



**STAKEHOLDERS' PERCEPTION ON THE LOW ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
GRADE SEVEN LEARNERS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN KAZUNGULA
DISTRICT, SOUTHERN PROVINCE ZAMBIA.**

BY

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**A Dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia and Zimbabwe Open
University in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of
Master of Education in Educational Management.**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my own work and the works of other people have been appropriately acknowledged. I further declare that this work has never in part or whole has been submitted to the University of Zambia or any other institution for the award of any academic qualification.

Signature:

Date:

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by Edward, Nyambe is approved as fulfilling the requirements for the award of the Master of Education Degree in Educational Management by the University of Zambia and Zimbabwe Open University.

Examiners' signatures

1. SignatureDate.....

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ABSTRACT

The good academic performance of learners in most cases depends on the dynamics of inspiration such as reliable teaching staff, sufficient of teaching/learning aids and good leadership styles of school managers and positive attitude towards education of stakeholders in the community or any given society. However, in Kazungula district concerns have been made by stakeholders such as parents, learners, teachers and other prominent members in the community over the low academic performance of grade seven learners in some public primary schools in the district that has continued to be poor. The study examined the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district, southern province of Zambia. A sample of 49 respondents were purposively and randomly selected and interviewed. Therefore, this included eight (8) public primary school grade seven teachers [five (5) male and three (3) females], 8 headteachers [five (5) males and three (3) males], 1 planning officer and thirty-two (32) grade seven learners [sixteen (16) girls and sixteen (16) boys] from the selected public primary schools. The study was mainly qualitative in nature and used a case study design. Thematic analysis was used to analyse data.

The findings of the study revealed that the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools was due to a number of contributing factors included insufficient teaching and learning materials, inadequate infrastructure, over-enrolment, low teacher morale, few qualified teachers, rampant teacher and pupil absenteeism, erratic and insufficient funding and low staffing levels. Others were that geographical location of the school, quality of teaching staff, the size of the class and unavailability of certain facilities such as computers and IT equipment/facilities and laboratories. However, other non- interpersonal de-motivating contributing factors were cited by stakeholders and these were such as latest reference books for the revised curriculum in most public primary schools. This included negative attitude for both school managers and teachers, other stakeholders such as parents and learners towards primary education.

Arising from the research findings, several recommendations were advanced to stakeholders and these were as follows in line with the research findings, (a) The Ministry of General Education should increase funding to public primary education schools, (b) The Ministry of General Education through Zonal Schools should find ways of motivating teachers and raising their morale, (c) measures should be taken by school administrators to curb absenteeism among teachers and pupils and (d) School managers should find alternative ways of raising funds so as to buy the required teaching and learning materials in public primary schools than depending on government funding only. School administration should carry out routine monitoring and evaluation of educational standards in public primary schools for quality assurance. It was further recommended that the District Education Board Secretary, school headteachers and teachers in the district to address other non-interpersonal de-motivating contributing factors.

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LIST OF ACRONYM

DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
PO	Planning Officer
ECZ	Examination Council of Zambia
MOE	Ministry of Education
MOGE	Ministry of General Education
PTA	Parents Teachers Association
NBTL	New Breakthrough to Literacy
SITE	Step into English
ROC	Read on Course
PEO	Provincial Education Officer

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

Studies have indicated that behavioural affect the achievement of students in academic performance. The success of secondary education, like any other education depends on quality primary education. Ministry of education (1992:38) noted that there is urgent need to reform the grade 8 selection examination so that it can contribute effectively to improving the quality of education in primary schools. Low academic performance of learners participating in any examination has become a national concern in Zambia. There is a strong relationship between the skills within which the child enter school and their academic performance (Spira et al 2005). Kelly (2000) explained that children who did not display good reading and writing skills in the first grade had approximately ninety percent chance of remaining poor readers and as such their academic performance will be dramatically impacted during their time of schooling. School administration requires collaboration and professional interactions to achieve certain objectives and goals. The school management need to closely work with the teachers who play a critical role in the teaching and learning of pupils in turn translates into either good or bad performance.

The relationship between school managers is characterized by various forms managerial skills, interpersonal interactions, collaboration and team work. Since, the teaching fraternity is characterized by a number of professional relationships that encompass various collegial interactions among the human resource in a particular school. The dynamism of these interactions with the school management in a school tend to follow the kind of leadership that the school management has established in the school. Moreover, these interpersonal interactions seem to affect the level of motivation among the teachers. Kip (2014) pointed out that creating a collaborative environment can breathe new life into a company and reinvigorate employees. He further stipulated that, sharing new ideas and knowledge lets others see things from different perspectives, spurs their own work in new directions, and moves the organization forward.

Bush (2007) also agreed that good communication between the school management and staff helps to build participatory management, which is vital in establishing school management terms. These school management terms are empowered by the local by the school manager as she/he delegates responsibilities to them. Effective communication also establishes the foundation for good professional interactions and a shared vision and mission. In addition, the

school's vision and mission helps to focus the attention of teachers and shows the learners the principles for which the school stands. Since, the learner is the most important client in the school, there is need to harness her/his potential to ensure results. The school manager using by his/her managerial skills, must therefore work closely with members of staff to achieve the desired goals of the school. The school manager must be aware of factors that affect the motivation of the teaching staff. Grade seven examination plays an important role in the Zambian Curriculum. It enhances the learner's understanding of the world around and prepares them for further education and challenges in life.

Curriculum Development Centre (CDC, 2013) noted that examinations of grade seven are very important in that they equip learners with vital knowledge, skills and values that are necessary to contribute to the attainment of Vision 2030. Additionally, the Ministry of General Education (2013) is now encouraging every child in Zambia to concentrate on passing grade seven examinations as it is regarded by most stakeholders as essential. Ministry of General Education (2013) observed that overall unsatisfactory performance in school certificate is attributable in large measure to poor performance in grade seven. Accordingly to the Examination Council of Zambia Examiners' report (2014) indicated that the low academic performance in grade seven levels especially in Southern province has continued in the nation to date. A number of reasons have been given for this kind of performance in public examination.

Ministry of Education (1996) stipulates that, the distressing picture of poor of performance in grade seven could be attributed to deficiencies at school level in the facilities, resources or the teaching. This continuous poor performance of learners in grade seven has prompted this study to find out stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of Southern province of Zambia. The general academic performance for grade seven learners as documented in Kazungula Strategic Plan (2015-2021) for the district is unsatisfactory and falls below the national expected standard. Do teachers of grade seven in the district have enough teaching and learning materials to address the situation? Or may they do not receive the much needed support from the school managers, or do they work together to find the solutions to the problems?

1.1 Statement of the problem

There has been general concern by stakeholders such as parents, other members of the community and teachers and learners over the low academic performance of grade seven learners at national level as reviewed by from the examination analysis in Kazungula district of southern province (Kazungula Strategic plan 2013-2015). Could it be that public primary schools lack the element of managerial skills, collaboration and team work? Or could it be that school managers are not supportive to the grade seven teachers in terms of equipping them with rightful resources of teaching and learning so as to provide the needed skills to mitigate the problem? Or could it be the management of Kazungula district education board does not provide qualified and experienced teachers to teach the grade seven learners in Kazungula district of southern province. The issue of low academic performance of grade seven learners has become a common phenomenon today as perceived by concerned stakeholders in the district. Therefore, this study was aimed at establishing the perception of stakeholders on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of southern province, Zambia.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to explore the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this study were;

- To explore the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of Southern Province.
- To assess the availability of Teaching and Learning resources in selected public primary schools of Kazungula district of Southern Province.
- To identify the leadership styles of school managers in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of Southern Province.

1.4 Research Questions

The study used the following questions.

- What factors are contributing to the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools in Kazungula District?
- Are there sufficient teaching and learning resources in public primary schools in Kazungula District?
- What leadership styles are mostly used by school managers in public primary schools in Kazungula District?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study is significance in that it generated information on unsatisfactory academic performance of grade seven learners as shown from the examination results analysis in the district. The findings of the study would bring about improvement of efficiency and effectiveness in the management of institutions of learning so as to promote better performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools. The study would help to add value to the existing literature on educational administration, decisions makers, researchers, Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ) and other stakeholders might also find the study very helpful. Further, this study would generate information that could be of helpful to the Ministry of General Education and education practitioners in training, monitoring and evaluating administrative staff.

1.6 Theoretical framework.

The study was guided by the Effective Schools Model by Lezotte (2010) theory which relates to academic performance in organization. This model explains that an effective school is a school that can be measured in terms of pupil achievements, demonstrates the joint presence of quality and equity. The seven correlates of effective schools included strong instructional leadership, clear and focused mission, safe and orderly schools, climate of high expectations for success, frequent monitoring of pupil progress, positive home-school relations, and opportunity to learn/time on task as documented by (Lezotte 2010). Additionally, Lezotte (2010) noted that strong instructional leaders are proactive and seek help in building team leadership and a culture conducive to learning and professional growth. In The effective school, the headteacher and others act as instructional leaders and effectively and persistently communicate and model the mission of the school to staff parents, and pupils.

Everyone knows where they are going and why because of a clear and focused mission and it has been noted that a clear focus assists in aligning programs and activities for school improvement. To effectively determine a specific focus, school leadership and stakeholders use a collaborative process to target a few school goals and then build consensus around them. A safe and orderly school is defined as a school climate and culture characterized by reasonable expectations for behaviour, consistent and fair application of rules and regulations and caring, responsive relationships among adults and pupils (Lezotte, 2010). Classrooms are warm and inviting and learning activities are purposeful, engaging, and significant. Personalized learning environments are created to increase positive relationships among pupils and between pupils and their teachers. Pupils feel that they belong in the school community, and children are valued and honoured, their heritage and backgrounds are viewed as "assets," not deficiencies. In a climate of high expectations, those mantra "all pupil can learn" must be followed by instructional practices and teacher behaviour that demonstrate that teachers believe in the pupils, believe in their own efficacy to teach pupils to high standards, and will persist in teaching them. Teaching advanced skills and teaching for understanding together with basic skills are required for all pupils to achieve at high levels.

Lezotte, (2010) observed that frequent monitoring of teaching and learning requires paying attention both to pupil learning results and to the effectiveness of school and classroom procedures. Learning is monitored by tracking a variety of assessment results such as test scores, products, performances, and other evidence of learning. Teaching is monitored by teachers themselves through self-reflection and by supervisors for program and teacher evaluation. Assessment results are used for planning instruction for individual pupils as well as for school-wide decision making and planning. On one hand, classroom and school practices are modified based on the data.

Further, Lezotte (2010) noted that family and community involvement is a general term used to describe a myriad of activities, projects and programs that bring parents, businesses and other stakeholders together to support pupil learning and schools. Families and other adults can be involved in the education of young people through a variety of activities that demonstrate the importance of education and show support and encouragement of pupils learning. These are legitimate approaches for involvement and do not necessarily require adults spending time at the

school site and does not offer an opportunity to learn. Time on task simply means that each of the teachers in the school has a clear understanding of what the essential learner objectives are, grade-by-grade and subject-by-subject. Once it is clear what pupils should be learning, they should be given time to learn it and it has been noted that in an effective school, teachers allocate a significant amount of classroom time to instruction on the essential skills. Pupil so fall abilities, races, gender, and socio-economic status have equal opportunities to learn (Lezotte, 2010). Therefore, the theory was relevant to this study in that it clearly highlights on how school effectiveness can be achieved and this relates to improved academic performance. For example, by having effective leadership in the part of the school administrators. This is in line with Sullivan and Glanz (2000) observation that a prime task of school leaders have to exercise instructional leadership of some kind that results in a shared vision of the directions to be pursued by the school and to manage change in ways that ensure that the school is successful in realizing the vision. By identifying the correlates of well performing schools in Kenya, the study tests Lezotte (2010) Effective Schools Model, and also suggests measures that low performing schools can implement so as to improve academic performance of learners as documented by (Banda, 2015).

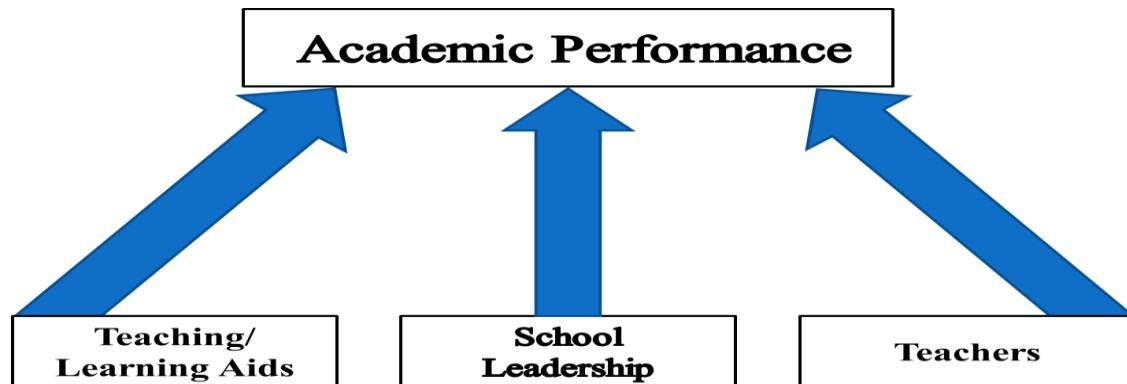
1.7 Conceptual Framework

Miles and Huberman (2008) explains that the conceptual framework is a plan that shows or explains either diagrammatically or in narrative form, the main things to be studied. Therefore, the conceptual framework of this study spells out the key factors, concepts or variables used and the presumed relationship among them.

The conceptual framework of this study had three dependent variables and these were teaching/learning aids, school leadership styles and teachers as well as one independent variable which is academic performance. It can be noted that good academic performance is as a result of having well organized teaching and learning aids/ facilities, effective school managers and well qualified teachers. You realize that failing to organize well these variables, it is difficult to get the best from the learners. The quality of learning is directly related to the quality of instruction in the classrooms. It is a fact that the academic qualifications, knowledge of the subjects leads to good learner academic performance in schools. This Effective School theory was important to this study in the sense that it clearly shows on how effectiveness can be attained. For instance,

there is need of having effective leadership in the part of the school. This is in line with Sullivan and Glanz (2000) cited in Chileya (2016) that an important task of school leaders it exercise instructional leadership of some kind that can bring about a shared vision well as to manage change in ways that ensure that the school is in the process of realizing its vision. According to studies by Chileya (2016) explained that by identifying the correlates of well performing schools in Kenya, the study tests Lezotte (2010) Effective Schools Model and points out measures that low academic performing schools can take to improve academic performance of learners in public schools.

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Source: Formulated by the author, 2018

1.8 Operational definitions

Academic performance-

This refers to the ability to study and remember facts, being able to study effectively and see how facts fit together and form larger patterns of knowledge, and being able to think for yourself in relation to facts and being able to communicate your knowledge verbally or down on paper (Kip, 2014).

Effective learning-

This refers to pupils' being available, focused and committed to undertake learning willingly (Kokemuller, 2013).

Effective school-

This refers to a school whose educators are responsible for producing Acceptable results, by putting emphasis on

instructional leadership, focus on vision and mission, school safety and orderliness, communicating high expectations for success, monitoring of pupil progress, home-school relations, and creating an opportunity to learn for each pupil (Malambo, 2012).

Effective teaching-

This refers to helping pupils to learn by providing adequate context and content, and involving the learners in the process of responding to questions, summarizing findings and discussions and research and report on unanswered questions (Sikatali, 2016).

Poor performing schools-

This refers public primary schools in Kazungula District that consistently produce small number of pupils selected to go to grade 8 after writing the grade seven composite examinations (ECZ, 2014).

Well performing school-

This refers to public primary schools that produce a good number of pupils going to grade 8 after writing grade seven leaving examinations with good marks in division one (ECZ, 2014).

School environmental factors-

This refers to the quality of the physical environment classroom infrastructure and facilities (Mpundu, 2017).

Home based factors-

This refers to the provision of educational resources in the home also whether homes provide a stimulating environment conducive for learning (Banda, 2016).

Stakeholders-

A stakeholder is an individual or group with an interest in the success of an organization (Novoa and Shackleton, 2015).

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Overview

This chapter presents the objective reviewing the literature related to the topic of stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools. Additionally, the chapter reviews the causes of low academic performance of learners and achievement from other written sources and studies done by other scholars within and outside Zambia. This concept of reviewed of related literature has been defined as follows. Creswell (2012) defines the review of related literature as a scholarly paper which includes the current knowledge, substantive findings, theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic. Additionally, Baglione (2012) explains that a review of related literature as a type of review article mainly associated with academic oriented literature and such literature in this study has been discussed in line with the subheadings of contributing factors to low academic performance of grade seven learners in public schools and strategies that help to improve the learner academic performance.

2.1 Stakeholders' perception on the contributing factors to Low Academic Performance of Grade Seven Learners.

In line with the researcher's first objective, the study investigated the contributing factors to low academic performance of grade seven learners as indicated by some scholars. Kanyika (2000) states that learning is a product of formal schooling, communities, Families and peers. Therefore, learning can be influenced by social-economic and social cultural forces, leadership styles and teaching/ learning aids. Therefore, without proper learning, pupils can on one hand experience low academic performance in national examination.

2.1.1 Socio-economic status and Academic Performance of Learners in Public Primary Schools.

Abba (2004) in Nigeria did a study on the impact of socio-economic status on pupils' academic performance. A case study research design was used as data collection tool. The findings of the study revealed that the socio-economic status of families in rural areas, long distance to school, over-enrolment, low teacher morale, insufficient teaching and learning resources affected the performance of learners. There is a link to this study in that the research also looked at the academic performance of learners. However, the study left a gap because it did not focus on the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary school. Therefore, the purpose why this research was conducted so as to fill up the gap. Chaudhari et al (1998) cited in Abba (2004) observed that socio-economic status plays a very cardinal role in the life of human being. This is really in line with the first objective of this study because the status of a person easily determines the academic performance of the learner. What has been realized is that intelligence, attitudes and interests are patterned by socio-economic status background of an individual learner. Abba (2004) indicates that socio-economic such as the position of that individual and family occupies with reference to prevailing average standards, cultural possession and participation in the group activity of the community.

Additionally, studies by Banda (2016) explains that socio-economic status refers to both the social and economic status of the individual in the group. The variations in grade seven learners achievement are also due to differences in socio-economic status of the children, differential treatment given by parents, parent's educational level, influence of the surroundings and many more. The socio-cultural factors has got influence on various aspects of individual's development and on one hand has particularly caught the attention of academician as well as the current researcher.

It has been noted that facilities and environment provided for one study, self-concept and study habits can also lead to individual success and failure. As such Vandiver and Telford (2011) stipulates that children belonging to higher socio-economic status are not only brilliant but are also provided with better opportunities for developing intellectuals, physically and emotionally. It has been also observed that the kind of intellectual in the home will also on the other hand have an impact on the school achievement of the child and this in turn is determined by intellectual level of parents, parents' education, occupation, income and size of the family. Additionally, learners are strongly influenced by society, socio-economic status, self-concept,

study habits, emotional maturity among others, which may enhance the academic achievement of the grade seven learners in public schools period.

2.2 Teachers' Qualification and Learner's Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools

Smith (2011) conducted a study in London on the relationship between teacher qualification and students' learning. The study used both qualitative and quantitative approach as data collection tool. The findings of the study revealed that the teachers' qualification affected the performance of learners in public schools. There is a link to this study because due to the aspect of performance which the study did look at. However, the study did not fill the gap as it did focus on the stakeholders' perception on the academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools. Hence, the reason for this study. In line with the first objective of this study, it has been noted that there is a direct relationship to the quality of education and that of instruction in the classroom. The researcher observed that there is a fact that the academic qualifications, knowledge of the subjects can also enhance the academic performance of learners. Studies by Okpala (2010) cited by Banda (2016) indicated that that there is a positive relationship between teachers' preparation in the subject matter and this can lead to effective and student achievement. Additionally, Okpala (2010) noted that both positive and negative effects of teachers in the preparation on student achievement.

Further, Philias & Wanjobi (2011) cited by Banda (2011) noted that the effect of experience student learning have found positive relationship between teachers' effectiveness and their experience but there is no significance observed. The available evidence currently is that the inexperienced teachers are less effective than more senior teachers and the benefits of experience level off after few years. Philias & Wanjobi (2011) stipulates that the relationship between teacher experience and student achievement is difficult to interpret in the sense that it is highly affected by motivation of women teachers to work during the child-bearing period.

According to Philias & Wanjobi (2011) cited by Banda (2016) indicates that the qualified teachers who have good and considerable qualifications are those who usually engage in participating in professional development activities. The professional activities can be conducted by different organization in school and out of school on the job or during sabbatical leave. Generally, it is worthy to say on these occasions, practising teachers update their content

knowledge and teaching skills so that they can meet the requirement of new curricular, continue to discover new findings on teaching and learning and adapt to change in the needs of the student population.

Studies by Banda (2016) indicated that teachers who are well-trained in the teaching profession are likely to enhance pupils' academic performance. This is due to the fact that the qualified and certified teachers learned teaching method as a result of this, the pupils proved to perform better than the students who studied under the unqualified teachers. In line with the first objective of this study, the researcher stated that teachers' qualifications greatly affects students' academic performance. It has been realised that quality improvement in education depends upon proper training of teachers and on one hand, teachers cannot play of the role unless properly trained. Therefore, training is an art and as such it can be redefined by training and practise the competent teachers are central in the reconstruction of the educational system.

2.3 Distance from Home to School and Academic Performance of Learners in Public Primary Schools.

Indabawa (2014) in Nigeria did a research on comparative study of pupils' academic performance in social studies in public and private primary schools. Correlational research design was used as data collection tool for this study. The findings of the study revealed that the distance from home to school, class size, and socio-economic status and teacher qualifications greatly affected the academic performance of learners in social studies in both public and private primary schools. There is a link to this study due to the fact the aspect of academic performance in public primary schools is related to this current study. However, the gap was not filled up in the study because it just focused on the academic performance of learners in social studies in both private and public primary schools and did not concentrate on the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools. Hence, the reason for this study. It has been noted that distance from home to school is yet another contributing factor to low academic performance of grade seven learners that is line with the first objective of this study. Kanyika (2000) and Mbozi (2008) argue that when pupils travel long distances to school there are high possibilities of such pupils reporting for school late and very tired reducing their level of concentration when learning is in progress. The vice does not only contribute to such pupils missing first lessons but also make them in attentive during lesson

delivery by teachers. This later adversely affects their academic achievement. On the other hand, Kelly (1999) also agreed that long distances to schools had a negative impact to pupil school attendance more especially in rural areas. He emphasised that by the time pupils arrived at schools, they were too tired to concentrate on school work, and girls were less able than boys to negotiate physical hazards, like woollen rivers, or dangerous escarpment paths which they encountered on the way to school. In Nigeria, Fatunwa (1969) observed that school home distance affected pupils' academic performance.

2.4 Indiscipline of learners and Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools.

Berlina (2002) in New-York did a study focusing on the quality of teachers and their roles. The study used a qualitative and quantitative approach which settled on a case study design. Findings of the study revealed that pupil's indiscipline, poor leadership style, and negative attitudes towards work by both teachers and school managers contributed to the poor results in grade 12. The study has a link to the current study because it also looked at academic performance of learners. However, the study did not focused on the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learner in public primary schools. Hence there was still a gap and that was the reason which prompted the researcher to carry out this study. Ovell (2001) noted that discipline in schools is essential for effective learning, good teacher relationship and peer adjustment. A democratic form of discipline leads to a healthy Classroom environment that in turn promotes respect for education and a desire for knowledge. Reports on the problem of indiscipline and unrests in schools have been a common feature in the media for a long time. For example, Babbie (1973) in his article 'Pupils face life in prison over strikes' gave a chronological account of protests and destruction in public schools. The issue of unrests and indiscipline in schools is of great concern and it has become a worrying trend in that it has evolved from simple protests to the destruction of property and burning of prefects more especially in Secondary schools. As a result, this trend has negatively affected the academic performance of learners in both public primary and secondary schools more especially examination classes.

Lewis and Ubogu (2004) emphasized that if the educators conduct themselves in good manners and understand their work as well as their learners and possible challenges, there could be only good results in academic achievement. They further asserted that if educators are exemplary and know their work and understand the learners, as such the learners will be in a good position to

achieve academically. Additionally scholars such as Sonn, Fisher and Bustello (1998) explained the fact of self-respect and respect to others. If self-respect prevails in the school situation, then learners will learn self-discipline and if there is self-discipline, there are more chances of having direction in the fulfilment of the learners' goals of positive academic achievement is possible which translates to good academic performance. If the school has good facilities and the needs of the learners are well catered for there will be good academic achievement. The availability of resources, relevant educators, enough learning space which is conducive to learning, relevant teaching style and clear code of conduct can enhance improved academic performance of learners as documented by (Mpundu, 2017).

Furthermore Williams (1982) noted that discipline involves all stakeholders, programmes as well as personality and school climate be it in urban or rural set up respectively. Charlton and David (1993) observed that if there is no proper family environment social differences and learners from disadvantaged social areas, therefore, this could lead to bad discipline and negative results academically even at national examination level. However, if the family background is not good, different social classes are present in the school, school is located in a socially disadvantaged area and there is bad influence of peer groups it will have a negative effect on disciplines of academic achievement will also be negatively affected. Discipline is an important aspect particularly in the early years in public primary schools. It is not the only key to good academic performance, which all parents, students and teachers cherish and aspire but also a preparation for success throughout life. In fact, it has been observed that good academic qualifications without good foundation of self-discipline, the individual is useless to him/herself, family and the society. Every educational institution is expected to have a standard code of conduct which every student is supposed to adhere to willingly without compulsion. The schools also need to provide the cardinal support services through guidance and counselling in order to instil in students a sense of responsibility and curb incidences of ugly and destabilizing student's indiscipline in schools. In most cases where there is disobedience, it is expected that the necessary disciplinary measures will be taken according to the laid-down regulations in the education act. School discipline is a powerful emotive subject since it is one of the main determinants of students' success in their academic work, and it is an issue that has generated public concern (Ministry Of Education, 2001). Most people equate falling academic standards in educational institution to low standards of students' discipline as observed by (Griffin, 1994). It

is on this basis that the role of the Headteachers and teachers within the school's administrative and instructional services becomes an important part in an organization to provide quality education to the learners.

2.5 Inadequate funding of School Grants and Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools.

Ubogu (2004) in Nigeria conducted a study on the causes of absenteeism and drop out among secondary schools and university libraries. Correlational research design was used to carry out a research. Findings of the study revealed that the causes of absenteeism and drop out among secondary schools and university libraries in Nigeria were included inadequate funding of school grants, lack of libraries, computer and IT equipment/facilities, negative attitude towards work by both teachers and school managers, poor infrastructure, learner-related factors and teachers-related factors affected the performance of learners in schools. There is a link to this study because it also looked at some causes of poor academic performance in educational institutions. However, there was a gap in that the study did not fill the gap because it only focused on the causes of absenteeism and drop out among secondary school university libraries and never looked at the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to fill up the gap. This was reason why this study was conducted. The Wikipedia (2010) explained that funding for Primary Education in Africa is inconsistent and inadequate and that many of the difficulties experienced could be solved by allocation of resources to meet the needs including purchasing of educational materials, appropriate training for staff and other school requisites. It has been realized that this funding may come from public or private sector sources or even international and foreign aid to facilitate quality educational provision. However, the costs of much primary education seem to be kept low by the use of state facilities and by extremely low salaries paid to primary school teachers. Due to inadequate funding of these institutions the resultant scenario is that of failure by the school authorities to purchase enough textbooks, teaching and learning aids, develop infrastructure or to motivate the teachers.

Additionally, there is need for investment in capacity development, having a full, sufficiently paid and well-qualified, professionalized staff if the intended results and objectives for Continuing education are to be achieved as documented by (Wikipedia 2010). On the

inadequate of textbooks, Mbozi (2008) in his study of quality of education in selected schools in Livingstone and Kazungula Districts in Zambia found that inadequate text books is a fact or affecting academic performance of learners. According to his study, four classes of about sixty learners each shared only four textbooks amongst them, making it difficult for teachers to effectively use them during class lessons. Another contributing factor related to low academic performance in grade seven learners has been said to be non-availability of proper school infrastructure. According to IOB in Molopo (2010) the study carried out in Ghana indicated that a good learning environment has a significant impact on school attendance and learning outcomes. The study further explained that, the absence of adequate school facilities such as desks, blackboards, computer labs, electricity and water sanitation has a negative effect on pupil attendance and learning outcomes. Kelly and Kanyika (2000), in their study discovered that better learning occurred when learners were seated comfortably on a chair and when they had sufficient room for writing either on a table or at a desk. They recommended that not more than two learners should be seated at a desk if good results are to be achieved during examinations.

2.6 Library facilities, Computer and IT equipment/facilities and academic performance in Public Primary Schools.

Moola (2015) in Zambia did a study on factors affecting academic performance of learners in Continuing Education Schools. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative approach of data collection tools. The findings of her revealed that the unsatisfactory academic performance of learners in continuing education schools was due to a number of factors such as inadequate teaching and learning materials, lack of proper infrastructure, over-enrolment, low-teacher morale, few qualified teachers, rampant absenteeism, insufficient funding and low staffing level affected the performance of learners in schools. The study has a link to this study because it also looked at the factors affecting academic performance of learners in educational institutions. However, there was a gap in that it concentrated on the factors affecting performance in continuing education school only not focusing on the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools. Therefore, the reason why research was conducted. The other noted contributing factor to low academic performance in most public primary schools that falls under equipment/facilities in Kazungula District of Southern Province is the absence of library facilities. Libraries play an important role

and contribute to excellent academic performance. Hornby (2010) defined a library as a building or room in which collection of books, tapes, newspapers, journals, and articles are kept for people to read study or borrow. A library and Computer IT and equipment/facilities are important factors in the teaching learning process where education is concerned in the present era. They form one of the most essential educational services and the educational process functions in a world of books. The chief purpose of a school library is to make available to the pupil, at his/her easy convenience, all books, periodicals and other reproduced materials which are of interest and value to him/her but which are not provided or assigned to him/her as basic or supplementary textbooks. On the one computers and IT equipment/facilities do provide computer knowledge and skills to the learners. The Government through the National Policy on Education importance (NPE) expressed that in every state, the Ministry of Education need to provide funds for the establishment of libraries in all here educational institutions and to train librarians and library assistants. As are source, it occupies a central and primary place in any teaching and learning institution.

It supports all functions of school-teaching and provides service and guidance to its readers. Additionally, Ahmed (2003) stipulates that provision of educational facilities like availability of library facilities in school enhances good academic performance of pupils. A Headteachers of such school facilities provide educational resources that facilitate effective teaching and learning in schools. Educational facilities contribute to a skilful teacher to achieve a level of instructional effectiveness that far exceeds what is possible when they are not provided. Further, Ahmed (2003) noted that in most of the nation's secondary schools teaching and learning takes place in a most uncondusive environment, lacking the basic materials like books and thus hindering the fulfilment of educational objectives.

Progressively, in line with the second objective of this study, Fowowe (1988) emphasised that a library must be up-to-date and at the same time should have older materials and it must be properly supported financially to fund materials and services among others. He concluded that a well-equipped library, computers and IT equipment are major facilities which enhances good learning and achievement of high educational standards. In his words, Farombi (1998) reiterated that school libraries may not be effective if the books there in are not adequate and up-to-date. Its impact may only be meaningful if the library could always be opened to the students for a

considerable length of time in a school day. Shodimu (1998) observed that with all the above mentioned facts, it is sad to know that many public primary schools operate without libraries.

Additionally, using data from schools in seven countries in Florida, Drever (1991) also found school libraries to have a measurable effect on pupil performance achievement. At the elementary and middle school levels, approximately 4% of the variance in Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) scores was attributed to school libraries, while the figure more than doubled at school level, reaching 8.2 percent. Library variables outweighed the effects of other school variables including computers per student and teacher experience respectively.

In addition, Ogunseye (1986) noted that the total absence of an organized school library would continue to spell a doom for thousands of public primary school learners. This statement clearly implied that many schools operate without libraries and this had affected the academic performance of their students particularly examinations classes. Moreover, Fuller (1985) identified a school library as an instructional resource which may significantly influence pupils' achievement after controlling for pupils' family background. He found out that one effect of library size and its activity have been positive in 15 out of 18 analyses. Those public primary schools with well-equipped library normally maintain high academic performance. For example, the case of Mukuni primary school in Kazungula District. In another study on raising school quality in developing countries, Fuller (1985) found out that collection of books kept for reading in the library is related to academic performance of learners.

2.7 Instructional Leadership and Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools.

Sikatali (2016) in Zambia conducted a study on professional relationships between school managers and the teaching of mathematics in secondary schools. The study was a qualitative one and settled on a case study design. The findings of the of the study revealed that factors affecting the relationship between school managers and the teaching of mathematics in secondary schools are such as poor leadership styles used school some managers, negative attitudes towards work by both teachers and school mangers. Rampant absenteeism of by both learners and teachers, inadequate teaching and learning materials and insufficient funding affected the performance of learners. There is a link to this study because the research also looked at factors affecting academic performance of learners. However, the study did not fill the gap due to the fact that it just focused on the relationships between school mangers and the teaching of mathematics in

secondary schools and it did nothing in line with the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners. Hence, the reason why this study was conducted. One major emphasis in education that has dominated in the provision of quality education in the 20th Century has been the continuing demand for greater accountability for the improvement of pupil performance and this in line with the third objective of this study as observed by the researcher. Both the local Community and national expectations require schools to ensure that all pupils achieve mastery of the curriculum. As a result, effective school headteachers focus on teaching and learning especially in terms of measurable pupil progress while in effective school managers never mind of finding ways of improving pupil academic performance. Instructional leaders would concentrate on building a vision for their learning institutions, sharing leadership with teachers, and influencing schools to operate as learning communities. This however, is overlooked by school headteachers who have no vision on how best they can drive their learning institutions to higher heights in terms of academic excellence, and as such a great deal is required of an effective instructional leader. As an instructional leader you should be able to lead your teachers in improving learning and teaching. The other responsibility of an instructional to be aware of curriculum requirements and pedagogical techniques. You should be able to work with teachers to strengthen their skills and collect, analyse and use data to improve academic performance and on the other hand, one should have the skills needed to rally behind pupils, teachers, parents, and other community residents and partners around the common goal of raising pupil academic performance. In addition, the instructional leader must demonstrate the leadership skills and knowledge to apply these ideas in the daily work.

Hoy & Hoy (2009) noted that contemporary educational reform places a great premium on the effective instructional leadership and management of schools. The logic of this position is that an orderly school environment, that is efficient and well managed, provides the preconditions for enhanced pupil learning. Effective instructional leadership is generally observed as one of the most important characteristic of school administrators.

According to Lezotte (2010) cited in Banda (2016) instructional leadership is one of the tenets of effective schools. Effective instructional leaders are proactive and seek help in building team leadership and a culture conducive to learning and professional growth. For the effective school to be effective, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and Heads of departments (HODs), as well

as senior teachers in case of primary schools should act as instructional leaders and effectively and persistently communicate and model the mission of the school to staff, parents, and pupils.

School improvement and effectiveness can come good results through the use of effective instructional leadership (Scheerens & Bosker, 1997; Lezotte, Skaife & Holstead, 2002; Lezotte, 2010). The indicators of schools having effective instructional leaders have been shown through research to include factors like teacher morale and satisfaction as well as motivation. In the absence of teacher morale and satisfaction from the superordinate, teaching and learning is compromised to some extent.

Educational institutions like schools, need effective instructional leaders to communicate the school's mission and vision. By persistently reinforcing the school's mission, the headteacher must be on top of things in terms of innovativeness and establishes asset of common core values among the instructional staff. Having common core values and a shared sense of purpose helps guide all members of the Instructional team and avoids individuals straying from the intended goals as noted by (Kirk & Josnes, 2004). Additionally, instructional leaders are able to build and sustain school vision. Some scholars argue that if you are not sure of where you want to go, how will you ever get there? Furthermore, how will you know when and how to take corrective action along the way? And how will you know when you have arrived at the destination? A successful school administrator must have a clear vision that shows how all components of a school will operate at some point in the future. You will realize that having a clear image of the future helps school administrators avoid being swamped by the administrative requirements of their jobs. School administrators may need two types of vision and these can be one vision as well as the mission statement of their schools and the roles they play in those schools and another vision of how the change process will proceed.

In addition, Portin, Schinieder, Dearmond & Cundlach (2003) observed that school leaders have many roles to play in schools. All schools need school managers to exercise their roles as instructional leaders who ensure the quality of teaching is smoothly implemented. Thus good school managers spend time in classrooms observing the process of teaching and learning while also balancing other needs such as pupils' safety and parent relationships in the community. Fulfilling these multiple responsibilities well requires school managers to possess an inner

compass that consistently points them towards the future interests of the school, never losing sight of their schools' vision, missions and goals respectively.

2.8 The Rate of Absenteeism of Teachers/ Learners and Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools.

Maaga and Sebega (2002) in South Africa did a study concentrating on perception of stakeholders on causes of poor results in grade. The used both qualitative and quantitative approach research design. The findings of the study revealed that the contributing factors to the poor results in grade 12 are such as high rate of absenteeism of learners, lack of library, computer and IT equipment/facilities, not implementation of homework policy and teachers related factors affected the performance of learners in schools. The study has a link to this study in that it also looked at the perception of stakeholders on the causes of poor results in grade 12. However, the study did not fill the gap because it focused on the causes of poor results in grade 12 instead of, that of grade seven in public primary schools. The reason why this research was conducted. Absenteeism is a contributing factor to low academic performance of learners in most public primary schools as expressed in the National Assessment Survey carried out in Zambia in 1999 and 2003 as documented by (Kasanda, 2003). When Pupils miss lessons they find it very difficult to catch up with learning because they miss many concepts in different lessons which are vital in their learning. The end result of the practice is low academic performance when such learners are presented for national examinations. On one hand, teacher absenteeism is also identified in a survey as a factor attributing to the low academic performance of learners. Most are the times when pupils in classes are left without teachers on the pretext of teachers to have gone for their salaries and unofficial duties. In some cases a teacher may go away for a week without attending to his or her learners. Consequently, such teachers fail to catch up with time and in the end syllabi coverage in their respective subjects is highly affected and will finally lead to low academic of learners in examination classes.

2.9 Homework policy and Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools.

Mbozi (2008) in Zambia conducted a study on classroom factors that affect quality of education in basic schools in Livingstone and Kazungula districts in Southern province. The study used both qualitative and quantitative approach as data collection tool. Findings of the study revealed that affect the quality of education in basic schools are such as lack of homework policy,

unqualified teachers, long distance from home to school, socio-economic status as well as teacher and learner-related factors affected the performance learners in schools. There is a link to this study in that the research did look at classroom factors that affect quality of education in basic schools. However, the study did not fill up the gap because it did not look at the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools. Hence, the reason why this study was conducted. A Germany scholar by the name of Copper (1989) established that schools which implemented the homework policy throughout their teaching and learning time enhanced academic achievement and pupils in such schools performed better in class tests. Additionally, Beattie (1987) also observed that homework is not just given to learners, there are always rules regarding the amount of homework that was to be given to pupils of particular ages more especially in primary schools. Homework manifested only if it was given in right amounts and taken in the right spirit. It was not necessary to overload learners with home assignments and expected them to do well in their studies. Homework should be proportionate to their age and mental ability so as to enhance effective teaching and learning in schools. Berger (1991) in Finland established in his 50 studies that, time pupils spent on homework correlated with their achievement. The studies showed that pupils who had chance to do homework achieved good academic performance in various subjects where their class teachers gave home frequently. Similarly, Kelly and Kanyika (2000) explains that there is a positive relationship between learning achievement and frequency of homework.

The Ministry of General Education policy insists on homework should be given to learners at least twice a week in all the Subjects as documented by (Kasanda, 2003). It has been observed that some schools performed poorly because of teacher related factors such as, inadequate teacher preparation and teacher's lack of dedication to duty. In Asia, Beattie (1987) also equally discovered that homework correlate with academic performance of learners. He stated that homework contributes to a positive relationship with learning outcomes provided it was relevant to the set learning objectives, given regularly in required amounts, with clear instructions. Whenever, homework was given, learners' homework books were collected and reviewed during class time and that was used as an occasion for feedback to pupils and other stakeholders such as parents.

2.10 Over enrolment and Academic Performance in Public Primary Schools.

Mulopo (2010) in Zambia did a study on stakeholders' perception of factors affecting the performance of open secondary school classes. A descriptive survey research design that used both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection was employed. The findings of the study revealed that stakeholders' perception of factors affecting performance in open secondary schools classes are such as over-enrolment, lack of teaching and learning materials, lack of libraries, computer and IT equipment/facilities in public schools, unqualified teachers and negative attitudes towards work by both teachers and learners affected the performance of learners in schools. However, the study did not fill the gap because it just focused on the factors affecting performance in open secondary school classes and never researched on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools. Therefore, the purpose why this study was conducted. Mulopo (2010) noted that most of Zambian schools are characterized by over enrolments and this has always been a negative impact on the quality of educational achievement of learners. This is so because of higher teacher to pupil ratios, pupil to classroom ratios, pupil to book ratios and pupil to desk ratios which. He adds that these factors make learning unpleasant due to over-crowdedness in the classroom and lack of enough sitting space, in turn this promotes absenteeism among the learners (Ndoye, 2007). Teachers are also unable to give individual attention to learners thereby disadvantaging the slow learners who would have benefitted from remedial and individual attention. Further Mbozi (2008) observed that over enrolment in class made learners fail to concentrate while teachers failed to mark the books and avoided to use group work as a mode of teaching effectively and efficiently.

2.11 Teacher-related contributing factors and Academic Performance in Public Schools.

Smith (2011) in London conducted a study on relationship between teacher qualification and students' learning. The study used both descriptive survey design and both qualitative and quantitative were used as data collection technique. Findings of the study revealed that teachers' qualification, indiscipline of learners, inadequate funding of school grants, need for facilities affected the performance of learners in schools. There is a link to this study in the sense that the study also researched on the factors affecting the academic performance of learners in terms of teachers' qualification and student learning. However, the study did not fill up the gap in that it did not conduct a research on the stakeholders' perception on low academic performance of

grade seven learners in public primary schools. The review of related literature consulted on this study further revealed that apart from the above cited contributing factors on learners academic performance, on one hand, there are also some contributing factors caused by teachers. For example, Mbozi (2008) noted that teacher-pupil interaction as another factor that affects academic performance of learners. By this, he referred to situations where the teacher would use abusive language, threatening learners or shouting at them for various reasons. This resulted in the learners feeling out of place and in attentive in class due to fear or resentment for the teacher. Eventually such learners tended to abscond from school and perform poorly in the end. On one hand, Mulopo (2010) observed that the proponents of the humanistic paradigm state that an individual has freedom and ability to attain self-development or self-learning and is capable of directing his or her own learning as long as the environment is enabling. He has further stated that teachers are the custodians of the teaching and learning in schools, as such they should take time to learn how their learners can achieve the best and take keen interest in them. The quality of education delivery can only be achieved if the teachers place the learner at the centre of their teaching plans on the learner all the time. In the researcher's view, this implies that the teacher must plan adequately every time, report for work on time, be resourceful and innovative as well as avoiding absconding classes.

2.13 Summary.

The review of related literature reviewed in the section showed that the academic performance of learners were influenced by a number of contributing factors. The noted contributing factors included socio-economic status, teachers' qualification, distance from home to school, indiscipline of learners, inadequate funding of school grants, equipment/facilities and need for facilities. Others reviewed were instructional leadership, high rate of absenteeism, lack of homework policy, over enrolment of learners, insufficient of teaching and learning materials and contributing factors caused by teachers and understaffing level. The above are said to be the contributing factors to low academic performance of learners in public primary schools more especially the examination classes competing at national level. Therefore, this study has filled up the gap of stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula District of Southern province, Zambia.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter discussed the research methods which were employed in this study. It outlined the Research design, target population, sample size and sampling technique, data collection instruments, data collection procedure, validity and reliability, data analysis and ethical consideration. This section is important in that it attempts to clarify on the research methods chosen and how they intend to address the research questions. On one hand, it also explains why some methods were be preferred ahead of others.

3.1 Research Design.

A research design is defined as the planning of any scientific research from the first to last step. Studies by Bless & Achola (1954) cited in Creswell (2012) indicated that it is a specification of the most adequate operations to be performed in order to test a specific hypothesis under given conditions. A descriptive case study research design was used to conduct this research. This study opted for a qualitative approach owing to the fact that it provided a good situational analysis of what actually obtained on the ground. This is a method of collecting information by interviewing a sample of individuals or it employs the use of interviews to collect (Creswell,

2012). The reason why this research design was chosen was because of the advantages it has over other designs. For instance by carrying out interviews, the interviewer can easily explain the purpose of one's investigation and explain more clearly just the information that is needed by one. If the subjects interprets the question, the interviewer may follow it up with a clarifying question and at the same time one can evaluate the sincerity and insight of the interviewee. Additionally, Kulbir (2014) indicated that it is also possible to seek the same information in several ways, thus providing a check for the truthfulness of the responses.

This approach, therefore, paved way for participants to fully express themselves without any restrictions. It was considered more appropriate because it allowed for in-depth understanding of the phenomena that was studied: stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools (Sikatali, 2016). Maxwell (2007) also noted that the qualitative approach is suitable for documenting people's beliefs and interpretation of reality as well as their actions. Qualitative data was derived from semi-structure interviews. In developing research questions and methodological strategies, qualitative researchers make important decisions which reflect epistemological and theoretical considerations and are evident in the core characteristics of qualitative research. This research design was used because it provided a clear picture on the prevailing situation in the schools and strengthen and verify the research findings.

3.2 Study site

The study was done in Kazungula district of Southern Province and dealt with the eight selected public primary schools.

3.3 Target Population

This is another aspect of the research which is of important and it can be explained as follows. Target population refers to the class of people, events or objects which have been designated as being the focus of an investigation as observed by Creswell, (2012). Target population is also referred to universe. It is known as special universe so as to distinguish it from the general universe or population to which the study's findings be generalized. Further, Creswell (2012) explained that population is defined as all those people about whom a researcher wishes to make statements. Therefore, the target population for this was all public primary schools in Kazungula District. Therefore the concentration of this study targeted a number of stakeholders such as head

teachers of selected public primary schools, guidance and counselling teachers as well as grade seven teachers. Others targeted were parents/ guardians of the grade seven learners as well as pupils in the selected public primary schools of Kazungula district and the planning officer from Kazungula District Education Board.

3.4 Sample size.

This study had a population sample that comprised of 8 public primary schools. These were selected from the 78 public primary schools from both urban and rural areas of Kazungula District. The sample consisted of 8 grade seven class teachers [5 males and 3 females] from School A, School B, School C, School D, School E, School F, School and School G as well as 32 grade seven learners [2 males and 2 females] from each of the selected public primary schools and 8 grade public primary school headteachers (5 males and 3 females) and 1 planning Officer from Kazungula District Education Board Secretary. The number of respondents comprised 28 male and 21 female which brought the total to 49.

3.5 Sampling technique.

Kombo and Tromp (2006) explained that sampling technique is the procedure which researcher uses to gather people, places or things to study. It is a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements of the characteristics found in the entire group.

Simple random sampling and Purposeful sampling where used in this research to select the participants. Simple random sampling is referred to as Simple random sampling because no complexities are involved. All you need is a relatively small, clearly defined population to use this method as documented by (Kombo and Tromp 2006). In addition, in Simple random sampling, each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected and the member is not affected by the selection of other members.

The researcher decided to use Simple random sampling to select learners from the eight public primary schools, because the population of study was small and this procedure is usually used when the size of the population is small and each member of the population has equal chance of being selected. In this research, two types of paper marked 'Yes ' and 'No 'were put in a box for pupils to pick randomly, according to gender. Therefore, the first four boys and girls who picked

‘Yes 'pieces of paper from the eight selected public primary schools in Kazungula District were selected to participate in this research. Therefore, the total of 32 grade seven participants in selected public primary schools in this study were selected through randomly sampling by the researcher.

Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling technique that is used to select individuals from a given population who have unique characteristics and hold specific information desired for the study. The power of purposive sampling lies in selecting information rich cases for in-depth analysis related to the central issues being studied (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). For this reason, the researcher used purposive sampling to select the low academic performing public primary schools at grade seven level in Kazungula District. The grade seven class teachers, headteachers from the same eight affected public primary schools and the planning officer were purposefully selected to participate, because they were equally key in the study. For example, in this study, the researcher used purposively sampling by targeting the grade seven teachers because they had experienced the central phenomenon under investigation. In this case, “Stakeholders’ perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary school in Kazungula District”.

3.5.1 Research Instruments

In this study, the researcher used semi-structured interviews guides, focused group discussions and documents analysis. The interview guides were used to conduct interviews with the grade seven teachers and focused group discussions was used to collect from the grade seven learners. This was done to ensure validity and credibility of the findings. Details about the instruments areas provided below

3.5.2 Semi-structured interviews

Kombo and Tromp (2006) observed that focused interviews are based on use of interview guide. The guide is inform of a written questions or topics that need to be covered by the interview. The researcher used semi-structured interviews to gather data from headteachers and heads of departments. This study opted for this approach because the questions were designed in such a way that it was easy to elicit subjective views of the research participants. Where it was noticed that the questions were falling short in some areas and not bringing out desired responses, probes were used in order to make sure that the interviewee could open up and share a lot more. The

information gathered through this approach also helped create and bring out the social reality of what was being in those selected public primary schools. The interview questions were carefully constructed to bring out the desired information sought. These questions were not exhaustive but only guided the flow and course of the interview. In some instances, the interview would bring in information that was not sought, however, when this happened, such data was politely discarded and the interview was steered back on course.

The researcher had to be cautious of the data collected as some information was cosmetic and was given for the sake of impressing him. Other interviewees said somethings out of malice and frustration. The interpretation and analysis had to take into consideration the mood, gestures and time of the day when the information or responses were elicited. In addition, the responses were, at analysis stage, grouped according to the topic or the subject they discussed. It is worth mentioning here that the interviewees were given the chance to fully express themselves with very minimal intervention. The researcher only interjected when the discussant went beyond what was expected. This control helped the researcher to save time. The researcher took down the notes during interviews process and no recordings were done during the interviews.

3.5.3 Focus Group Discussion

The researcher used this approach in this study because it is a very cheap method in capturing the views of a large sample and at the same time the approach is equally interactive and provokes participants to think and look at other options available. On one hand, Bryman (2008) defines the focus group method as a form of group interview in which there are several participants (in addition to the moderator/facilitator) there is an emphasis in the questioning on a particular fairly tightly defined topic and the accent is upon interaction within the group and the joint construction of meaning, thus the focus group method appends to the focussed interview the element of interaction within groups as an area of interest and is more focused than the group interview.

Nupon and Wangenge-Ouma (2009) observed that focus group discussions is useful for ascertaining respondents' thoughts, perception, feelings and retrospective accounts of events. Therefore, the focus group discussions were very beneficial as not all participants agreed to one school of thought but most of them had divergent views.

3.5.4 Document Analysis

This study opted for document analysis because its rich source of information that was needed by a researcher. It also allowed the researcher to compare responses from the interviews and the information from the document. The other reason why this study opted for the approach was to eliminate bias and compare responses from one-to-one and group interviews. Mpundu (2017) indicates that document analysis is a common approach which allows for the analysis of various types of documents. He further, argues that these documents can either be official, semi-official or non-official. Kombo and Tromp (2006) argue that the information that can be gathered from official documents such as memos minutes of the meetings, working papers and draft proposals. These documents describe functions and values and how various people define the organization. Internal documents can show the official chain of command and provide clues about leadership style and values.

Documents that were be used by the researcher were those in form of external communication and these are those that are meant for public consumption such as newsletter, brochures, reports public statements and news releases. Such documents are rich source of data for education and social research. Documents in this study were in a form of grade seven (7) Examinations Councils of Zambia results which were analysed by the selected by public primary schools. The grade seven results from 2013 to 2017 examinations period analysed by selected by public primary school were used. This allowed the researcher to compare responses from the interviews and the information from the documents. This study used document analysis so as to eliminate bias and responses from one-to-one and group interviews.

3.5.5 Data Collection Procedure

Data collection procedure is defined a process as gathering specific information aimed at Proving or refuting some facts as documented by Kombo and Tromp (2006). In this vain the researcher must have a clear understanding of what they hope to obtain and how they hope to obtain it. Before the commencement of the study the researcher obtained an introductory letter from The Director of Research and Graduate Studies for Postgraduate at the University of Zambia. This introductory letter from the higher learning institution, where the researcher was pursuing his studies by distance learning was to be used to get final authority of entry into research premises. The letter in question was given to the researcher in March, 2018 during a residential school. The

letter to Kazungula District Education Board Secretary for permission to enter the eight selected public primary schools in the district and carry out research. These were School A, School B, School C, School D, School E, School F, School G and School H public primary schools.

The District Education Board Secretary wrote an introductory letter for the researcher to present before School A, School B, School C, School D, School E, School F, School G and School H public primary school headteachers for possible permission to carry out research into their premises. The introductory letter was presented before the eight headteachers and possible arrangements for the research commencement were made.

Before the main study was carried out, a pilot testing of the Interview guides was done to ensure the validity of the instruments. Pilot testing of an instrument gives the researcher a chance to check the respondents' understanding of the meaning of the items and determine their liability of the instruments to be used. Four public primary schools were used for rehearsals. 4 grade seven teachers from the target population participated in the study (1 from each school). A total of 8 grade 7 pupils were piloted on (2 from each school). Those schools which took part in the piloting study were not involved in the final study. Creswell (2012) argues that a pilot study should be conducted on the sample of subjects similar to the group with which the final study is to be conducted. In a related development, Banda (2016) postulates that the pilot samples should be chosen in exactly the same fashion as is intended for the final survey.

3.5.6 Reliability of the Instruments

Kombo & Tromp (2006) define reliability as a measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. In order to improve their liability of the instrument, an assessment of the consistency of the responses on the pilot semi-interviews was made to make a judgement on their reliability.

3.5.7 Validity of the Instruments

Creswell (2012) defines validity as the accuracy and meaningfulness of inferences, which are based on the research results. Face validity refers to the likelihood that a question will be misunderstood or misinterpreted, thus, the pilot study helped to iron out ambiguity. Pre-testing a survey is a good way to increase the likelihood of face validity. Borg and Gall (1989), content

validity of an instrument is improved through expert judgment. Content validity refers to whether an instrument provides adequate coverage.

3.5.8 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to examining what has been collected in a survey or experiment and Making deductions and inferences as documented by (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). This study generated a qualitative data analysis. Thematic analysis was used in analysis qualitative data from Interviews which led into categorisation of data into imaging themes. Additionally, Kombo and Tromp (2006) states that thematic analysis involve identifying major concepts or variables usually, from the questions or objectives. As such the bulk of the gathered qualitative data was be placed and analysed under the identified themes and appropriately coded to help develop summary reports according to the frequency with which the issues emerged. Therefore, for the reporting purposes, taking of notes technique was used in this study as well.

3.5.9 Ethical Considerations.

Ethical issues are cardinal in research world and should be observed fully when one is carrying out a research. Ethical issues in research are connected with beliefs and principles about what is right and what is wrong. In conducting this research the researcher observed a number of ethical issues regarded in research. For example, before the commencement of the study, the researcher had to seek permission from responsible officers to allow him entry into their premises and conduct the study. When getting permission the researcher also explained the kind of study he was carrying and why he had picked on such places and not others.

The researcher also informed all the participants that the information that he was going to collect from them was for educational purposes and he would maintain confidentiality at all times. This was evident in the manner the questionnaires were designed. There was total anonymity as no names were required in any semi-structured interviews guides.

Participants' rights during the research process were exposed to them or rather made known. The researcher informed respondents that they were at liberty to withdraw from participating from the study at any point whenever they felt uncomfortable to continue as research respondents. In compliance to the above withdrawal right of participation, the researcher made it clear that an informed consent was going to be signed and their participation was purely voluntary. The

informed consent had clear guidelines revealing all participants during their participation in the study.

3.10 Summary

this chapter presented the research design, study site, target population, sample size, sampling technique, data collection instruments, validity and reliability, data analysis, ethical consideration and summary.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study in accordance with the research questions and has been outlined according to the categories of the participants. Findings from Focus Group Discussions (FGD) and one-to-one interviews with grade seven teachers, headteachers and Planning Officer have also been presented in prose and narrative. Additionally, the chapter presented the findings of the study in accordance with the research objectives which were as follows;

- I. What factors are contributing to the low academic performance of grade learners in public grade seven learners in Kazungula in District?
- II. Are there sufficient teaching and learning resources in public primary schools in Kazungula District?
- III. What leadership styles are mostly used by school managers in public primary schools in Kazungula district?

4.2 Participants.

Out of the 49 people who participated in the study, 8 (20%) were grade seven class teachers and 8 (20%) were headteachers for public primary schools, 32 (59%) were grade seven learners and 1(1%) was the district education planning officer.

4.2.1 Gender of the Participants (Grade Seven Teachers)

Data for this study was from both males and females. The males constituted the majority with 5 (75%) while the females had 3 (25%). Therefore, this is a clear indication that the majority of grade seven teachers in Kazungula District are male.

4.3 Factors contributing to low academic performance

Research Question One.

What factors are contributing to the low academic performance of grade learners in public grade seven learners in Kazungula in District?

Stakeholders' perception on the contributing factors to the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools in Kazungula District.

4.3.1 The Findings from the One-to-one interviews with the grade seven teachers from Research Question 1 indicted that the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools included negative attitude towards work by some head teachers, lack of trained teacher, rampant absenteeism by learners, overcrowding due to over enrolment, insufficient textbooks and other reading materials, lack of teacher motivation, Pupils' lateness, poor leadership styles and low staffing level as documented by (Sikatali, 2016).

(i) Negative attitude towards work by some Headteachers in Public primary schools;

Findings from Grade Seven Teachers

It came out during the one-to-one interviews that negative attitude towards work by some headteachers as one of the contributing factor to the low academic performance the grade seven learners in public primary schools. As one of the participants aptly put it;

I can say that the causes of low academic performance of grade seven learners in National Examinations is that most of the grade seven teachers concentrate more on upgrading themselves at the expenses of

teaching and in most cases the school managers do not mind about the unnecessary movements of their teachers just because even them (school managers) are ever not present at work. Most of the teachers are studying by distance learning and on top of this, teacher transfer to urban districts is rampant leaving primary school in rural areas without teachers.

(ii) Rampant absenteeism in Public primary schools;

Findings from Grade Seven Teachers

One of the participants from the grade seven teachers (5 from the one-to-one interviews) described the contributing factors to low academic performance to the grade seven learners as follows.

Most learners are frequently absent from school. As a result of this they miss out on valuable lessons resulting in their poor academic performance during the end of term and final examinations." As such most the learners are not able to read fluently and properly up to Grade 7. School assessment shows that only 20% of grade seven learners in lower grades are able to read and write.

(iii)Pupils' Lateness to attend lessons in public primary schools;

Findings from grade seven teachers

Commenting on the Pupils' lateness three of the grade seven teachers from one-to-one interviews had this to say:

The majority of the learners report very late classes due to the fact that they do cover long distances from home to school particularly those Regular primary schools situated in remote areas of our District. I personally, as grade teacher have reported this issue to the headteacher, but it's like he doesn't care about it. This vice of reporting late to school has led to learners to miss out some important concepts of various subjects. Therefore, the loss of learning hours has contributed to the low academic performance of grade seven learners especially at this school

(iv)Teachers' Motivation to grade Seven Teachers in Public Primary Schools.

Findings from the grade seven teachers.

When asked them through the one-to-one interviews how the eight headteachers in the eight selected public primary schools motivated their teachers, the responses indicated that some of the

grade seven teachers were not motivated by the headteachers. One of the participant described that;

If schools can be heavily funded by Government, then teachers can also on one hand, appreciated in away. But as long as funding from Government continues going down, teacher motivation will remain a nightmare continued the respondent. In a related development another seven teacher had this to say, "Teachers are not being appreciated in our zone. Imagine I have never seen a teacher from public primary especially in remote public schools given a reward or present during labour. As a grade seven teacher am not motivated.

4.3.2. Other contributing factor raised by the teachers during the one-to-one interviews included low staffing levels, low teacher-morale, lack of qualified teachers in public primary schools and lack of laboratory and library and computer and IT equipment/facilities.

During the one-to-one interviews some participants bemoaned the issue of being overworked. It came out that some teachers handle classes from grade 5 to 7 alone due to low staffing levels especially in remote public primary schools. One participant from one of the schools (School E) had this to say;

I am the only class teacher for all the upper primary classes. I have to teach all the three grades and that is 5, 6 and 7. As such I feel overworked and as a result of this, my input is greatly reduced due to lack of enough time for preparation since I have classes throughout the day. "

(v) Lack of trained teachers in Public Primary Schools.

Findings from the Headteachers.

Commenting on the issue of lack of trained teachers in public primary schools, one of the eight headteachers had this to say;

As this school, they are no trained teachers, imagine only the grade I (headteacher) and the grade one teacher. The remaining other six teachers are community school teachers working on voluntary basis without teaching skills. Therefore, this has contributes to low academic performance of grade seven learners at this school.

Other findings from the headteachers

4.3.3. Other contributing factor raised by the Headteachers during the one-to-one interviews brought out a number of important findings related to this study which included some pupils' failure to do their homework, long distances from home to school which affected their attendance and punctuality for classes. Others were staying away from classes by some pupils and classes tests which adversely affected their academic performance, insufficient preparation of schemes of lesson plans by some of the grade seven teachers, some teachers' lack of punctuality for classes, erratic and insufficient funding which resulted in delayed implementation of planned school projects and late acquisition of school requisites. One of the eight headteachers had this to say;

The school has a good number of unfinished project which cannot be completed due to lack of erratic and insufficient funding by government. As you can see for yourself the school has inadequate infrastructure and then how do you expect the learners to perform academically.

Findings from the grade seven learners

Commenting on the issue of low morale of grade seven teachers, one of the grade seven learner from the focus group had this to say;

My grade seven teacher has no morale of teaching the grade seven class. Most of the time we are told to right the school on our without guidance from the teacher. She has no morale of teaching as she cannot write on the chalkboard, instead she always tells the class monitor to write on her behalf. Therefore, how do you expect to perform very well during the final examination in grade seven?

Findings from the Planning Officer

Commenting on the issue of negative attitudes towards by both teachers and school headteachers, the District Planning Officer representing the District Education Board Secretary has this to say.

Generally, most of the teachers and school headteachers in Kazungula District have a negative attitude towards effective teaching. Most of school managers are on the move and this in turn give an opportunity for class teachers to abscond classes due to lack of close supervision and monitoring by their immediate supervisors. As a district we fail to inspect and monitor the implementation educational programmes due to lack of transport and resources.

Other findings from the Planning Officer

On the issue of lack of trained teachers in the district, the Planning Officer had this to say;

What I observed is that the contributing factors to the low academic performance of grade seven learners is that most of the Community Schools without trained teachers and Regular Schools with few teachers dilute District results at national level. For example, out of 33 Community Schools 21 are still run by Community teachers without any managerial training or skills and schools are still using pole and mud structures.

4.4 Teaching and Learning materials

Research Question Two.

Are there sufficient Teaching and Learning Resources in Public primary Schools in Kazungula District?

The findings here indicated that the majority of public primary schools in Kazungula District do not have sufficient teaching and learning materials as required by the Revised Curriculum as observed below here.

(i) Insufficient Textbooks and Reading materials for the Revised Curriculum.

Findings from the Grade Seven Teachers

It is clear that there is a huge crisis in terms of course books or rather syllabus recommended textbooks for use in the eight public primary schools. Grade seven class teachers in separate interviews disclosed that there was big short of essential textbooks public primary schools in Kazungula district. Eight teachers drawn from eight different selected public primary schools that were among the participants echoed in a separate interview that in some cases teachers were sharing a textbook when making lesson preparations. This consumed a lot of valuable time when preparing lesson plans claimed the teachers. During the one-to-one interviews with the grade seven teachers some members bemoaned lack of enough textbooks and readers in line with Revised Curriculum to use during lessons as one of the serious impediments to effective lesson delivery. One participants cited that from (School B):

I find it very difficult to teach comprehension since on average there are only six books for a class of about fifty learners. How do I distribute such a small number of books among so many learners? Or am

I expected to write an entire passage on the board? It's quite laborious and time-consuming" Some respondents added that lack of pupils and teachers" handbooks were not available in most subjects. At one school, the respondents said that they were told to source for their own teaching materials either by borrowing from other schools or buy them on their own. They bemoaned this as lack of concern for the quality of learning offered in the school by the school authorities.

(ii) Overcrowding in some public primary schools;

Findings from the grade seven teachers.

Speaking on the issue of overcrowding, for instance, one participant from one-to-one interviews from School B had this to say;

"Overcrowding in classrooms is one of the factors that hinder pupils from performing well in school. This existence of sixty or more pupils in class, in some cases, makes it impossible for group work to be used as a teaching method or for a class teacher to give individual attention to his/her pupils. As a result of this, pupils lose the educational benefits that accrue from a teacher's use of such a method and provision of individual assistance to his/her learners." therefore, this becomes a challenge when it comes to the sharing of available textbooks and other reading materials.

(iii) Lack of a laboratory, computers and IT equipment/facilities or a library in most public primary schools;

Findings from the grade seven Learners

Non availability of laboratories, computer and IT equipment/facilities and libraries came out as some of the factors that adversely contributed to learners' low academic performance in grade seven learners as observed by (Mpundu, 2017). For example, during the one-to-one interviews, one participant had this to say;

"Teaching subjects like integrated science is quite challenging in the absence of a science laboratory and equipment in grade seven classes at primary level. In many cases I just teach science abstractly without carrying out any experiments since we do not have the apparatus and chemicals in the school." Now with Technology studies is very difficult the school does not even has desk top or laptop just sensitize the learners on to use a computer, you cannot go on as a grade seven learner to pass an examination at national level.

Findings from grade seven learners.

Non-availability of text books came out as some of the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learner as one of the participant from Focus Group Discussion (FGD) from school G has this to say;

In our school we don't have textbooks to use during our lessons. Most of the time we have to borrow books from the grade six in order to read. As such is very difficult to some us to know how to read fluently. It is like the school authority don't want to buy textbooks for their learners but take more money to sports activities.

Findings from the Headteachers.

On the issue of non-availability of teaching and learning resources in public primary schools, one of the participant from the school F during one-on-one interviews had this to say;

My school has insufficient teaching and learning resources for the revised curriculum and this has become a very challenge to all the teachers to teach efficiently and effectively so as implement the government' policy on education. Most of the time has school has no funds to purchase the needed materials for teachers to use during lessons.

Findings from the Planning Officer.

On the issue of insufficient teaching and learning resources, the Planning Officer has to say;

The district has no capacity to buy the needed teaching and learning materials to cater for all public primary schools in the district due to lack of funds. Therefore, this greatly affected academic performance of learners.

4.5 Types of Leadership Styles

Research Question three

What type of leadership styles mostly used by School managers in public primary schools in Kazungula District?

Among the teachers, the most commonly reported leadership style was "democratic style". As for "Autocratic" and "Laissez faire" leadership styles were mentioned only on a few occasions.

Democratic leadership styles were mostly described as their Headteacher's ability to make decisions with the consultation of his or her teachers. In such cases, the head teacher consulted various delegated or non-delegated groups or individuals including management teams, various committees, or even the staff body as observed by (Moola, 2015). Some teachers reported that their headteachers went with the majority. In many cases, the Headteacher was reported as accepting divergent views and even criticism as one of the grade seven teachers in different public primary schools had this to say:

Findings from the grade seven teachers.

One of the grade seven teacher from School D had this to say during one-to-one interviews.

When it comes to decision-making; he won't make it on his own but will refer it to a group that is part of the management. The decision will then be taken to the and if they agree with it, it will be implemented (grade seven teachers, School D)

Our headteachers allows us to give views and at the end of the day, he goes with the views of the majority (grade seven teacher, School H)

We are free to give our own opinion. The headteacher is not the kind of a person who will shut members of staff up when they are contributing effectively....if she was autocratic kind of a person, she would have held everything in her hands (grade seven teachers, school G). *He is always ready to listen to criticism. Sometimes there are issues in the school where he may feel this opinion is right. But the staff will refuse and is ready to listen* (grade seven teacher, School I).

Some of grade seven teachers reported that their Headteachers were using a mixed style of leadership whereby democratic, autocratic and laissez faire were used interchangeable, depending on the context. In some cases, autocratic leadership style was used. For instance, when a Headteacher felt there was need to be firmer with the teachers or when a situation called for an urgent decision. Therefore, different grade seven teachers from different schools had this to say;

While at time she practices democratic type of leadership, she is also firm on certain decisions. She just does not leave it to members of staff alone but also makes her own decisions (grade 7 teachers, School C).

I would say that the leadership is somehow semi-autocratic.....as there are certain decisions that are made by the head teacher himself and others are referred to members of staff (grade 7 teacher, School F).

If there is an issue, he brings it before the teachers in the staff room. Of course, being democratic does not mean that he is going to implement whatever the teachers decide. As such he has the discretion to change those decisions (grade 7 teachers, School A).

Depending on the situation, sometimes she practices democratic style and sometimes; if she wants things to get done, she just dictates (grade 7 teachers, School H).

Morale in a place of work has to do with leadership. We cannot talk of morale without looking at the leadership (grade 7 teachers, School E).

The kind of leadership which we are talking about dampens the morale of teachers (grade 7 teachers, School B).

Morale has been affected by these leadership practices.....it has been affected in that you lose interest in whatever one is doing pertaining teaching in this school (grade 7 teachers, School A).

4.5.1 Findings from Focus Group Discussions with the Grade Seven Learners

Research Question One

What factors are contributing to the low academic performance of the grade seven learners in public primary schools in Kazungula district?

Findings from Grade Seven learners (Focus Group Discussions)

4.5.2 The perception that Focus Group Discussion (FGD) members gave as contributing factors to the low academic performance of Grade Seven Learners in selected public primary schools included teacher absenteeism, insufficient textbooks, lack of library services and computer and IT equipment, lack of punctuality by some teachers to report for work and low teacher-morale.

(i) Frequency of Absenteeism among Teachers in public Primary Schools.

Findings from Grade Seven learners (Focus Group Discussions)

During focus group discussion with the grade seven learners in nearly all the selected public primary schools in Kazungula, Teachers' rate of absenteeism came out strongly as one of the contributing factors to the low academic performance of learners particularly in remote public primary schools. When asked through interviews what contributed to teacher absenteeism, a good number of them gave several reasons.

Most teachers leave their work places for their salaries since most of them get their salaries through Zambia National Commercial Bank which has no branch in the district (Kazungula). Indicating that during pay days most classes remain without teachers to attend to pupils. Furthermore, a good number of them are doing studies by distance learning upgrading themselves to either diploma or degree level .In the process, they leave their classes concentrating on writing assignments. At times they go to their classes while their concentration is mainly on their assignments. Teacher presence however, is cardinal in an effective school to provide academic guidance to his or her learners. Absenteeism by teachers reduces the amount of instructional time and this result in the syllabi not being completed. This in return results to lower output of work by the pupils (grade seven learners, Schools D, E, A and C).

Our class teacher when he goes to town for salaries by Mulobezi Train usually takes more than two weeks away and in most cases we have to learn own our own without the teacher, therefore, this becomes very for the learner to perform well academically during national examinations in our school (grade 7 leaners, School G).

(ii) Low teacher-morale in most public primary schools;

Findings from the Grades seven learners (Focus Group Discussions)

And when dealing with the matter of low teacher-morale in particular, some Focus Group Discussion members pointed out that most of the teachers particularly in remote areas felt demoralized due to deplorable working conditions which ranged from poor work environment, low salaries and lack of proper accommodation. One member had this to say;

“Lack of proper and decent accommodation makes some of the teachers in remote areas frustrated. The accommodation allowance they receive is not sufficient for them to rent decent houses. As a result they find themselves renting houses in shanty compounds where we feel disregarded and suffer a loss of respect (grade seven learners, School A).

(iv) Lack of punctuality for classes by teachers in public primary schools;

Findings from Focus Group Discussions (Grade seven learners)

It also came out during the focus group discussion with the grade seven learners, a good number of had this to say:

So what I have observed myself is that some teachers were fond of going late for classes. And as a result of lack of punctuality, they tended to rush through the lessons to cover up for lost time. By so doing, the

slower learners fail to grasp the concepts and lag behind. Thereby adversely affecting their academic performance in National Examination (grade 7 learners, School B).

Research Question Two

4.5.2 Are there sufficient of Teaching and Learning Resources in the public primary schools in Kazungula District?

(i) Erratic and insufficient funding in public primary Schools.

Findings from Grade Seven Learners (Focus Group Discussion)

During the Focus Group Discussions, it came out from some grade seven learners that erratic and insufficient funding of the institutions resulted into delayed implementation of school projects and procurement of school requisites such as teaching and learning materials. One of the respondents had this to say;

Our school is operating under difficult conditions financially. As much as we would love to buy the required number of books, integrated science equipment and improve infrastructure, we are incapacitated financially. Our funding does not come at the right time and even when we receive it, it's always insufficient in terms of our requirements as a school and sometimes we are not even involved in budgeting.

(ii) Insufficient Textbooks and Reading materials for the Revised Curriculum public primary Schools.

Findings from grade seven learners (Focus Group Discussions)

During the Focus Group Discussions with the grade seven learners some members bemoaned lack of enough textbooks and readers as well as desks to use during lessons as some of the serious impediments to effective teaching and learning in some public primary schools. One participants cited that:

We find it very difficult to read fluently especially when it comes to comprehension since on average there are only six books for a class of about fifty learners. How do we share such a small number of books among so many learners? Always we have to borrow grade six text books so as to use them for reading because the school has no text books specifically meant for the revised curriculum. Sometimes our teacher has to write an entire passage on the board? It's quite laborious and time-consuming" lack of

pupils and teachers and teachers' handbook has hindered our smooth learning in class (grade 7 learners, School D).

At school B, the participants said that at this school we cannot perform very academically due to the fact the school does not have sufficient textbooks and desks. The following was the typical example:

So far our class teacher has advised us to source for our own textbooks either by borrowing from other schools or tell our parents to buy them on our behalf. Imagine, we have also been told to remind our parents to source for desks or stools to sit on during lessons in class. As such, how do you e They bemoaned this as lack of concern for the quality of learning offered in the school by the school authorities (grade 7 learners, School B).

Research Question Three.

4.5.3 The leadership styles mostly used by school managers in public primary schools in Kazungula District.

Findings from Grade seven Learners (Focus Group Discussions)

According to the grade seven learners, motivation ad high morale in the school environment stemmed from the Headtechers' leadership practices, particularly his or her attitude towards the learners and how the he or she treated them. Both teachers and learners reported that high morale was dependent on the extent to which the Headteacher showed appreciation and respect for both his/her teachers and learners in a school set up. This included commending them for their good work or even providing reproach through constructive criticism as well as providing various incentives, greetings the learners, interacting with the learners as well as showing interest in, asking about and assisting with their concerns, needs and generally showing the learners that they were valued. Therefore, during Focus Group Discussions with the grade seven learners, the majority of them in different regular primary schools had this to say:

Even when you are wrong he call you and tell you that was wrong and advises what should be done.... One thing is that the respect of the leader has for his or her learners. If you are respected, then you are going to have high morale during teaching and learning in classes and you easily listen to the teacher in front of you (grade 7 learners, School G and H).

Every morning before classes, he personally moves around the school to chat with the learners and even encourage us to clean the school so quickly so that we can attend classes on time (grade 7 learners, Sch. D)

Motivation is through praises. For example at the end of each term after, the results are announced for all learners and those have done well; he tells them that this term we have done very well. I think that motivates us as learners in every grade (grade 7 learners, School E).

At the end of each year the results are analysed and those that have done very well are commended. I think that motivates us. Those who have not done well; he cautions and encourage them to do better next time (grade 7 learners, School C)

Other Focus Group Discussion members in grade seven learners also lamented to say the following. This was typical example:

He is a father, more accommodative. You can even feel encouraged that you are in school as if you are also a staff member where others are concerned about you (grade 7 learners, School F)

The way our Headteacher welcomes school children always they come to school gives morale for some to continue coming to school and sometimes I wish he can even take over from class teacher in grade seven (grade 7 learners, School A).

Even we have not seeing him passing by; we feel blessed by his blessings.....When you have a leader like that as a learner you can feel motivated (grade 7 learners, School H)

Another thing that makes learners' low is the situation we have in this school where other learners from teachers' homes are more valued and motivated than the learners from ordinary parents (grade 7, Sch. B)

I have also experienced that sometimes she comes and starts to literally shout at you.... Therefore, I feel that her approach is a bit on the harsh side. This makes it difficult to have morale and concentrate on teaching and learning activities in class set up. Our headteacher sometimes a simple issue that needs as simple yes or no will take the whole week. Some problems are personal and not academic and need to be addressed urgently. You have to push hard to get an answer from him. This reduces the learners' morale drastically (grade 7 Learners, School C).

4.5.4 Frequency of Checking the Teachers' Lesson Plans

Findings from the Grade seven Teachers.

One of the grade seven teacher was cited and this what she opted to say on the above;

Our headteacher does not bother to check lesson preparations for his teachers and each time you give him preparation work book will opt to make it “checked” without scrutinizing the work done by the teacher and I wonder how manages this school, this we have always failing to produce learners with good results at grade seven national examinations.

4.6 Summary of the discussions of Findings.

The discussions presented above were guided by the research objectives. With the first objective it was found that negative attitude towards work by some of the headteachers, rampant absenteeism of both teachers and learners, pupils' lateness, low staffing level, non-implementation of homework policy, the second objective the presentation of findings were that indeed insufficient teaching and learning materials, overcrowding of learners, insufficient funding, non-availability of school libraries and the last objective it was found that poor leadership styles by some of the school managers in the selected public primary school indeed contributed to the low academic performance of grade seven learner.

CHAPTER FIVE. DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.0 Overview.

This chapter discusses the findings according to the objectives of the study. The purpose of the study was to investigate the stakeholders' perception on the contributing factors to low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula District of Southern province. The objectives of the study were;

- (i) To explore the stakeholders' perception on the factors contributing to the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula District.
- (ii) To assess the availability of teaching and learning resources in selected public primary schools in Kazungula District.
- (iii) To identify the leadership styles used most by school managers in selected public primary school in Kazungula District.

The study revealed that contributing factors associated with the low academic performance of grade seven learners fell under three sub-themes which acted as independent variables. These included learner/pupil-caused contributing factors, teacher-related contributing factors and administrative procedures and practices-related contributing factors.

5.1 Factors Contributing To Low Academic Performance

Explore the stakeholders' perception on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula District.

From both the review of related literature and the primary data collected during the study, it was discovered that learner/pupil contributing factors such as learner behaviour in line with rampant absenteeism, failure to do homework, indiscipline of learners, socio-economic status and late coming to school contributed to the low academic performance of grade seven learners. These findings were consisted with those found in the review of related literature that attending classes always plays an important role in the academic achievement of a pupil. The admission by the respondents (40%), that the grade seven learners absented themselves from school for more than five times during the previous term provides one reason for the contributing factor to the low academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools. This is because such pupils lagged behind in their school work and had serious gaps in the learnt material. The resultant scenario was usually reflected in the low marks such learners got during class tests and end of term as well as final examination as documented by (Kazungula District Strategic Plan 2013-2015).

The socio-economic status pays rewards and punishment both to a person Abba (2004) cited in Banda (2016). As pointed out by Legotho, Maaga and Sebaga (2002) that children belonging to higher socio economic status are not only brilliant but are in most cases provided with better

opportunities for developing intellectually, physically and emotionally. A person comes from a poor family is more likely to perform poorly in class than that one who comes from a rich family. Failure by learners to carry out their homework activities, late-coming or leaving school before time is another contributing factor to the low academic performance of grade seven learners. Their failure to do homework robbed them of the benefits of feedback on what their teachers would have indicated on their would-be written work and of the opportunity to do corrections and thereby enhance their knowledge.

5.1.1 Teacher-related contributing factors on learners/pupils' academic performance in selected public primary schools.

In the review of related literature was found that teachers play a critical role in the academic performance and achievement of learners. It was also found teachers have an effect on the learners' academic performance because in the review of related literature it was found that when teachers appear to be harsh not friendly to accommodate learners then teaching and learning is adversely affected. From both review of related literature and the data primary collected during this research and the learners focus-group discussions and one-to-one interviews with the grade seven teachers themselves and the head teachers as well as the planning officer, several teacher-related contributing factors to the low academic performance of learners came to light. These included lack of lesson-planning and preparedness, absconding, lack of punctuality, not giving enough homework, not marking exercises and failing to give remedial work, laissez-faire attitude, pro-longed and frequent illness, poor teacher-pupil relationship, punishing pupils during lesson time and some teachers lack of adequate qualifications as documented by (Banda, 2016).

5.1.2 Lack of adequate lesson preparation in public primary schools.

From both review of related literature and primary data collected during this study it was found non-preparation of lessons in most public primary schools affected the academic performance of grade seven learners as noted by Legotho et al (2002) cited in Banda (2016). Teacher preparation such as writing schemes, records of work and lesson-planning is a professional requirement for teachers in Zambia (Malambo, 2012). However, the study revealed few teachers wrote schemes of work, records and lesson plans. This revelation does not

only present one of the pertinent reasons for the poor academic performance of pupils in continuing education schools but is extremely disheartening. Schemes of work and lesson preparation are important facets of lesson effectiveness. While the former ensures proper sequence in the field of teaching/learning, the latter contributes to teacher effectiveness. Lack of preparation is undoubtedly a recipe for poor lesson delivery on the part of the teacher and poor academic performance on that of his/her pupils. This trend has, in the researcher's view greater repercussions on the pupils' academic performance. This is because it robs the whole class rather than a few of its members of valuable learning time. It may also prevent the teacher from completing the syllabus and thereby reduce his/her pupils' academic performance in the given year's examination.

5.1.3 Teacher missing classes and lack of punctuality in most public primary schools.

Closely linked to missing classes is that of teachers' lack of punctuality for classes. This results in such teachers rushing through their lessons which impacts negatively on pupils comprehension of the taught material or the teacher's failure to complete their planned work which disadvantages the learners. Therefore, this has adversely affected the academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools.

5.1.4 Non - giving of homework or not implementing homework policy in primary schools.

Here it was found that another factor which came up as a contributor to low academic performance of grade seven learners during the study was none implementation of homework policy some public primary schools by some teachers. The study revealed that in most cases teachers did not give homework (60%) as required while some (40%) never gave homework at all. This factor, undoubtedly affects pupils' academic performance negatively. Malambo (2012) observed that the homework policy goes hand in hand with the marking of exercises. If the learners are given homework and the teacher ignores to mark it then the homework has not served its purpose. It came out during the discussions and interviews that despite some teachers giving homework, at the end of the day the work was not checked by some teachers. As a result, this discouraged the learners and caused them to be reluctant to do homework too.

5.1.5 Non- marking of learners' exercises/tasks and failing to give remedial work to learners in public primary schools.

From both review of related literature and primary data collected during this study it was found that non-marking of learners' exercises and failing to give remedial work to slow learners adversely affect the academic performance of grade seven learners. The majority of the respondents in all the selected public primary school complained that their teachers rarely marked the class exercises. Class exercises serve a form of assessment of the learners' progress and as feedback for the teacher to discover whether the lesson objectives have been met or not. However, if the teacher gives class exercises and does not mark them afterwards, then it will be very difficult for the teacher to know if the pupils have understood the lesson or not. This is seen as laissez-faire attitude or lack of commitment towards duty on the side of some of the teachers. This results in low academic performance of learners.

5.2 Teaching and Learning Materials

Objective Two

Assess the Availability of teaching and learning materials in selected public primary schools in Kazungula District.

The findings here indicated that there were insufficient text books, readers and other educational books, laboratory and library, computer and IT equipment/ facilities were also not available in some public primary schools under study. Often the available text books for the revised curriculum were not enough to cater for the number of students available in a class. During the research, it was found that in one school a class of fifty learners had only three readers in English language and resorted into using the grade six readers. Yet it's imperative that every school should have these facilities, if teaching and learning is to take place for the benefit of the learner. Mbozi (2008) observed that limited text books for the school curriculum also affected the academic performance of learners. In the view of the review of related literature it was found that lack of equipment/facilities and insufficient teaching and learning resources adversely affected the academic performance of grade seven learners.

5.3 Types of Leadership Styles

Objective Three

Identify the Leadership style used mostly by school managers in selected public primary schools in Kazungula District.

From both the review of related literature and the primary data collected during this study it was found that the poor leadership styles mostly used some of school headteachers, unsound relationship with colleagues and superiors, poor school-community relations and not involving teachers and learners in decision-making in some public primary schools adversely affected the academic performance of the grade seven learners. It was also found that both teachers and learners, their high morale was dependent on the extent to which the headteacher showed appreciation and respect for both his/her teachers and learners in a school which was not the case with public primary schools in Kazungula district. This included commanding them for their good work or even providing reproach through constructive criticism and providing various incentives, greetings and showing interest in asking about and assisting with their concerns, needs and generally showing the teachers and learners that they were valued as documented by (Sikatali, 2015).

5.4 Summary of Discussions

The discussions presented above were guided by the research objectives with the first objective found that learner/pupil factors such as rampant absenteeism, failure to do homework, indiscipline of learners, socio-economic status and related factors such as inadequate lesson plans preparations, teachers missing classes and lack of punctuality for classes, not implementing homework policy and non-marking of learners' exercises affected the academic performance of grade seven learners in public primary schools. The second objective was found that insufficient text books, readers and other educational books, laboratory and library, computer and IT equipment/facilities and lack of equipment affected the academic performance of grade seven learners. The third objective was found that the poor leadership style used mostly by some headteachers, was not friendly.

CHAPTER SIX. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

This chapter contains the conclusion and recommendations for the study.

6.1 Conclusion

There are a good number of factors inside and outside school that contribute to the quality of academic performance of grade seven learners. This study only focused on some of the

factors within school that influence the student's achievement scores. The key aspect for the educators is to educate their students effectively so that they may be able to show quality performance in their academics. To achieve this objective it is necessary for the educators to understand better about the factors that may contribute in the academic success of grade seven learners. The following therefore are the findings which researcher made of this study. The first is that insufficient of teaching and learning resources, non-availability of laboratory, computer labs and library facilities and low staffing levels adversely affected the quality of teaching and learning in public primary schools.

The second one is that the grade seven learner's low academic performance in public primary schools was a result of weak and undedicated teaching staff with low morale due to poor leadership styles being practised in most of the public primary schools by some school managers. Additionally, long distances of some pupils from their homes to the schools due to the location of the institutions within the community is also a contributing factor to the low academic performance of the grade seven learners. The third is that the socio-economic status of some of the pupils' parents adversely affected the grade seven academic performance. This is when such pupils missed classes when they were sent home to look sports fees on various occasions by the school administration. The fourth is that insufficient and delayed funding contributed to non-availability of the necessary infrastructure and school requisites to facilitate effective teaching and learning in public primary schools. In addition, the low academic performance of learners in public primary schools is a result of the kind of management and leadership styles that the headteachers practice in these public primary schools.

6.2 Recommendations

To determine all the influencing factors in a single attempt is a complex and difficult task. It requires a lot of resources and time for an educator to identify all these factors first and then plan the classroom activities and strategies of teaching and learning. It also requires proper training, organizational planning and skills to conduct such studies for determining the contributing factors inside and outside school. This process of identification of variables must be given full attention and priority so that the teachers may be able to develop instructional strategies for

making sure that all the children be provided with the opportunities to arrive at their fullest potential in learning and performance.

In line with the findings the following recommendations are made for the attention of policy makers, education officers, and school managers:

6.3 Ministry of General of General Education should:

(a) The government should provide a conducive learning environment in public primary schools by reducing the number of learners from 60 pupils per class to about 30 learners per class in each class.

(b) The Ministry of General Education should recruit more primary school teachers to meet the number of learners in public primary schools. There is an increased desire for education to meet the social-economic challenges of the 21st Century as well.

(c) Government through the Ministry of General Education should inject enough funds into the public primary schools coffers for the procurement of teaching and learning resources. This responsibility lies on the educational planners and administrators.

(d) Ensure that there is a laboratory, computer labs and library in each of these existing public primary schools so as to facilitate effective teaching and learning all learners

(e) there is need to make sure that frequent Monitoring is conducted and reinforced in public primary schools particularly those in both rural and remote Areas.

6. 3.1. School Managers should;

(a) be proactive and engage all stakeholders to improve the physical working environment of teachers.

(b) Work hand in hand with Parents Teachers Association (PTA) and school administration on measures to increase and improve staff accommodation so as teachers are motivated to work in remote areas.

(c) Carry out routine supervision of teachers' work and regularly check, schemes of work, lesson plans and records of work and advise class teachers where possible.

- (d) Be resourceful in the provision of necessary teaching and learning resources are available at all times in the school to attain quality education.
- (e) Purchase required equipment or utensils especially those which can cater the Home Economics department and furniture in the school.
- (f) Ensure that teachers hold and attend INSET meetings regularly to enhance professional development in public primary schools particularly at school and zonal level.

6.4 Suggestions for Future Research

Further research is needed in other public primary Schools situated in both urban and rural areas for the purpose of comparing the results on contributing factors to the low academic performance of grade seven learners in these public educational institutions. There is also need to assess community involvement in the running of public primary schools.

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CONSENT FORM

I am a registered postgraduate student in the Department of Educational Management and Administration at The University of Zambia in Collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University. I am conducting a research on **The Stakeholders' perception on the Low Academic Performance of Grade Seven Learners in Selected Public Primary Schools in Kazungula District of Southern Province.** The office of the Provincial Education Officer and that of the District Education Board Secretary are both aware of this study.

You are cordially requested to participate in this study by answering questions from the interview guides. Please be assured that the information you give will be confidential. Therefore, if you are willing to participate in this study, please sign your name in the spaces provided below.

Participant

Name.....

Signature.....

Place..... Date.....

Researcher: Date.....

Name.....

Signature.....

Place.....

Appendix 1: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE HEADTEACHER (A).

School..... Date..... Sex.....

I am a postgraduate student from the University of Zambia in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Open University (UNZA-ZOU) currently studying Master's degree in Educational Administration and Management. I am researching on the Stakeholders' views on the low

academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of Southern province of Zambia. Whatever information that I shall correct will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and for academic purpose only.

1. How many teachers do you have in your school?
2. How many these teachers are trained and how many are degree, diploma and certificate holders?
3. How many of them are degree, diploma and certificate holders?
4. Do you feel you have adequate infrastructure in your school?
5. How do you relate you relationship with your grade seven teacher?
6. When you look at the results analysis of your pupils, how would you describe their general performance?
7. How often do you monitor the grade seven teachers?
8. Are the teaching and learning materials in your school sufficient?
9. Are there some pupils frequently absent from school? If so, what are the main reasons they give?
10. How do you rate your academic performance of grade seven teachers?
11. What reasons can you give for good academic performance of your grade seven teacher/s?
12. How is your collaboration and team work with the grade seven teacher/s?
13. How often do you receive funding?
14. Do you find the funding adequate or inadequate and if not, why?
15. How do you rate the academic performance of grade seven pupils in your school?
16. What are the contributing factors to low academic performance of grade seven learners?
17. Have you been trained in administration or managerial skills?

Appendix 2: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE GRADE SEVEN CLASS TEACHER/S (B)

School..... Date..... Sex.....

I am a postgraduate student from the University of Zambia in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Open University (UNZA-ZOU) currently studying Master's degree in Educational

Administration and Management. I am researching on the Stakeholders' views on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of Southern province of Zambia. Whatever information that I shall correct will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and for academic purpose only.

1. How many years have you been teaching at this school?
2. How can you describe your relationship with the school manager?
3. Does your relationship with your school manager affect the teaching and learning of grade seven learners?
4. What reasons can you give for your answer?
5. How can you describe your future interpersonal relationship with your head teacher?
6. Do you always receive adequate teaching materials and support from the head teacher?
7. What has contributed to this situation?
8. Who supplies your materials for teaching and learning for grade seven class (is it free or you buy)?
9. Do you receive materials that are recommended by the Ministry of General Education?
10. What is the general reading level of the grade seven class?
11. Are there any problems that are affecting the teaching and learning of grade seven class?
12. How do you describe the leadership style of your head teacher?
13. What things would you have wanted your head teacher to do in order to enhance the teaching and learning to the grade seven learners at this school?
14. How many times has the school head teacher, deputy or zonal inset coordinator (ZIC) visited you to observe any of your lesson?

**Appendix 3: DISCUSSION QUESTION FOR THE FOCUS GROUP
AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE FOCUS GROUP WITH GRADE 7 LEARNERS.**

Introduction

School.....Date.....Sex.....

I am a postgraduate student from the University of Zambia in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Open University (UNZA-ZOU) currently studying Master's degree in Educational Administration and Management. I am researching on the Stakeholders' views on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of Southern province of Zambia. Whatever information that I shall correct will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and for academic purpose only.

1. What are the classroom elements that may not promote academic performance of the students in grade seven class?
2. Are there any administrative practices and procedures that may hinder teacher performance? If so, what are some of them?
3. How willing is the school manager to approve the budget for grade seven class and ensure that the budgeted items are purchased?
4. What do you think could be some of the solutions to the challenges you are facing as grade seven learners?

Appendix 4: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING TEACHER

Introduction

School.....Date.....Sex.....

I am a postgraduate student from the University of Zambia in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Open University (UNZA-ZOU) currently studying Master's degree in Educational Administration and Management. I am researching on the Stakeholders' views on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of Southern province of Zambia. Whatever information that I shall correct will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and for academic purpose only.

1. To what extent has your school has achieved high academic performance at grade seven level?
2. From the school examination analysis, what are the academic achievement at grade seven level has your school scored since 2013 by year?
2013.....2014.....2015.....2016.....2017.....
3. Does your school have a routine local policy of improving low academic performance of grade seven learners?
4. Which year was the policy introduced to this school?
5. Are you involved in the routine local policy of improving the low academic of grade seven learners from the time it was introduced?
6. How do you as a guidance and counselling teacher follow up or monitor the cases of low academic performance of grade seven learners?
7. State, if any, the type of instruments or tools the school or you use in the process of implementing the local policy of improvement of low academic performance of grade seven learners?
8. What are the follow up challenges that you face as guidance and counselling teacher?
9. What do you think are the possible solutions to these follow up challenges?
10. Finally what recommendations would you make to the higher authority in order to make improve the local policy for improving the grade seven results?

Appendix 5: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE GRADE SEVEN PARENT/S OR GUIDIAN/S

Introduction

School.....Date.....Sex.....

I am a postgraduate student from the University of Zambia in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Open University (UNZA-ZOU) currently studying Master's degree in Educational Administration and Management. I am researching on the Stakeholders' views on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of Southern province of Zambia. Whatever information that I shall correct will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and for academic purpose only.

1. What is the current grade of your child?
2. Why do you think school is important in your area?
3. As we discussing right now, where is your child?
4. Does the child in grade class know how to read and write properly?
5. Explain what you do always to support your child attend classes?
6. How do you collaborate with the school management regarding the education of your child?
7. Kindly explain briefly, how you as parent/guardian follow up or monitor your child?
8. What challenges do you face as a parent/ guardian in educating your child?
9. What do you think are the possible solutions to the low academic performance of grade seven learners?
10. Finally, what recommendations would you make in order to improve the low academic performance of grade seven learners?

THANK YOU VERY MUCH AND GOD BLESS

Appendix 6: AN INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE PLANNING OFFICER (PO) AT DEBS' OFFICE

Introduction

School..... Date..... Sex.....

I am a postgraduate student from the University of Zambia in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Open University (UNZA-ZOU) currently studying Master's degree in Educational

Administration and Management. I am researching on the Stakeholders' views on the low academic performance of grade seven learners in selected public primary schools in Kazungula district of Southern province of Zambia. Whatever information that I shall correct will be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and for academic purpose only.

1. To what extent do you appreciate the academic performance of grade seven learners in Kazungula district?
2. From the district examination results analysis, what has come out strongly about the academic performance of grade seven learners in the past five years?
3. What are the causes of low academic performance of grade seven learners in your district?
4. Does the District Education Board Management have a routine policy of reducing the low academic performance of grade seven learners in your district?
5. Which year did your district recorded the lowest academic performance of grade seven learners?
6. How the district management team follow up or monitor the low academic performance of grade seven learners?
7. State if any, the type for instruments or tools the district management uses to monitor or follow up the low academic performance of grade seven learners?
8. How do you collaborate with the district management and other stakeholders regarding the low academic performance of grade seven learners in your district?
9. What are the challenges faced by the district education board management to improve academic of grade seven learners?
10. What do you think would be the possible solutions to these challenges of low academic performance of grade seven learners in your district?
11. Finally, what recommendations would you make in order to improve the low academic performance of grade seven learners in your district?

Appendix 7

TABLE 2: GRADE 7 PROGRESSION RATES BY GENDER SINCE 2013.

YEAR	CANDIDATES ENTERED			NUMBER SAT			ABSENT			NUMBER PROGRESSING TO GRADE 8			% PROGRESSION
	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	B	G	T	
2017	1678	1319	2997	1519	1160	2679	159	318	158	148	710	307	39%
2016	2091	1656	3747	1868	1482	3350	197	173	370	1012	935	1947	59%
2015	1913	1493	3406	1671	1316	2987	242	177	419	701	619	1320	45%
2014	1785	1393	3234	1500	1124	2887	285	269	347	165	164	339	42%
2013	2255	1736	3991	1975	1518	3493	280	498	1420	710	2130	2130	61%

Source: District examination results analysis reports.