open Distance Learning (ODL) and Non-Formal Secondary Education (NFSE). The study adopted a Mixed Methods research design and data collection process involving nine (9) interviews including; sixteen (16) open school owners and four (4) officials from the Institute of Adult Education (IAE) and ten (10) Advanced level students. Also, quantitative data were collected from 20 questionnaires from teachers and students whose findings were triangulated with the qualitative data obtained from the interviews and documentary analysis. The results obtained from the data collected illustrate the respondents' understanding of what constitutes an open school; the level of institutional support to open schools; and the inherent challenges confronting the adoption to the concession PPP model. The findings show that open schools are diverse in character and composition, but they can be broadly divided into profit and non-profit open schools. It was also determined that despite the lack of a broad PPP institutional framework for open schools; there is a clear policy followed by the IAE in cascading its mandate to open school. In practice, open schools are concessions and performance contracts that operate on behalf of the IAE in providing Non-Formal secondary education (NFSE). It is recommended that there should be more dialog with the stakeholders to increase the cooperation between the IAE and open schools by finding better ways of financing open schools in the milieu of the PPP framework.

**Keywords:** Open schooling, public private partnerships, PPP Model, Concessions, Open Distance learning, challenges, Institute of Adult Education.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

This study investigated the challenges faced open schools in Tanzania when implementing a PPP concession model in the delivery of Non-Formal Secondary Education (NFSE). The new policy mix calls for better coordination between the public and the private sector in the provision of the would-be public services including education. The Education and Training Policy of 1985 (URT 2013) highlighted the adaption of the PPP model as one of the policies aimed at increasing private sector participation in the provision of education. This policy indicated the government's desire to change its approach from direct to the provision of education to enhance partnership with various stakeholders, including the private agencies and individuals to establish and manage schools at all levels. However, based on the guidelines to establish and register open schools in Tanzania (URT 2013), the open schooling sub sector, still has several challenges resulting from increased involvement by private sector interests and other stakeholders.

Any study of open schools (OS) in Tanzania as of necessity start with the IAE, which is a statutory body with the responsibility of coordinating the development of Open Schools in a Tanzania (URT 2013). The institute has the obligation and mandate to provide technical advice and support for existing government and private schools, community

or faith-based organizations and private-sector interests who wish to become partners in the provision of instruction for adult and out-of-school youths. According to Shirima (2016) the provision of (NFSE) for the purposes of this research also known as open schooling, is a new innovation in Tanzania as part of the ODL strategy of delivering education to out-of-school youths. Open schooling marks a shift away from the existing normative practices of providing education, as illustrated in Figure 1 (Shirima 2016). It illustrates the potential benefits of adopting an ODL strategy including the benefits of enhancing free learning, in a free learning environment, which all results from a paradigm shift from the traditional system of delivering education (Everard *et al.*, 2004; Fullan, 2007).

## 1.2 Statement of the problem

The Government of Tanzania (GoT) while keeping in line with its international obligations to attain Education for All (EFA), has suggested policies that are aimed at increasing access to education. Through the IAE network countrywide, more Tanzanians especially the out-of-school youths can now access NFSE. The commitments to increase access to education have been complemented with policies and institutional support aimed at attracting more resources from the private sector to finance the provision of education. Deliberate moves facilitate public-private partnership to improve service delivery (URT 2017). Unfortunately, the process of adapting to the PPP model of service delivery is still work in progress and it is riddled with many outstanding challenges. Much as the policies are clear on what to be done, to increase the Public-private joint stock projects, there is still a general lack of clarity on behalf of the implementing units. The implementation of PPP model in education is uncoordinated, intermittent and impromptu action by many players, especially the Public-Private Intermediaries. This state of affairs should not be allowed to continue because it risks the attainment of the overarching objective of the (EFA) and the associated Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

## 1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study investigated the challenges faced by open schools in Tanzania when implementing a concession PPP Model in delivering ODL.

### 1.3.1 Objectives of the study

- i. Determine the types of open schools implementing a concession PPP model in delivering education services in Tanzania.
- ii. Explore the views of the stakeholders to determine the challenges faced in the implementation of the PPP contractual models with open schools.

## 1.4 Significance of the Study

The results of this research help the stakeholders in the open schools in Tanzania to improve on the communication between the IAE and open schools. Shirima (2016) identified communication as one of the challenges of providing NFSE in Tanzania. Therefore, based on the results of this study, the stakeholders in Open schools will exploit the newly found knowledge, to improve on the communication and interaction. The challenges highlighted in this study should be a reference point for all stakeholders that wish to solve the problems faced by open schools. Such problems are diverse and, in many ways, unique to the individual schools. However, this study has classified these problems into broad themes that can provide a more coherent and broad understanding of the problems faced by open schools in Tanzania. It is preferred that the readers of this research report will now abandon the piece-meal and ad hoc measures to deal with the challenges of implementing concessions and affirmages, but adapt a more comprehensive approach.

## 1.5 Important Conceptual Definitions

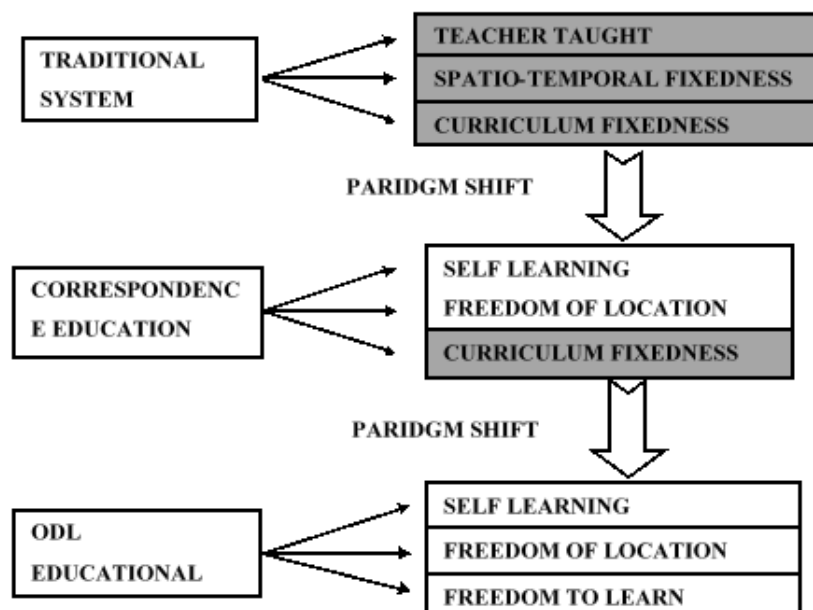
### 1.5.1. Open Schools

According to the guidelines to establish and registering open schools (URT 2013), open schools are organizations that facilitate open learning. The official IAE list of registered open schools between 31/12/2013 and January 16, 2017 indicates that there were 428 open schools in Tanzania of IAE owns 60 Open Schools. The term ODL was coined in the later decade of the 20th century to combine two concepts into a single construct. Juhudi (2018), adds that the concept of ODL originates from two fundamental concepts that is, 'open learning' and 'distance-learning' and it is important to get a deeper meaning of the concepts. According to Onwe (2013), at present there is no universally accepted definition of the concept 'open learning'. While some educationists argue that 'open learning' means open entry and access to learning

opportunities and the removal of barriers to learning opportunities, others argue that ‘open learning’ can be substituted for flexible learning (Juhudi, 2018; Onwe, 2013). Komba (2009) views such openness in relation to the intake, participation, progression, completion and achievement.

Barriers to learning opportunities include the student’s economic circumstances, socio-cultural factors, academic qualifications as well as teaching approaches. However, distance learning is an approach that takes learning to many learners who are separated by time and space, from those who are teaching. It is a mode that has a high potential for transcending barriers that are caused by distance, time, and age; thus, facilitating lifelong learning (Juhudi 2018; URT 2013; Komba, 2009). Figure 1 offers a diagrammatic illustration of how open schooling facilitates the departure from the traditional learning and instruction system toward the easier communication between participants in a learning system across time and space through technologies. Open schools should not be under the continuous, immediate supervision of tutors present with their learners in lecture rooms. Through distance learning the learner enjoys a high degree of autonomy in deciding what, when and how to learn. Worldwide, open and distance learning (ODL) is synonymous with Non-Formal Education, Non-formal Secondary Education, Open schooling and these concepts are on many occasions used interchangeably (Shrima 2016).

This method for delivering adult education targets the out of school youth and the vulnerable communities. According to Juhudi (2018), ODL offers new ways in which to widen access to education and it has a decisive role to play in meeting the demand for education. Importantly, ODL can contribute to the global commitment to provide quality and inclusive education for everyone worldwide, as expressed in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 4 and its targets (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 2013). SDG 4 states to ‘ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning’ by 2030



**Figure 1: Learner centred Instructional System in Open Schooling**

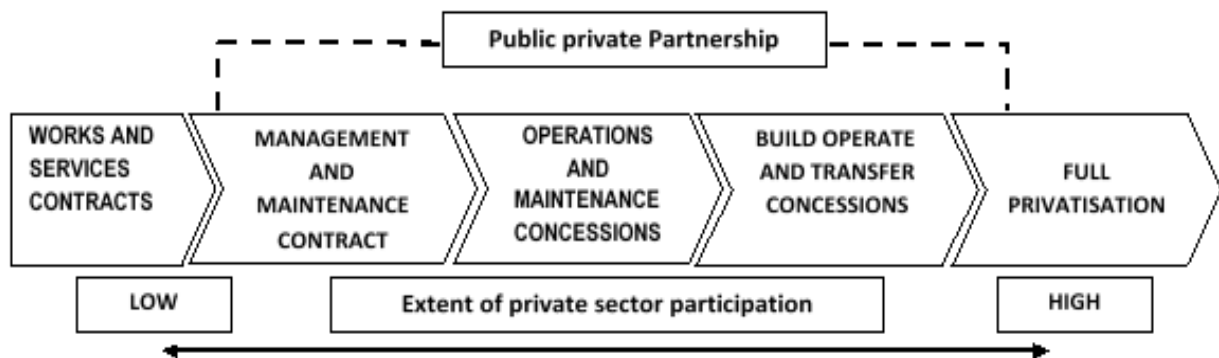
### 1.5.2 The Institute of Adult Education

The study was conducted at the Institute of Adult of Education (IAE) that has been mandated to provide open schooling in Tanzania. Open Schooling is an avenue through which learners are freely to follow general school curriculum at their own pace and without following formal school rules. According to the Institute of Adult Education (URT 2013), the Institute was established in 1960 as extra mural studies section of Makerere University College, under the University of London. In 1963, the Institute was upgraded to a department and placed under the Dar-es-Salaam University College. Later on, the institution became an autonomous entity as established by an act of Parliamentary No. 12 of 1975 under the then Ministry of National Education (Institute of Adult Education, 2008). In 1970, the national correspondence institute was established

as a unit of the IAE with the aim of expanding access to education for adults and out-of-school youths in both rural and urban areas. Since its inception, the institute at most directly provided out-of-school education using the same formal curriculum and indirectly through the open schools it registers and inspects. In 1995, under the guidance of Education and Training Policy (URT 1985) the institute has addressed most of the challenges relating to access, equity, and quality of distance education. The Institute among other things offers, Certificate Course in Law, Ordinary and Advanced level secondary education certificates and Teacher Education and Community Development. Based on such a mandate given to the institute, it was in the interest this study to determine whether the relationship between the IAE and open schools is based on a PPP model or not and what are the views of the stakeholders toward the challenges.

### 1.5.3. The Concessions Model

The concession model is a public-private partnership similar to the Design, Build Operate and Finance (DBOF) model, but the main difference is that in a concession model the service provider in the case of this study recovers the costs through direct user charges in the form of school fees or a combination of charging school fees and government subsidies. A concession model entails the sale of the output direct to consumers Delmon (2017). While performance contracts are similar to concessions, the difference is that this time the service is provided by the public sector Delmon (2017), enforcing obligations under a performance contract can be difficult because both entities are public and the necessary dispute resolution mechanisms are absent. The service provider (the open school) in such PPP agreement retains the ownership of the school while providing the requisite service. According to Ankintoye et al., (2003), under a concession, the service provider can be given the exclusive right to operate the school and deliver the NFSE but make payments to the IAE for the right to do so. It is the obligation of the proprietor of the open school – service provider to invest in the improvement of the school -facility with the provision to pass the cost to the consumers in this case the students, in the form of school fees. Figure 2, illustrates the continuum of how responsibilities are shared between the public and private sector when offering a would-be public service. The extent of participation in a concession largely depends on the extent to which public interests should be protected. In the case of open schools, IAE can regulate the school fees charged by the concessionaires to avoid the public to be exploited.



**Figure 2: Concession on the scale of private sector participation**

An open school can also enter a joint venture PPP model in which the government through IAE and the private sector assume co-responsibility and co-ownership in an organization. It entails the pooling of their resources and generating share returns (Ankintoye *et al.*, 2003). The returns are shared on the basis of the proportion of the investment each partner has made to the joint venture. The organization in question is normally a special purpose vehicle that looks at the interest of both partners on a day-to-day basis. (McCann et al., 2014; Trafford & Proctor, 2006). Therefore, a joint venture is the true partnership in all social and economic sectors between public and private partners. The level of private sector participation (Table 1) indicates that the private sector assumes increasing responsibility for the functions of design, build, operation and maintenance and finance. In the last case of full privatization, the private sector also assumes ownership of the infrastructure.

**Table 1: The Concessions PPP model Matrix**

Responsibility matrix for conventional procurement and PPP options							
Category	Works and service contracts (conventional procurement)		Public Private Partnerships			Build transfer concessions	Privatization
	Design Bid Build	Design Bid Build	Management Contracts	Performance based contracts	Lease or franchise Affirmage		
<b>Type</b>	Design Bid Build	Design Bid Build	Management Contracts	Performance based contracts	Lease or franchise Affirmage	BOT/DBFO/BOO	
<b>Design</b>	Private by fee contracts	Private by fee contracts				Private by concession agreement	
<b>Build</b>	Private by fee contracts						
<b>Operation and maintenance</b>	Public	Public	Public	Private by fee contracts			
<b>Finance own</b>	Public	Public	Public	Public	Public		
	Public	Public	Public	Public	Public	Public after contract	
<b>Private sector revenue options</b>					Tolls (Concessions Model)		
				Availability payments			
				Government guaranties and support; Other support			

Source; Fall *et al.*, 2009

## 2. METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Approach and Design of the Study

This study employed a mixed methods research approach with a greater domination of qualitative study (QUAL + quant). This type of study first involved collecting qualitative data that were mainly obtained from interviews and documentary analysis, while on the other hand quantitative data especially obtained from the structured questionnaires were used to add meaning to the qualitative data. (Clarke & Braun, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Stake, 2010). The respondents gave personal accounts of their first-hand experiences and provided a deeper understanding of the phenomena of the public sector working with the private sector to deliver NFSE (Creswell, 2007). The (QUAL + quant) approach used in this study provided the researchers with in-depth knowledge and understanding of multiple perceptions of participants in the context of the relationship between open schools and the IAE.

### 2.2 Sampling and Sample Size

The idea behind the qualitative study is to purposefully select participants of the study that best help the researcher understand the problem and question from the viewpoint of the participants of the study (Creswell, 2007). This study employed a purposeful sampling technique to select the participants of the study. The study employed convenience sampling strategy. Purposeful sampling strategy helped the researchers select the participants at the Institute of Adult Education – at the headquarters – National level in Dar-es-salaam (Table 2). Three (4) senior officials at the IAE and Sixteen (16) open school senior administrators were interviewed. Ten (10) students all in their Advanced level were also interviewed. Twenty (20) of the participants also filled in questionnaires.

**Table 2: The categorization of the sample of respondents**

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
IAE officials	4	13.3
Open schools' administrators	16	53.3
Students	10	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>

Source; Field data 2019

### 2.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected from participants with first hand experiences with open schools and open distance learning. While the researcher used the structured, the participants were asked to indicate their opinions on issues that were used to trap and collect information relating to the research questions. (Denzin, & Lincoln 1994) The data collected through open ended questionnaires were subjected to thematic analysis by assigning codes to the insurgent issues until when the saturation point was reached, a report was written. The researchers deductively identified themes as findings.

### 3. FINDINGS

The study established the challenges faced by open schools when adapting to a concession PPP model. In this line, researchers anticipated getting views for improving the delivery of NFSE through the ODL mode in Tanzania. A wide range of issues were identified from the participants' responses, which revealed the various interpretations of what they understood to be the relationship between the IAE and open schools in terms of partnership, the challenges of this partnership and the possible solutions to the challenges faced in this partnership. This analysis used the research questions a guide to cut through the responses, some of which are normative and it required researchers' intuition and analysis to make logical and acceptable conclusions (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln 1994). Using the questionnaire data collection method, on a Likert scale of 1 – 6 respondents were asked to read the hypothetical statements and indicate how these statements closely express their experiences and opinions. Where: (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3. lightly disagree, 4. Lightly Agree, 5. Agree, 6. Strongly Agree). The findings are summarized in Table 3.

The quantitative findings in Table 3 were triangulated with the findings from other data collection methods including interviews and documentary analysis. The results are discussed in this session to give a guide to the recommendations of the study. The following section presents and discusses some of the major findings from this study, focusing on the participants' first-hand experience with open schools.

**Table 3: Summary of the Findings on the Interaction between IAE and Open Schools**

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	6	Total/%
The IAE must give financial and technical support to private open schools.	9 50.0%	4 22.2%	1 5.6%	3 16.7%	1 5.6%	0 0%	18 90%
Open schools are too small and have a weak position to negotiate a fair PPP deal with the IAE.	7 41.2%	3 17.6%	1 5.9%	3 17.6%	1 5.9%	2 11.8%	17 85%
Open schools in Tanzania are agents working on behalf of the IAE	0 0.0%	1 5.0%	1 5.0%	3 15.0%	6 30.0%	9 45.0%	20 100%
There is equal treatment between the government and private open schools.	1 5%	2 10%	4 20%	6 30%	3 15%	4 20%	20 100%
The IAE and open schools should share ownership in open schools	1 5%	5 25%	6 30%	2 10%	4 20%	2 10%	20 100%
Open schools do not adhere to the regulations and standards set by the IAE.	0 0%	5 27.8%	2 11.1%	4 22.2%	3 16.7%	4 22.2%	19 95%
There is trust and confidence between the IAE and open schools.	7 35%	4 20%	3 15%	3 15%	1 5%	2 10%	20 100%

#### 3.1 PPP model

The study assumed that the various stakeholders had a common understanding of the meaning attached to a PPP contract. Therefore, the subsequent analysis of the findings is built around the acceptable definition of a PPP by the Public Private Partnership Act of 2017 (URT 2017) as any formal collaboration between the public sector at any level (National and local governments, international donor agencies, bilateral government donors) and the non-public sector (commercial, and non-profit) to jointly regulate, finance, or implement the delivery of services, products, equipment, research, communications, or education. The extent to which the IAE is implementing the PPP model can also be analysed on the

continuum of the various PPP models, some of which do not strictly conform to the definition given above. Such models include

### Contractual obligations

Any PPP project does involve a formal agreement in the form of a contract involving the principle and agent as stipulated by the PPP Act (URT 2017). It was found that at a basic level the IAE is the principal and open schools are the agents that conduct ODL to the out of school youths. Data collected from the interviews indicate the respondents' views to the question seeking to determine their **awareness of any formal contractual agreement between the IAE on behalf of the Public sector and the Open schools on behalf of the private sector**. It was found that both the IAE open school administrators acknowledged the formal relationship where the open schools are given the right and authority to operate but not a fully-fledged partnership, as one of the senior officials said that;

*“For sure there is a partnership although we do not have a formal document explicitly talking about a partnership, but the guidelines given by the institute can serve that purpose....”*

Similarly, to add to the argument that there is a basic contractual obligation another IAE officer had this to say;

*Open schools are working under our guidance and they are implementing programs. We set the standards and schedule of examinations, especially the internal examination of the institutes and they are to adhere to those standards. If that is meant by a concession for sure open schools are implementing a concession model. However, I am not sure about the interpretation of a scenario where the institute is in common ownership with private open schools' proprietor.*

Another open school administrator admitted that he had never thought of this as a PPP working relationship but practically that is what it was and he had this to say.

*The institute officials like the new leader now, they come here to inspect and see if we meet the minimum standards. They provide us with the mock examination that students conduct for a proper national examination preparation.*

The above qualitative data were triangulated with the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires from a question that asked the respondents to indicate their opinion on the statement that **“Open schools in Tanzania are agents working on behalf of the IAE”** The responses are recorded in **Table 3** that summarizes the statistical distribution in absolute frequency (n=20) and percentage (n=100). Most respondents (n=20, 45%) strongly agreed with the view that open schools were working on behalf of the IAE. This finding indicates that as long as the private proprietors whether Non-governmental organizations are given the right to implement the ODL programs on behalf of the Institute, but can recoup the expenses of building the infrastructure and the running costs of open schools, then it is a concession agreement. However, most of the participants even the senior administrators admitted that the registration forms and certificates of operation fall a little short from a formal PPP agreement, but for all intents and purposes open schools are concessions that work on behalf of the IAE.

### Concession

The data obtained from the documentary analysis indicate that a concession is a special right granted by the government for a private company to operate and profit from an otherwise public sector asset in exchange for a concession fee or other form of payment for use of those assets (Zhuang & Shu 2012). Through the interview sessions, many respondents expressed their views and understanding that open schools are using the established administrative structure of the IAE to deliver Non-formal secondary education to out formal school youths.

### Central coordination

When asked to comment **about working relationship between the Institute and the opens schools**, most of the open school administrators were positive especially toward the inspection and regular communication from the IAE. As one of the administrators said that

*“The IAE staff keep checking operations in Open School regularly, do not be surprised that even during this interview that they can easily enter here. In fact, the licensing of this centre was delayed because they were unhappy with the narrow road and ordered that it should be widened. We are in constant touch with the institute and we try everything possible to meet their requirements”*

A distance education official was of the view that IAE staff were supervising open school regularly and that there was a close supervision of the school. She said that

*“The institute keeps track of the enrolment lists and the number of students and teachers at our centre. For example, the perform one class has ended and we had more than 500 students attending. The institute has been informed and we are now reopening for the regular classes.”*

The above findings indicate that the granting of a license to offer open schooling services is also tagged with the responsibility of coordinating the programs. It was found that the IAE coordinated the various programs of inspecting and evaluating the various open schools. Through its decentralized administrative mechanism, the IAE central coordinates the examination timetables but gives the open schools the right to design the school timetables.

### **Scheduling of activities**

It was found that there is a partnership in the scheduling of activities, especially the structuring and administration of the examinations either end of term or mock examinations. Scheduling of activities shows that despite the failure to have a formalized PPP arrangement, between the IAE and open schools in the provision of NFSE is an indicator that there is room for more cooperation on a concession and performance contract basis. When **asked to comment about the areas of cooperation between the IAE and the open schools, an official at the IAE** had this to say

*“The IAE is offering training and various forms of assistance even if it is not money, which is all aimed at making private open schools succeed. We send out experts and inspectors to these schools to improve their standards. We offer testing in the form of examination for their benefit. If examinations are not a form of assistance then I do not know what it is!”*

### **Regular meetings**

It was determined that there are regular meetings and consultations between the IAE and open schools. Open schools have an umbrella organization through which they channel their views and opinions to the IAE. It was determined that despite the regular inspections, the two sides meet every 6 months to iron out any outstanding issues. As one of the IAE officials had this to say;

*“For the time I have worked in this office, we have created and promoted an atmosphere of free expression. We are in close contact with the open school even last June, we had a grand meeting that was also in part organized by their chairperson, in such a meeting that we address the burning issues, including timetables and schedules.”*

The above findings indicate that as long as there are regular meetings with the public sector and private sector officials, the partnership between the IAE and the open schools is working and all that is remaining is to elevate this cooperation to a more formal partnership indicated as concessions PPP model

### **Quality and Standards**

The implementation of a successful partnership between the public and private open schools requires agreed upon standards in terms of facilities like quality/qualifications of the teachers, classroom size, sanitation, water facilities, tables and chairs and others. These form the prerequisites for the granting of an open school license. It was found that the open schools on behalf of the IAE subscribe to the standards and failure to comply do result in serious reprimand, suspension or withdrawal of the license all together. The quality and standards control mechanism is typical of the circumstances of the principle-agent relationship in which the contracting authority issues the standard guidelines to be followed by the private sector. One open school administrator during the interview had this to say

*“The institute has given us the requirements and we try our level best to meet them. Our classes are up to date as I will show you and the teacher student ratio is not atrocious. We had a problem with a narrow road, but it has been solved. Unlike other tuition centres that claim that they are registered; they failed to qualify with the institute standards.”*

Finding more about the standards, the researcher probed with the question finding out more about the issue of whether open schools should put on uniforms just like other normal secondary schools. One of the open school administrators in Mwenge said that



*“Standards of open schools are directives from the institute and it is only under special circumstances like over age students or the sick that students can be excused from putting on uniforms for us all students must put on the school T-shirts as part of their uniform. The directives still apply to the time of reporting to school and leaving.*

The above findings indicate that open schools are willing to abide by the regulations and meet the standards. It is up to the IAE to do the regulation and where possible formalize the relationship as a PPP contract preferably a concession model or performance contracts.

### **Equality and Free expression**

One of the important prerequisites of a partnership is the sense of equality among the different partners. Respondents specifically the senior officers at the IAE and the administrators of the open schools were asked to give their views about whether the institutions in not overbearing on the open schools to the extent that there is no freedom to express views and concerns. It was determined although the IAE grant permission to open schools to operate; there is enough freedom to express one’s views constructively.

The researchers asked; **“Does the institute gives equal treatment to the privately owned and its own centers?”** In response to the officer said that;

*“We treat everyone equally. The unfortunate thing is that in Dar-es-salaam the resident tutor is housed here at the headquarters, but when we get to such meetings, we treat them equally just like any other open school proprietor.”*

The same question of equality and fairness was raised to the attention of an administrator at a prominent open school in Ilala district and he had this to say;

*For sure there is freedom of expression otherwise I would not even be telling you this word. When we open school practitioners, meet the IAE officials we feel free to talk and there is no overbearing on behalf of the institute. However, I do not agree that there is fairness for treating the institutes’ own open schools and the private ones like ours. Can you imagine if National Council of Tertiary Education (NACTE) formed its own university! That is unfair.*

The above qualitative data were triangulated with the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires from a question that asked the respondents to indicate their opinion on the assertion that **“Open schools are too small and has a weak position to negotiate a fair PPP deal with the IAE”** The responses are recorded in Table 3 that summarizes the statistical distribution in absolute frequency (n=17) and percentage (n=100). Most respondents (n=17, 41%) strongly disagreed with the hypothetical statement, while only (n=17, 11%) strongly disagreed with the statement. The above findings indicate that despite the seemingly dominant position of the institute over open schools, there is a mutual and more equal power balance. The open schools can freely express their views without fear of recrimination and the institute acts with restraint to the extent that one senior official was calling for lighter penalties for the offending open schools.

### **Financial matters and material support**

It was determined that the IAE does not give financial or material help to open schools. Normally in any partnership, different partners have different obligations to meet to make the partnership achieve the best of the desired end. Financial matters and material support are seen when partners from one entity, for example, the IAE is going out of his/her way to assist the other partner. Respondents from the IAE were asked **if they provide any form of assistance to the open schools.** One of the senior officials at the institute said that;

*For sure it is difficult to quantify the kind of assistance offered by IAE. In terms of money, it’s true, we do not offer any assistance because by law and policy we are not allowed to offer financial assistance to private proprietors. If anything, we also have our own open schools even in a worse off condition. However, when we get donations and assistance in terms of scholastic materials, we sometimes do also give to privately owned open schools in that we do not discriminate because the students that study are these schools belong to all of us.*

The above qualitative data were triangulated with the quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires from a question that asked the respondents to indicate their opinion on the assertion that **“The IAE must give financial and technical support to private open schools.”** The responses are recorded in Table 3, which summarizes the statistical distribution in absolute frequency (n=18) and percentage (n=100). Most respondents i.e. (n=18, 76.6%) did not agree with the statement. About (n=18, 50%) overwhelmingly disagreed with the statement. In addition, at the extreme end no one (n=18, 0%)

strongly agreed with the statement. The above findings indicate that both public and private open school officials do not favour of the Institute providing assistance to open schools unless it is governments' own open school as one of the operating principles of a concession agreement.

### 3.2 The challenges in the development of a formal partnerships

In this study, researchers also, determined the perceptions of the stakeholders on the challenges of forming and running a formal partnership between the IAE and the Open schools. It was found that there are several structural and operational rigidities that have so far delayed the formalization and concretization of the concession PPP model.

#### Keeping up with regulations and standards

It was determined that some of the open schools are not respecting the guidelines give to them during the approval of their application and the eventual certification. According to a senior official at the IAE;

*"It is difficult to enter a formal partnership with some of the private school owners who keep on changing offices even without informing us. Some of the owners of open private schools are crafty. There is one who was given the registration in Dar-es-Salaam but moved to Morogoro with the same registration without applying again. When we went to his school, we had to close it down and asked him to apply again through the Morogoro office."*

It was found that if the IAE has exclusive power to close open schools, then forming a mutual relationship in a partnership is difficult. Even one of the senior IAE officials called for the review of the current policy whereby in case the owners of an open school contravene some rules, there should be lighter punishments than outright closure because ultimately the students suffer.

#### Communications

It was found that poor communication is a challenge to the formation of PPPs in delivering NFSE in Tanzania. Open school administrators were accused of sometimes not adhering to the regulations set forth by the IAE. However, equally, it was discovered the even the IAE also has on numerous occasions failed to meet the deadlines and schedules. An example it that of the up to now delayed mock examination results. Commenting about the delays a senior administrator at an open school had this to say;

*"Can you imagine that we are now left with 1 month to write the National examination and the mock results are not yet out? We set our own examinations a month later and they are already out. We very much wanted the institutes' results so that we can make adjustments where necessary for the teaching if we are to get better grades. Releasing results are the full and sole responsibility of the IAE."*

A similar view on communication challenges was shared from another administrator of open school who was dismayed with the kind of delay in giving the feedback. He had this to say;

*In case the institute lacks enough human resources to conduct such examinations, they should hire more people because we greatly need the feel of the external assessment to our students.*

When the students were asked about the challenge of the external examinations, most of them reaffirmed the words of the administrator that their success in part depended on the external examination and one of them had this to say;

*"The external examinations give us a different feeling and I am confident that I did well. I prefer to study in this format of open school because I come in close contact with my teachers, unlike before when I was in a government school."*

The above information was triangulated with the data obtained from the questionnaires that is summarized in Table 3, and it was determined that there is little confidence and trust and confidence if the two sides are to form a formal partnership. (n=20, 70%) disagreed with the hypothetical statement that there is trust and confidence between the two sides. The above information indicates a communication gap between the IAE and open schools. Despite the acknowledgment of the routine inspections, more clear communication channels and content being communicated should be devised. For example, clear timetables and schedules over examinations should be drawn and in case of any delays, clear communication about the same should be made to all the parties concerned. Regular communication will go a long way not only in reducing communication challenges but also building trust, which is the basis for a strong and enduring PPP project (DFID 2010).

### Classification and standards

It was also found that the lack of standards and uniformity challenged the development of a serious partnership between the IAE and open schools. Some respondents were worried that there is no proper classification of open schools. The lack of standards based on various categories reduces the competition. One of the senior open school administrators had this to say;

*For us, we are discouraged that the institute has so far failed to classify open schools not only on the basis of the facilities offered but on the level of grades obtained in the national examination. We would prefer the institute uses a special program to obtain all the results of the open school centres from NECTA, classify them and publish such results. Setting standards will increase the competition among the open schools and consequently improve the standards of the services offered.*

It was also learned some open schools would prefer to have proper uniforms and strict time tables like the regular schools but so far, the institute has been silent about it and such have not been protected against other schools that are not strict enough. Another senior administrator of an open school had this to say;

*We lost several students to our rivals when we insisted on discipline and strict adherence to the school rules. We would prefer the institute puts us in a different category from other schools so that parents are informed of the differences. We do not want our students to move around the streets because there are so many challenges out there.*

When asked about whether the call for uniformity will compromise the very essence of an open school administrator responded that;

*We need the institute to make clear guidelines, especially with the capacity of students that a given school can take. You find some open schools especially that have poor facilities with overcrowded classrooms and poor services. Each school given the institutions' standards and categorization should have a maximum number of students.*

The above information indicates that in order for the partnership between the IAE and open schools to work properly, there is a need to involve various stakeholders as a matter of policy development. The partnership meetings will help the sides in meeting the required standards in the provision of the NFSE in Tanzania through open schools.

### Competition between the private and public open schools

To have a functioning partnership between the public and private sector, there have to be trust. Unfortunately, there is diminished trust and belief that the IAE can be neutral and fair in discharging its duties. Some respondents from private open schools claim that there is a conflict of interest on behalf of the institute. In response to the questions that; **do you think it is possible for private open schools to partner with IAE over the running of your open school?** One of the senior administrators said that;

*"There is no way a private open school can enter a joint venture with the government, as those people want money no wonder, they have put up such government open schools to frustrate us. Can you imagine what it would be like if we share the same school!"*

A similar question was given to a senior official at the IAE, and he had this to say;

*"Already we are partnering at that level any further partnerships beyond that level would bring us back to the 1969 scenario when the government nationalized FBO run schools because they were not in line with the government objectives in my opinion nothing has changed so far"*

When asked if government open schools also provide Free Universal Secondary education another IAE officer answered that

*"No-the students in public open schools were paying school fees just like the ones in private open schools. The only difference is that for us we are not profit oriented, which makes our fees much cheaper...."*

The above information reveals that some of the most outstanding challenges that can derail the partnership between private open schools and the IAE is the obvious unfair competition between the institute and private open schools as it is a supervisor. It was found that there is an environment of mistrust between the IAE and private open schools, especially when it comes to treating the institute's owned open schools and private open schools.

#### 4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of this research agree with what Shirima (2016) determined that there is weak and unsystematic coordination of NFSE activities among the various entities across various levels. The findings of this research reveal that there is an appreciation by most of the respondents, especially the administrators and senior staff that open schools were working on a concession basis on behalf of IAE education, but the system has fallen short of accepting as a PPP arrangement. It was also learned that there are more challenges yet to be surmounted to increase trust between open schools and the IAE, especially since the institute also runs parallel open schools alongside private open schools. These tantamount duplicate roles and occasion but disruptive overlap can have a serious handicap on the delivery of NFSE just like Shirima (2016) found. According to him, there was duplication of administrative positions and functions caused by differing administrative structures, as well as incoherent policies and incomparable institutional directives.

The challenge of standards and categorization of open schools is still debatable and there is no agreement even among open school administrators. To some this strict approach goes against the very essence of what an open school should be as Mnyanyi and Mbwette (2009) who concluded that there were also indications of misconception about ODL mode of delivery. Some assumed that to be open means to have no control and to have no rules to guide the learning and assessment. Therefore, any formation of a partnership at a concession level should bring on board the different value judgments of the different partners, including the extent of control over the students. Any successful partnership must be built around effective communication. From the findings it has been learned that so far there is good communication between open schools and the IAE to the extent that one of the administrators at one open school applauded the current head of the institute who came personally to visit the centre to get a firsthand experience of what the schools are going through. Such communication and feedback should be encouraged as Ali & Ahmad (2011) point out, that it helps show that instructors are related to learner satisfaction in ODL program. Similarly, Hurd (2007) adds that, the absence of feedback coupled with isolation impact anxiety among distance-learning learners.

#### 5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The relationship between the IAE and open schools in Tanzania is not a formalized PPP arrangement. Nonetheless, it bears all the qualities of a concession PP model between IAE and private open schools and performance contracts between the IAE and its own open schools. Most of the respondents admitted that, as long as the IAE has the power and right to set the standards and regulations that are to be followed by the open schools, then that is the principal – agent relationship that forms the basis for a PPP contract. Figure 3 (*self-constructed*) illustrates the researchers' impression and conceptual understanding of how the PPP concession model can be built based on the research findings. It is shown in figure 3 that the necessary building blocks in terms of institutional, support exists. What is remaining is the formalization of the partnership between the IAE and open schools.

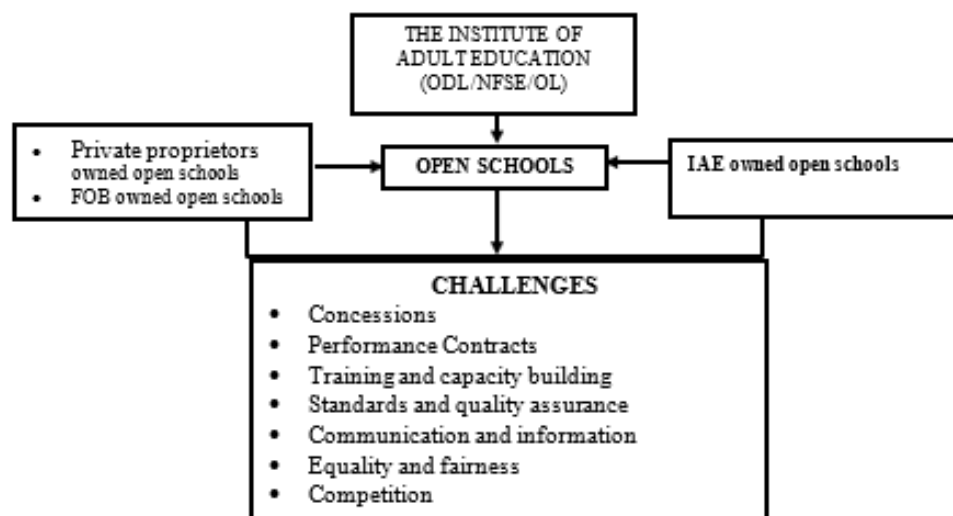


Figure 3: The PPP Concessions Model between the IAE Open Schools

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