

# Teachers' Feelings About the Status of the Teaching Profession and Associated Factors in Tanzania

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## **Abstract**

This study explored secondary school teachers' feelings about their teaching profession and the factors responsible for their feelings. This phenomenology study draws its findings from the lived experience of secondary school teachers with varying working experience levels. Informed by the qualitative inquiry, the paper is mainly empirical and employs interviews and focus group discussions in the data collection process. Findings reveal that teachers and the teaching profession have lower status nowadays than before and after independence, which makes teachers feel bad about their profession. Society regards the teaching profession as the last choice for those who have no other choice and poor living and working conditions. The findings further revealed that low salaries, rare or no teacher professional development, misconduct of teachers and lack of board are factors responsible for negative feelings in the teaching profession. Hence, the revival of the lost status of the teaching profession remains in the hands of educational authorities and education stakeholders. Future studies should focus on the impact of teachers' feelings on their professional well-being and its influence on teaching practices.

**Key Words:** Tanzania, feelings, teachers, teaching profession, teacher motivation

## **Introduction**

Teaching has been the most popular and one of the oldest professions since ancient times. In recent years, it raised the issue of the global deterioration of the teaching profession's status (Mutluer & Yüksel, 2019). Researchers confirm with documents the presence of worsening teaching status (Anangisy, 2009; Mgaiwa, 2018; Namamba & Rao, 2017; Stromquist, 2018); this refers to the perception of the community, teachers themselves and perception from other professionals. Before, society highly respected teachers; now, they no longer respected them (Anangisy, 2009; Matveev, 2021). People from all occupations pass through teachers' hands in the classrooms, which means teachers are the ones who prepare people for all professions (Siddiqui & Ahamed, 2020).

Children spend much time with teachers in many countries, including Tanzania. According to Swati (2012), in India, children spend eight to ten hours with teachers at the school. Teachers are involved in various issues socially, politically and economically at social and national levels. Teachers are essential in national development, for they are on the frontline in facilitating the socio-economic agenda (van Ommering,

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2017). Based on this vital role of taking care of the children for more time than parents, studying their feelings is inevitable to ensure they render quality professional service. These teacher roles span from early childhood education to the university level.

Despite the long and extensive history of respect that teachers received, today, scholars evidenced via documents the global decline of teachers' status, particularly in Tanzania (Anangisye, 2009; Mgaiwa, 2018; Namamba & Rao, 2017). For instance, Fry (2002) pinpointed that, some years back, teachers benefited from considerable communal respect and rational financial reward, but now there is a deterioration in their status. Mutluer and Yüksel (2019) present similar findings from Turkey that teachers have a negative opinion about the social status of teaching profession based on several factors such as financial and the relationship between the Ministry of National Education and teachers. Based on this fact, the current study investigates teachers' feelings as professionals and finds the reasons for those feelings.

Therefore, this article aims to explore teachers' feelings as professionals and determine the factors responsible for those feelings. Specifically, two specific objectives guided the study; to examine teachers' sentiments as professionals and to enquire about factors accountable for teachers' emotions.

## **Literature review**

### ***Teachers as professionals***

Teachers are exceptional professionals who raise all other professionals dealing with human cognition, attitudes, and ethics. Teachers help other professionals acquire the required skills and knowledge of their profession. A professional is a career member or person earning a living from a specified activity (Dada & Fadokun, 2010). Any profession expects its members to exhibit high levels of integrity and trustworthiness as its code of conduct requires.

Studies suggest several characteristics that qualify an activity to be a profession which are; Provision of essential social services (Balyer & Özcan, 2020; Emeh & Ogaboh, 2010), a high degree of autonomy for individual practitioners (Nayak & Padhi, 2022), exalt service above personal gains (Balyer & Özcan, 2020; Emeh & Ogaboh, 2010), and code of ethics and a kind of control over the quality of membership (Dada & Fadokun, 2010; Emeh & Ogaboh, 2010). Also, high status and recognition in society (Fauziah et al., 2021; Emeh & Ogaboh, 2010), possession of specialised knowledge through a long period of training (Dada & Fadokun, 2010), a high degree of autonomy for individual practitioners and the occupation group (Emeh & Ogaboh, 2010), and Professional association (Ajayi, 2007).

Additionally, any professional should have a body of knowledge, be competent, honest and integrity, be accountable, and have self-regulation and image in society.

### ***Feeling of teachers as professionals***

Willard Waller was the first scholar to analyse feelings about teaching in 1932 (Hargreaves & Tucker, 1991). In his analysis, he mentioned positive feelings, such as pride, while there were negative feelings, like fear and guilt, among teachers. These feelings are attached to the contexts where teachers are working. The Online Merriam-Webster dictionary (2023) defines feeling as appreciative or responsive awareness or recognition. The feeling is a subset of emotions that originates from a particular person's situation, mood, or affiliation with others. Pekrun et al. (2002) added that emotion is feelings formed after a specific catalyst. Mulligan and Sherer (2012, p.352) explain features of emotions that they: (1) have a sporadic nature (means an event will have a duration beginning and an end), (2) have intentionality (directed towards achieving an objective), (3) include appraisal (this helps to assesses the objective as good or bad), and (4) link up with bodily changes. So, emotions may be an organism's mechanism to control its environment. Whereby feeling is an idea or belief, especially a vague or irrational one.

The literature shows that teachers recently did not receive the traditional high status and praise, nor do public or private teachers' who still perceive teaching as the same as in the past. As a result of what is happening, teachers are dissatisfied with receiving a low status (Mutluer & Yüksel, 2019). Fauziah et al. (2021) from their study that included six countries, argue that teachers perceive their profession as a low-status, less rewarding profession. Symeonidis (2015) reported the same teaching profession receive low esteem and autonomy compared with other professionals like doctors, engineers, and lawyers, a few to mention. According to society's perception, Wettstein et al. (2021) believed that teachers are stressful professionals. This claim is confirmed by Mugo and Guyo (2018), accentuating that in Kenya, society perceives teachers as professionals as belonging to an unsatisfactory profession. Anangisye (2009) outlines that the status of teachers and the teaching profession is low today compared to the colonial era and a few years after independence. Kasuga (2019) and Mkumbo (2017) agreed with Anangisye that people perceive teachers in Tanzania as professionals with deficient status in society. In this study, teacher feelings are how teachers perceive how they are recognised or appreciated by being teachers about the work they do.

### ***Factors responsible for teachers' feelings***

Researchers worldwide have reported the deteriorating status of teachers as they identify associated factors. Wronowski and Urick (2019), scholars from the United States, narrated that the deterioration of the teaching profession increased from a low level in the state to a higher level that is federal in recent years. Anangisye (2009) outlines that teachers currently receive low status compared to the colonial era and a few years after independence. The government and teachers are concerned with problems leading to deteriorating teachers' status.

Researchers outlined different factors responsible for teachers' feelings as Fry (2002) stressed that many teachers' working and living conditions, especially in rural areas, were not pleasing enough to satisfy teachers. Kasuga (2019) argues that those who joined teacher colleges had low entry qualifications. Moreover, there is no teacher's regulator body, which is the engine of the profession as it describes and fixes standards required for maintaining and improving the quality of the work.

Another factor is the lack of professional development, which is essential to teachers due to changes made by the development of science and technology. Madeline Will, the American Federation of Teachers president, said that the teaching profession is amid an ongoing and alarming crisis. In that case, professional development is obligatory for in-service teachers. Researchers revealed that few or no teachers experience growth in many secondary schools. Scholars in Tanzania testified that teachers are teaching for an extended time without attending any professional development program, which harms their career (Komba & Nkumbi, 2008; Komba & Mwakabenga, 2019).

Milner (2013) explained that fast-track programs such as TFA (Teach for America) contribute to the dissatisfactory feelings of teachers as professionals. This dissatisfactory feeling is because the program prepared teachers briefly, emphasising mastering content knowledge in a particular subject. These fast-track programs did not emphasise developing knowledge and skills in teaching that subject. They assumed that one would acquire leading knowledge and talent along the way.

Research prove that teacher professional misconduct prevails including such as sexual relationships with students, raping, examination irregularities, and truancy (Christensen & Darling, 2020; Lawrent, 2022; Smith, 2023). For instance, Kasuga (2019) found that in the 2010/2011 academic year, the authorities fired many teachers due to professional misconduct. From the literature analysis, low salaries, poor working and living conditions, lack of teacher professional development, teachers' misconduct, and lack of a regulatory body are factors responsible for teachers' feelings in many countries, particularly Tanzania.

### ***Teacher motivation in teaching profession***

Despite teachers feeling and associated factors, a number of theories explains how teachers can be motivated, one of the theories being the Maslow theory. Many factors influencing teachers negative feeling towards teaching profession are against Maslow theory of hierarchy of needs. The psychologist Abraham Maslow suggested five needs humans must satisfy before acting unselfishly (Shikalepo, 2020). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory guided this study to understand teachers' satisfaction that leads to the feelings of being in the teaching profession. As outlined by Maslow, the five needs are; physiological needs, which are basic needs for sustaining human life, such as food, water, warmth, shelter, and sufficient rest. Maslow explained that ful-

filling these basic physiological needs before moving to another level is necessary (Griffin, 2011; Shikalepo, 2020). Safety needs include protection from violence, theft, well-being, emotional stability, health security, financial security, fear, anxiety, chaos and natural disaster. Love and belonging needs, according to Maslow, these needs become important after people satisfy their first two types of presented needs above. Since people are social beings, they need to be loved, to belong and to be accepted by other people. Esteem needs, according to Maslow, once people begin to satisfy their need to belong, they want to be held in esteem both by themselves and by others. The primary element is self-respect, believing you are valuable and deserve that dignity. The esteem needs include self-respect, acknowledgement from others, confidence, and competence. Maslow categorises two levels of esteem needs, self-esteem and reputation. Self-actualisation, Maslow regards this need as the highest in his hierarchy which fulfils full human potential. Self-actualisation includes education and skills development like designing, music, cooking, caring for others, winning awards, and travelling to new places.

As Maslow theory suggested, teachers need to have those needs just like other human beings. Teachers need protection from violence in their profession and from theft of their properties, well-being, emotional stability, health security, financial security, and security in their work, which will make them feel comfortable. The achievement of the said needs to help teachers elevate their societal status. It renders the respect and recognition they deserve that ultimately motivating the conduct of their professional practices (Okafor & Abraham, 2021).

### **Methodology**

The methodology contains detailed procedures or skills used to classify, select, process and evaluates information about the investigated topic. This part helps to describe the study, collect data and show how to answer the questions under investigation. Finally helped to evaluate the reliability and validity of the research.

### **Research approach and design**

The study used the qualitative research approach. The approach allowed researchers to examine the lived experience of participants from the social circumstances of the investigated phenomenon from the informants' worldview (Cresswell, 2014; Qutoshi, 2018). The study employed phenomenology research design. The design is suitable to study the lived experiences of respondents in their natural setting (Cresswell, 2014; Patton, 2015). In this case, the design assisted to understand teachers' feelings about the teaching profession. Liamputtong (2019) supports the research inquiry base on what people see, hear or feel in making sense of social experiences. Cleland (2017) added that qualitative research is necessary for education research as it discusses why and how research questions enable deeper thoughtful of phenomena, experiences and

context. Qualitative research agrees by asking unquantified inquiries to recognise human understanding.

### Area of the study

The study area was in Iringa district council in Iringa region, Tanzania. Of 47 secondary schools in the council, 32 are government schools, and 15 are private schools. The study involved seven selected public secondary schools and picked teachers with varying levels of working experience. Public schools are reported to have poor working conditions and have low remunerations compared to some private schools. The distance from the city to respective schools bar them from living in town because of an unaffordable cost, but villagers' perceptions of a teacher are quite different from those in town.

### Participants and sampling procedures

The study employed purposive sampling technique to select fifteen (15) teachers from seven secondary schools in the Iringa district council. Selected teachers are experienced enough from eight to thirty years of work. Their involvement in the teaching profession at that time gave them plentiful information about the status of the teaching profession by experiencing or hearing from society. The teachers from selected schools have working experience ranging from 7 to 30 years. They have lived and experienced life in both urban and rural places. With this experience, they could provide plentiful information on the tabled topic. Their rich and valuable information on how they feel about being teachers and the reasons for their feelings are important in this study.

The study used pseudonyms to maintain the anonymity of the participants.

**Table 1.**

*Respondents' demographic and interview information*

#	Pseudo name	Gender	Working experience	Data collection method	Interview date	Duration (Minutes)
1	Nova	Male	14 Years	Focus group discussion	20/06/2022	60
2	Ambakisye	Male	20 Years	Focus group discussion	20/06/2022	60
3	Tumaini	Female	22 Years	Focus group discussion	20/06/2022	60
4	Furaha	Female	18 Years	Focus group discussion	20/06/2022	60
5	Anipenda	Female	27 Years	Focus group discussion	20/06/2022	60
6	Tuntufye	Male	16 Years	Focus group discussion	20/06/2022	60
7	Bakari	Male	30 Years	Interview	18/06/2022	20
8	Ajuaye	Female	14 Years	Interview	15/06/2022	19
9	Magea	Male	20 Years	Interview	22/06/2022	18
10	Amenipa	Male	15 Years	Interview	17/06/2022	17
11	Peace	Female	08 Years	Interview	18/06/2022	15
12	Tony	Male	07 Years	Interview	19/06/2022	15
13	Merry	Female	16 Years	Interview	19/06/2022	14
14	Ami	Female	11Years	Interview	21/06/2022	13
15	Hino	Male	11 Years	Interview	17/06/2022	13

### **Data collection method**

Under the research questions and the requirement for credible, trusted and dependable data, the study employed two data collection methods: one-to-one semi structured interviews and a focused group discussion. Semi structured interviews and focus group discussions focused on the extent related to how teachers feel like professionals and the factors responsible for their feelings. The triangulation of data collection methods (semi structured interviews and focus group discussions) as used by researchers ensured trustworthiness and credibility of the findings. Both interviews and focused group discussion were conducted in schools in an office provided by the school management.

#### ***Semi structured interview***

An interview is a dialogue between the interviewee and interviewer to collect information whereby the interviewer and interviewee are the organisers of the process by probing questions. Therefore, the method allowed the participants to air their views about the subject under study, while allowing the researcher to probe for detailed information (Patton, 2015). Researchers invited five (5) participants for one-to-one interviews after working hours in offices at their respective schools, and the duration was 13 to 20 minutes (See Table 1). The interview guiding questions were: How do you feel to be a teacher? What are the reasons for your feelings? How do you think the society perceive you? Do you think teaching profession receive the same status as other professions such as Medicine, Engineering and Law? And why?

#### ***Focus group discussion***

A Focus group is an extended interview method, a more specific in-depth group interview with discussion from participants who experienced or have the same knowledge about the investigated topic (Gundumogula, 2020). The discussion followed a sequence of designed interview questions (Silverman, 2011). Researchers and teachers conducted focus group discussions after working hours in the evening. Six participants simultaneously participated in two separate focus group discussions from two different schools after working hours (See Table 1). Nyumba et al. (2017) opined that for a focus group discussion to take place, there must be at least three members. Hence in schools where there were three members and above, they participated in focus group discussions. Discussion questions were the same as in interview, and researchers manoeuvred its administration not to influence responses. Researchers introduced the topic that allowed the participants to discuss while researchers kept on probing for detailed information during the discussion.

### **Data analysis**

During the data analysis process, researchers transcribed all interviews and fo-

cus group interviews. The generated data from interview and focused group discussion were subjected to thematic analysis involving six concurrent processes (Braun & Clarke, 2019). Initially, the researchers read the transcripts repeatedly to familiarize themselves with the data about teachers' feelings as professionals and factors responsible for their feelings and seek what emerged directly from the transcripts. Then, they generated initial codes, searched for themes based on the research questions, reviewed themes, defined and named themes, and finally reported the findings based on themes and subthemes developed from the process (Braun & Clarke, 2019). In presentation of the findings, the selected quotations from interviews and group discussions support the developed themes. The headings in the findings are guided by research questions, but the sub-headings are thematically developed from the collected data.

### **Trustworthiness and dependability of the study**

Researchers employing more than one method in data collection help them to gather adequate and balanced data from different angles. Stahl and King (2020) insisted that triangulation through the use of multiplicity methods functions as a way of proving the trustworthiness of data from single sources, therefore improving the validity of instruments. For that reason, face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions constituted a data collection process. Bengtsson (2016) explain that researchers can use qualitative interviews, open ended questionnaires, pictures, films or observation of a situation as the primary strategy for data collection. Additionally, researchers used peer debriefing, where they consulted peers who are expert in the field to crosscheck the tools before data collection.

### **Findings**

This study explored teachers' feelings about their teaching profession and the factors responsible for their feelings in secondary schools. This section presents the findings in explaining the main objective of the study. Specifically, the study intends to answer two research questions based on investigating teachers' feelings as professionals and the factors responsible for their feelings in Tanzania secondary schools. The sections below present a detailed analysis in response to the study's specific objectives.



**Table 2.**  
*Summary of themes and sub-themes*

S/N	Theme	Sub-Theme
1	Teachers' feelings as professional	Teachers feel inspired and proud in teaching Teachers feels dissatisfied in teaching profession Lacking self-efficacy in teaching
2	Factors for teachers' dissatisfactory feelings in the teaching profession	Low entrance qualifications to the teaching profession Teachers professional misconduct Poor teachers' remuneration Fast-track teacher preparation programs The need for professional development Absence of teachers' professional board Poor working and living conditions

### **Teachers' feelings as professional**

The study's first objective was to investigate how teachers feel about themselves as professionals. Although teachers have shown how bad they feel, some teachers have mixed feelings based on their experience in some cases and contexts within society.

#### ***Teachers feel inspired and proud in teaching***

Although teachers have shown how bad they feel, some teachers have mixed feelings based on their experience in some cases and contexts within society. For example, Teacher Magea reveals that he is inspired to be a teacher and loves the job. He believes that committed teaching is more like investing in your learners. When students succeed, teachers have attained the teaching profession goal. He reveals this as he said, *"I observed from my parents who are now retired teachers were highly respected, this inspired me a lot to join this profession. Seeing my students excel makes me proud even the people respect me"*. Teacher Hino from a different school provides similar findings that he is thankful and proud to be a teacher. He compared his current life with the life he lived with his parents and found that he has achieved much, and with that, he loves being a teacher. He admits, *"I'm so happy with a thankful heart to be a teacher. It helps me to fulfil basic needs in my family and my relatives. We had a tough life. I started schooling without shoes"*. Again, in addition to what Magea said, teacher Nova also aired that; -

It depends on the context. I feel bad. In one of our family meetings, I remember I had little to contribute in terms of advice because I did have money. They told me to go and do some activities while others were in a family meeting....try to imagine how painful it was! But in some offices, you are given priority when you visit for services. However, we are unsure if we receive the priority because of the profession's value or how they pity us [all are laughing] (Nova).

### ***Teachers feels dissatisfied in teaching profession***

The study reveals that many respondents strongly agreed that they are not feeling good about their profession as they are no longer prouder or not confident with their profession. It reaches the stage where they are not confident to introduce themselves as a teacher because society no longer respects them. This situation is due to several reasons which lead society to disvalue the teaching profession. Teachers admits that some teachers who commit misconducts and the government which fails to provide attractive working environments are the reasons for the deterioration of the teaching profession, making teachers feel bad. The findings contradict the esteem needs as Maslow's theory describes, which seeks to acquire self-respect and feel valued and dignity from what one does. One interviewee, Peace, aired that *"I am not feeling so comfortable with how society perceives us teachers. I am still in this field because there is no other alternative for running life"*. In another response similar to what Peace reported, Mr Bakari added that; -

I cannot explain how I feel because it is now a shameful profession compared to when I started this work. Teachers and the teaching profession were highly respected! Society considered teachers as well-qualified, knowledgeable people with morals and ethics; we were used to giving counselling to other people. We were given priority in the community meetings, even in the church. But not now (Bakari).

The findings revealed that teachers' feelings as professionals are unsatisfactory. Unsatisfaction is because their status is deficient as the community, they live in no longer respects them. For example, Merry said, *"From 1992's teachers were receiving high respect from society! I think it was because of their economy and society believed that teacher can do anything in the society"*. Also, another participant clarified more as he said that; -

Teachers in the villages are still respected because they have at least good economic status compared to their surrounding community. This situation is different to those teachers from the town where many economically sound people surround them. But generally, society respects professionals like engineers, doctors and lawyers, and maybe now accountants (Amenipa).

### ***Lacking self-efficacy in teaching***

Another participant explained that teachers are not confident in introducing themselves as teachers due to their current status. They are signalling the fear of being despised. The fear is an indication that they are not proud of their profession. She revealed that; -

When I'm trying to compare several years back when we were students, especially in primary, teachers were highly respected. Their families were of high status. Teachers were proud of their profession, not like today. I don't want to introduce myself or people to mention me as a teacher! (Tuntufye).

The findings revealed some teachers are in the teaching profession because they failed to join the profession of their dreams. In this view, they feel negative about everything in being teachers. They admit they cannot find anything to be proud of and always see people in society laughing at them. The feeling has affected their capacity to teach as they feel forced to teach rather than self-motivated. Tony, one of the participants, said; -

I cannot exactly explain how I feel being in the teaching profession, but I'm in this field simply because I failed to join my dream profession. I dreamed of being a doctor, but my form six result didn't allow me to be selected. But this teaching profession is not receiving value and respect in general (Tony).

### **Factors for teachers' dissatisfaction in the teaching profession**

The study's second objective was investigating factors responsible for teachers' feelings. The findings revealed several factors responsible for teachers' dissatisfaction as professionals in Tanzania. Factors include low entrance qualification, teachers' professional misconduct, low remuneration, the once-used fast-track teacher preparation, limited chances for professional development, absence of teachers' professional board, and poor working and living conditions. The following sections explain these factors that made teachers valued less and receive less respect from society.

#### ***Low entrance qualifications to the teaching profession***

Findings portray that from the 1990s up to the 2000s, those students who scored division four in the form four national examination were not allowed to join universities. Instead, the government recruited them to join teacher training colleges to obtain a Certificate or Diploma in teacher education. With their low performance, they could not proceed to advanced secondary education to join universities to pursue the bachelor's degrees of their choice. This context was the primary reason societies believed that the teaching profession was for failures whose performance was a barrier to applying for any other job. In response to this finding, Mr Anipenda pinpointed that; -

Back then [several decades ago], students who failed in form four national examination joined teacher colleges. It was normal to hear from people asking students who could not proceed with other higher levels of learning if they failed even to send them to teachers' training college. It means teacher colleges were the option for those with no choice (Anipenda).

The findings again indicated that the government partly contributed to the trend in which the teaching profession lost its status in society. The teaching environment has been poor hence not attracting students who performed higher. Those with first and second classes in examination results preferred to join law, medicine and engineering professions rather than teaching. Another participant supplemented that;

First, it is a mistake made by our government to allow students who complete form four with division four to join teachers' colleges. These students are unqualified to continue with advanced secondary education. Can you imagine the one who scores division four will prepare doctors, engineers or lawyers? Can you imagine how difficult it is? Allowing this situation was the government's first mistake that assures society that this profession is for those who failed to continue further studies (Nova).

Teachers believe that revising entry qualifications into the teaching profession will help revive the diminishing status in society. They say once teachers regain the lost status, their remuneration also will be improved to reflect the status and the noble task they perform. Tony confirms this finding by saying, *"I think our government should revise the entry criteria to join teacher education programs. This will help restore their status and remunerations"*.

### ***Teachers professional misconduct***

Findings revealed that some teachers are engaging in love affairs with students. In recent years, there has been an escalation of unethical and misconduct among teachers. These misconducts include teachers establishing sexual relationships with their students. Male teachers have been more involved in these professional misconducts than female teachers. These findings are similar to Christensen and Darling (2020), Lawrent (2022) and Smith (2023). These studies also reveal that these wicked issues are teachers' sexual relationships with girls' students, raping, drunkenness, and so many bad cases, which sure are deteriorating the status of the teaching profession. The consequences of these acts contradict the third level in Maslow's theory, love and belonging, where one needs to feel accepted and belong to a particular society. All teachers supported the findings in unison as Bakari declared that; -

Some teachers are doing shameful things which make us lose our social image for sure! by being in a relationship with girls, which is a severe issue that we have to rebuke!! They are killing the destination of our students because they will never perform in their studies. These teachers erode the trust that parents and society have in us teachers (Bakari).

The findings further reveal that these sexual relationships, in some cases, end up impregnating girls forcing them to drop out of school. Mr Tuntufye, who has been

teaching for sixteen years in several schools, was deeply against these acts as he said, *“We hear from various places teachers having sexual relationships with students and impregnating them. Imagine someone trusted to take care of the children is doing that. It breaks the trust the society has for teachers”*. Although Magea warns that not all teachers engage in such misconducts, despite tarnishing the image of the teaching profession. He confirms this by saying, *“Teachers are no more respected and receive honour from the society as they did previously. Things are upside down now because few don’t behave themselves”*.

### ***Poor teachers’ remuneration***

Findings revealed that teachers’ low salaries and lack of allowances caused low financial quality compared to other disciplines like lawyers, soldiers and doctors. Low wages and lack of allowances lead teachers to have a poor standard of life; for that reason, society undervalues the teacher profession. Maslow believed that low income leads to financial insecurity that makes people fail to sustain living with basic needs and hence become demotivated in what they do. Teacher Ambakisye confirmed this by saying, *“Due to living expenses, our salaries are not enough to fulfil our needs. Sometimes we fail even to pay house rent. This situation forces many teachers to seek loans from financial institutions to fulfil their needs”*. Tony further believes that some teachers earn less compared to some peasants who can generate more income through various agricultural activities. He revealed this when he said, *“... Also, compared to some peasants’ income, low-income teachers have made society disvalue the profession totally”*.

Also, teachers reveal that what a teacher can achieve throughout their career can be achieved quickly from someone in other professions like doctors and lawyers. In the eyes of the same society, they believe this is not a rewarding profession; hence they work hard to educate their kids so they can pursue other professions rather than teaching. Teacher Merry confirmed these findings as she revealed that; -

Other professions have high salaries and allowances, which soften their lives. A teacher who has served for thirty years cannot afford to build a house, while a lawyer within five years can build a house and have a nice car. About ninety per cent of teachers have loans in private loans institutions enslaved by us (Merry).

Teacher Magea further admitted that many teachers are experiencing difficult life. They struggle to send their children to the best schools for quality education as other people do. Apart from discouraging them, the situation demotivates and lowers their social status. Findings again reveal that the condition results in drunkard behaviours and neglecting their families. Which further erodes their already diminishing status in the public eye. Megea supports this finding by adding, *“Due to their low salary,*

*teachers still live in rental houses and cannot afford to send their children to higher education”.*

### ***Fast-track teacher preparation programs***

Findings reveal that at a certain period, teacher preparation programs provided in a brief period which were insufficient to equip teachers both in content and pedagogy, was another factor. In early 2000, the government expanded access to secondary education by building secondary schools in each ward. In this period, there was a high demand for trained teachers to be deployed to these schools; hence, they initiated short-term training programmes of two to three months. The fluctuation in the duration of training programmes indicates that the profession lacks guiding principles and policies to ensure its quality. One participant opined that: -

Some years ago, the government introduced the crash program for training student-teachers for a short time due to insufficient teachers following the implementation of Education for All goals. These were not enough to equip student teachers to be competent, and the authorities recruited these candidates with low grades (Furaha).

In the same period, the findings have revealed that even those teacher education programmes offered for two years changed to one year with the same curricula coverage. Another participant elucidates that; -

Changing the training duration from two years to one year and after a few years back to two years in teacher training colleges for diploma and certificate of teacher education is a problem. There was no specific training duration, so anyone could be trained for any duration and recognised as a professional teacher. This twist lowered teachers’ status in the community (Tumaini).

### ***The need for professional development***

Findings revealed that teachers do not have regular professional development to upgrade their education level and increase their knowledge. In Maslow’s theory, developing and acquiring new skills and education constitute attaining self-actualisation, which catapults one’s motivation to do what they do and raise their status. Professional development training intends to update in-service teachers, which can give them a chance to have one step ahead in terms of salary grades, hence improving their economy. A respondent aired out that; -

In our careers, we do not have professional development apart from those for supervising national examinations. The issue of upgrading your education is your effort without government support. What is so bad is that the government does not consider a master’s degree in secondary school.

Also, they have a lot of professional development, like seminars which increase their knowledge and economy (Peace).

### ***Absence of teachers' professional board***

Findings disclosed that, In Tanzania, there is no teachers' professional board whose primary function is to set standards and oversee and advise the government or employers about relevant professions. One participant underscored that:

In those countries where the teaching profession is respected, it is because of the presence of the teachers' profession board. In our country, professions like law and medicine are respected and valued because they have a professional board. Lacking this board in our field causes many things to go wrong and allow politics to interfere. We have seen the crash program's introduction, low salaries allowances, poor working conditions, and so many bad things which the board could be the solution (Nova).

### ***Poor working and living conditions***

The study found that teachers in Tanzania work and live in poor environments, which are not attractive. This poor environment is one of the factors that made teachers feel dissatisfied. During the interview, one respondent, Merry, opined, "*We are working and living in a poor environment compared with other professionals living in a good environment contrary to a teacher*". The finding falls on the first and second levels of Maslow's theory. Poor living environments among teachers do not provide suitable, comfortable and safe shelter. The situation may lead to dissatisfaction and lower the people's motivation to perform their duties.

Ajuaye from Isimila secondary school admits that she dreamed of becoming a teacher, the profession she loved the most. However, the working conditions she experiences have changed her mind to the point of regretting being a teacher. She reveals these findings by saying, "*Unfortunately, after joining the field, I experienced different things from what I expected. We live in poor houses, low salaries which are too hard to sustain their life; No one respect a person with difficult life*".

## **Discussion**

This study aimed to explore teachers' feelings as professionals and the factors responsible for their feelings in Tanzania secondary schools. It focused on exploring the emotions of secondary school teachers as professionals in Tanzania. On teachers' feelings, findings from this study concur with Mgaiwa (2018) and Namamba and Rao (2017) that teachers in Tanzania lost their status soon after independence. Experienced teachers are more dissatisfied with their teaching careers compared to less experienced teachers. The finding implies that even those intrinsically motivated to enter teaching professions might change their mind and become demotivated due to surrounding fac-

tors in their working environment and society. Education stakeholders should promote the position of teachers in society since they are the ones who prepare people for other professions. Deteriorating the status of the teaching profession led to attrition, killing teachers' morale and motivation and bringing stress to teachers. The ultimate result of the deteriorated status of teaching has deterred potential candidates from joining the teaching profession. Teachers' misconducts also contribute to the deterioration of teachers' status. Teachers' behaviour is fundamental in building and retaining professional status in society. This result concurs with Kasuga (2019) found that one of the factors for the deteriorating quality of the teaching profession is teachers' behaviour. Public Service Act No. 8 of 2002 vests the responsibility of formulating and enforcing the code of professional conduct for the teaching profession on the Teachers' Service Department (TSD) (Anold & Mwila, 2022; URT, 2002; URT, 2018).

On factors for dissatisfactory feelings of teachers, findings are similar to Kasuga (2019) and Symeonidis (2015), that entry qualification for teaching qualification is relatively low compared to other professionals such as Doctors, Engineers and lawyers, to mention a few. Maslow's theory on self-esteem needs describes the comparison with other professions that includes getting social respect, dignity and the value they receive, and safety needs where people have the financial security to manage their basic needs. Teaching is considered a low-status profession as the findings reveal they lack both self-esteem and safety needs (Fauziah et al., 2021; Wettstein et al., 2021; Mugo & Guyo, 2018). Also, in their research, Anangisye (2009) found that teaching applicants selected were totally among those with doubtful qualifications to obtain admission for further studies. To revive the dying status of the teaching profession, the government should benchmark in other countries with the best education systems and review the entry qualification. Besides, time for teacher preparation matters a lot, given their position. Enough time for teacher preparation can influence quality education (Milner, 2013).

Low salaries expose teachers to a lot of debt, given the expensive life, and the ends don't meet (Mutluer & Yüksel, 2019). Additionally, low remuneration demotivates teachers. Low wages kill teachers' morale, resulting in teacher attrition (Kasuga, 2019; Mkumbo, 2017). Teachers struggle to make ends meet to provide basic needs to their families, such as food, shelter and clothing, which Maslow's theory describes as part of physiological needs. Borrowing money only helps teachers feel secure financially, but the teaching profession is not rewarding enough.

Likewise, Professional development is essential since it updates teachers' skills and knowledge. Since the world we are living in is changing, teacher professional development has become inevitable. These findings agree with what Koda (2014) reveals, in Tanzania, teachers teach for an extended period without attending any professional development program, which harms their careers and deteriorate their social status. Komba and Nkumbi (2008) and Komba and Mwakabenga (2019) discoursed



that teacher professional development is crucial, not only on content and pedagogy, but teachers' wellbeing in general in understanding the society they live and work. Regular professional development can help remind teachers of their position, duties, responsibilities and rejuvenate trust that society puts in them despite low payment, poor working and living condition and lack of motivation to mention a few. Through professional development teachers can be reminded that teaching is not a mere gainful profession but rather a calling (Madero, 2021).

Maslow's theory asserts that one can reach self-actualisation through education and skills development to fulfil their full potential. Having a regulatory board adds value to a profession; however, the findings have revealed that there is no teachers' professional board to regulate their continuous professional development. A board can guide to fight for professionals' rights and raise the qualification and standards of the professionals. Hence, the teaching profession in Tanzania should have an independent regulatory authority that can revive the status of teachers and the teaching profession in Tanzania. Ishumi (2013) pinpointed that the responsibility of the regulator board is to boost and discipline all members within the profession.

Poor working and living conditions for teachers result in low-quality education as teachers become demotivated in their teaching activities. This situation is similar to what Kasuga (2019) and Nyamubi (2019) discovered in some schools, the teachers' offices do not have adequate chairs and tables. Teachers used to sit under trees. Matveev (2021) added that living and working conditions, especially for many rural teachers, were not attractive enough to people a situation which force some teachers to think leaving the profession. Teachers need conducive working and living environments to achieve the expected quality of education. Maslow emphasises that people are motivated to be more productive when they meet their physiological needs, including shelter, comfortable working places, and safety needs that ensure their security. Lacking these basic requirements in teachers' working environments makes them feel unrecognised and their status damaged.

According to findings, some teachers are unhappy with their profession because they receive low salaries; hence, they struggle to fulfil their needs (Mutluer & Yüksel, 2019), as explained by Maslow in hierarchies. They feel not respected in society because they cannot have their own houses or send their children to the best schools, which could help them reach self-actualisation (Sahito & Vaisanen, 2017).

## **Conclusion**

The study explored teachers' feelings about their teaching profession and the factors responsible for their feelings. Findings have uncovered negative feelings that teachers have concerning the teaching profession. In light of research findings, teachers have developed such negative feelings due to associated factors that demotivate them in their teaching careers. This dissatisfactory feeling of teachers is killing the

soul of teaching, resulting in teachers' stress, attrition, and teacher turnover. Teachers are the ones who make all other professions, so they need to fulfil their needs, as narrated in Maslow's theory, specifically to be respected in society and have financial security. In short, teaching is the mother of all other disciplines, as it is the one that starts preparing medical doctors, lawyers, engineers, accountants and other experts in various occupations.

It is inevitable to review teachers' remunerations, entry qualifications and continuous professional learning, improve their working and living conditions, and fully enforce the professional code of conduct. Since society regard teaching as 'light' and 'salt', authorities should nurture it as required to train and prepare other competent professionals. This noble task is not a simple endeavour, requiring dedication and commitment from a broad spectrum of stakeholders. Educational authorities should take a step further in creating supportive working and learning environments for the growth of the teaching profession. The support includes providing financial support and aiding professional development opportunities. The government needs to formulate an independent regulatory body for teachers is necessary to enhance retaining teachers' status. Introducing a teachers' professional board, which by working together with the government, will bring back and higher the teacher and teaching profession status in Tanzania. Improving the teaching profession to regain its status in society is the only way to attract more qualified personnel to join teaching. Therefore, the study implies that government should consider developing teacher education policies that focus on improving working environment in the teaching professions.

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