

Applicability of Ujamaa Policy in Social Work Education in Tanzania Regarding Ubuntu Philosophy – A Literature Review



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ABSTRACT: A literature review on the applicability of Ujamaa Policy in Social Work Education in Tanzania Regarding Ubuntu Philosophy. The late first president of Tanzania and Ubuntu champion (2014) Dr. Julius Kambarage Nyerere made deliberate efforts to decolonize education policy and systems in post-colonial Tanzania including education for self-reliance policy in 1967 under Ujamaa policy. Ujamaa is among the core values of Ubuntu philosophy that influenced social work education in Tanzania through the Ujamaa Intersections Model from pre-colonial to the present. In Ubuntu philosophy education is collectively developed and owned by the community and Tanzania's social work education is integrated through the Ujamaa Intersections Model. Arusha Declaration of 1967 through the Ujamaa Policy strategically restored and integrated Social Work education through the Ujamaa Intersections Model that linked education and community. Compatibility of the Ujamaa Intersections Model and social work education facilitated self-reliance, voluntarism, community participation, cooperation, and empowerment by allowing community sections to take collective and holistic control of available resources for universal welfare. As per Ubuntu philosophy, the realization of Universal welfare in the country covered all community members regardless of their social status but emphasized vulnerable populations including orphans, disabled, elders, sick persons, pregnant women, etc. Over time, the applicability of social work education was in line with the Ujamaa Policy, and despite the colonial legacy in early social work programs, the content reflected the Ujamaa intersections Model. Ujamaa Policy addressed tribalism, and promoted national unity, solidarity, and cooperation spirit relevant to community development in the country, with more than 120 ethnic tribes requiring a comprehensive and collective cultural diversity social work relevant model of education to address existing social problems and collective sustainable future of Tanzania's National Vision of 2050 and Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

KEYWORDS: African Ubuntu, East Africa, Indigenous social work, Tanzania, Ubuntu social work, Ujamaa Policy, Ujamaa Education, Ujamaa Intersections Model

INTRODUCTION

Ujamaa, which means "family hood" in Swahili, was a political and economic philosophy introduced by the late first president of Tanzania and Ubuntu Champion of 2014 Dr. Julius Kambarage Nyerere. The Ujamaa ideology was based on the Ubuntu philosophy of African humanism or humanness where community members live, work, and equally distribute resources and collective welfare for all with consideration of vulnerable populations in the community (Lembuka, 2023a). Education was seen as a key component in achieving the goals of Ujamaa and decolonizing social work education was inevitable in post-colonial Tanzania. One of the main objectives of the education system in Tanzania under the Ujamaa ideology was to provide accessible and affordable education to all citizens, irrespective of their social class, family background, or economic status (Nyerere, 2011).

The Ujamaa policy also emphasized the importance of evidence-based education that was compatible with vocational training and social work education, which would equip individuals with specific skills needed to serve their communities and contribute to the development of the economy (Nyerere, 1967). Under the Ujamaa policy national development agenda focused on community empowerment and this led to the decolonization of education and restoration Ujamaa intersections or community intersections in Tanzania (Lembuka, 2023b). Ujamaa intersections formed a relevant ecology for realizing education for self-reliance, vocational training centres in rural areas, and social work education which targeted to provide practical competence to the community members (Nyerere, 1967).

Social work and Ujamaa policy embraced cultural diversity by integrating cultural values and promoting African culture and values in education. According to Nyerere, education should not only be about acquiring knowledge and skills but also about shaping

Applicability of Ujamaa Policy in Social Work Education in Tanzania Regarding Ubuntu Philosophy – A Literature Review

the personality and morality of individuals that is relevant to the community that he or she belongs (Nyerere, 2011). This meant that education should cater to the holistic and collective development of individuals, incorporating cultural values and traditions into the curriculum that have a direct link to community needs. Overall, the Ujamaa policy represents the African Ubuntu philosophy and has played a significant role in shaping the social work education system in Tanzania, particularly in promoting universal social welfare services delivery (Nyerere, 2011).

Dr. Nyerere ensured that social work education was developed to address the socio-economic problems and special needs of vulnerable populations through existing history, ecology, customary laws, cultural values, and indigenous approaches for collective community welfare (Buhori, 2023). As per Ubuntu philosophy, Ujamaa forms the basis of social work education in Tanzania that facilitates embracement and transition of social work education in the community. Ujamaa community was formed by various interdependent community sections which influenced the development of the Ujamaa Intersections Model representing other social work African models covered beneath Ubuntu Philosophy (Lembuka, 2024).

Ubuntu epitomizes a similar demonstration of social work knowledge practiced across African societies from pre-colonial times to the contemporary through collective community approaches. According to Asamoah (1994), social work knowledge and practice were practiced in pre-colonial Africa on a voluntary and mutual basis representing the type of traditional social work knowledge that capacitated Africans to master their environment through clearing community fields, assigning gender roles, attending sick people, counseling, spiritual services, rules for community peace, maintaining acceptable social behavior, ritual ceremonies, and cultural, ethical values, etc. (Asamoah, 1988).

Ubuntu influenced the nature and delivery of the social work education component in Africa as it is contextualized within community sections or Ujamaa intersections rather than institutionalization through documentation of training i.e. curricular, syllabus, classroom, and assessment criteria. etc. (Lembuka, 2023b). These intersections are depending each other on developing, maintaining, reviewing, and delivering relevant educational content knowledge within the community sections including families, extended families, neighborhood, ecology, spirituality, and wider community (Sanga, 2019). Also, social work education from pre-colonial Africa mostly was oral and some societies went further into documentation practice such as Egypt, Mali, Ghana, Sudan, Ethiopia, etc. Community intersections facilitated the transmission of social work education through the peoples' ethnic languages whereby various means were involved including traditional initial ceremonies, received wisdom, cultural values elders' pieces of advice, songs, customary laws, cave writings, folklore, etc. (Buhori, 2023). Ultimately each community section contributes to collective and holistic social work knowledge to the best interests of a wider community under the Ubuntu perspective.

Distortion of social work education in Tanzania by colonial invasion was similarly felt in other African countries where Indigenous social work education and practices were side-lined from the 19th century. The importation of colonial social work education and legal framework to support the colonial population affected existing educational models in the African context. In post-colonial Tanzania, The late first president of Tanzania and Ubuntu Champion (2014) Dr. Julius Kambarage Nyerere made deliberate efforts to decolonize social work education in line with other education policies in Tanzania (Lembuka, 2024). According to Dr. Nyerere decolonization of education was inevitable to create a relevant and sustainable future for Africa and he made serious educational framework reform starting 1960s including Education for Self-Reliance introduced in 1967 to guide the planning and practice of education, the Musoma Resolution in 1974, the Education and Training Policy (1995), The Education Sector Development Programme, Vocational Education and Training Act (1994), etc. All these reforms were influenced by the Ujamaa Policy framework focusing on decolonizing education in post-colonial Tanzania and a similar process gratified social work education to embrace indigenous models like the Ujamaa Intersections Model (URT, 2001).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

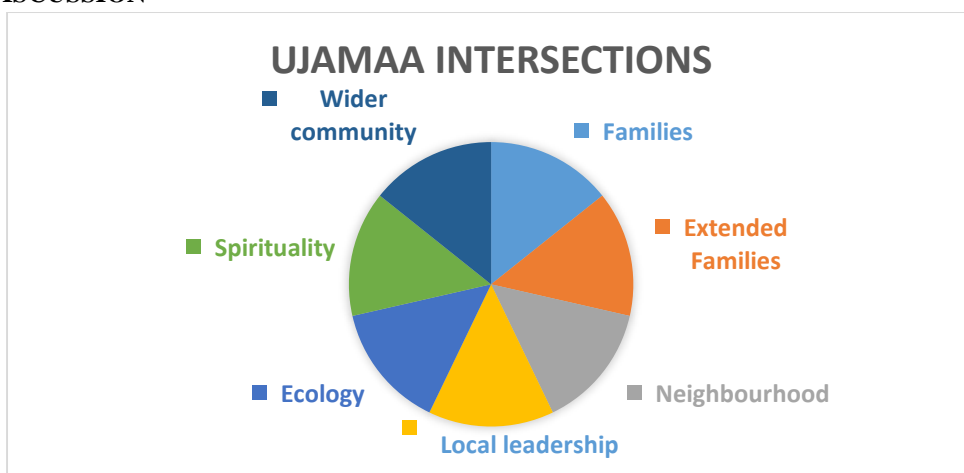


Diagram 1.0: Ujamaa Intersections Model Source: Lembuka (2024).

Applicability of Ujamaa Policy in Social Work Education in Tanzania Regarding Ubuntu Philosophy – A Literature Review

Ujamaa, which means "family-hood" reflects the collectiveness and togetherness of human beings leading to brotherhood and sisterhood. *Diagram 1.0* as per the Ujamaa approach, the family is the core section and represents the first juncture of community intersections and it plays a vital role in community development. Ujamaa intersections are formed by family, extended family members, local leadership, ecology, spirituality, and the wider community. Ujamaa intersections Model represents other Ubuntu Education models in the African context. Nyerere (2011) emphasized on the ideal of social work education relevant to African settings where Ujamaa Intersections are fully utilized to ensure everyone's basic needs, such as food, education, welfare, and healthcare, would be met through collective efforts. In pursuit of Ujamaa, Tanzania implemented educational policies that integrated Ujamaa Intersections Model that emphasized self-reliance, rural development, and community participation in decision making.

Integration of the Ujamaa Intersections Model rendered a conducive ecology for social work education and was considered a crucial tool for achieving Ujamaa universal welfare that was necessary for community members to be self-reliant, responsible, patriotic, voluntary, teamwork, and productive members (URT, 2001). The government aimed to provide competent education to serve community needs and made efforts to increase access for all especially in rural areas (Nyerere, 2011). The social work education was also implemented to ensure that education was relevant to the country's needs and that it incorporated African culture, history, ecology, and values. The Ujamaa ideology also influenced the establishment of The Institute of social work in 1974 which prioritized social work research and teaching relevant to the needs of Ujamaa Intersections. Overall, social work education in Tanzania has been guided by the Ujamaa ideology, emphasizing the importance of education in shaping a self-reliant, universal welfare, human dignity, equality, social justice and productive society ((URT, 2001).

Submission of Ubuntu social work education in African context was guided by similar values including interdependence, cooperation, voluntarism, care, sympathy, tolerance, ecology, human dignity, Ujamaa, etc. (Mugumbate et al, 2019). Ubuntu social work education perspective considers all individuals are submerged into various sections in the community and this renders a conducive environment for collective and holistic community welfare (Buhori & Mugumbate et al, 2023). The community sections or Ujamaa sections converted as a model of social work education in African context including Tanzania and during colonialism imported Western social work that side-lined Ubuntu social work models including Ujamaa intersections Model. This marked the historical process of importation of social work education from the colonial masters and declining of existing African social work education in Tanzania (Nilsen et al., 2023).

The history of social work education and Ujamaa intersections Model in Tanzania are inseparable following the intertwined relationship through ecology, cultural values, customary laws, experiences, traditional knowledge and practices relevant for socio-economic and political development. Literally, Ujamaa Intersections are the interdependent structures or sections at community level and they are foundation of education and practice in Tanzanian context from pre-colonial time (Lembuka, 2023). Arusha Declaration of 1967 through Ujamaa Policy strategically restored and integrated Social Work education through Ujamaa intersections Model that linked training and community, also it facilitated self-reliance, voluntarism, community participation, cooperation, a sense of empowerment by allowing community sections to take collective and holistic control of available resources for the welfare of all (Nyerere, 2011).

Arusha Declaration under the great leadership of the late Dr. Julius Kambarage Nyerere envisioned to restore African Ubuntu models in key aspects of human life in Tanzania from social, political, cultural to economic aspect. In that regard, Dr. Nyerere strategically through Ujamaa policy framework embraced Ubuntu values and approaches relevant for Tanzanian context that ultimate targeted collective and holistic community empowerment. Community empowerment agenda became part of realization of Ujamaa community development and general welfare through capacitating all sections in the community. The community sections formed the Ujamaa Intersections Model with reference to family, extended family, neighbourhood, local leadership, ecology, spirituality, and wider community (Sanga, 2016). According to Ujamaa policy, all the socio-economic and political plans and relevant interventions should start from the community level which repositioned the influence of social work education in Tanzania and vice versa (Lembuka, 2024).

In the 1970s, Tanzania was at the peak of the establishment of communal villages or Ujamaa Villages all over the country in relation to African Ubuntu development that rely in the collective development of people rather than material properties, in a similar era social work services were highly demanded to accommodate the emerging socio-economic problems in the country (Sanga, 2016). In 1973 the government of Tanzania took deliberate efforts to address the emerging problems through the enactment of Institute of The Social Work Act No. 26 of 1973 marking a historic social work education under the first social work school in the country (TASWO, 2017). The Institute of Social Work was established to prepare qualified human resources guided by the Ujamaa vision and mission necessary for strengthening the social service delivery into existing Ujamaa intersections in Tanzania.

Since the establishment of The Institute of Social Work in 1973 public school and social work training became a government monopoly and it was provided as a public good to address the best interest of Ujamaa policy (TASWO, 2018). Over 3 decades, the institute throughout its operations in Dar es Salaam remained the only social work school in the country and it was easy to prepare graduates with relevant skills to realize the goals of Ujamaa policy by influencing the special needs of Ujamaa intersections at the community (ASSWOT, 2014). Social work training and the Ujamaa intersections Model became compatible as they depicted the

Applicability of Ujamaa Policy in Social Work Education in Tanzania Regarding Ubuntu Philosophy – A Literature Review

collective mass of society as ‘self’ (Nyerere, 1967) relevant for Education for Self-Reliance (ESR). According to Dr. Nyerere, the policy of self-reliance means that Tanzanian’s development should depend on her natural setting including families, neighbourhoods, local leaders, ecology, cultural values, history, etc. (Nyerere, 2011). The concept of Education For Self Reliance among other objectives was to improve commitment, responsibility, voluntarism, and democratic involvement of individuals in the plans and activities of Ujamaa intersections (Rahumbuka, 1974).

Social work training integrated education for self-reliance to capacitate and liberate individual actors of within community intersections for the ultimate realization of collective welfare and development (TESWEP, 2012). Post-colonial Tanzania’s social work education focused on the empowerment of Ujamaa intersections to problems that touched most of the post-colonial African countries and Ujamaa policy ensured social work education addressed the special needs of vulnerable population poverty, ignorance, moral decadence, false beliefs, social disintegration, economic dependence, exploitation and social injustice (Nyerere, 1967). Decolonization of social work education went perpendicular with capacitation and re-integration of the Ujamaa intersections Model into social work education in the country (TESWEP, 2012). Despite the various challenges it faced the application of the Ujamaa intersections Model in social work education contributed in delivering human rights, freedom, equality, unity, liberation, social justice, social welfare, social equality, and community development (Nyerere Centre of Peace Research, 2010).

The emergence of socioeconomic problems increased the demand for social workers in private and public settings, which created opportunities for the establishment of social work schools to meet market demands (TASWO, 2017). Despite the opportunities created and government efforts in the indigenization of social work education in the country external forces, the remaining colonial mentality in some social work elites, and the lack of political will to embrace Ubuntu models like the Ujamaa intersections Model in social work education and practice influenced the emergence of schools of social work to lack sufficient Ubuntu competence relevant to addressing social and economic problems of Tanzania (TASWO, 2020).

Table 1.0: Ubuntu Intersections Model

SN	Name	Components	Tasks
1	Families	Parents, guardians, and children	<p>Family is the first community section to provide social work and related welfare knowledge where parents or guardians are the first teachers through the mother language.</p> <p>Family is among the resources for social work learning and growth, parents help to shape a child's social, emotional, and physical development so that a child can fit into other Ujamaa sections.</p>
2	Extended families	Relatives, kinfolks, clan or ethnic tribesmen	<p>Extended family members are responsible for assisting the family on transmitting social work knowledge to children and they provide educational mentorship to newly formulated families in other welfare issues basing on ethnic guidance.</p>
3	Neighbourhood	Surrounding elders, peers, and close family friends	<p>This section acts like an immediate observers of family and its children on the demonstration of social work education and practice on behalf of wider community. It plays a vital roles in shaping the well-being of individuals and it has noble role to capacitate an individual to acquire additional social work knowledge necessary to access to community resources and social welfare services</p>
4	Local leadership	Jumbe, Shea, chiefs, Laibons, clan leaders. Wandewa. etc.	<p>This section comprises community-based leaders who either inherited or were democratically elected by the community to supervise social work education and practice across various community sections regulated by Ubuntu cultural values and customary laws.</p> <p>It embraces and supervises the social work vision of collective community welfare necessary</p>

Applicability of Ujamaa Policy in Social Work Education in Tanzania Regarding Ubuntu Philosophy – A Literature Review

			for each community section and ensures each section abides by education of human dignity, cooperation, interdependence, community participation, and equal distribution of vital resources for ultimate sustainable and relevant social work service delivery
5	Ecology	Social, economic, cultural, and political environment	Leaders ensured that all social work education components must include the relevant ecology of the African context and existing practical experience of the social, economic, and political arena. Also, social work education should ensure how individuals interact within community sections and how they respond to the environment around them necessary for collective social welfare. Moreover, all social work education interventions aim to create a conducive environment for collective social, economic, cultural, and political development that places the individual into existing community sections as part of Ubuntu vision.
6	Spirituality	Elders, religious dogmas, organized religious traditional spiritual healing, and psychosocial care and support	<p>This a sensitive section that involve the social work education of higher power connection and realization of psychological needs rather than material needs. The fact that Ujamaa Intersections Model embraces the knowledge of how individuals' spirituality affects their sense of well-being, a spirit of community interactions, confidence, and mental health status.</p> <p>Also, this section demonstrates a vital education for restoring hope, confidence, and a positive attitude relevant to collective community gains such as cooperation, teamwork, solidarity, mutual support, community participation, and a sense of community belongingness.</p> <p>Moreover, spirituality in social work education provides a vital contribution to psychosocial care and support of mentally challenged people, stimulates self-awareness, and fosters integrity, ingenuity, resourcefulness, and positive connection of an individual with other community sections.</p>
7	Wider community	Customary laws, cultural values, community vision, and mission	<p>This section holds a reciprocal social work knowledge of the collective vision and mission that each individual contributes to the section and vice versa.</p> <p>Its highest section strategizes the knowledge of the relationship of individuals with community sections and how the wider community interacts with the outside world and vice versa.</p>

Source: Lembuka (2024)

The Government of Tanzania recognizes the central role of the social work education sector in achieving the overall development goal of improving the quality of life of Tanzanians. Ujamaa policy envisions collective education that links community and education rather than schooling thus the application of Ujamaa Intersections Model supported both formal and informal social work

Applicability of Ujamaa Policy in Social Work Education in Tanzania Regarding Ubuntu Philosophy – A Literature Review

in Tanzania. As per Table 1.0 Ujamaa intersections Model became a cross-cutting tool for the development of education guidelines in support of the Ujamaa Policy in the country. The major policy reforms in Tanzania included Education for Self-Reliance introduced in 1967 to guide the planning and practice of education, the Musoma Resolution in 1974, the Education and Training Policy (1995), The Education Sector Development Programme, Vocational Education and Training Act (1994), etc. All these reforms were influenced by the Ujamaa Policy framework focusing on the indigenization of the post-colonial education system in Tanzania and a similar process gratified social work education to embrace indigenous models like the Ujamaa Intersections Model (URT, 2001).

Therefore, in the course of community empowerment, the government of Tanzania initiated several policies and structural reforms that decolonized education and linked education with African settings for collective community development (URT, 2001). Also, among the goals of education reform were to improve the quality of education including social work in the country, to ensure relevant universal education for all that strengthen the linkage between the education provided and community needs to boost the socio-economic development of Tanzania (URT, 2001).

CONCLUSIONS

Dr. Nyerere (1967) depicted the collective and holistic community that represents African Ubuntu philosophy. Therefore, social work and other education components in Tanzania reflected Ubuntu values of voluntarism, community participation, cooperation, teamwork, community engagement, universal social welfare, and self-reliance, etc. According to Ujamaa and Ubuntu, African education and development are inseparable and they should depend on the natural resources that are linked to the community sections. Combining the concept of education for self-reliance added advantages in social education relevant to promoting self-confidence, independence, responsibility, democratic involvement, and ultimately addressing the major 3 national enemies namely poverty, ignorance, and diseases (according to Dr. Nyerere) (Rahumbuka, 1974).

Ujamaa policy is compatible with social work education from values and approaches from Ubuntu perspective that holds the milestone of social work education in Tanzania, like other African societies social work education was distorted largely by the imposition of Western social work education in the course of colonizing Africa in the 19th century. The history of social work education and the Ujamaa Policy in Tanzania are inseparable following the intertwined relationship through ecology, cultural values, customary laws, experiences, traditional knowledge, and practices relevant to socioeconomic and political development. When Ujamaa policy and social work are combined they can influence the realization of socio-economic development as they reflect the relevance of Tanzania's National Vision 2050 and Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Moreover, integration of the Ujamaa intersections Model in social work education and practice is inevitable as it offers competency-based education as per social work global standards and Ujamaa policy in Tanzania, the reflections of current social work education is more institutionalized rather than community-integrated. As per Ubuntu's perspective, the primary mission of education is to address community needs, and the Ujamaa Intersections Model links direct training and community settings necessary for evidence-based practice education and facilitation of self-reliance, voluntarism, community participation, community engagement, cooperation, a sense of empowerment by allowing community sections to take collective and holistic control of available resources relevant for the realization of universal welfare.

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Applicability of Ujamaa Policy in Social Work Education in Tanzania Regarding Ubuntu Philosophy – A Literature Review

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