

Editorial Note

It is my pleasure to present **Volume 28, Issue 1 (June 2026)** of the *Journal of Adult Education in Tanzania (JAET)*. This issue brings together ten articles that examine contemporary questions in adult, non-formal, open, distance and lifelong education. Drawing on evidence from Tanzania and Nigeria, the contributions address land literacy, institutional sustainability, indigenous religious knowledge, digital safety, climate resilience, adult literacy provision, open educational resources, educational decentralisation, authentic assessment, and learner retention.

Collectively, the articles demonstrate that adult education extends far beyond the acquisition of basic literacy. It is a means of strengthening individual agency, community organisation, institutional resilience, social inclusion, and informed participation in rapidly changing social, environmental and technological contexts. A recurring message across the issue is that access to education must be accompanied by relevant curricula, responsive institutions, adequate resources, participatory governance and sustained learner support.

The opening article, **Bridging Land Literacy Gaps through Transformative Adult Education in Rural Tanzania: A Participatory Action Research Study**, by Michael Ng'umbi, examines how participatory adult education can respond to land-related challenges in rural communities. The study identifies gaps in legal, civic, conflict, and practical land literacy and translates them into context-responsive learning modules. Its findings show emerging improvements in land knowledge, sustainable land-use practices, engagement with local governance structures, conflict management and collective community action. The article illustrates the value of participatory action research in connecting learning with locally defined priorities.

In the second article, **The Association Between Strategic Management Practices and the Sustainability of ASEP Centres in Mwanza Urban, Tanzania**, Gaudensia Ngongi investigates the relationship between strategic management and the sustainability of Alternative Secondary Education Pathway centres. The study finds generally low implementation of strategic planning, leadership and governance, resource mobilisation, stakeholder involvement, and monitoring and evaluation. Nevertheless, these practices collectively show a strong association with perceived institutional sustainability. Stakeholder involvement emerges as particularly important, underscoring the need for participatory governance, centre-level planning, distributed leadership, and systematic monitoring.

The third article, **Who Do not Practice Witchcraft? Assessing the Relegation of African Indigenous Religious Knowledge Resource by Christian and Islamic Traditions**, by Onesmo Emmanuel, offers a critical examination of the historical marginalisation of African Indigenous religious knowledge. Through documentary analysis, the article interrogates how concepts such as witchcraft and miracle have been differently applied across religious traditions. It calls for critical engagement with inherited colonial categories, renewed recognition of African knowledge systems, and careful mechanisms for distinguishing culturally grounded knowledge and healing practices from harmful conduct. The article contributes to wider debates on epistemic justice, cultural identity and decolonisation.

Isma'il Husain Mshelia's article, **The Role of Lifelong Digital Literacy in Preventing Online Victimisation in Nigeria**, turns attention to the risks accompanying digital transformation. Through a narrative review guided by Routine Activity Theory and Social Learning Theory, the article conceptualises digital literacy as a component of capable guardianship against phishing, identity theft, online fraud, cyberbullying and related threats. It highlights the heightened vulnerability of older adults, low-income populations, rural residents and people with limited formal education. The article recommends lifelong, inclusive, culturally responsive, and community-based digital education supported by secure systems, institutional responsibility, effective regulation and accessible reporting mechanisms.

The fifth contribution, **From Information to Transformation: A Thematic Analysis of the Curriculum Gap in Climate Resilience Education for Rural Adults**, by Rabilu Abdu Yahaya, Samir Halliru and Saddiqa Surajo Wudil, examines how adult education can help rural communities move from climate awareness to adaptive action. The thematic synthesis identifies four interconnected dimensions: psychological transformation, social learning, curriculum relevance and the integration of indigenous and scientific knowledge. The authors argue that climate education should move beyond information delivery by fostering reflection, collaboration, experimentation and locally relevant problem-solving. The article presents an integrated framework for strengthening climate resilience through adult learning.

In **Challenges Facing ODL Students in Initiating Adult Literacy Classes in Mwanza Region, Tanzania**, Tyson Charles examines the barriers encountered by Open and Distance Learning students during teaching practice. The study identifies limited community understanding of adult education, stigma associated with

illiteracy, competing family and employment responsibilities, inadequate teaching and learning materials, and financial constraints. Interpreted through the Characteristics of Adults as Learners model, these challenges are shown to be situational, institutional and dispositional. The article recommends stronger community awareness, adequate instructional resources, sustainable financing, and the integration of literacy with practical livelihood and entrepreneurship education.

The seventh article, **Access to Open Educational Resources among Postgraduate Students in the Faculty of Education: A Case of Hezekiah Oluwasanmi Library, Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria**, by Adewale Titus Elewode, Abimbola Roseline Olawale-Jimoh, and Ismaila Olaitan Mudasiru, examines the availability, awareness, accessibility and use of open educational resources. The findings indicate broad access and positive utilisation among postgraduate students, particularly for self-directed learning and research. However, inadequate institutional support, limited familiarity with specific platforms, unreliable internet access and insufficient digital infrastructure constrain optimal use. The study highlights the important role of academic libraries in advancing equitable access to knowledge and lifelong learning.

Gasper Nturu Shoo's article, **Education Policy vs. Practice: An Assessment of Decentralisation by Devolution Practices in the Secondary Education Sub-sector in Tanzania**, analyses the practical effects of decentralisation reforms on school management. The study finds that school management teams exercise some authority over academic activities, staff supervision, resource mobilisation and student discipline. However, important decisions concerning budgeting, professional development, student admission and other administrative matters remain substantially controlled by higher authorities. The article reveals a continuing gap between formal decentralisation policy and operational autonomy and recommends clearer delegation, adequate resources, capacity development, and effective monitoring.

In the ninth article, **The Authenticity of Assessment Methods in Open and Distance Learning at the Institute of Adult Education in Tanzania**, Tullo Mtunguja, Brown Gwambene and George Jumbe assess the extent to which ODL assessment promotes meaningful learning, knowledge application and critical thinking. The findings show that the institutional framework combines conventional methods, including assignments, tests, and examinations, with authenticity-oriented methods such as portfolios, projects and field practice. Although students generally perceive these methods as effective, written and

examination-based assessment remains dominant. The authors recommend expanding practical, reflective, collaborative and technology-supported forms of assessment suited to adult learners and ODL environments.

The issue concludes with **Administrative Learner Support Services and Retention in Alternative Secondary Education: Evidence from ASEP Centres in Dodoma Region**, by Simon Michael Moses. The study investigates academic, psychosocial, and financial or material support in relation to perceived learner retention. Academic support is found to be comparatively more available, while counselling, mentorship and financial assistance remain constrained. Financial or material support emerges as the strongest predictor of perceived retention, followed by psychosocial and academic support. The article demonstrates that second-chance educational pathways require integrated support systems that respond to learners' academic, emotional, family, employment and economic circumstances.

Across these ten contributions, several themes stand out. First, effective adult education must be **context-responsive**, grounded in learners' lived experiences and immediate social and livelihood needs. Second, participation and community ownership are essential for sustaining educational interventions and institutions. Third, access alone is insufficient: learners also require relevant curricula, capable facilitators, appropriate assessment, adequate infrastructure, psychosocial assistance, and financial support. Fourth, educational transformation is gradual and depends on sustained cycles of learning, action, reflection and institutional adaptation. Finally, lifelong learning has become increasingly important in helping individuals and communities respond to land insecurity, climate change, digital risks, institutional fragility and evolving knowledge demands.

I commend the authors for their contributions and acknowledge the work of the reviewers, editorial and advisory board members, production team and Institute of Adult Education in bringing this issue to publication. We hope the articles will stimulate scholarly discussion, inform policy and professional practice, and strengthen adult, non-formal, open, distance and lifelong education in Tanzania, Africa and beyond.

Prof. Sempeho I. Siafu

Chief Editor