

CAN PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES WORK IN A SITUATION OF HIGH POWER INEQUALITIES? LESSONS FROM TANZANIA

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ABSTRACT

There has been a growing and persisting demand towards auspicious more integrated approaches that will catapult participation of multiple actors in social and economic activities. Such impulsion accelerated the adoption of various participatory approaches which endeavor at attaining cohesion in decision making and equity in enjoying social and economic services. The use of participatory approach is also seen in policy making where the focus has changed to bottom-up approach to provide more opportunities to multiple actors from the lower level to be involved in policy making. Since the adaption of participatory approaches its triumphs have been reported to be poor. It is due to the fact that, participatory approaches involve various actors who acquire power from different sources which makes it difficult to prevent power asymmetries. Given that situation, the important to ask: can participatory approaches work in a situation of high power inequalities? The paper aims at unveiling the impact of power on participatory approaches drawing examples from Tanzania Participatory planning approach commonly known as Opportunity and Obstacles to Development (O &OD). The paper employs secondary data from various documents. It ends by concluding that variations of power are critical issue compromising the effective implementation of participatory approaches in the community.

Key Words: *participatory approaches, power, opportunities and obstacles to development*

Introduction

The emergence of participatory approaches is the response to top-down approach in which powers and decision making is concentrated in the hands of external development professionals (VSO, 2009). The top-down approach was accused to contribute to persistent poverty as well as inappropriate and unsustainable development programmes due to lack of involvement communities in the process of identification and programme design (Mosse, 2001). Thus, participatory approaches is regarded as the best approach towards the success of projects and programmes because it provides opportunity for every actor or participant who has a stake in the intervention to have a voice either in person or by representation. In participatory approaches the

actors are said to be the agents of change and decision making. Moreover, the proponents of participatory approaches enlighten participatory approaches in relation to equity and empowerment that, participatory approaches enhance capacity of individual to improve their lives and facilitate change to the advantaged and disadvantaged or marginalized (Clever, 1999). On the other side, participatory approaches are viewed in conjunction with community development. This assumption is grounded on a belief that citizens are the centre for development. In line with this, Nyerere (1968) argues that:

Development is the participation of the people in mutual learning experience involving themselves, their local resources, external change agent and outside resources. People cannot be developed but they can only develop themselves by participating in activities which affect their being. People are not developed when they herded like animals into new venture (Nyerere, 1968).

Moreover, World Bank (1996) contended that, social change cannot occur if the external experts alone acquire, analyze and present information. Therefore, participatory approaches especially to development evolved quickly throughout the 1980's into early of 1990's and became very popular and all bilateral development claimed to adopt participatory approaches (Henkel & Stirrat, 2001). During those periods various participatory approaches were introduced such as Rapid Rural Appraisal, Participatory Action Research and Participatory Rural Appraisal (Duraiappah, 2005). By the 1990's continuing to present participatory approaches has become a prominent mechanisms to steering development and has gained popularity in social, economic and political arenas.

The paper starts by discussing theories underpinning participatory approaches. It analyzes the features of participatory approaches. It goes further into looking the trajectory of participatory planning in Tanzania. Moreover, since the main discussion focuses on power, the paper provides discussion on power and the theories grounding it. It further examines the studies done by Mollel (2010), Chaligha (2008) and Fjeldstad, Lucas & Erast (2010) to analyze the impact of power on participatory planning. Secondary data review were employed whereby various documents including, journals, thesis, government documents such as policies, manuals and reports were used to enrich the study with appropriate data concerning the impact of power in participatory planning approach in Tanzania.

Theories of participatory approaches

Participatory approach did not emanate from nowhere. The credibility that it gained to be a sound mechanism that involves multiple actors to enhance development in political, social and economic arenas was championed by the existence of several theories:

Rational choice theory

This theory perceives human being as a rational decision maker with known alternatives and usually makes decision guided by rational calculation of which options will maximize their gains or ends frequently known as payoff (Gul, 2009). In this regard, participants or actors choose from a choice of set of possible actions in order to try and obtain the desired outcomes (Alfredson & Cungu, 2008). Each participant has a unique inducement structure which comprises a set of costs associated with various action united with a set of probabilities that reflect live hoods of various action which leads to a certain desired outcomes (ibid). Therefore, the proponents of participatory approaches believe that actors are rational and are able and capable to make best decisions that affect their well being as Bruce (1964) argues that, development without co-operation is unethical and it is deadly sin for such development planners to assume that the people themselves have no idea of their need and how best they could be met. Reeler (2007) chipped in by arguing that, individuals can identify and solve problems and imagine different options, think themselves and their present stories into preferred futures, being able to project possible outcomes or visions and develop conscious plans to bring about change. In this regard actors (local people) are viewed to have ability to define their own problems, identifying situations that give rise to such problems, setting priorities for their resolution, and identifying and formulating project interventions that may help to solve some of those problems (ESCAP, 2009).

Problem solving theory

This theory is best explicated by Murray (1986). The theory is based on a belief that the world is controlled by enlightened self-interest and most of the time negotiators(parties) value the common interest that govern the parties. In this regard, interdependence within the system is acknowledged, and although there are limited resources but actors (problem solvers) see as an unlimited in personal preferences among the resources. The problem solving theorists believe that the distribution system is largely integrative in nature, where by each party maximize joint gain relying upon their personal preferences. The advocates of this theory view participatory approaches as the negotiation process between actors with diverse interest, demands and choices. They believe that participatory approaches endeavor at seeking diverse opinion whereby people disagree and debate which is fine because it makes for a richer, better and more sustainable result (PMO-RALG, 2007a). Therefore, despite the disagreement of the actors there is always consensus since the actors value the common interest which makes it easier to attain cohesion in decision making which played a pivotal role in maximizing joint gain basing on personal preferences.

Grasping from the problem solving theory we can presumably, argue that diversity is imperative for the triumph of participatory approaches and it has lower possibility of impeding participation of the actors. This is substantiated by the Ryan (2009) who came up with Causality Orientations Theory (COT).This theory based on describing individual differences and how people orient to

various aspects of the environment in modifying their behavior. It is grounded on the notion that when autonomy-oriented, an individual orients to what interests them normally acts with congruence. The second assumption is that, when control-oriented, a person mainly alters behavior by orienting to social controls and reward contingencies, and when impersonally-oriented a person focuses on their lack of personal control or competence.

Institutionalism Theory

This theory is best explained by Clever (1999) who posits that, the discourses of participation are strongly influenced by new institutionalism. Institutionalism theories centered on a belief that institution plays an imperative role in formalizing mutual expectations of co-operative behavior, by allowing the exercise of sanctions for non-co-operation and thereby minimizing the costs of individual transactions. The theory perceives social institutions as clever solutions to the problems of trust and malfeasance in economic life. Furthermore, Clever (1999) argues that institutionalism is highly championed by theorists, development policy makers and practitioners because their main focus is to render legible community; more specially by translating individual into collective endeavor in a form which is visible, analyzable and amenable to intervention and influence (Scott, 1998 cited in Clever, 1999). Thus, the aim of many participatory approaches interventions is to establish or support formalized community structures which most clearly reflect bureaucratic structures. In this regard, institutional inclusion has become an essential strand for participatory approaches; a process which is claimed to enhance a more efficient delivery of development as well as the inculcating desirable characteristics amongst participants (which includes co-operation, responsibility, ownership, collective endeavor) and therefore empowerment (ibid).

The Features of Participatory Approaches

From the theories presented above by Clever (1999), Ryan (2009), Murray (1986), Gul (2009) and Alfred & Cungu (2008), the following features of participatory approach can be drawn.

Equal partnership: This is due to the recognition that actors are rational, therefore has the ability, skills and initiative to participate in the process, regardless of their heterogeneity. Thus participants share equal responsibilities

Diversity: Participatory approach involves different actors during negotiation process. This leads to the diverse of interests, choices and demand. Normally the consensus is met through debating.

Cooperation: Participatory approaches calls for different actors to gather together and sharing every actor's strength and minimizing weakness. In this sense collective actions is attained.

Inclusion: Participatory approach involves inclusion of all actors who are affected by the results of decision or the outcome or a process.

Empowerment: Recognizing the rationality of participants and being engaged in decision making or programmes or projects undertaking build the capacity on decision making and priorities setting that affect their lives.

The Trajectory of Participatory Planning Approach in Tanzania

The government efforts to have participatory planning approach can be traced in 1961 to 1966 where the government vision was to obtain higher standards of livings by fighting against poverty, diseases and illiteracy (PMO-RALG, 2007b). During that period people were encouraged to involve in self –help projects as their contribution to National development. In ensuring the government attains the same; chiefdoms were abolished country-wide in order to vest decision making power to the people in their development endeavors’ (ibid).

The second period was 1967-1992. This period led to the introduction of Arusha Declaration which was grounded on the philosophy of social-economic liberalization. The main emphasis was on socialism and self reliance as a means of attaining national development goal. Apart from that, Arusha declaration also endeavors at devolving power to the people in order to build up capacity to accelerate development (ISN, 1967). Such impulsion resulted to the abolishment of Local Government Authorities of the colonial Administration of 1972 which was replaced by Regional Decentralization. Regional decentralization came up with the introduction of village governments, district development committees and regional development committees to enhance more participation in decision making (PMO-RALG, 2007b).

To push forward the initiative in 1982 local government authorities were reinstated. Its re-establishment was championed by the Constitution of United Republic of Tanzania of 1977 Articles number 145 and 146 which require the establishment of local government authorities in every party of the country to facilitate the transfer of authority to people. Local governments are given power to involve people in planning and implementation of development programmes (PMO-RALG, 2008).

In 1998 the government of Tanzania adopted D by D aiming at promoting autonomy and community participation (Mollel, 2010). In making sure D by D attain the same, planning participatory approach commonly known as Opportunity and Obstacle to Development (O & OD) was introduced in 2002 (PMO-RALG, 2009). This approach intends to strengthen local autonomy by fostering citizens participation through giving power to people to identify and prioritize their needs as well as implementing their development programmes in their localities (Fjeldstad, et al, 2010). It also aiming at building citizens’ capacity in planning process more specifically in (i) identification and setting priorities (ii) making choices to the identified priorities (iii) decision making on the implementation of the priorities which have been identified. Under this approach local people participate in priorities setting, formulation, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and control. It is the multi-sectoral initiatives which have been approved to be used national wide to promote community initiatives (Mwakipole &

Rusimbi, 2009). Currently the approach is embodied within the local government reform programme phase II framework.

The methodology uses participatory tools to prepare community plans by focusing on the Tanzania Development Vision (TDV) 2025 as broad guide and the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty (NSGRP) as it also aim to move people out of poverty (PMO-RALG, 2009). In this case, the approach aimed at harmonizing communities' efforts to attain the targets and goals set in the national development vision of 2025 and the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty. The targets of TDV are to attain high quality livelihood, good governance and rule of law as well as strong and competitive economy (PMO-RALG, 2007a).

O and OD participatory planning process

O and OD is the patchwork process that involves different actors such communities, institutions, donors and various tiers of the government. The undertaking of planning process starts at a grassroots level that comprises village or mtaa. The Village or mtaa are charged with the responsibility of involving local community to formulate wishes preferences then the wishes are transformed into a ward plan which ultimately brought to the council level (Fjeldstad et al , 2010). After receiving a village or mtaa plan, district council is supposed to incorporate the preferences in the village or wards into the council plan (PMO-RALG, 2007a). The draft council plan is then submitted to the regional secretariat for scrutinizing to ensure that the policies, regulations and governments directives and guidelines have been adhered (Mollel, 2010). Then submitted to the regional secretariat, the regional secretariat will coalesce the budgets from the combined council plans from the region and submit these budgets to the Prime Minister Office Regional Administration and Local Government (PMO-RALG, 2007a). The entire budgets are merged and submitted to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs to be incorporated into a national plan and budget (ibid). The national plan and budget is finally presented to the parliament for discussion and approval (Mollel, 2010). In this regard, the entire planning process, from the development of the village or mtaa plans to the ward plan, consolidation of these plans into council plan and finally decision-making at the national level encompasses six different institutions on three layers of administration (Mollel, 2010). The village and ward which is regarded as a grassroots level, whereas the regional, ministerial and parliament are the central government levels (ibid). The council is the intermediate level and is the highest decision-making body within the local government authorities.

Referring from the above, O and OD participatory approach involves multiple actors in planning process which causes diversity of power inevitable. Before, assessing whether O &OD can work in situation of power high inequalities it is imperative to understand the concept of power and the theories that explains how an individual or parties can possess power.

What does Power entail? The term power has a multiple meaning. Turner (2005) views power as the capacity to make effects, to have an impact on or alter things, to do 'work', either in the

physical or social world. This definition perceives power in relation to things as well as people and effects of things and people. Anderson & Thompson (2003) define power as the capacity to influence others. Their view is supported by some scholars who perceive power as the capacity used in some way to affect people or society, to cause them to do things that they would not otherwise have done (Turner, 2005 & Krieger et al, 1999). In this regard, an institution, person, physical event or idea may be regarded as powerful because of having a big effect on society as it affects people's ways of thinking as well as their lives. The idea of a group or person having an influence on others, causing them to feel, act or think in ways they would not have otherwise, is termed 'power as impact'(Tuner, 2005). Other scholars view power as the capacity of people to have a deliberated influence on others (Turner, 2005, Anderson & Thompson (2003) & Krieger, 2005) . This is why most theorists have named it 'social power'. Turner (2005) argues that power to be termed as a social power rests on the analogy between the processes by which people influence others, to generate desired changes in their psychological and behavioral states, and the way in which people can exercise some physical power over objects. Power is also referred as the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry his own will regardless of the resistance (Rojot, 1991). Where does power come from? And what gives a person or group influence over the other? In trying to answer the question posed above, it is important to understand the theories that explain various sources of power so that to be in a position to explore why certain people or group have influence over the other.

Ideology Theory

This theory is best explained by Stoddard (2007). The term Ideology refers to means in which society as a whole adopts the ideas and interests of the dominant economic class. This theory is grounded on Marx's model of ideology which based on historical-materialist perspective. It states that material reality is the foundation of social consciousness. Thus, Material reality usually places boundaries on the ideas that may emerge as imperative, or even acceptable, in a particular social setting. In this case, it is through the dominant ideologies of capitalism that the working classes take for granted their exploitation within economic structures of inequality. Therefore the aspect of material reality under this theory centers on human productive labor. Moreover, Marx believes that the appropriation of resources from the natural world for the production of goods is the foundation of social life. Within a capitalist form of production, the most significant social relations are those between members of the working class as they involve in productive labor, as well as the relations between the capitalist class working class, which possesses the means of production (such as factories and machines). Through their ownership of the means of production, the capitalist class gets the power to appropriate the labor of the working classes, who does not have access to the means to produce the necessities of survival including shelter, clothing, and food for themselves.

Marx theory of ideology was expanded by Gramsc's (1992) who introduced a concept of "hegemony". This theory is also best explained by Stoddard (2007). Hegemony theory came up

to make a distinction between coercion and consent as alternative mechanisms of social power, whereby coercion is defined to mean the state's capacity for violence, which can be used against those who decline to participate in capitalist relations of production. By contrast, hegemonic power operates to convince individuals and social classes to subscribe to the social values and norms of an inherently exploitative system. It is a form of social power that depends on voluntarism and participation, instead of threat of punishment for disobedience.

The other theory of power was incepted by Max Weber (1949) and is best explicated by Livesey (n.d). Max Weber view of power lies on the belief that the ability to possess power derived from the individual's ability to control various "social resources". These resources can be capital, land, social respect, intellectual knowledge and physical strength. He goes further into arguing that, the ability to exercise power takes a number of different forms, but basically based on the ability to get things done on your own way with others, regardless of their ability to resist. He connects power in relation to social stratification by theorizing several ways in which societies are organized in hierarchical systems of domination and subordination using the following major concepts: First, class power (Class): He explained class power on the basis of "unequal access to material resources". For example, if a person owns something than the other then that makes a person potentially more powerful than the other. The person who possesses something is in a dominant position and the one who does not have is in a subordinate position because he or she controls access to a desired social resource. Second, social power (Status): Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Zur, 2009 & Lunenburg, 2012) defined social status to mean the extent to which an individual or group is respected or admired by other. In this sense, Max Weber argument is that if you respect a person or view that person as your social superior, then he or she will potentially be able to exercise power over you (since you will respond positively to his or her instructions / commands). In this respect, social status is a social resource simply because some people may have it while others may not. Third, political power (Party): According to him, this form of power is related to the way in which the state is organized in modern social systems (includes the ability to make laws), for example if a person can influence the process of law creation then, that person will be in a potentially powerful position. Thus, by his or her ability to influence a decision-making process that person possesses power, even though he or she may not directly exercise that power personally. Moreover, he sees political parties as the organizations created to possess power through the mechanism of the state and they include not just formally organized parties, but any group that is established to influence the way in which power is exercised legitimately through the machinery of the State.

Krieger et al (1999) chipped in by arguing that political power is normally associated with political actions or threats by the parties which in turn affect the negotiation of the dispute. In addition to that, Krieger et al (1999) et al uncovered some other sources of power as follows: Psychological power. They asserted that all parties engaged in negotiation have particular psychological needs: desires, anger, fears and other emotion. In this sense, one party or more parties may take advantage to exploit those needs by using psychological power. For example,

landlord and tenant negotiations. The landlord may threaten to lock the tenant out of his apartment and cut off the utility service even though the landlord has no legal right to do so. Threats like this can strongly impact the low-income tenants who do not know their rights. Apart from that, they pointed out that, expertise is also another source of power (Lunenburg, 2012; Zur, 2009 & Barraclough & Stewart, 1992). They argued that, when it happens in the negotiation that one party has a greater expertise on a certain matter involved in transaction or dispute that knowledge can result into power asymmetry.

Nevertheless, other theorists' discovered trust in the hierarchical relationship a source of power. These theorists observed that people with less power occupy a weak position in an organization and that they are at risk of being exploited by other. This is because the individuals with less power tend to be more concerned about the issue of trust than people with power. Thus people with less power are very receptive to the counterparty's positive affect (Anderson & Thompson, 2003). However, power in hierarchical relationship is obtained in various ways first being coercion (Barraclough & Stewart, 1992). Coercion is the application of direct threats or physical sanctions on the resisters such as the infliction of pains, generation of frustration through restriction of movement, termination of employment by the organizational management (Robbins, Judge & Campell, 2010; Zur ,2009; Barraclough & Stewart, 1992). Reward is also another type of power gained hierarchically which referred to the personal ability to influence other's behavior by providing them with things they want to receive (Lunenburg, 2012). Moreover, Barraclough & Stewart (1992) view reward power as the ability to mediate reward to the people or employee, for example; promotion of employees which is basically done by the Top management to the lower levels. In this case, individuals comply with wishes or directives others because doing so produces positive benefits (Robbins et al, 2010). Therefore, Reward is acquired through control over material resources such as money, fringe benefits, commodities, money etc (Lunenburg, 2012; Robbins et al, 2010 & Barraclough & Stewart, 1992) .Other source of power in hierarchical relationship is legitimate which is derived from the position that someone hold in an organization or company (Lunenburg, 2012; Robbins et al, 2010; Zur, 2009 & Barraclough & Stewart, 1992).

Empirical cases on how power creates inequalities in participatory approaches: A lesson from Tanzania participatory planning approach (O & OD)

We have seen from theories that power has a great role to play in creating inequalities among individual's and even parties. This being the case, it is presumably that we cannot do away with the issue of power in participatory approaches because actors derived power from different sources as Gaventa (2005) argues that power is omnipresent, and appears in every moment of social relations. Therefore, the operations of power are not departures from the norm, but rather are constantly present. In justifying the above statement, we examine the findings from Fjeldstad et al (2010) based on four councils (Bagamoyo district council, Ilala municipal council, Iringa district council and Moshi district council), Mollel (2010) based on three council (Morogoro

Urban council, Morogoro Rural council and Kilosa District council) as well as Chaligha (2008) based on six councils (Ilala Municipal council, Mwanza council, Iringa District council, Bagamoyo District council, Kilosa District council and Moshi District council). These three scholars discussed Participatory planning approach in Tanzania (O and OD) in different contexts, for example the study done by Fjeldstad titled Planning in Local Government Authorities in Tanzania: Bottom –up Meets Top-down based on examining the experience of four councils: Bagamoyo district council, Ilala municipal council, Iringa district council and Moshi district council in implementing O&OD whereby the key question examined was whether the O and OD approach had increased local autonomy with respect to local development priority setting, budgeting and planning. Moreover, the study conducted by Mollel (2010) focused on local participation and development of primary infrastructure more especially on health and education under Opportunity and Obstacles to Development Methodology. His study covered three councils each contain two cases as follows: Morogoro Urban Council (Kingorwila Dispensary and Mlimani Primary School), Morogoro Rural (Tawa Health Centre and Ngerengere primary school) and Kilosa District (Kidodi Health Centre and Mvomero Primary School). Furthermore, Chaligha (2008) looked at local government autonomy and citizen participation in six councils: Ilala Municipal council, Mwanza council, Iringa District council, Bagamoyo District council, Kilosa District council and Moshi District council. Although the studies conducted based on different perspectives but discovered the approach does not work properly. The main reason being given is lack of autonomous to the communities and local government authorities, the paper is taking different direction to examining the impact of power on the participatory planning approach (O &OD).

As explained earlier, the approach is designated to facilitate community participation to planning and local government authorities are charged with responsibility to make sure that local communities are participating full in planning process through building capacity in priorities setting, formulation, implementation, monitoring and control. Whereas the function of Central government is to support local government and communities by providing resources and guidelines. The issue of power under this approach is core for its functionality. The local government authorities that are charged with the responsibility to involving people are suffering from insufficient resources to implement development projects initiated by local people because of inadequate resources. This is attributed to inadequate power and capacity to generate its own revenues. This assertion is underpinned by Chaligha study of (2008) on six councils Ilala Municipal council, Mwanza council, Iringa District council, Bagamoyo District council, Kilosa District council and Moshi District council. He unveiled that six councils were unable to meet citizens' demand and implement village plans because of lack of reliable resources. Local government are not able to sufficiently generate their own revenue to facilitate the discharge of their responsibilities Baker et al (2002) point out that 80% of the local government revenue are the transfer from the central government while the remaining is funded from local government sources. Apart from that, most of these central government funds are conditional grants. They are earmarked for specific purpose this can be the reason what Fjeldstad et al (2010) uncovered

from six council that local communities were forced to drop their preferred priorities in favor of the central government priorities such as education, water, and roads due to resources constrains. The authors further argued that, it also applies to local government capital development grant which is specifically designed to provide non-specified development funding which is largely spent on the project prioritized by the central government (ibid). This shows that local government authorities in Tanzania have no power over resources (financial) and is explicitly reflected in the local government plans whereby they are almost uniform across country reflecting central government priorities (Fjeidad, 2010). Moreover, Fjeldstad et al (2010) found that, communities' projects proposal which are not in accordance with national priorities may or are automatically ending up low on the council priorities list. This might be the reasons why Mollel (2010) found low consideration of community priorities of council plan on six cases selected as follows:

Kingowrila Dispensary: Findings obtained indicate that, community participation in reconstruction of planning process in light to kingowrila dispensary was undertaken according to O & OD guideline. The Community from mtaa level were involved in priorities setting and mtaa identified development plan was developed and combined into ward plan then the plan was submitted to the council. However, the findings unveil that the development preferences contained in the ward concerning Kingowrila Dispensary were not reflected in the council plans. Apart from that, council plan contained some intervention regarding the improvement of primary health facilities infrastructure in municipality; surprisingly none of the interventions were colligated according to the identified preferences for Kingowrila dispensary as shown in the ward plan. Such practice creates low morale of community to participate in planning process because their involvement ending up with little or no impact (Mollel, 2010).

Mlimani Primary School: In Mlimani primary schools findings show that only one development preferences were reflected in council plans which were 'the construction of one staff house in Mlimani primary school. The grassroots development preferences was contained in the council plan for financial year 2005/2006 and it was the only development plan detected in all three plans that could be related to the preferences of Mliman primary School (ibid,).

Taha Health Centre: The review undertaken on the council plans for financial year 2005/2006, 2006/2007 and 2007/2008 revealed that, all three council plans did not reflect the development preferences identified in village plans (Mollel, 2010). Instead, the council plans reflected other issues for Tawa Health Centre (ibid)

Ngerengere primary school: Similar experience was also obtained in Ngerengere primary school were Mollel (2010) discovered that three council plans did not contain any specific issues related to the development of Ngerengere Primary School. Although, there were some development aspects revealed in the plans where it was broadly explicated that the Ngerengere Primary School might be one of the beneficiaries. These issues included (i) Recruitment of 100 teacher trainees (ii) Construction of classrooms and staff houses (ibid).

Malowelo primary school: In Malowelo it was found that, the planning process in the form of a council plan in the prescribed financial year's showed some issues that can be related to primary schools (Mollel, 2010). However, these issues were very broad and did not indicate a specific primary school (Ibid).

Kidodi heath centre: The Review of the council plans at Kidodi Health Centre show that most of development issues contained in the plans were fairly broadly stated (Mollel, 2010). However, the collected data shows that very few development activities have been implemented. For instance, the health centre has no operating theatre, can only conduct minor operations and lacks a facility for laboratory services. According to the respondents, these are the most urgent priorities since people have to travel long distances for these services (Ibid).

Discussions

From the discussion above, it is evidently that O and OD participatory planning approach can difficultly attains its primary objective due to the existence of power imbalance among the actors. The central government emerges as the strongest power holder among the other actors such as community and local governments. Its emergence as the powerful actor is attributed to various factors: first, resources as Max Weber (1949) argued that, the ability to possess power is derived from individual's control over various resources which is true, reflected from Local Government Expenditure Review of 2007 the local government authorities depend on the central government financing for more than 90% of their funds. That is why the central government is able to allocate funds basing on its priorities such as education, water, health, road and etc which has negative impact to the communities preferred preference as observed by Fjledstad et al (2010) that local communities are forced to drop their preferred preferences in favors of the central government. This can be the reason what Mollel (2010) has observed, that councils take low consideration of the communities' preferences, which can also be attributed to the failure of the communities' preferences to align with the central government preferences as found out by Fjeldstad (2010). Therefore, the failure of the councils to incorporate communities' preferences in a council might be probably due to the fear of the preferences not to be funded by the central government since they are resources powerless. Second, Political power also makes central government the powerful actor as she is the one that influences the formulation and implementation of policies. This is clearly explicated in the Local government reform programme policy paper of 1996 which confers power to the central government to make national legislation affecting local government, issuing legislation, policies, guidelines and national standards. That is why the undertaking of O and OD has to comply with the National Development Vision developed by the central government which acts as a guideline (PMO-RALG, 2007). TDV contains various attributes that communities have to follow when making decisions. Examples of those attributes are universal primary education, universal primary health, universal to clean safe water, access to quality reproductive health services etc. These attributes are mainly contained in the central government priorities for example, education,

health, water and roads and they are funded through conditional grants (Ishemoi, 2010). This is also verified by interview conducted to the head of the economic department of Morogoro Urban council by Mollel (2010). The head of economic department eluded that,

“Most funds from the central government are specified for certain sectoral areas. Bearing this in mind, the sectoral plan must be developed based on criteria set out in the guideline, the budget ceiling and the national priorities. They also have to be taken into account, any directive from the central government. ‘The council has to abide to the guidelines otherwise the budget may not be approved (Mollel, pg 76).”

Moreover, the allocation of funds to a plan based on the compliance of national guidelines and policies, and this is the reason why the plan has to pass through Regional Secretariats for advises and to see whether the plan is in accordance with the national guidelines and policies. This is also justified by interview conducted by Mollel (2010) to one of the senior Manager of Morogoro Rural (District) council who said that.

“They call it advisory, but, my friend, when you are advised and you refuse to incorporate such an advice into the plan, the regional secretariat has its own way of communicating to the central government to make sure you get stuck. (Mollel, pg 93).”

This being the case, central government priorities has a great chance to determine communities decisions which is true, As uncovered by Mollel (2010) through the group discussion with Council Management Health Team (CMTH) of Kilosa District Council . They argued that,

“We often fail to respond to pressing local development needs because the guidelines restrict us on the amount of funds we can spend for a particular issue. For instance, in most of our primary facilities the most pressing need is the washing machines. But we cannot buy the machine because the cost is higher than the amount we are allowed to spend according to guideline. In this view, we are forced to spend money in routine and consumable activities, which have less impact to our primary health facility. Frankly speaking, I do not see any impact of the basket fund. The guidelines are too strict. We have just been doing the same things all and all over again. In fact, there is very limited room for discretion (Mollel, pg 109).”

Third, hierarchical power also makes central government to become the strongest actor. It is because central government is regarded as the creator of local government authorities therefore; the relationship that exists among them is like that one of the mother and the child. The relationship being viewed as a mother and a child creates controlling mechanism to local governments because normally a child is under the supervision of the mother, and has to be obedient. Basing on the hierarchy central government is at the top (boss) its function is to give

orders and local government is at the bottom (subordinate) existing to receive orders. Apart from that, the central government is the one that employ, promote, terminate, imposing rules, regulations, and policies as well as financing operations local governments (URT, 2002 & LGRP, 1998). This makes local government authorities less powerful as Kriegel et al (1999) argued that, people who occupy weak position tend to be receptive to their superiors. This can be the reason why local government authorities instead of implementing the priorities identified by local communities tend to favor the one's from the central government as evidenced by Mollel (2010) through six cases discussed, which all of them showed the denial of the inclusion of local communities preferences in the councils plans. Although many research conducted on this area condemned that. the failure of the local government to enhance local participation to participatory planning is because of lack of autonomy and forget that power is critical for functionality participatory approach. Therefore, the important questions to ask ourselves: How LGA's will be autonomous while they don't have power to influence the formulation of policies? As they are created to be implementers? How can they be autonomous while they regarded as the creature/ a child of the Central government? How can they be autonomous while they don't have power to sufficiently generate and manage resources? It is in this context we argue that, power has a great impact on the triumphs of participatory approaches. We also argue that, the area where there are high power inequalities and where one would like to implement participatory approaches are least likely to succeed.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study has analyzed various issues regarding to participatory approaches to development. The paper started by shading light on the vitality of the approaches in empowering people to foster their development. It went further to explicate theories of participatory approach as well as its features. Furthermore, the paper explained participatory approach. Dwelling on the central theme of the discussion, the paper discusses the concept of power and analyzes theories of power and document the way power may impede participatory approaches using the cases from Tanzania participatory planning approach (O & OD). Generally, we argue that, we cannot do away with the issue of power in participatory approaches because actors confer power from different sources. This makes variations in power to be critical issue which compromising the effective implementation of participatory approaches in the community. To get rid of such challenges, there is need to rationalize power for instance central government to build up more capacity to the local government so that to be in a position to generate more own resources, encourage collective deliberation and decision-making on important issues pertaining to development of the community etc. Although power differences (example for individual persons) cannot be extinguished, efforts can be done to mitigate them in a way that they would let the nascent trajectories of participatory approaches blossom.

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