



Strategies for Managing Innovative Education Reforms in the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goal in Ilala City, Tanzania

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine strategies for managing innovative educational reforms to achieve Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in public secondary schools in Ilala City, Tanzania. Guided by Fullan's Theory of Educational Change, the research used a mixed-methods approach with a convergent parallel design, combining qualitative and quantitative data. A total of 113 participants, including students, teachers, school heads, education officers, and parents, were selected through stratified random and purposive sampling. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, and analyzed using SPSS version 26 for quantitative data and MAXQDA for qualitative thematic analysis. Validity and reliability were Cronbach's Alpha of 0.8. The study identified key strategies for managing educational innovations: stakeholder engagement, investment in education, monitoring and evaluation, enhancement of educational resources and curriculum, community involvement, and promotion of quality and inclusivity. Effective reform management necessitates collaboration among government, teachers, NGOs, and communities, equitable resource allocation, and adherence to policy guidelines. These findings offer a roadmap for policymakers and educators to enhance innovation management for achieving SDG4 in Tanzania and similar developing contexts. The study concludes that sustainable and inclusive educational change requires strong leadership, participatory governance, continuous professional development, and alignment with national and global education goals.

Keyterm: Strategies, Managing, Innovative Education, Reforms, Sustainable Development Goal.

INTRODUCTION

Globally, education plays a vital role in advancing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, linking environmental, social, and economic progress (Saxena et al., 2021; Mkulu, 2024). Education not only represents SDG4 itself but also supports other goals by raising awareness and promoting sustainable practices (Rieckmann, 2017). Effective management of educational reforms requires careful planning, teacher development, and supportive school environments that align with national objectives and community needs (Kamara et al., 2024). Strong leadership, stakeholder collaboration, and accountability are crucial to ensure reforms are sustainable and inclusive (Qablan et al., 2023). Around the world, educational institutions are integrating sustainability into teaching and operations, offering lessons for public secondary schools to follow (Ferrer-Estévez & Chalmers, 2021).

In Africa, many nations, including Tanzania, are reforming education systems to align with international standards and SDGs, though challenges such as limited funding, inadequate infrastructure, and weak stakeholder coordination persist (Oweibia et al., 2024).

Tanzania is among the developing countries striving for educational change in response to societal needs and global sustainability goals (Malik, 2018). New approaches such as revised teaching content, modern teaching methods, and technology integration are being adopted to enhance educational effectiveness for future generations (Agogbua & Umeozor, 2024). Managing these innovations effectively requires clear leadership, proper resource allocation, and inclusive participation at all stages of reform (Novawan & Aisiyyah, 2020).



Achieving Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in Tanzanian public secondary schools, therefore, demands strategies that address both management and implementation challenges (Islam et al., 2025).

The Tanzanian government's ongoing curriculum and policy reforms aim to enhance access, quality, and relevance in public secondary education, yet their success depends on effective management at local levels (Mabagala, 2025). Ilala City Council, as an urban education setting, provides a suitable case for studying how such reforms are implemented and managed to achieve SDG4. Understanding these processes at the local level offers valuable insights for developing sustainable education management strategies that promote inclusive, equitable, and quality learning opportunities for all.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Review

The study employed Fullan's (2020) Theory of Educational Change. The theory emphasizes that successful and sustainable educational reforms require strong leadership, stakeholder collaboration, capacity building, and continuous improvement, supported by systemic alignment between policy, school leadership, teacher development, and community involvement. Its strengths lie in its holistic and adaptable nature, which recognizes the need to tailor reforms to local socio-cultural and economic contexts while promoting continuous learning and adaptation. However, the theory's limitations include its insufficient attention to external factors such as government policies, economic inequalities, and political instability that may hinder implementation in resource-constrained settings like Ilala. Fullan's framework is practically applicable in managing innovations such as competency-based education, online learning, and teacher professionalization, stressing coherence, moral purpose, inclusivity, and sustainability to ensure long-term success. Ultimately, while Fullan's theory offers a robust foundation for guiding educational reforms toward SDG4, future approaches should integrate hybrid, context-specific strategies to address the unique challenges faced in developing countries.

Empirical Literature Review

The Strategies of Managing Innovative Education Reforms in the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4 in Secondary Schools

Globally, education reforms are becoming increasingly linked with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), specifically SDG4, which targets inclusive, unbiased, and quality education for all. Achieving this objective requires strong leadership and innovative management practices that incorporate sustainability in curriculum design and teaching practices. From this literature review, the methodology used in the report is a mixed-method approach, which complies with both quantitative and qualitative methods. It is suitable because reforms involve both measurable outcomes in teacher preparedness, student performance, and resource allocation. Another methodology used is a descriptive survey design,

which was used because the research involved stakeholders. Finding which occurred like use of ICT tools in teaching and administration as more secondary schools' students, teachers, head of schools, and administrators use ICT for education operations, another finding is competence-based curriculum (CBD), implemented through teachers training, continuous professional development (CPD), and public-private partnership, which improves infrastructure. Camilleri and Camilleri (2020), industrialized together with developing nations like Finland, the U.S.A., China, India, Qatar, have adopted student-centered education and technology, which is being integrated as core reforms driving quality outcomes. In Africa, some nations also adopted the reforms in terms of alignment in education policy and SDG4 indicators. Countries like South Africa, Nigeria, and other East African nations are uplifting their countries to create more innovative education reforms. In Tanzania, some regions and districts should accept the various innovative education reforms, particularly in Ilala City Council. Reform is necessary to balance urbanization challenges such as unfavorable infrastructure, overcrowded classrooms, limited education resources like ICT and computer labs, and unequal access to learning materials. It requires strategic planning and policy alignment with the global agenda to address such reforms.

Countries like Finland are globally recognized as a model of education reforms, where pedagogical innovations such as phenomenon-based learning have been institutionalized. These reforms aim at critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills that align with SDG4's vision of quality and transformative education. Leadership in Finnish education also encourages teacher autonomy and continuous professional development so that innovation can become sustainable. For Ilala City Council, adopting elements of Finland's reforms, such as decentralizing powers to teachers and building teachers' capacity, can increase achievement of SDG 4. Finland also illustrates how reforms are more effective when they target inclusivity and complete development of the student rather than concentrating on plain standardized measures. In managing innovative education reform in the attainment of Sustainable Development Goal Four, the final political system introduced the following into managing education systems: The government emphasized equity, decentralization, and trust-based governance as guiding principles. Policy frameworks were designed to empower schools with autonomy while ensuring national coherence in educational standards. Innovative reforms were also linked to long-term political consensus that prioritized education as a societal investment. (Takala & Korhonen-Yrjänheikki, 2019).

In the United States, the politics of educational reform frequently intersect with the broader agenda of achieving Sustainable Development Goal Four, particularly in efforts to promote inclusive and quality education. The introduction of reforms, such as the Common Core standards and increased charter school options, has presented new ways of improving quality and accountability in education systems. Nonetheless, reform efforts have frequently experienced ongoing

challenges around equity and access, especially for different socioeconomic groups (Bruns, Macdonald, & Schneider, 2019). While political discussions have remained ongoing, schools and programs have invested in integrating information and communication technology (ICT) in their respective classrooms. Efforts to improve digital literacy, expand access to technology resources, and modernize teaching practice ensued. Likewise, curriculum development has also begun to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and student-centered learning to prepare students with competencies appropriate for the 21st century. Although these endeavors are situated among institutional challenges, all of these types of efforts signified a well-known attempt to manifest ideas of aligning U.S. education systems with the global objectives of sustainable development, or, similarly, how innovation and resources can be mobilized in an environment of political reform. These final attempts to reform were echoed within Malik's (2018) argument that the issues of 21st-century education require a blending of pedagogy and technology. In Tanzania, where ICT infrastructure is developing, approaches may be to implement digital tools in public secondary schools, in stages, and provide professional development on managing the reform for teachers. This is an innovation of the United States' emphasis on innovation, but located and contextualized.

India's National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 demonstrates a guiding reform agenda for education for the promotion of critical thinking, multilingualism, and vocational learning. Guha and Chakrabarti (2019) condense and explain an important aspect of this reform as decentralization, where real authority is given to local governments to lead reform at the district or regional level. Decentralization implies taking into account the realities of communities and ensuring the reforms are relevant. This context is similar to the experiences faced in Ilala City Council, where the school's principals are dealing with the realities of student diversity, limited resources, and urban poverty's pressures of reform management. Moreover, Islam et al. (2025) emphasize engaging teachers' voices in educational transformation. In India, this is a negotiated space for teachers in decision-making with increased relevancy and buy-in to the policy goal. If a similar participatory model were adopted in Tanzania, teachers would have more of a say in the design and implementation of reform as well as ownership, accountability, and sustainability of innovative change at the secondary school level. India demonstrates how more inclusivity through decentralization can implement transformative educational reform aligned with SDG4 aspirations.

China serves as a noteworthy example of how state-driven reforms are able to intentionally connect education with a larger agenda of sustainable development. Zhao et al. (2024) note that government-led initiatives in greening financial reforms and technological ability have resulted in an indirect but notable impact on education. Previously, Kozma (2005) noted cases of ICT-oriented reforms in China that successfully connected learning systems with broader social and economic aspirations. These experiences highlight the need to

intentionally connect education with national development priorities through policy action. In Ilala City Council, Tanzania, for example, such case studies imply doing so, and opportunities to do so, in terms of technology sustainability and financial goals. Digital learning applications, especially in science and mathematics, could assist with student output and achievement. It is also necessary to design reforms in schools that are aware of local challenges regarding financial resources and the inequity of previous investments in educational infrastructure. This may require identifying and implementing scalable and cost-effective solutions to ensure equitable access. By leveraging China's course, Tanzania may be able to support schools through educational reforms that are both innovative and appropriate for the particular contexts and challenges. Ultimately, in Tanzania's context and within resource-constrained environments, state-like capacity and careful development of educational reforms is necessary for inclusiveness.

The post-apartheid education transformation in South Africa has remained closely associated with the objectives of equity and access, aligned with SDG 4. Ofor-Douglas (2023) observes that some of the transformational changes seen in the education system have been in the form of curriculum changes, skilled workforce uses of ICT, and reorganization of structures to allow for effective management. Nevertheless, despite these reform efforts, the system still faces unrelenting challenges, including disparities and shortages of teachers. Animashaun et al. (2024) suggest that while technology would assist in closing learning gaps, any outcomes are futile without having well-trained teachers to use technology in an effective manner. South Africa experienced a situation similar to Ilala City Council, where significant disparities exist between better-resourced schools and under-resourced schools. The educational case in South Africa emphasizes the need for attention on inequalities as well as innovation. Managing reform in education systems requires policymakers to balance technological and curriculum innovations with the necessity to address unequal provision. South African lessons establish that innovation, without addressing structural inequality, does not sustain. For Tanzania, incorporating this dual approach could strengthen reform outcomes in government secondary education.

Nigeria's story with education reform has been fraught with unpredictability, encompassing areas such as the relationship between schools and communities, changes in policy, and the slow process of technological advance. Uzoigwe (2020) notes that principals' administrative capacity is important for achieving Sustainable Development Goals through engaging communities more deeply and completely. Oweibia et al. (2024) provide a fine-grained case study from Nigeria on progress towards the SDGs, but note once again that ultimately the consequences of reform are mitigated by poor implementation and chronic under-resourcing of the system. These two issues highlight the need to shore up governance and accountability in terms of how reforms are managed. For Ilala City Council, Nigeria highlights that sustainable change cannot be achieved without adequate resources, and if systems

for oversight do not exist and work well. Lastly, community involvement is another crucial area needed, especially if ICT adoption or curricular innovation is to happen with the help of parents and community members. Without this help, participation and ownership of educational outcomes would mitigate collective responsibility. So, in summary, Nigeria makes the case that education reform at scale must combine strong leadership with community-based strategies to be inclusive. This dual approach can then build resilience and sustain changes in Tanzania in the light of available resources. Reforms in East Africa have had the international forces and the local issues acting as facilitators. Kenya and Uganda have enacted policies to enhance ICT in education towards their alignment with SDG 4. Mabagala (2025) emphasizes that strategic planning is urgent for reforms to succeed, especially whenever one tries to link reform with sustainable development. In the same vein, Tanzania in East Africa has also revised its curriculum and teacher training programs for quality enhancement. However, there exist implementation gaps. For Ilala City Council, strategic management of reforms must consider regional lessons, particularly the need for long-term planning, adequate funding, and strong leadership support at the school and district levels to ensure reforms are impactful.

Within Tanzania, education reforms have centred on improving access and quality, but challenges in management persist. Mahere (2025) notes that higher education reforms in Zimbabwe provide relevant comparisons for Tanzania, emphasizing leadership and institutional capacity. Similarly, in Ilala, reforms will be administered by summoning school officials to develop ICT integration, teacher professionalization, and student-centered approaches. According to Agogbua and Umeozor (2024), policy education reforms are most effective when tied to national security and sustainable development goals. That is to say, in Tanzania, reforms should not just target teaching outcomes but also greater social goals such as social solidarity, equity, and national progress.

Leadership takes center stage in managing reform. Novawan and Aisiyyah (2020) opine those leaders embracing the principles of sustainable development drive successful curriculum reforms in tertiary education. Similarly, Qablan et al. (2023) emphasize school leadership in implementing education for sustainable development. For Ilala City Council, head teachers and education officers are critical to the implementation of reforms and SDG 4 alignment. This entails the building of leadership capacity, accountability, and innovative practice, such as continuous teacher mentoring. In the absence of leadership, innovative reforms cannot be sustained or institutionalized.

Engagement with stakeholders is another imperative reform management strategy. Adhikari and Shrestha (2023) point out that universities achieved SDG 4.7 targets through the application of inclusive stakeholder participation in knowledge management. Ferrer-Estévez and Chalmeta (2021) also emphasize that the integration of SDGs into educational institutions requires multi-stakeholder participation, such as

teachers, learners, parents, and policymakers. Reforms in Tanzania are often plagued by restricted stakeholder involvement in decision-making. For Ilala City Council, participatory approaches under which teachers, students, and parents are all involved in planning reforms would enhance impact. This ensures that reforms are adapted to the requirements of the local societies and are based on international SDG targets.

METHODOLOGY

This study utilized a mixed research approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methods to enhance the robustness of the findings. Following Creswell's framework, the study focused on ensuring trustworthiness through various criteria such as credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability in qualitative analysis, as well as validity and reliability in quantitative analysis. A convergent parallel design was employed to collect and analyze both types of data simultaneously, aiming to provide a comprehensive understanding of strategies for managing innovative educational reforms to achieve SDG4 in public secondary schools in Ilala City. The target population consisted of 3,000 participants, with a sample size of 113 respondents, including students, teachers, school heads, education officers, and parents, selected through stratified random and purposive sampling techniques. Data collection tools included structured questionnaires for quantitative data and semi-structured interviews for qualitative insights. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS for quantitative data and MAXQDA for thematic analysis. The validity of the instruments was ensured through face and content validation by experts, and reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.7, indicating acceptable internal consistency. A pilot study was conducted to refine the instruments and establish trustworthiness through member checking, peer debriefing, and audit trails. Ethical considerations were strictly adhered to, including obtaining institutional permissions, informed consent, confidentiality, and maintaining integrity in data collection and reporting.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Strategies of Managing Innovative Education Reforms in the Attainment of Sustainable Development Goal 4

This section aims to determine the strategies of managing innovative education reforms in the attainment of sustainable development in secondary schools. Through data collection, different strategies have been involved, which have been used in managing innovative education reforms as explained below:

Table 1.1
Strategies of Managing Innovative Education Reforms in the Attainment of SDG

Items	Frequency	Percentage
Engage stakeholders and buy in	78	78.0
Invest in education	70	70.0
To enhance educational	55	55.0

resources and curriculum		
Involve the community and parents	49	49.0
Focus on quality and inclusivity	45	45.0

Source: Research field 2025

Table 1.1 shows data collected in the field about strategies used in the management of innovative education reforms, as explained below:

Stakeholder engagement and buy-in

From the findings, the researcher examined the strategies for education innovation in secondary schools. Educational stakeholders are involved to ensure the innovation of education reforms in enhancing Sustainable Development Goals. This is achieved via contributions such as providing digital tools, planning implementation strategies, ensuring that all eligible students are enrolled in Form One, and supporting the construction of school infrastructure, like classrooms. This finding is supported by Fullan's Education Change Theory (2020) emphasizes that meaningful educational reform requires collaboration among multiple stakeholders, including teachers, school administrators, the community, and external partners. The findings align with this principle, showing that NGOs provide technological tools, such as computers and printers, which support teaching, learning, and student data management. As one respondent noted:

The first strategy we have is engaging educational stakeholders, such as NGOs. These supporters provide us with technological tools, which we use in teaching and learning computer studies, as well as in collecting various data related to our students. These devices help us to cope with the 21st century, which is characterized by digital aspects in the provision of quality education to our students. For example, here we have received a computer and a printer (Interviewee from School A, July 2025).

This quotation implies that NGOs play a pivotal role in bridging the technological gap in schools by supplying digital learning tools. Their support helps schools align with 21st-century education demands and enhances both teaching effectiveness and student preparedness. This perspective is reinforced by the views of the other respondents interviewed. That involving teachers in planning strengthens reform implementation. It ensures curriculum alignment, fosters ownership of reforms, and guarantees that all students, regardless of financial barriers, are enrolled, thereby promoting inclusivity in line with SDG Additionally, another respondent expressed that:

Here, the strategy we have is involving parents in the efforts to support the government when infrastructure construction projects are introduced. Parents contribute labour and money to support the government. For example, here, we have received the BOOST project, which we are implementing in the construction of

classrooms. Through this project, we are grateful to the government for its efforts to ensure that our schools have sufficient infrastructure to help provide education to all our students at the right time (Interviewee from School B, July 2025).

From this quotation, there is sufficient evidence that education reforms in facilitating sustainable development are implemented through the involvement of education stakeholders such as the government, NGOs, teachers, and parents. For example, it is very clear that when the government collaborates with teachers and parents, it implements classroom construction projects that enable all students to access quality education. Not only that, NGOs also support schools in providing different teaching and learning digital resources, such as computers and printers, to align with the needs of the 21st century. These findings align with Fleacă and Maiduc (2018), who propose that entrepreneurial higher education institutions align their strategies with the SDGs by partnering with government agencies, private sector actors, and civil society organizations. Such collaborations expand resource bases, enhance innovation capacity, and strengthen societal relevance.

Invest in education

Based on the data provided, the researcher came up with a management strategy for innovative educational reforms in secondary education. The findings identified educational investment as a significant strategy for strengthening the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Investment in education, therefore, attracts the provision of adequate resources, in the provision of modern teaching and learning facilities, motivates teachers and enhances access to quality education for students. Such investments are channeled through the government, development partners, NGOs, and the local communities themselves as their contribution in making sure reforms are implemented effectively. Moreover, according to a respondent in an interview session, Fullan's Education Change Theory (2020) emphasized that in systemic educational reform, there has to be adequate capacity and resources, with active educational investment, or else no worthwhile and sustainable change will occur:

When the government channels resources into priority areas such as laboratories, ICT, and libraries, schools are better equipped to improve student outcomes. Such targeted investments directly enhance the quality of teaching and learning, preparing students to meet global standards and ensuring that SDG 4 goals are met. This perspective was reinforced by another respondent who remarked:

Apart from the government, we also benefit from donor-funded projects, which are crucial investments in education reforms. For instance, the EQUIP-T programme supported teacher training and the provision of teaching materials. Through such investments, teachers are motivated, and students are equipped with the resources necessary to achieve SDG 4, which calls for inclusive and equitable quality education. (Interview, Educational Officer 2, July 2025).

This quotation implies that donor-funded projects complement government efforts by addressing teacher capacity and resource shortages. Teacher motivation and improved classroom resources create a more supportive learning environment, contributing to equity and inclusivity in line with SDG 4. That means at the community level, parents are also contributing to education investment. Here, they mobilize funds to support school feeding programmes and student bursaries. This helps in reducing dropout rates and ensuring that vulnerable children remain in school. Such community-based investments complement government efforts and make education reforms practical.

There is sufficient evidence that educational investment is central to the management of innovative education reforms. For example, when the government allocates funds for infrastructure and ICT facilities, donors strengthen teacher training, and communities support through local contributions, students are assured of quality education. This investment blend promotes reforms and the realization of Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDG 4, covering access, equity, and quality in education. This is claimed by Camilleri and Camilleri (2020), who elaborate that developed and developing nations, such as Finland, the USA, China, and India, have significantly invested in student-focused education, technology integration, and teacher professionalization. These investments have propelled reforms that deliver quality outcomes according to SDG 4. In the same context, Takala and Korhonen-Yrjänheikki (2019) mention Finland's approach, whereby education reforms are directed through long-term political agreement and continuous public investment. Their study shows that prioritizing equity, decentralization, and stable funding has allowed Finland to maintain innovation and inclusivity in education. This model is a demonstration of how financial commitment as a basis provides for the implementation of reform.

Enhance educational resources and curriculum

The interviews revealed that the majority of school heads and educational officials reported that the distribution of resources is carried out by considering the number of students and the needs of each school, so that every school can implement education reforms in promoting sustainable development. Therefore, the government ensures that every school receives teaching and learning materials and capitation grants to operate the school. During the interview session, one of the respondents had this to say:

First of all, we make sure that in our schools there is a relatively good balance between teachers and students, as well as teaching and learning materials such as books and digital tools like computers, tablets, and printers. You know, for education to achieve SDG 4, these aspects must be balanced. We are aware that there are challenges in terms of teaching and learning materials, but we are making efforts, and the government is also struggling in this regard (Interview, Educational Officer 4, July 2025).

This statement implies that balancing resources such as teachers, books, and ICT facilities is central to the successful implementation of educational reforms. Equitable distribution ensures that no school is disadvantaged, allowing all students to access quality education in line with SDG 4 objectives. In line with this, the other respondents added to the strategies of managing innovative education reforms in attaining sustainable development. However, in reality, the resources are not equally distributed, and not all schools have computers, needed books, teachers, etc. Hence, equitable distribution is not reached by all schools

Indeed, the government has taken a very initiative step by introducing the free education policy in our schools. At present, our school receives capitation grants which support the purchase of teaching and learning materials, rehabilitation, sports, administration, and examinations. This has greatly contributed to the provision of quality education to our students, since every student is allocated funds donated by the Tanzanian government

It becomes clear that the government ensures the availability of teaching and learning resources; it is not enough to create policies without implementing them. Educational change has to have tangible support and resources attached to it. The government has set provisions for schools, for example, to ensure that they get the right number of computers, tablets, printers, and teaching staff so that teachers can implement innovation in practice. As such, a proper devolution of resources would give teachers a better capacity to handle educational innovations and, in the end, satisfy SDG4 targets, including equitable and quality education for all pupils. Findings of research are in accord with Novawan and Aisyiyah (2020), claiming that efficient management of issues related to any factors, such as resource allocation, enables the successful implementation of changes. Moreover, Ossai (2023) conducted a study in Nigerian universities that underscores the essentiality of resource mobilization to drive the Sustainable Development Goal Four agenda.

Involve the community and parents

Based on the evidence, the researcher examined communities' contributions towards maintaining innovative education reforms in secondary schools. The findings revealed that community involvement is a key approach in entrenching education reforms and realizing Sustainable Development Goal 4. Communities, particularly parents and local leaders, assist with financial assistance, voluntary work, and active participation in school management. Their involvement helps bridge the gap between government initiatives and the practical needs of schools, thereby making reforms more effective and sustainable. During the interviews, one of the respondents commented:

In our community, parents actively participate in supporting education initiatives. For example, when the government launches a classroom construction project, parents contribute labour and sometimes building materials. This ensures that projects are completed on

time, and students benefit from improved learning spaces. (Interviewee from School C, July 2025).

This implies that community contributions in the form of labour and materials complement government investments in infrastructure. Such involvement accelerates project implementation, reduces costs, and ensures that schools have adequate facilities to accommodate learners, thereby fostering equity and access as envisioned in SDG 4. That means

We also involve community members in school decision-making through school committees. Parents and local leaders participate in setting priorities, monitoring projects, and ensuring accountability. This joint responsibility strengthens trust and ownership of education reforms.”

There is sufficient evidence that community involvement is central to education reforms. Communities provide resources, support student welfare, and participate in governance, all of which contribute to the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 4. When parents and local leaders work together with the government and other stakeholders, they not only ease the burden on state resources but also ensure that reforms address the real needs of learners. This collaborative model enhances equity, quality, and sustainability in education delivery. This is supported by Camilleri and Camilleri (2020), who note that in both developed and developing nations, local communities play an important role in sustaining reforms through grassroots participation and resource mobilization. Similarly, Takala and Korhonen-Yrjänheikki (2019) point out Finland's case, where not only state financing allows for sustainable reforms but a participatory effort of communities in keeping schools going and making them inclusive. The studies observe that community participation, alongside government and donor funding, creates an enabling environment for the success of SDG 4.

Focus on quality and inclusivity

On the basis of the findings, the researcher explored the adoption of quality and inclusivity as approaches in managing secondary school innovative education reforms. The results showed that inclusivity and quality play fundamental roles in the achievement of SDG 4, which is aimed at ensuring inclusive and high-quality education for all learners regardless of socio-economic status, gender, or physical disability. Quality pertains to improving practice in learning, providing learning materials in adequate numbers, increasing capacity among teachers, and monitoring learners' performance. Inclusivity addresses ensuring the opportunity for all learners to study, particularly excluded and vulnerable groups, so they do not get left behind. During the interviews, one of the respondents stated:

We make sure that every student, even the disadvantaged ones, has access to textbooks, digital resources, and qualified teachers. For example, no student is excluded from learning due to an inability to pay school fees or because of not having uniforms. This is our way of

ensuring quality and inclusive education as per SDG 4. (Interviewee with Education Officer 5, July 2025).

That is, the implementation of reforms that merge both inclusivity and quality reduces learning barriers and offers all learners equal opportunities. The provision of necessary learning facilities and allowances for disadvantaged learners improves overall educational performance.

Apart from resources, we focus on quality teaching by engaging in constant professional development. The teachers are trained to employ student-centred methods that accommodate diversified learning needs. This ensures effective learning and achievement of learning goals for all the children.

As can be seen from the above evidence, quality and equity are complementary strategies. Yet in reality, most of the infrastructure in Tanzania is not friendly to accommodate all learners, the disadvantaged, and the normal students. The provision of highly educated teachers, adequate learning resources, and student-centered approaches guarantees that education reforms reach all students equally. These strategies facilitate Tanzania's secondary schools to be competitive according to international SDG 4 standards to ensure there is both excellence and equity in the delivery of education. This is supported by Camilleri and Camilleri (2020), who note that successful education reforms in countries like Finland, India, and the USA integrate quality pedagogy and inclusive measures to ensure that all learners achieve learning outcomes. Similarly, Takala and Korhonen-Yrjänheikki (2019) point out that Finnish education is characterized by high-quality pedagogic practices augmented by inclusivity measures such as equal access and support for disadvantaged students, which ensures sustainable and fair outcomes.

Furthermore, respondents were given open-ended questions and data analysis revealed that the majority of head of schools and educational officers reported that schools use the policy guidelines provided to ensure that the education delivered is of a quality and considers student equity, regardless of the challenges encountered in implementing education reforms. To confirm this, one of the respondents in the interview session had this to say:

In managing innovative education reforms to enhance the implementation of SDG4, we teach by following the guidelines of the Education and Training Policy 2023, which is reviewed from the Education and Training Policy of 2014. We have been provided with these policy guidelines that direct us in doing educational activities. For example, to ensure that every student has access to education, the policy focuses on equity and inclusiveness in education accessibility. This means that both students with special needs and those without special needs are all considered learners and deserve equal rights (Interviewee from School C, July 2025)

This implies that the majority of head of schools and educational officers reported that schools use the policy guidelines provided to ensure that the education delivered is

of a quality and considers student equity, regardless of the challenges encountered in implementing education reforms. These findings align with the work of Sever and Tok (2023), who conducted research in Qatar and demonstrated that national policies and localized innovations can interact to enhance educational reform outcomes. Additionally, Zhao et al. (2024) noted that national-level strategies, such as green financial reform and innovation zones, integrate sustainability principles into educational programming. Consistent with this, Oweibia et al. (2024) highlighted that the specific strategies employed in different African contexts are crucial for developing effective policies and practices.

In addition, through open-ended questions, respondents described that knowledge sharing is one of the strategies they use to manage innovative education reforms in achieving sustainable development also exchange various knowledge in teaching through online platforms, as well as teaching manuals. For example, nowadays we have a program called Teacher Continuous Professional Development (TCPD). Through this program, we have the opportunity to share ideas about education reforms and how to teach inclusive classes, where the school setting, teachers exchange various knowledge in teaching and learning. The TCPD prepares seminars and workshops for teachers' professional development in the workplace. Since this topic was looking for strategies of managing innovative education reforms in the attainment of SDG in secondary schools in Ilala. Hence, teachers need to have career development in their workplace. These findings align with the work of Adhikari and Shrestha (2023), who found that higher education institutions, as knowledge hubs, must implement strategic initiatives for knowledge sharing, collaboration, and innovation diffusion to achieve Sustainable Development Goal Four. Similarly, Animashaun et al. (2024) and Odell et al. (2020) concur that Innovative educational reforms are increasingly seen as vital strategies to equip individuals with the knowledge, skills, and values necessary to contribute to sustainable development. Generally, both previous and current studies indicate that stakeholder engagement, including government agencies, teachers, parents, private sector actors, and civil society organizations, together with equitable distribution of resources through fund allocation, provision of policy guidelines, and knowledge exchange, is a significant strategy for managing innovative education reforms in the attainment of sustainable development goals in secondary schools.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study concludes that achieving Sustainable Development Goal Four (SDG4) in public secondary schools within Ilala City, Tanzania, depends on effective management of innovative educational reforms through strong leadership, stakeholder collaboration, adequate investment, and continuous monitoring. Findings revealed that stakeholder engagement, investment in education, enhancement of resources and curriculum, community involvement, and focus

on quality and inclusivity are essential strategies for sustaining reforms.

The study recommends that the government needs to strengthen partnerships among the government, schools, and communities. The government must enhance teacher professional development; invest in ICT and infrastructure; improve monitoring and evaluation systems; and promote participatory decision-making. It further suggests that education policies should bridge resource gaps and ensure equitable access to quality education for all learners, fostering sustainable and inclusive educational development aligned with SDG4.

Implication of the study

The study sums up that innovative educational technologies can help achieve sustainable development goals. A school to achieve transformation innovation must balance between teachers and students, as well as teaching and learning materials such as books and digital tools like computers, tablets, and printers, so as to achieve SDG four.

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