



FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE
IN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS.
A CASE OF NCHELENGE DISTRICT, LUAPULA PROVINCE.

By

Anthony Machina

**A Dissertation Submitted to the University of Zambia in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational
Management.**

DECLARATION

This research project is my own clear testimony of my personal effort and experience during field research and that it has not been previously submitted for a master`s degree in any other university.

.....

.....

Anthony Machina

Date

COPY RIGHT

All copyright reserved. No part of this dissertation may be reproduced, stored in any retrieval system, transmitted in any form or any means, electronic recording, mechanical photocopying or otherwise, without prior permission in writing, from the author or the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This research report of Anthony Machina is approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the master`s degree in educational management by the University of Zambia.

Signed..... Date.....

Signed..... Date.....

Signed..... Date.....

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEBS – District Education Board Secretary

ECZ- Examination Council of Zambia

FGD - Focus Group Discussion

HOD – Head of Department

MOGE – Ministry of General Education

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved children: Anthony, Jennifer, Faith and Precious my wife who gave me full encouragement and support as I went through this programme. This work is also dedicated to my parents for their support in my education.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors affecting pupil's performance in public secondary schools at junior and senior level in Nchelenge District of Luapula province. Specifically, the study sought to establish the effects of teaching and learning resources on pupils' performance at junior and senior examinations, the extent to which the teaching and learning process and social cultural factors affect the performance in examination council of Zambia (ECZ) examinations. Strong school cultures have better motivated teachers; highly motivated teachers have greater success in terms of pupil performance and learner Outcomes. School teachers seeking to improve pupils' performance should focus on improving the school's culture by getting the relationships right among themselves, pupils' and parents. This study adopted descriptive survey design .The sample of 33 respondents were selected on the basis of the fact that the current researcher sought that they would provide experience on the factors that hinder the academic performance in Nchelenge public secondary schools; then were selected with purpose, hence, the sampling techniques applied in this study was purposeful sampling technique.

The study established that, inadequate facilities such as science equipment, classes, dormitories and other teaching and learning resources influenced learners' performance in public schools at junior and senior examinations level. The researcher recommends that, hours within the week be increased as a way of recovering missed lessons which occur due to unavoidable circumstances such as national public holidays, sports completion and drama festivals among others. The Ministry of General Education should ensure that all schools are provided with the necessary text books and other relevant resources to enrich learning environment. The government should also revise the school syllabus.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to sincerely thank the Almighty God for granting me sound health and knowledge to do this tiresome work. I wish also to express my sincere appreciation to my supervisor Dr.Ngandu for his professional guidance during my research work. I further pay my sincere gratitude to the District Education Board Secretary for Nchelenge and the school administrators for Mutono, Mweru, Kashita, Nchelenge and Kashita day Secondary School for not only allowing me entry into their premises but also providing me with the needed data so were the pupils and parents surrounding the learning institutions in question.

In a nutshell, the researcher owes everyone who played a role during the research process.

LIST OF FIGURES

1.0 Figure 1.5: Conceptual frame work.....	6
--	---

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4.2: Shows teachers response on the pupil's attitude to participation in games.....	42
Table 4.4.1: Shows ways of improving performance.....	43
Table 4.4.2: Shows pupils response on the measure that must be put in place to curb factors affecting performance.....	44

APPENDICES

Appendix I: Interview schedule for the education standard officers.....	70
Appendix II: Focus group discussion guide for teachers.....	71
Appendix III: Focus group discussion guide for pupils.....	73
Appendix IV: Introductory letter.....	74
Appendix V: Time frame.....	75

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	i
COPY RIGHT.....	ii
CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL.....	iii
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS	iv
DEDICATION.....	v
ABSTRACT.....	vi
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	viii
LIST OF TABLES.....	ix
APPENDICES	x
CHAPTER ONE	1
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY	1
1.0 Introduction	1
1.1 Background	1
1.2 Statement of the problem	4
1.3 Purpose of the study	5
1.4 Theoretical Framework	5
1.5 Conceptual framework	5
1.6 Objectives are	7
1.7 Questions	7
1.8 Significance of the study	7
1.9 Limitations of the study.....	8
1.10 Delimitations of the study	8
1.11 Definition of operational terms	8
CHAPTER TWO	9
LITERATURE REVIEW	9
2.0 Introduction	9
2.1 School based factors.....	9
2.1.1 Library facilities and academic achievement	11
2.1.2 Proximity to the learning institution.....	13
2.1.3 Learner-Teacher absenteeism	14

2.1.4 Instructional Leadership and Academic Performance	16
2.2 Effects of social cultural factors on pupils performance	18
2.2.1 Social background	19
2.2.2 Cultural effect on learning	21
2.3 Effects of social economic factors on pupils performance	23
2.3.1 Geographical effect on performance	26
2.3.2 Social economic status of the family	26
2.3.3 Effects of child labour on education	28
2.4 Summary of literature review	30
CHAPTER THREE	31
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	31
3.0 Introduction	31
3.1 Research Design	31
3.2 Location of the Study	33
3.3 Target Population	33
3.4 Study Sample and Sampling Procedure	34
3.5 Data Collection Methods	35
3.5.1 Interview	35
3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)	35
3.5.3 Documentary Review	36
3.5.4 Validity and Reliability	36
3.6 Data Analysis Techniques	37
3.7 Ethical Consideration	38
3.8 Summary	38
CHAPTER FOUR	39
PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS	39
4.0 Introduction	39
4.1 Effects of school based factors on pupils performance	39
4.2 Effects of social cultural factors on pupils performance	41
4.3 Effects of social economic factors on pupils performance	42
4.4 Strategies for improving pupil's performance	43
CHAPTER FIVE	45
DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	45

5. 0 Introduction	45
5.1 Effects of school based factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District.....	45
5.1.1 Textbooks and Academic Performance.....	46
5.1.2 Science Laboratories and Academic Performances	48
5.1.3 Classroom Congestion and Academic Performance	48
5.1.4 Quality of School Administration in Secondary Schools.....	49
5.2 Effects of socio-economic factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?.....	51
5.2.1 Level of Education of Parents and Pupils	51
5.2.2 Level of family income and pupils' performance at school.....	52
5.2.3 Parents' Marital Status and Pupils' Performance.....	53
5.3 Effects of socio-cultural factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?.....	55
5.3.1 Teachers' Motivation	56
5.3.2 Pupils' Frequency of Absenteeism	58
CHAPTER SIX	61
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	61
6.0 Introduction	61
6.1 Summary of the study	61
6.2 Summary of the major findings.....	62
6.3 Conclusion.....	63
6.4 Recommendations	64
6.5 Suggestions for further study	65
REFERENCES	66
APPENDICES	70

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.0 Introduction

Schools, colleges and universities have no worth without good academic performance of students. Good academic performance of students is the most essential asset for any educational institute. The social and economic development of the country is directly linked with students' performance. The students' performance (academic achievement) plays an important role in producing the best quality graduates who will become great leaders and add manpower for the country thus responsible for the country's economic and social development (Ali et al, 2009). Academic achievement is an apparent phenomenon in many developing countries like Zambia. Therefore academic achievement can be measured in final examination, whereby success is measured by academic performance or how well students meet standards set out by the Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ) and the institute itself. Students' performance at the level of secondary has the strong impact on other levels of higher and tertiary education. The chapter includes an explanation on why this topic will be important, research problem, the purpose and significance and the specific research questions along with the delimitations of the study.

1.1 Background

Performance in public schools is something which everyone expects to be of higher quality because of the roles the sector plays to provide service to the community, on the other hand those who failed to perform better cannot contribute well to the human resources because they don't have skill needed. Despite of its importance, this has not been implemented effectively thus, many public schools still lack improved performance.

Therefore, if the quality of education is undermined, the schools may not give adequate knowledge, skills, and attitudes to pupils that a country needs in its citizens in order to guarantee the role of education in development (World Bank 2002). The development of the skills and knowledge of the people of a nation through the education process constitutes one of the prerequisites of national development.

Scholars have revealed that there are different factors within the home and school environment which influence pupils achievement in learning institutions. Edmonds (1982) identified an effective school as one in which there is a strong leadership, an orderly and humane climate, frequent monitoring of pupils progress, high expectations and requirement for all pupils. This clearly shows that the school characteristic plays a very crucial role as far as academic performance is concerned. These characteristics have been deepened and broadened. That is safe and orderly environment, climate of high expectations of success, instructional leadership, clear and focused mission, opportunity to learn and student time on the task, frequent monitoring of students' progress and home- school relations. He argued that the extent to which the correlates are in place in a school has a dramatic, positive effect on student achievement.

Scholars and studies have revealed that there are different factors within the home and school environment which influence pupils achievement in learning institutions. Edmonds (1982) Research by Kent Peterson (1985); Eshiwani (1983: 28); Muchira (1988: 174); and Jones (2004) found that schools with sound and efficient management perform well in national examinations. UNESCO (2005: 73); point out that quality and adequacy of material and physical resources determines how effectively curriculum is implemented and ultimately education outcomes.

Research studies have established that academic performance is also influenced both negatively and positively by socio-economic status of the family. Basil (2007) points out that poor parental care with gross deprivation of school and economic needs of a child usually yield to poor academic performance. He also asserts that good parenting supported by strong economic background could enhance strong academic performance of the child. Similarly, Orodho (1996:180) and Atkinson and Feather (1966, cited in Muola, 2007), also contend that parental education influences students achievement. Gakuru (1977, cited in Kibera and Kikomoti, 2007) states that wealthier and better educated parents create conducive learning atmosphere for their children.

UNICEF (2005:9), UNICEF (2000) and Marshall (1984:61) pointed that parents with little formal education may also be less familiar with the language used in school, limiting their ability to support learning and participate in school related activities.

Muola (2007) and Kibera and Kikomoti (2007:114) have shown that occupation status of the parent determines student achievement. Studies have also demonstrated that student achievement is influenced by socio-cultural factors. UNESCO (2005:139) and Ministry of Education (1994:102) reveal that students' achievement is highly influenced by the community and/ or parents attitude towards education. Cultural practices such as initiation rite of passage (circumcision) ceremonies and early marriages are said to affect academic performance (Ministry of Education, 1994:106-109 ;) UNICEF, 2005:9), and Bachman (2003, cited Parkes, 2010) have demonstrated that academic performance is affected negatively when learners engage themselves in sexual activity and dating. Grimm (2007, in Parkes et al, 2010) has argued that engagement in sexual activities impedes school work.

Studies reviewed in Fukofuka (2007) suggest that religiosity or spirituality has a positive impact on students' academic achievements. Burnet (1994); Ministry of Education Science and Technology (2001); UNESCO (2003); and UNICEF (2005) asserted that organized groups related activities have a negative impact on schooling and academic performance.

From the human resource perspective, education is seen as the determinant of character and pace of social and economic development. UNESCO (2006) states that, most of the pupils that go through primary and secondary education in developing countries fail to master the basic cognitive skills as shown by the poor performance in primary and secondary school examination. The results are unsatisfactory levels of socio-economic development due to inadequate and inappropriate human capital resource. This situation is worse in countries that give and use public examination as the basis of important decision making about the educational and vocational future of pupils.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Student's performance at grade nine and twelve examination level is a major concern for all stakeholders in education. This is because good performance is associated with social, economic development of a nation and this is a major drive towards understanding of Vision 2030. Despite the importance of education, government schools of Nchelenge District in Luapula province of Zambia have continued to register unimpressive examination results for the last five years. This is a major problem to parents, teachers and other stakeholders in education. This study therefore, attempts to investigate factors affecting academic performance in government secondary schools in Nchelenge District of Luapula province.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of this study is to investigate factors affecting pupil's performance in government schools in Nchelenge District, Luapula province.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The study is guided on the structural functionalism theory. According to Merton (1957) defines structural functionalism theory as 'a theoretical orientation which proposes that a human society is like an organism made up of structures called social institutions'. These social institutions are made in such a manner that they perform different functions on behalf of the society. In its role, the structural functionalism theory endeavours to give an explanation on how a human society is organized and what each of the various social institutions for stability of the society (Merton .1957).

In any human society, education is a complex institution and full of many factors. It is an integral and recognized social institution that is structured to carry out a specialized function that is the education of the members of the society. Also, the role, contribution and the use of education towards the maintenance and development of the society can be understood and explained through this theory. The rationale for using this theory is that it explains why certain structures such as, teaching and learning activities, effective curriculum supervision, impact of socio cultural factors on education among others key in promoting academic performance at grade nine and twelve examinations.

1.5 Conceptual framework

Figure 1.5.The conceptual framework showing the factors of school based, social-economic and social- cultural on pupils' performance.

Inputs

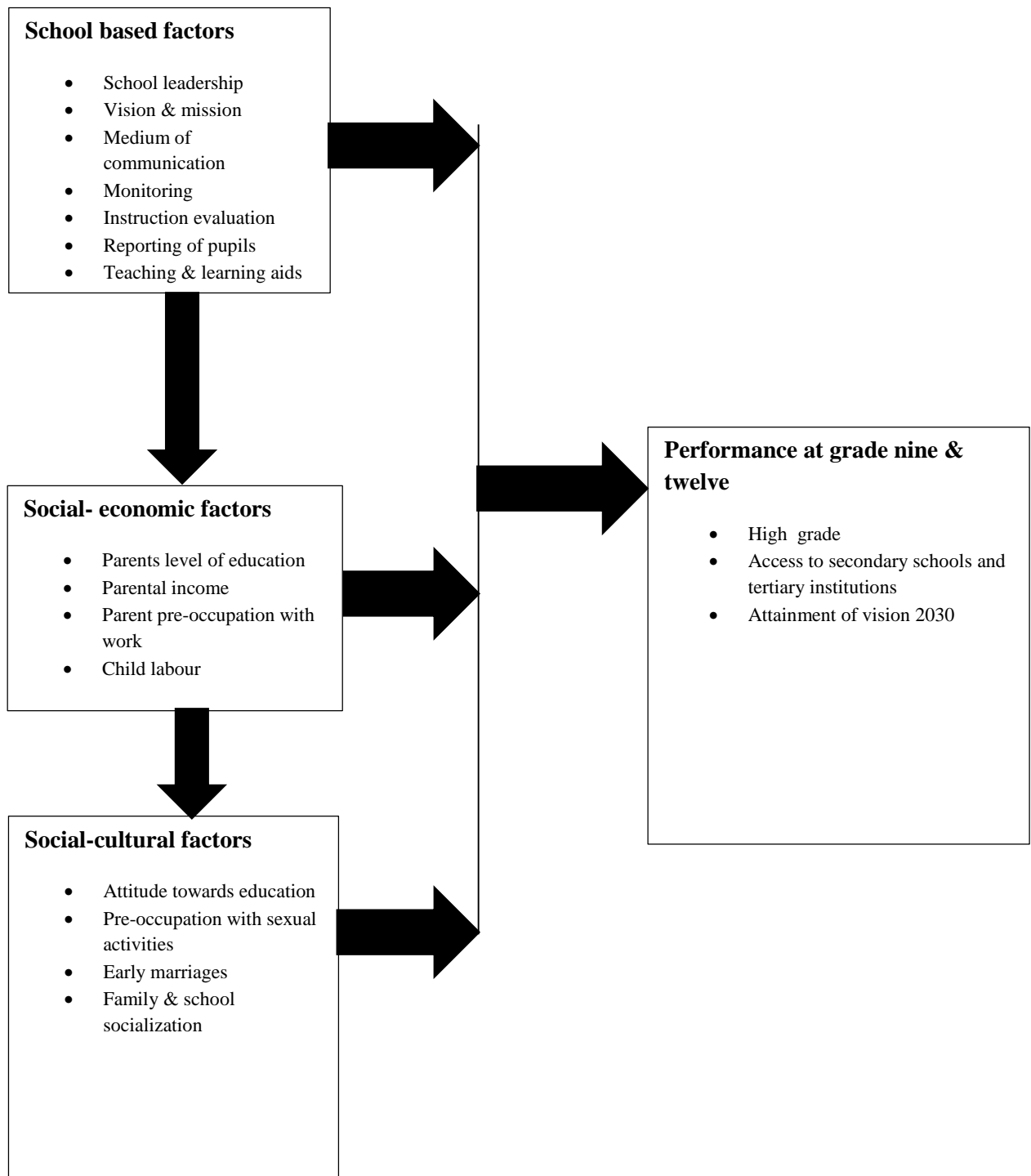


Figure: 1.5

1.6 Objectives are

- (i) To assess the school-based factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?
- (ii) To describe the socio-economic factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?
- (iii) To establish the socio-cultural factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?

1.7 Questions

- (i) How do school based factors influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?
- (ii) Describe the social-economic factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?
- (iii) To what extent has the socio-cultural factor influenced academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?

1.8 Significance of the study

The findings of the study are likely to provide information to the stakeholders on the importance of carrying out research in other districts on social-cultural factors especially in those areas that are densely populated. The study should also be extended to private institutions within Nchelenge District with a view of comparing the outcome from the two settings so as to uplift the low academic performance experienced in District.

1.9 Limitations of the study

According Best and Khan (1998) limitations are conditions beyond the control of the researcher that may place restriction on the conclusion of the study and their application to other situations. The limitations that were encountered by the researcher included lack of cooperation on the part of the respondents on suspicion that the information sought may be used to victimize them.

Another limitation related to the area of study is that, the area is not large enough to capture the findings that would be generalized to cover the whole country.

1.10 Delimitations of the study

The study targeted only four categories of respondents namely head teachers, teachers, pupils and standard officers. Other stakeholders including non-governmental organisations and district education offices were not included in the sample. Factors considered for this study were limited to school based factors, social economical and socio cultural factors. Any other factor affecting pupils' performance was not investigated by the study.

1.11 Definition of operational terms

The following terms have been operationalized in this study.

Performance: In this research, performance refers to pupils' score at national examinations.

Teaching and Learning Resources: This refers to books, classroom, desks, chairs, charts among others.

School management: In this study, school management refers to the precision in planning and executing by the school heads, the duties and responsibility bestowed on school administration.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter covers a review of literature related to the study. The literature review given in this chapter covers literature on factors affecting academic performance, including school based-related factors, social economic factors, and social cultural-related factors at grade nine and twelve examinations.

2.1 School based factors

Eshiwani (1983) identified the following policy-related factors that may cause poor academic performance:

- School plant and resources (Textbooks, library and laboratory facilities).
- Leadership behaviour of the principal (school administration and management).
- Teacher characteristics (training, teacher certification, professional commitment, experience and transfer index).

Research conducted in the United States indicated that very small schools have lower academic performance than large schools. However, a school cannot provide a reasonably well-qualified staff for the different subjects of curriculum below a minimum size. There will be an optimum size of school beyond which the level of attainment falls.

A number of studies in several African countries (Foster and Chigret, 2006; Heyneman, 1984) found a strong relationship between resources and students achievement. They gave the laboratory a central and distinctive role in education. In addition, studies done in less developed countries such as Uganda, India, Ghana, Brazil and Malaysia, indicated that access

to textbook availability is positively related to students achievement. For example, the data for India and Chile showed that a block of factors, which included textbook availability accounts for more of the variance in test scores than does a block, which includes home circumstances and student's age and sex (Heyneman et al 1984). Among the most recent studies undertaken in Kenya regarding factors influencing academic performance are those carried out by Kathuri (1984), and Eshiwani (1983).

Kathuri's (1994) research reveals that schools resources including textbook availability are not significantly related to performance in Certificate of Primary Education (CPE). However, he summarizes his work by saying that teaching resources may not be significant in totality but very critical in some situations and subjects. Eshiwani (1983) identifies that schools which consistently perform well tend to have sound and efficient leadership. He further stresses that school leadership is a crucial factor in the success of a school. The qualities that are expected of a school principal include setting a climate of high expectations for staff and students, encouraging collegial and collaborative leadership and building commitment.

In addition a number of studies have been carried out to identify and analyses the numerous factors that affect students' academic performance in various centers of learning. Their findings identify students' effort, previous schooling (Siegfried 1979; Anderson and Benjamin, 1994), parents' education, family income (Foltz, 1996), self-motivation, age of student, learning preferences (Aripin, et al 2008), class attendance (Romer, 1993), and entry qualifications as factors that have a significant effect on the students' academic performance in various settings.

Parent involvement is another factor that has been consistently related to a child's increased academic performance (Hara1998; Hill and Craft, 2003; Marcon, 1999; Stevenson and Baker,

1987). While this relation between Parent involvement and a student's academic performance is well established.

In Africa poor academic performance has been attributed to curriculum changes that educational authorities effect without first adequately preparing for changes and without learners orientations in curriculum change (Milter 1991). In Zambia for example the 2013 curriculum framework change which introduced compulsory computer studies at grade nine did not ensure that physical infrastructure and teaching and learning materials such as text books, computers and computer software were provided before the commencement of the programme. As a result the grade nine computer studies examination in 2015 was marred with a wide range of challenges (MOE, 2015). Therefore this chapter covered the literature on the factors affecting students' academic performance. The chapter covers how school based factors, social cultural factors and economic factors affect students' academic performance at grade nine and twelve examinations

2.1.1 Library facilities and academic achievement

The other contributing factor to poor academic performance in most learning institutions at different levels world over is the absence of library facilities. Libraries play an important role and contribute to excellent academic performance. Hornby (2010) described 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 is an essential factor in the teaching learning process. It forms one of the most important educational services. 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 easy convenience, all books, periodicals and other reproduced materials which are of interest and value to him but which are not provided or assigned to him as basic or supplementary textbooks.

The importance of a library has been demonstrated by the government when she expressed in the National Policy on Education (NPE) that every state Ministry needs to provide funds for the establishment of libraries in all here educational institutions and to train librarians and library assistants. As a resource, it occupies a central and primary place in any school system.

It supports all functions of school-teaching and provides service and guidance to its readers.

Ahmed (2003) posited that provision of educational facilities like availability of library facilities in school enhances good academic performance of pupils. He adds that 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. Ahmed (2003) adds 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.

Fowowe (1988) further emphasised that a library must be up-to-date and at the same time have older materials. It must be properly supported financially to fund materials and services among others. He concluded that a well-equipped library is a major facility 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 therein 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. With all the above mentioned facts, it is sad to know that many schools operate without libraries (Shodimu, 1998).

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 percent 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.

Ogunseye (1986) had earlier noted that the total absence of an organized school library would continue to spell a doom for thousands of secondary school students. This statement clearly implied that many schools operate without libraries and this had affected the academic performance of their students. 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 schools with well-equipped library normally maintain high academic performance. 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 performance. Distance from home to school is yet another cause of pupil poor academic performance.

2.1.2 Proximity to the learning institution

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 inattentive during lesson delivery by teachers. This later adversely affects their academic achievement.

Kelly (1999) also agreed that long distances to schools affected pupil school attendance. He emphasised that by the time pupils arrived at schools, they were too tired to concentrate on school work, girls were less able than boys to negotiate physical hazards, like swollen rivers, or dangerous escarpment paths which they encountered on the way to school. In Nigeria,

Fatunwa (2005) found that school home distance affected pupils' academic performance. In addition Moyo (2013) investigated that the location of schools, revealed that distance travelled by learners from home to school correlated positively with the academic performance of the students. The researcher elaborates further most of the learners were affected by the distance which make them use most of their time on travelling than learning. The investigation by Morakinyo (2003) on effect of distance to school, students found that the failing level of academic achievement was attributed to teacher's non-use of verbal reinforcement strategy. In addition, studies show that the attitude of some teachers to students lead to poor attendance in lessons, lateness to school, unsavory comments about student's performance that could damage their ego, and poor method of teaching.

It was also discovered that because of longer walking distance, fatigue and hunger lead students to drowsiness during learning as a result of walking over long distances compared to students from rich families who usually cycled to school making them at the advantage of arriving at school early without having lost any considerable amount of energy

2.1.3 Learner-Teacher absenteeism

Absenteeism is a tendency to be away from work or school without a good reason or habit of being absent from work or school. Bowen (2005) has established that students who attend classes more regularly seem to be more successful in their studies than those who regularly absent. In addition, students that attend class regularly are more likely to remember well the information and apply the knowledge effectively throughout their life (Crede, et al 2010).

Due to absenteeism teacher have to reteach lesson take instructional time away from students those who attend regular classes. They spend extra time over absentee extra homework and class assignments. It is beyond the planning period of lecturers and time needed to provide individual assistance to students (Weller, 1996). Student miss valuable information when

they are absent from classes. They also missed the interaction lecturer and benefits of specific examples which are used to clarify the difficult concepts. They valuable information cannot be repeated when teacher re-teach lecture to absent students (Williams, 2000).

Kamla-Raj (2011), explains that absenteeism affects the abilities of students which can be reason of decreasing the grades and in the result of this the students may get failed and they have to repeat same year level. Performance of students becomes prominent and effective when they attend the classes on regular basis and it positive impacts on the performance. Student who are attending the classes on regular basis, they get higher grades and marks in the examination than those students who got absent from classes. Absenteeism leads the difficult effect on the performance. Once the student is absent from class, he or she will miss the opportunity to learn new techniques. If he missed the class there is chance of missing study material and misses the opportunity in the examination to get high grade. Students who attend the regular classes get high marks as compare to absent students (Sharma, 2005). There is a strong positive correlation between attendance and grades. (Moor, 2003)

Kasanda (2003) in the National Assessment Survey carried out in Zambia in 1999 and 2003 attributes poor pupil academic performance to learner absenteeism as well as teachers. 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 poor academic performance when such learners are presented for national examinations. Teacher absenteeism is also identified in a survey as a factor attributing to the poor academic performance. Most are the times when pupils in classes are left without teachers on the pretext of teachers to have gone for their salaries. 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.

2.1.4 Instructional Leadership and Academic Performance

One major emphasis in education in the early 21st Century has been the continuing demand for greater accountability for the improvement of pupil performance. Both the local community and national expectations require schools to ensure that all pupils achieve mastery of the curriculum. As a result, effective school head teachers focus on teaching and learning especially in terms of measurable pupil progress while ineffective 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 head teachers who have no vision on how best they can drive their learning institutions to higher heights in terms of academic excellence. 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. You should be aware of curriculum requirements and pedagogical techniques. You should be able to work with teachers to strengthen their skills. You can collect, analyse and use data to improve academic performance. You should have the skills needed to rally pupils, teachers, parents, and other community residents and partners around the common goal of raising pupil performance. And, you demonstrate the leadership skills and knowledge to apply these ideas in your daily work.

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 pre conditions for enhanced pupil learning. Effective instructional leadership is generally recognized as the most important characteristic of school administrators (Lezotte, 2010).

According to Lezotte (2010) 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 head teacher, deputy head teacher and Heads of Departments (HODs) should act as instructional leaders and effectively and persistently communicate and model the mission of the school to staff, parents, and pupils.

Effective instructional leadership has been shown to result in school improvement and effectiveness (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. In the absence of teacher morale and satisfaction from the superordinate, teaching and learning is compromised to some extent.

Schools need effective instructional leaders to communicate the school's mission and vision. By persistently reinforcing the school's mission, the head teacher creates a shared sense of purpose and establishes a set 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 (Kirk and Jones, 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. 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: one vision of their schools and the roles they play in those schools and another vision of how the change process will proceed.

Portin, et al (2003) considers that school leaders have many roles. All schools need head teachers to exercise their roles as instructional leaders who ensure the quality of teaching. Thus good heads spend time in classrooms observing the process of teaching and learning while also balancing other needs such as pupils' safety and parent relationships. Fulfilling these multiple responsibilities well requires head teachers 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.

World Bank Report (2005), on tools and technology as performance input, identifies instructional materials as the entire range of teaching tools from chalk to computer. According to report, the availability of teaching tools at all levels in poor and middle level income countries is limited, particularly at primary level of education and these impacts negatively on academic performance.

2.2 Effects of social cultural factors on pupils performance

Pupils' academic performance is influenced by social factors. These factors include romantic relationships, student clubs, membership in clubs and organizations, and sports. Some studies disagree over how best to measure social factors, most studies indicate that children from low social factors families do not perform as well as they potentially could at school compared to children from high social factors families (Graetz, 1995).

2.2.1 Social background

Family has been described as the smallest, most personal and not intimate of social groups. It is the most important primary group and the smallest social unit in the society. Odo (1990:10) defined family as “a social group sharing a common residence and cooperating economically”. The author went further to assert that the institutions of the family is usually based on the marriage of one or more sexually co-habiting couples and usually there is the expectation of having children for whom the adults of the family accept responsibility. Alio (1995) observed that the family is also the most personal social organization, for nothing is more personal than the interaction and relationship between members of a family. He further said that married couples without children, though bound by the strongest personal ties do not constitute a family for such ties can conceivably exist among couples who are not married. For him, what gives a family its character are children, for only in such a family can that intimate, personal relationship be established by which the family can perform its functions of rearing, protecting and educating the children, transmitting to them the social values it has inherited and a special bond between all the members.

Most studies, however, compare Students from across all social factors backgrounds to reach the conclusion that low social factors adversely affects a range of educational outcomes. Another important dimension, however, is the factors that may influence educational outcomes within particular social factors Bands. The educational performance of children from financially disadvantaged backgrounds and examines its variation as affected by Traditional measures of social factors as well as by a range of other family, individual and Contextual factors (Graetz, 1995).

Single-parent families have a negative impact on the child in that it is bad for the child's upbringing and cognitive development. Indeed, children from single-parent families are at

greater risk than children in two parent families; even when they have the same academic abilities, Thiessen (1997) posited that children from single-parent families are three times more likely to drop out of high school than children from two-parent families. Likewise, Amato and Keith (1991) and Lauer and Lauer (1991) found that children in single-parent families may be at greater risk than children of two-parent families. Because they are the primary and frequently sole source of financial support for the family, single parents have less time to help children with homework, are less likely to use consistent discipline, and have less parental control; and all of these conditions may lead to lower academic achievement (Astone and McLanahan, 1991; Mulkey et al., 1992). The implication of this theory to the present study lies on the fact that students' performance in school is mediated by their upbringing which perhaps is influenced by their family background. According to Fadeyiye (1990) in two parent homes, both parents have roles to play in child education. The father is to provide the necessary tools for the educational advancement, while the mother is supposed to supplement the father's efforts in this regard. When the father is absent and the mother is not privileged enough to cater for all the basic needs as well as supervised the academic performance of the child, the child will be backward or withdrawn. In similar view, Ortese (1998) noted that when the mother is absent and the father is not privileged enough. A single parent faces doubled responsibilities requiring time, attention and money of the parent. A child from homes where the father and the mother are present will be well taken care of and socialized in the best way possible. This is due to the fact that the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complimentary roles in bringing up the child. Such a child is likely to achieve self-actualization later in life; but children from single-parent homes are likely to suffer deprivation and denial of some rights and opportunities which may have tremendous influence on their performance in real life situations.

Educational performance at school has also been found to vary according to the student sex (Horne, 2000). In particular, reviews of the evidence suggest that boys suffer an educational disadvantage relative to girls, especially in terms of performance in literacy (Buckingham, 1999; 2000b). There are several explanations for this increasing gender gap which include: biological differences; gender biases (such as reading being seen as not masculine.); teaching, curricula and assessment (for instance less structured approaches to teaching grammar may have weakened boys. literacy performance); and socioeconomic factors (Buckingham, 1999).

According to Sparkes, (1999) stated that lower educational attainment has also been found to be associated with children living in public housing compared to those in private housing. This may be due to the effects of overcrowding, poor access to resources and a lack of social networks, and in this sense, housing type may also be a measure of neighborhoods influence.

2.2.2 Cultural effect on learning

Culture is a product of the interaction between various factors. As a subject of many fields such as anthropology, ethnography and sociology, (Güvenç 1994) culture can be defined as a collective thinking schedule depending on the existence and unity of an interacting group of people, and it differentiates a group of people from others (Hofstede 1980; Sisman 2002).

Likewise culture, every organization can have a culture unique to itself. School is a distinctive organization. In this regard, it has subjective properties and it is hard to analyze and understand it with an objective approach (Balci 2007). Many variables such as socialization, rituals, language, authority, economics, and technology have an impact on this process (Waller 1932). Organizations such as schools in particular, are products of the cultural paradigm in the society. Moreover, every school cultivates a culture that separates it from other schools depending on the special environment, varying inputs and processes (Dimmock and Walker 2005; Marzano et al. 2005; Morey and Luthans 1985).

Organizational theorists have long reported that paying attention to culture is the most important action that a people can perform. Educational theorists have likewise reported that the teachers' impact on learning is mediated through the climate and culture of the school and is not a direct effect (Hallinger and Heck 1998).

Watson (2001) warned us that if the culture is not hospitable to learning then pupils' achievement can suffer. Fink and Resnick (2001) reminded us that school teachers are responsible for establishing a pervasive culture of teaching and learning in each school. A closer look at the relationship of specific aspects of school culture to pupils' learning is needed, however. Categories of schools are then compared on the ten dimensions of school Climate as measured by the organizational health inventory (Leithwood et al. 2001).

Negative cultural practices such as early and forced marriage, genital mutilation, Child Labour, domestic and household work, all these deprive girls' education. Other cultural factors that impact negatively on education are practices such as circumcision rites of which when boys undergo they feel they are grown-ups and they cannot be controlled and contained by both parents and teachers leading to poor performance due to rebellion against authority. Some even end up dropping from school and engage themselves in illicit activities such as drug taking and consumption of local alcohol. Early marriages for both boys and girls too affect pupils' education performance from pursuing further education. As witnessed today most of the pupils who entered into early marriages are experiencing marriage breakages and some going back to school (Mluma, 2001).

Boys on the other hand were said to be "pushed" to succeed because more was expected of them. It was therefore suggested that the society should invest more in education to both girls and boys because more is expected from girls as it is from boys. In general, the literature

indicates that, major challenges to progress in education and training for women arise from persistent gender stereotyping, widespread gender discrimination and negative social attitude toward girls' education.

According to Ogbu (1992) Conflicts between home and school may occur over how pupils have been taught to view the world, the qualities of interpersonal relationships, standards of behavior, and the goals and objectives of education. Home, community, and school/center environments may value some of the same competencies, but differences in expression may obscure their common root. Pupils socialized in communities that value physical aggression and "macho" behavior may have considerable difficulty learning to suppress such behavior in school, just as pupils more conservatively socialized may feel deeply threatened by open aggression in the school ground. Both the pupils who tolerate high levels of aggressive behavior and those who do not acquired their characteristics through the normal developmental process of identification with the values and behavior of family and friends. The point is not that high or low levels of aggression are desirable, but that their acquisition is a normal accomplishment in some communities. Schools, by valuing low-aggression pupils' set the stage for cultural conflict for those who do not believe that physical docility can reflect competence and effectiveness.

2.3 Effects of social economic factors on pupils performance

Parents or family socio-economic status is determined by an individual. Achievements in: education; employment and occupational status; and income and Wealth. Several comprehensive reviews of the relationship between social factors and Educational outcomes exist (Ainley et al., 1995). These studies and reviews make it clear those children from low families are more likely to exhibit the following patterns in terms of educational Outcomes compared to children from high social factors: it is argued that families where the parents are advantaged socially, educationally and economically, foster a higher level of achievement in

their children. They also may provide higher levels of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school (Williams et al., 1993).

In addition many scholars defined education differently; with Odaet and Bbuye (1997) defining it as a process whereby some human being directs and guides the growth and development of some human being towards some end or goal in life. It deals with preparing the right type of environment for the individuals to allow them physically, mentally and spiritually so as to develop harmoniously within themselves and together with their fellow human beings. Level of education of parents is the degree to which parents have acquired some knowledge, skills, attitudes and values of informal and formal education. The study conducted by Prewittz in Kenya on parents' education showed that parents' level of education is very crucial for the performance of their children because educated parents send their children to school early, in most cases at the age of five to six. Ezewu (1998) pointed out that children who join primary schools at early age also complete their primary education early.

Ezewu (1988) found that educated parents provide adequate learning materials for their children, which stimulate them to learn and perform better in all subjects. These parents are concerned over their children's education or performance, which sometimes makes them coach their children themselves or appoint part-time teachers for them. They send their children to the best nursery and primary schools which serves as sure gateways to secondary and university education which in turn leads to higher educational qualification to occupy higher positions in societies. Owen (1999) in her study exploring beliefs about academic achievement studied the relationship between parents' educational attainment and found that the educational attainment of parents have a relationship with educational achievement of their children.

According to Sentamu (2003), the educational attainment of parents determines the kind of schools to which their children go to. Such schools are near in kind to the ones their parents attended. This tends to lay a foundation for better performance of their children while at school. Considine and Zappala (2002) in their study in Australia on the influence of education disadvantages in the academic performance of school found that families where parents are educated foster a higher level of achievement in their children because of providing psychological support for their children. Combs (1985) found that virtually all nations, children of high parents on education have far better chances of getting into better secondary schools and universities than equally bright children of ordinary workers or farmers. In other words, the highly educated parents tend to provide a more conducive learning environment that propels their children to go to schools and succeed.

Maani (1990) and Mugisha (1991) who both attempted to analyze the relationship between children's performance at school and the level of their parents' education established that the more educated the parents are, the better the children's performance at school. According to Nabbumba (1988), parents' level of education influences pupils' performance in the sense that educated parents value education and they tend to encourage their own children to value and actively engage in receiving education. In a study conducted in Kenya by Obanya and Ezewu (1988) it was found that the higher the levels of education of parents, the more likely it motivates children to learn and perform better. Kundu and Tuto (2000) found that home background has a significant influence on the achievement of children at school because educated parents tend to offer more psychological, social and financial support to their children, thus giving them the opportunity to excel in their studies.

2.3.1 Geographical effect on performance

Geographical location affects pupils' performance as pupils' from rural areas are more likely to have lower educational outcomes in terms of academic performance and retention rates than students from urban area. Despite an adequate number of educational facilities in rural and remote Zambia, school children from these areas remain disadvantaged by other factors. Issues affecting access to education in regional areas include: costs, the availability of transport and levels of family income supports (Cheers, 1990; HREOC, 2000).

According to Sparkes, (1999) lower educational attainment has also been found to be associated with children living in public housing compared to those in private housing. This may be due to the effects of overcrowding, poor access to resources and a lack of social networks, and in this sense, housing type may also be a measure of neighborhoods influence.

2.3.2 Social economic status of the family

Socio-economic status may therefore also be linked to family structure. As single parent families on average have lower levels of income, are headed by parents with lower educational attainment and are less likely to be in the labour force, children from these families are likely to have lower educational performance (Rich, 2000).

The family is the primary social system for children. Rollins and Thomas (1979) found that high parental control were associated with high achievement. Cassidy and Lynn (1991) included a specific factor of the family's socioeconomic status, crowding, as an indicator of how being disadvantaged affects educational attainment. They found that a less physically crowded environment, along with motivation and parental support, were associated with higher educational levels of children. Religiosity as an aspect of the family environment is

another independent variable possibly influencing academic achievement (Bahr, Hawks, and Wang, 1993).

According to Hammer (2003) the home environment is as important as what goes on in the school. Important factors include parental involvement in their children's education, how much parents read to young children, how much TV children are allowed to watch and how often students change schools. Achievement gap is not only about what goes on once students get into the classroom. It's also about what happens to them before and after school. Parents and teachers have a crucial role to play to make sure that every child becomes a high achiever. Parental influence has been identified as an important factor affecting student achievement. Results indicate that parent education and encouragement are strongly related to improved student achievement (Odhiambo, 2005).

Phillips (1998) also found that parental education and social economic status have an impact on student achievement. Students with parents who were both college-educated tended to achieve at the highest levels. Income and family size were modestly related to achievement. Peng (1994) analysis of academic achievement, home environment (including family income) and educational activities concluded that home environment and educational activities explained the greatest amount of variance. In conclusion denying the role of the impact of a student's home circumstances will not help to endow teachers and schools with the capacity to reduce achievement gaps (Hammer, 2003).

Also related to poor educational performance is the level of truancy or unexplained absence among students. Truancy can be modelled both as an educational outcome and as a causal factor in explaining educational performance. Truancy tends to be higher among students from low social economical sector backgrounds. Truancy, even occasional, is associated with poorer academic performance at school (Sparkes, 1999). Having high levels of unexplained

absence at school has also been found to be associated with poorer early adult outcomes in the Labour market for instance higher probability of being unemployed and poorer adult health relative to non-truants (Sparkes, 1999).

2.3.3 Effects of child labour on education

Advanced learners dictionary (2010) defined a child as a young human being who is not yet an adult. On the other hand child labour is the act of subjecting a child to work that is dangerous for kids and that are hazardous to their physical, mental or emotional health. It is also works that prevents kids from attending school such as unlimited or unrestricted domestic work (International Labour Organization- ILO 2007). According to Anderson (2006) child labour is engaging under-aged children into work.

Child labour is predominant in most developing nations because children's contributions to the well-being of the family are encouraged and socially accepted (Mathias 2011). In Nigeria; children are seen in urban and rural communities carrying out domestic and economic duties which are functional to the families. According to Dorschner (2000), in the rural areas children are found working in agriculture and on family farms. They are seldom employed by state-owned commercial agriculture plantations, which are responsible for much of the agriculture production for export. In cottage industries and mechanic work-shops, children work as apprentices in serious crafts or trade such as weaving, tailoring, catering and auto repair. In urban areas and towns children work on the streets as vendors, car washers, scavengers, beggars, head load carriers, feet-washers and bus conductors. These economic activities affect the performance of the children since they engage in them at the expense of their studies, this often result in these children leaving school prematurely and entering into paid work. These works are usually under paid.

Child labour, however, is perhaps the most virulent force preventing pupil's from pursuing education. While child labour is an obstacle to both boys and girls, girls are affected at much higher rates, particularly because much of the child labour that girls do may not be Bank Economic and Sector researchers found that pupils' start work at an earlier age, work longer hours and oftentimes work as many hours as adults (Canagarajah, S and H Coulombe, 1997). A full-time work schedule paired with primary education for a ten-year old pupil cannot be sustainable, nor can it be adequate preparation for successful passage of examinations and transition to secondary school. The burden of labour placed on pupils must be contributed to enable pupils to pursue an unimpeded course of primary and secondary education. This scenario is a common practice in Zambia, especially in rural provinces (Canagarajah, S and H Coulombe, 1997).

Allen and Kickbusch (1992), cited in WEAC, (2005), found that the higher-achieving students plan to continue their education after graduation from high school, participate extensively in extracurricular activities, have a few absences each school year, more likely to engage in recreational reading and to check books out of the school or public library on a regular basis, watch less television, spend more time each evening doing their homework, have friend who have positive attitudes toward school and who rarely cut classes or skip school, have positive feelings about their teachers and about specific courses they take and attribute success in school to hard work rather than ability. This study attempted to reveal the relationship between motivation, family environment, student characteristics and academic achievement.

2.4 Summary of literature review

Literature reviewed shows that there are various factors which influence students' academic performance. Some of these factors are unavailability of instructional materials, social and cultural factors among others. It is clear that whenever there is poor performance, a number of factors either independently or in conjunction with others contribute to it. The study investigated some selected factors influencing pupil's academic performance at grade nine and twelve level in Nchelenge District of Luapula province. These included availability of school based factors, social economic factors and social cultural factors. The three factors although ignored by most scholars are equally important in understanding the underlying factors influencing pupil's performance at grade nine and twelve examinations level.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focussed on the methodology that was used in the study. It dealt with research design, location of the study, target population, sampling techniques and sample size, research instruments, validity instruments, reliability of instruments, data collection procedures and ethical considerations.

3.1 Research Design

Trochim (2006) holds that “the research design refers to all the overall strategy that researcher chooses to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical way, thereby, ensuring you will effectively address the research problem; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data. Note that your research problem determines the type of design you should use, not the other way round!”

There are about three research designs; qualitative research design the one that generates words as data for analysis (Creswell,1998; Patton, 2009), quantitative research design is the one that generates numbers as data for analysis (Patton and Cochran, 2002), and mixed-method design comprises both qualitative and quantitative research designs.

The study intended to assess factors affecting academic performance in Nchelenge district. The researcher find out the experience in-depth the causative factors of poor performance from participants themselves (students) as to what extent are they comfortable with school based factors, social economic factors and social cultural factors. Thus, qualitative approach was deemed necessary as (Omari, 2010) postulates that, “qualitative approach expects to

conduct and work with more descriptive data which seek deep and vivid descriptions of the context and events.”

A qualitative approach was adopted purposely to allow the flexibility in the study. Qualitative research design allowed the researcher to change according to the conditions of the respondents and ask open ended questions during interviews (Kombo et al; 2006). Some respondents may mixed questions during the interview and focused group discussion; the researchers may twist the questions so as to get the required information basing on the objective of the study. Qualitative design develops in-depth knowledge. Laws, Harper and Marcus (2003) pointed out that if the researcher needs to develop in-depth knowledge about a certain phenomenon, the use of qualitative method is recommended especially interviews method and focused group discussions. The researcher managed to receive views and experiences of the respondents based on the study objectives.

Also, qualitative design allowed researcher to make description of data. In qualitative research design, the researcher is allowed to put explanation on the data collection from the field (Patton *et al.*, 2000). The researcher used qualitative design because the research design allowed him to make description on factors affected students’ academic performance in terms of school based factors, social cultural factors and economical based factors. Also, the researcher explained recommended strategies in the study according to the response of the respondents to what they have said and not said by looking their feelings during the interviews. Qualitative research finding are not representative (Laws et al, 2002 and Patton *et al* 2003). Knowledge produced might not generalize to other people or other findings (i.e. findings might be unique to the relatively few people included in the research study). Hence, findings about the factors that affecting public secondary schools, particularly on school based factors, social cultural factors and economical based factors, the study found strategies

to realize good academic performance of students that are applicable in Nchelenge district especially in selected schools.

By qualitative research is difficult to test hypotheses and theories with large participant pools. By qualitative research generally takes more time to collect data also, data analysis is often time consuming. The results are more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases. In connection to that, sometimes researcher decided to take note on some issues of own interests and leave other issues in relation to school based factors, social cultural factors and economical based factors affected students' academic performance. Therefore, the nature of the researcher's perspective might influence the value of inquiry, findings and interpretations. To clear his doubt, the researcher borrowed ideas of (Bogdan & Biklen, 1992) in their argument that, there is no form of research which is free from human bias, all research, whether qualitative or quantitative has some forms of subjectivity. Madrigal *et al* (2012) say, "Both qualitative and quantitative methods of user research play important roles in product development". However, the researcher struggle to the maximum to be as fair as he could avoid biasness in the study.

3.2 Location of the Study

The study was conducted in Nchelenge District of Luapula province. In Nchelenge district the study involved five public secondary schools namely; Nchelenge, Mutono, Mweru, Munsa and Kashita.

3.3 Target Population

Target population also known as universe population is a group of elements such as individuals, objects or items from sample are taken for measurement. A population refers to the group of individuals from which sample are taken for measurement. A population should

have at least one thing in common (Kombo et al., 2006). However, a sample is a subset of people, items, or events from a larger population that you collect and analyse to make inferences. This study used the experience of four (4) standard education officers, three (3) Heads of secondary schools, seven (7) teachers, nine (9) parents, and ten (10) pupils that made a total of 33 respondents. This number of respondents is enough because in qualitative research even a single respondent is enough for a researcher to generate findings (Patton et al., 2002). It is from this population that sample of study was drawn from deep investigation on the school based factors, social-economic factors and social-cultural factors affecting academic performance among public secondary schools in Nchelenge district.

As one can observe that the sample of 33 respondents were selected on the basis of the fact that the current researcher sought that they would provide experience on the factors that hinder the academic performance in Nchelenge public secondary schools; then were selected with purpose, hence, the sampling techniques applied in this study was purposeful sampling technique.

3.4 Study Sample and Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the act, process or technique of selecting a suitable smaller size of population of a representative part of a population for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population. All the 4 standard education officers, 3 Heads of secondary schools, 56 teachers, 20 parents and 100 pupils would be used in purposive sampling. The researcher used simple random sampling for the categories to determine the respondents among the students. Gay (1996), states that for a descriptive research a sample of 10-20% of population is sufficient for reliable findings. The researcher used 100(%) of the pupil's participation in the study. Using simple random sampling 60% from girl's pupils and 40% from boy's pupils was used in the study respectively.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

3.5.1 Interview

Bogdan (1998) explains that the interview uses oral method to collect data between the interviewers and the interviewees. The interview can be open or structured. The interview usually has power to use the probes to allow the interviewer to get more depth information than any other method like questionnaire.

The interview can inform other information the current researcher may have not planned to investigate but they are useful in the study as the respondent is seen how he feels about the issues; unlike the questionnaire where the information is filled by the distinct respondent. The current researcher prepared the interview questions by using the guideline of the research objective. So, three questions (appendix 1) with sub questions were developed to guide the investigation of this study.

3.5.2 Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The study employed the focused group discussion (FGD). The focused group discussion is another nature of the interview that is used in collecting data for the investigations by involving around eight people who come to discuss a topic under the investigation. The questions themes composed for interview was used for the focused group discussion. The advantage of this method is that it allows those who cannot initiate discussion to contribute after observing the contribution of their fellows in the group. The method again can generate a lot of data in a shorter time than other method like interview and questionnaire. FGD if not well controlled, can result to a chaos and lost direction in the discussion, thus, the researcher used assistants to help recording the discussion when the discussion is going on. The current

researcher therefore, played a role of the mediator to control the discussion as recommended by (Patton, 2009).

3.5.3 Documentary Review

The study used the school documents from the office of the head teacher, standard education officers and the school meeting minutes to observe the pupils' academic preferences of examination results for past five years. These documents are appropriately selected and used as they could inform on what is being investigated as they would match with the studied objectives.

3.5.4 Validity and Reliability

Validity is the accuracy and meaningfulness of inference which were based on research results (Mugenda and Mugenda 1999). In this study, the validity of the research results was increased by applying more than one method. This involves employing the interviews, Focused group discussion (FGD) and the documents. The result obtained from the interview was therefore cross checked with FGD method and then the documents.

Another method used was more than one site to collect data. That was Nchelenge, Mutono and Mweru. Sites improve the reliability of data than if the study had relied on the single source for data collection. Lastly, the approach employed varied samples where the pupils, the parents and the teachers would be involved to inform the study on the factors that affect academic performance of the pupils in selected secondary schools in Nchelenge district.

According to Mulusa (1990), reliability is a measure of accuracy of the findings and suggests the truthfulness of the collected data whereas validity is the measure of acceptability that outcomes are likely to be adopted for similar cases or areas covering same domains. The researcher used questionnaires method to enhance instrument reliability. The same instrument

was given to another group of people. The reliability was the correlation between the scores of the two instruments. The judgment was ascertained that the items in the instruments to prove reliability level to make a judgment about the instrument reliability.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

Mhehe (2002), quoting from (Glesne & Peskiri, 1992), explained that data analysis involves organizing what we have observed, heard and read, to make sense of the acquired knowledge. They maintain that, as one does so he/she categorizes, synthesizes, search for patterns and interprets the data collected. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) quoted from Athanas (2004) defined data analysis as a systematic process involving working with data, organizing and breaking them into manageable units. It is also concerned with synthesizing data, searching patterns, discovering what is important, what is to be learned and deciding what to tell others.

In this study, data analysis continued throughout the data collection phase. Data analysis in this study took Kvale's (1992) approach which contends that, data analysis in interview needs to follow five steps, which are, categorization of meaning, condensation of meaning, structuring of meaning through narratives, interpretation of meaning, and ad hoc methods for generating meanings. In the data analysis of interviews and focused group discussions the information was first read by the researcher. Secondly, the data was placed in sub topics of the study. Third step was to re-read the common patterns in each category, and decide which to take and which to leave out. Fourth, was to write narratives in each category using quotes from interviewees. The fifth step was to interpret narratives from respondents to gain meaning out of it. All categories of data was led by the research questions.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Gray (2009) insists on the need of the researcher to observe the principle of ethics when conducting research. This is because there could be some danger the respondents may experience or harm if their views are known to their superiors. Furthermore, it is not recommended to violate the right of individuals for the reason of searching knowledge. So the researcher in the first place needs to establish an informed consent to ask the respondents to respond willingly and without being forced. Then, since it is not possible to estimate the danger the respondents may experience the researcher has to change the name by giving them codes and protect them for any harm or embarrassment from those superiors. In this study the respondents' names were hidden and the respondents were asked to participate willingly and anyone who was not interested was allowed to withdraw at any time during research processes. Further, the current researcher obtained a research clearance letter from the Directorate of Research and Postgraduate Studies, which allowed accessing various schools in data collection in Nchelenge District.

3.8 Summary

This chapter shows the analysis of results of each item. The researcher used questionnaire, FGD, interview and documentary review as they could inform on what would be investigated.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

The data are presented in three themes. The first them was the effect of school based factors on pupil`s academic performance, second was the effects of social cultural factors on the academic achievement of pupils and last the effects of social economic factors on the pupils` academic performance.

4.1 Effects of school based factors on pupils performance

The interview results held at Nchelenge secondary school indicated that the school had some recourse for teaching like textbooks. The teacher said that the school in fact has many arts textbooks like those of teaching civic, geography. However the teacher remarked that the textbooks for teaching science subjects like Physics and Chemistry and computer science are not enough.

The teacher further explained on the problem of textbooks at the school:

Under Sector pool funds we usually received some funds for the school development. Nowadays the funds are not coming regularly. The schools are in serious shortage of funds and the schools cannot purchase the textbooks for the students to use in their learning, either the parents do not understand if we order the students to buy the textbooks using their own funds.

The parents living in Kanyembo village when asked to give their own opinion on the challenge of the school resource and how they affect the academic performance had this to say: *The way I observe the students taking the private study without textbooks gives me worry if they are serious learning and getting the concepts of the subject. What I see they do is to*

use notes written by their fellow students whom also may have not passed the examination because of the same poor system of learning.

The student who was about to take final grade twelve examination at Kashita secondary school in 2018 remarked by saying that their school is struggling to assist the students to do better in their examination. However, the school has the library room but the books are not their so it is used as the study room instead as a resource room.

Many of the schools in Nchelenge District do not have laboratories for doing science practical. Ministry of general Education stated that every school must have the science laboratory to assist the students to learn science effectively. Despite of this move the progress of the science laboratories was not promising in some schools of Nchelenge District. They have no conventional laboratories despite the fact that these schools have been upgraded to secondary school level.

One student at Mweru secondary school lamented that: the students who opted for science subject are forced to choose the alternative practical subject like art and design. To us this is not a good opportunity to learn in the sense that every pupil should learn science by seeing, observing the specimen, manipulating data and recording the results; as this is in hypothetical model.

One head teacher remarked that the schools are using both the allocated funds and the community contribution to make sure that the science laboratories are completed. We are not yet their but we are trying. As we are waiting; the science students are affected because they cannot do the practical in the laboratories and the chance for them to interact with the chemicals, use equipment and specimen as part of the science drills is limited. This has a greater impact in the way the students' perform the science subject at our school. He also

stated that it will be very difficult to attain vision 2030 if the situation is not addressed by the government in the sense that pupils' performance will not be desirable.

In a course of doing interview with the teachers at the Munsa secondary school the researcher was given chance to observe the classroom teachings. The status of the classrooms was not able to accommodate a big number of the students. This problem was observed and it was noted in all classrooms from grade eight to grade twelve. The teacher said that when there are larger numbers of students, it is not easy for the teacher to manage the classroom and follow up the stages of teaching effectively, as there is not chance and time to attend to all students in the classroom. There is no learning here the teacher ended her remarks.

The student at Munsa secondary school showed the dissatisfaction with the number of the students in their classroom. He said that:

We are studying in difficult situation, the classroom are not having enough spaces. The big number forces the school to have congested classroom. During learning the teacher cannot attend all questions asked by students when they need clarification about a certain issue or concepts in academic. This is not good to us. My parents are planning to transfer me to another school.

4.2 Effects of social cultural factors on pupils performance

On social factors, the study established that pupils' academic performance is influenced by social factors such as family structure, absence among students, gender, geographical location, neighborhoods, romantic relationships, student cults, membership in clubs and organizations, and sports. The study concluded that all these social factors adversely affect a range of educational outcomes and performance.

On cultural factors the study established that Strong school cultures have better motivated teachers, and highly motivated teachers have greater success in terms of student performance and student outcomes. The findings further revealed that School teachers seeking to improve pupils' performance should focus on improving the school's culture by getting the relationships right among themselves, pupils' and parents.

Table 4.2: Shows teachers response on the pupil's attitude to participation in games.

Pupils attitude to participate in games	Frequency	Percent
Very positive	12	29.8
Positive	21	51.1
Neutral	5	14.9
Negative	2	4.3
Total	40	100.0

Source: Field Data (2018)

According to Table 4.2, over 50 percent of the teachers agreed that pupils had positive attitude on pupils' participation in games. This would mean pupils value a school culture that embraces extra-curricular activities. This could promote their abilities and talents and hence translate to the liking of their school thus enhancing good academic performance.

4.3 Effects of social economic factors on pupils performance

One teacher from Mutono secondary school reviewed that children from low families exhibit the following patterns in terms of educational Outcomes compared to children from high social factors: it is observed that families where the parents are advantaged socially, educationally and economically, foster a higher level of achievement in their children. They

provided higher levels of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school.

From focus group discussion it was found that single parent families on average have lower levels of income, are headed by parents with lower educational attainment and very few had to be in the labour force, children from these families are likely to have lower educational performance.

One teacher at Nchelenge secondary school said that *a less physically crowded environment, along with motivation and parental support, were associated with higher educational levels of children. He also stated that parental education and social economic status have an impact on student achievement. Students with parents who were both college-educated tended to achieve at the highest levels. Income and family size were modestly related to achievement.*

In addition there is less evidence in relation to the status of the parent economically to the academic performance of their child.

4.4 Strategies for improving pupil's performance

Table 4.4.1: Ways of improving school performance

Ways to curb factors	Frequency	Percent
Provision of adequate learning materials	10	50.0
Employing more teachers	12	62.5
Encouraging children by parents	5	25.0
Motivating pupils	5	25.0
Punishing in disciplined pupils	8	37.5

Source: Field data (2018)

Table 4.4.1: shows that, majority (62.5 percent,) of the teachers said employing more teachers and providing more learning materials will help with 37.5 percent felt that indiscipline pupils should be punished. Both parents' encouragement and motivation of pupils had 25 percent each. The indicated strategies are crucial for teaching/learning environment to be conducive for learners. This eventually affects academic outcome.

Table 4.4.2: Shows pupils response on the measures that must be put in place to curb factors affecting performance.

Measures	Frequency	Percent
Provision of learning materials	88	28.2
Teamwork	40	12.8
Introduction of remedial classes	8	2.6
Parent should encourage their children	16	5.1
Guidance and counseling	95	30.8
Motivating pupils	25	7.7
Employing more teachers in school	40	12.8
Total	312	100.0

Source: Field data (2018)

According to Table 4.4.2, 30.8 percent of the pupils reported guidance and counseling. 28.2 percent provision of learning materials while 12.8 percent reported employing more teachers in the schools and introduction of remedial classes. Few 7.7 percent of the pupils indicated that motivation of the pupils was a measure that could curb factors affecting performance in their respective schools and while the rest 5.1 percent agreed that the parents should encourage their children. Both the pupils and teachers agreed that remedial work was necessary and encouragement of pupils to learn was of paramount importance.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings of the study based on the data collected from the field and of course guided by the study objectives. The study had the following research objectives.

- To assess the school-based factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?
- To describe the socio-economic factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?
- To establish the socio-cultural factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?

5.1 Effects of school based factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District.

Each objective had imaging themes under which the factors where discussed. For instance, the first objective under school based factors affecting academic performance of pupils in government schools was to assess the role of school environmental factors play in pupils' academic performance in secondary schools of Nchelenge District. These included: Commencement of learning, adequacy of teaching and learning materials, quality school administration, and frequency checking of teachers' lesson plans as well as frequency observation of lessons by heads of departments.

These were the emerging themes under which objectives findings were presented in line with each objective.

5.1.1 Textbooks and Academic Performance

The adequacy and use of teaching and learning materials affects the effectiveness of a teacher's lesson. Teaching and learning resources enhances understanding of abstract ideas and improves performance.

The interviews and method employed in searching data in Nchelenge District indicated that many Secondary Schools had social Science textbooks for teaching learners. However, the data indicated that, the schools were experiencing shortage of science textbooks which hindered the chance for the students to learn effectively.

The researcher also learnt from pupils that they had no access to text books as they were not available in their respective schools. One pupil from the three selected day secondary schools had this to say, "Our learning entirely depends on the availability of the teacher in class and what we get from him or her. Otherwise in their absence learning is proved impossible as there are no text books to use for research"

One teacher in an interview disclosed to the researcher that he had even lost hope on improving learning results at junior secondary leaving examinations. Each time he presented to the school head teacher on the need to procure essential text books for the department, the response was always that the school had no money. Meanwhile, whenever there was a meeting for head teachers, subsistence allowance was always available for him or her.

How can results improve when controlling officers cannot prioritize the needs for the school?

When one talks about money he/she is shut down and told that his/her time will also come to enjoy the privileges.

From such comments from the teacher, the researcher comprehended that school managers were hardly concerned with providing the needed teaching and learning resources that would enhance learner performance.

The data findings indicated that schools used to receive capitation grant for running schools, including purchasing textbooks. But the current trend has revealed that the funds are not any more enough and the schools are not having purchasing power for science textbooks. This was evidenced by the following quotation.

Under SECTOR POOL we usually received funds for the School development. Nowadays the funds are not coming regularly. The Schools are in serious shortage of funds and the schools cannot purchase the textbooks for the students to use in the leaving either the parents do not understand if order the students to buy the textbooks using their own funds.

The findings further showed that the parents have observed that their sons and daughters are not having the relevant science textbooks and this has raised worry if the students are getting the right concepts when doing private studies. Students also learned that their libraries are turned to be study rooms as they do not have stock of textbooks in particular, the science textbooks. The finding suggest that, the students' academic performance cannot be affected to be good because some of the students taking science subject have no these textbooks. It was revealed further in the report which investigated on the mass failure of grade twelve examinations in 2017, that students who failed science, they failed to answer physics questions. The major reason associated with this failure is that they could not answer the question set from current topic (Modern Physics). Had these students being given access to modern science textbook, they could also manage to tackle modern physics questions.

5.1.2 Science Laboratories and Academic Performances

As a nation we are remaining behind in terms of technologically because many of our learners divert and select to do social science subject and neglect science stream. This could have been contributed by problem of school system which created ambitions to open more secondary schools but, we failed to vision how the school will be facilitated in terms of its facilities like laboratories. However, while we are working in the completion of the laboratories, the quality of education in schools is in serious condition. The observation at some secondary schools in Nchelenge District showed that the laboratories were not conventional and were also lacking apparatus and chemicals. This scenario made science students to be denied to access the chemicals, specimen and do drills in practical and interact with equipment which lead their fear during practical time. Jidanva (2013), Mollel (2015) established similar finding when discovered that many learners in schools are using alternative practical which limit their competence in knowing science. The above findings are further supported by Galabawa et al (2008) who hold that there is deterioration of secondary education in upgraded schools since there is poor system of controlling supply of text books used in schools, poor method of instruction that fosters rote learning, lack or absence of libraries and laboratories in schools.

5.1.3 Classroom Congestion and Academic Performance

The interview and additional observations in some schools of Nchelenge District revealed that many schools were having classroom congestions. The findings were further revealed by the students who had showed dissatisfaction with the status of congestion in a classroom. Pedagogically large class size causes congestion in the classroom. The situation creates many difficulties to the teacher teaching in the class. For example if a geography teacher is teaching classroom of 70 students; how can he move in groups to see if the students have gained the skills of map reading? How could again a Chemistry teacher visit each group to direct them

how to handle bunsen burners, gases, equipment, chemical and actual procedure of during practical's? So the groups which are closer to the teacher are visited. Mind you, the time is running and is planned for 80 minutes. What about fatigue, finally, it becomes unacceptable to expect learning will take place under such environment, because the interaction is limited. The above findings extend the findings by Rwegoshora (2011) who established that classroom congestion in secondary schools, negatively affected the classroom teaching, and limited the teachers' individual attention to pupils.

5.1.4 Quality of School Administration in Secondary Schools.

The quality of school administration plays a vital role in academic performance as it is concerned with pupils, teachers, rules, regulations and policies that govern the school system. In analyzing the efficiency of school administration a number of issues emerged. These included the frequency of staff meetings schools held in a term, how often heads of departments checked the schemes of work for their teachers to monitor syllabus coverage in respective subjects so that those moving at snail's pace can be advised to double their efforts.

After schemes of work checking was looked at, checking of teacher lesson preparation by heads of departments was looked into in depth so as it could be established if heads of departments performed their daily routines among which was checking lessons prepared by teachers frequently or otherwise. Lesson observation by heads of departments was the last aspect which was focused on among other things that come out under quality of school administration in selected day secondary schools.

From the findings, it was discovered that the secondary schools in Nchelenge District were seldom holding staff meetings during the term. Most respondents disclosed that they had either an opening staff meeting or close staff meeting. Few staff meetings may lead to less co-ordination of curriculum implementation. Findings by Kathuri (1986) asserted that the

first aspect of administration is staff meetings as they facilitate co-ordination of various activities in the school. This implies that there was less monitoring and reporting of the progress of the schools activities to the teachers in secondary schools in Nchelenge District and this could be a factor contributing to poor performance in the junior and senior secondary leaving examinations in the same schools.

The responsibility of checking the professional documents like teachers' schemes of work and lesson plans lies in the hands of the head of department. This may be done in person or he may delegate to the head of section. Preparation and use of schemes of work by the teachers enhances sequential teaching and results to improved academic achievement (Reeves, 2003).

The frequency of checking teachers' schemes of work was therefore looked into and findings indicated that most heads of departments only checked the document in question on the very date respective teachers submitted the same documents for checking and endorsement. They claimed that it was unnecessary for them to check the schemes of work more than once since its prepared once every start of the term and once approved it means all was well. This reflects that majority of heads of departments (78%) in secondary schools in Nchelenge District do not do any follow up on curriculum implementation during the course of the term. Checking of teachers schemes of work should be done frequently to allow the head of department monitor curriculum implementation. Lack of this close monitoring could be a factor contributing to poor performance in junior secondary leaving examinations in selected day secondary schools in Nchelenge District.

5.2 Effects of socio-economic factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?

Parents or family socio-economic status is determined by an individual. Achievements in: education; employment and occupational status; and income and Wealth. Several comprehensive reviews of the relationship between social factors and Educational outcomes exist (Ainley et al., 1995).

5.2.1 Level of Education of Parents and Pupils

The parents' level of education was looked at in term of highest level of education which was divided into: No education, primary education, secondary education and above secondary education. The findings indicated that level of education of parents has positive an influence on pupils' performance in secondary schools of Nchelenge District. The positive relationship meant that improvement in parents' level of education, for instance, led to improvement in pupils' performance in secondary schools.

According to Sentamu (2003), the educational attainment of parents determines the kind of schools to which their children go to. Such schools are near in kind to the ones their parents attended. This tends to lay a foundation for better performance of their children while at school. Considine and Zappala (2002) in their study in Australia on the influence of education disadvantages in the academic performance of school found that families where parents are educated foster a higher level of achievement in their children because of providing psychological support for their children. Combs (1985) found that virtually all nations, children of high parents on education have far better chances of getting into better secondary schools and universities than equally bright children of ordinary workers or farmers. In other words, the highly educated parents tend to provide a more conducive learning environment that propels their children to go to schools and succeed.

Maani (1990) and Mugisha (1991) who both attempted to analyze the relationship between children's performance at school and the level of their parents' education established that the more educated the parents are, the better the children's performance at school. According to Nabbumba (1988), parents' level of education influences pupils' performance in the sense that educated parents value education and they tend to encourage their own children to value and actively engage in receiving education. In a study conducted in Kenya by Obanya and Ezewu (1988) it was found that the higher the levels of education of parents, the more likely it motivates children to learn and perform better. Kundu and Tuto (2000) found that home background has a significant influence on the achievement of children at school because educated parents tend to offer more psychological, social and financial support to their children, thus giving them the opportunity to excel in their studies.

5.2.2 Level of family income and pupils' performance at school

Parents or family socio-economic status is determined by an individual. Achievements in: education; employment and occupational status; and income and Wealth. Several comprehensive reviews of the relationship between social factors and Educational outcomes exist (Ainley et al., 1995). These studies and reviews make it clear those children from low families are more likely to exhibit the following patterns in terms of educational Outcomes compared to children from high social factors: it is argued that families where the parents are advantaged socially, educationally and economically, foster a higher level of achievement in their children. They also may provide higher levels of psychological support for their children through environments that encourage the development of skills necessary for success at school (Williams et al., 1993).

From the finding it shows that pupils' performance was not influenced by level of income of parents. This finding contradicted with that of Farrant (1998) that family income actually influences pupils' performance in schools. This could be to the fact that most parents in the

study area generally have equal income. They are equally poor or rich, thus the difference in the pupils' performance cannot be attributed to the difference in the level of income of parents.

5.2.3 Parents' Marital Status and Pupils' Performance

Most studies, however, compared Students from across all social factors backgrounds to reach the conclusion that low social factors adversely affects a range of educational outcomes. Another important dimension, however, is the factors that may influence educational outcomes within particular social factors Bands. The educational performance of children from financially disadvantaged backgrounds and examines its variation as affected by Traditional measures of social factors as well as by a range of other family, individual and Contextual factors (Graetz, 1995).

Single-parent families have a negative impact on the child in that it is bad for the child's upbringing and cognitive development. Indeed, children from single-parent families are at greater risk than children in two parent families; even when they have the same academic abilities, Thiessen (1997) posited that children from single-parent families are three times more likely to drop out of high school than children from two-parent families. Likewise, Amato and Keith (1991) and Lauer and Lauer (1991) found that children in single-parent families may be at greater risk than children of two-parent families. Because they are the primary and frequently sole source of financial support for the family, single parents have less time to help children with homework, are less likely to use consistent discipline, and have less parental control; and all of these conditions may lead to lower academic achievement (Astone and McLanahan, 1991; Mulkey et al., 1992). The implication of this theory to the present study lies on the fact that students' performance in school is mediated by their upbringing which perhaps is influenced by their family background. According to Fadeiye (1990) in two parent homes, both parents have roles to play in child education. The

father is to provide the necessary tools for the educational advancement, while the mother is supposed to supplement the father's efforts in this regard. When the father is absent and the mother is not privileged enough to cater for all the basic needs as well as supervised the academic performance of the child, the child will be backward or withdrawn. In similar view, Ortese (1998) noted that when the mother is absent and the father is not privileged enough. A single parent faces doubled responsibilities requiring time, attention and money of the parent. A child from homes where the father and the mother are present will be well taken care of and socialized in the best way possible. This is due to the fact that the process of socialization depends on both parents playing complimentary roles in bringing up the child. Such a child is likely to achieve self-actualization later in life; but children from single-parent homes are likely to suffer deprivation and denial of some rights and opportunities which may have tremendous influence on their performance in real life situations.

The data collected from, interviews and focus group discussion revealed that there was no significant relationship between level of parents' marital status and pupils' performance in the said schools. This finding contradicted with that of Sheila (1989) and Peny (2001) which found that level of parents' marital status actually influence pupils' performance at schools. This therefore, implied that the difference in performance of pupils in the said area cannot be attributed to the difference in the level of parents' marital status.

5.3 Effects of socio-cultural factors which influence academic performance of government schools in Nchelenge District?

Pupils' academic performance is influenced by social factors. These factors include romantic relationships, student cults, motivation, and membership in clubs, organizations, sports, including absenteeism among learners. The study concluded that all these social factors adversely affect a range of educational outcomes and performance.

On cultural factors the study established that Strong school cultures have better motivated teachers, and highly motivated teachers have greater success in terms of student performance and student outcomes. The findings further revealed that School teachers seeking to improve pupils' performance should focus on improving the school's culture by getting the relationships right among themselves, pupils' and parents.

On strategies for improving junior and senior examinations the study highlighted the following: That there is need to provide adequate materials for learning, employ more teachers for effective learning, parents to motivate and encourage their children to learn and correct the wayward pupils by giving them appropriate punishment so as to uplift academic performance in the division.

Concerning the number of all pupils in teachers' respective schools at grade nine and twelve, majority (50 percent) of teachers' response was that they had 100-250 pupils while both 251-400 and over 400 pupils had 25 percent each. Findings on teachers' response on the discipline condition in the school indicated that, majority (62.5 percent) agreed that they were satisfied with the discipline condition in their respective schools. Regarding whether the schools have adequate teaching and learning facilities, majority (74.4 percent) of the pupils said yes while 25.6 percent accepted that there were no adequate teaching and learning resources. Majority

(75 percent) of the head teachers agreed that there was adequate library in their schools while only 25 percent disagreed.

Regarding head teachers' response on the school textbook ratio, majority (75 percent) responded that the textbook ratio in their respective schools was 1:2 while 25 percent of the head teachers had their ratio as 1:3. On whether there has been any transfer of the school heads and teachers in the last 3 years, equal percent of head teachers (50 percent) of head teachers said there was transfer of school heads and teachers.

Strong school culture, as indicated by commitment of teachers, attitude of pupils to school rules and regulations, a sense of community towards their school, commitment of pupils to school tradition and the pupils' attitude of learning of sciences, was found to be affecting School Certificate at senior Education positively. As indicated by Cheng (1993) the effect of strong culture when teachers, pupils and community are committed to a certain school norm, that norm translates to performance in a National examination at grade nine and twelve respectively.

5.3.1 Teachers' Motivation

On the aspect of teacher motivation at secondary schools of Nchelenge District, study findings showed that majority of the school head teachers were not motivating their teachers. It was however, noted that a small percentage of head teachers as indicated motivates their teachers in some way. World Bank Report (1986) acknowledges that teacher satisfaction is generally related to achievement. Satisfied teachers would concentrate hence enhancing academic performance of their pupils. In this regard it is relevant that head teachers in some secondary schools in Nchelenge District devise a system of motivating their members of staff if results are to improve.

The aspect of teacher turn-over is cardinal in an effective school. Frequent changing of teachers does not help improve academic achievement in most cases. This is so because a new teacher needs to settle down to the new class and environment, get acclimatized to the pupils until the teacher finally knows the speed at which he/she should drive his pupils. The same is the case with the learners. They are also anxious to know the likes of the new staff. In the process the limited time allocated for learning is lost. Findings on this aspect were that some staff transfers were observed in secondary schools. Teachers with right qualifications were being sourced and taken to the schools in question. The idea is to take people with qualifications in these secondary schools in Nchelenge District. While the idea is appreciated it is disturbing in the process not until all is finally done. According to Schneider (2003) high teacher turn over forces schools to devote attention, time and financial resources attracting replacement of teachers. As the school is looking for a replacement such classes where such a teacher is needed would continue suffering.

Teacher workload is yet another important factor that needs attention in the quest to improve academic achievements. In an environment where a teacher is given more periods to handle it becomes very difficult for such a teacher to make adequate lesson preparations. This is so because the time he/she is supposed to do such a task is attending to another class. At the end of the day the teacher is tired and fails to look for materials which can provide suitable concepts to give to his/her learners.

Teacher work load is the last aspect under teacher based factors in this study. Findings on this aspect from secondary schools in Nchelenge District indicated that a good number of teachers have between 36 and 40 periods per week a situation which is not ideal.

This entails that some teachers are occupied from period one up to the last period. This condition is not favorable for a secondary school but a primary school where a teacher has to

teach all the subjects alone since the entire class say grade three is allocated to one teacher. In a related development study findings revealed that some teachers are given to teach subjects they are not qualified to teach, transferring their difficulties to the learners. How can results improve in such horrible conditions?

This implies that since most teachers in the selected secondary schools are overloaded, their output in terms of national examinations performance should not be very good. This explains the poor results prevailing in junior secondary leaving examinations in the secondary schools in Nchelenge District.

5.3.2 Pupils' Frequency of Absenteeism

The aspect of how frequent pupils absented themselves from school was looked into and the study finding was that a good number of pupils are in school during the first two weeks of opening on pretext that their parents are still sourcing for their school fund. Some even report in week three. This fact on frequent absenteeism especially in the first two weeks of opening was common in all the secondary schools. Some pupils indicated that they were unable to report to school in the first two weeks of opening as they were still looking for money to pay for school fees. Others also indicated their parents had taken them in farm fields to uproot cassava from which school fees could be generated after selling. These were the prominent factors that were established and contributed to most pupils' absence in school especially in the first two weeks of each term. However, it is important to note that when pupils absent themselves from school, they tend to lose many concepts and definitely may not do well in examinations. Ubogu (2004) also established that the effect of absenteeism and irregular school attendance is that materials taught is difficult to understand when studied on one's own. Continued loss of classes results to loss of content and knowledge. Assignments and exercises would not be properly and correctly done leading to poor performance. From the discussion above, quite a number of pupils from secondary schools in Nchelenge District

absent themselves from school and therefore this could be a factor contributing to poor performance at junior and senior secondary leaving examinations in the same schools. This can also affect the nation of not achieving the vision 2030 if the situation is not controlled.

On the aspect of absenteeism among teachers, study findings indicated that teacher absenteeism in secondary schools in Nchelenge District was also moderate. Only a small fraction of showed indicate low absenteeism in teachers. Head teachers had a common answer in explaining what contributed to the moderate rate of teacher absenteeism. The justification was that a good number of teachers in the schools under study were pursuing studies by distance learning to upgrade themselves to either diploma status or first degree.

This fact made some teachers to be getting permission to enable them do assignments given to them. In some instances such teachers could pretend to be in a particular class teaching and yet their presence makes no difference in that they are there for writing their assignments at the expense of teaching. Hence such teachers were regarded absent despite being in a particular class. In addition, to the above findings, school head teachers for the same schools added that most of their teachers draw their salaries through Zambia National Commercial

Bank (ZANACO) which has no branch in Nchelenge District. This implies that during the pay week a good number of same teachers have to go to Mansa and get their hard to earn dues leaving their classes without anyone attending to their respective classes.

The above prevailing situation as indicated in the study findings has a negative bearing on pupil performance at junior and senior secondary leaving examinations in secondary schools of Nchelenge District. In tandem with what is obtaining on the ground Ubogu, (2004) asserts that when teachers absent themselves from school frequently, pupils go unattended and do not do well in examinations. Absenteeism by teachers reduces the amount of instructional time and this results in the syllabi not being completed. This in return results to lower output

of work by the pupils. End result is mostly poor performance which is the case for the secondary schools in Nchelenge District.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The study also gives suggestions for further study.

6.1 Summary of the study

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors affecting pupil's performance in public Secondary schools at National examinations in Zambia.

Specifically, the study sought to establish the effect of school based factors on pupils performance at National examination level; to describe the effect of social economic factors on pupils performance in National examination; to assess the effect of social cultural factors on pupils performance in National examinations and identifying the strategies for improving National examinations performance in public secondary schools of Nchelenge District.

This study adopted descriptive survey design. The study used the experience of four (4) standard education officers three (3) Heads of secondary schools, seven (7) teachers, nine (9) parents, and ten (10) pupils that made a total of 33 respondents were chosen purposively. The main tools for collecting data in this research were interviews, focus group discussion and document analysis. The focus group discussion was self-administered, where the respondents were asked to fill them by themselves. Data was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software programme.

6.2 Summary of the major findings

The study established that most schools completed syllabus on time and school text books were not enough in some subject areas. Majority (50 percent) of the teachers agreed that they had below 50 candidates' while 37.5 percent was between 71-90 candidates.

On social factors, the study established that pupils' academic performance is influenced by social factors such as family structure, absence among students, gender, geographical location, neighborhoods, romantic relationships, student cults, membership in clubs and organizations, and sports. The study concluded that all these social factors adversely affect a range of educational outcomes and performance.

On cultural factors the study established that Strong school cultures have better motivated teachers, and highly motivated teachers have greater success in terms of student performance and student outcomes. The findings further revealed that School teachers seeking to improve pupils' performance should focus on improving the school's culture by getting the relationships right among themselves, pupils' and parents.

On strategies for improving national examination performance the study highlighted the following: That there is need to provide adequate materials for learning, employ more teachers for effective learning, parents to motivate and encourage their children to learn and correct the wayward pupils by giving them appropriate punishment so as to uplift academic performance in the division.

Concerning the number of all pupils in teachers' respective school, majority (50 percent) of teachers' response was that they had 100-250 pupils while both 251-400 and over 400 pupils had 25 percent each. Findings on teachers' response on the discipline condition in the school indicated that, majority (62.5 percent) agreed that they were satisfied with the discipline

condition in their respective schools. Regarding whether the schools have adequate teaching and learning facilities, majority (74.4 percent) of the pupils said yes while 25.6 percent accepted that there were no adequate teaching and learning resources. Majority (75 percent) of the head teachers agreed that there was adequate library in their schools while only 25 percent disagreed.

Regarding head teachers' response on the school textbook ratio, majority (75 percent) responded that the textbook ratio in their respective schools was 1:2 while 25 percent of the head teachers had their ratio as 1:3. On whether there has been any transfer of the school heads and teachers in the last 3 years, equal percent of head teachers (50 percent) of head teachers said there was transfer of school heads and teachers.

6.3 Conclusion

The study has revealed that, Public Secondary schools with adequate teaching and learning facilities as well as adequate staffing are well placed to perform better at National examinations level than those with inadequate facilities. Most schools which are not well equipped with the relevant text books may explain the wide variations in academic performance among pupils enrolled in these secondary schools as compared to private schools in the district. Therefore the availability and use of teaching materials, effective administration and proper management of learning resources could control certain level of quality education provided to pupils.

6.4 Recommendations

- i. The government through the Ministry of General Education should consider allocating more time for teaching. At the same time the Ministry should ensure that all schools are provided with the necessary and relevant text books which would assist in boosting the national examination performance.
- ii. Secondary school syllabus should be reviewed to make it more relevant. In this context, head teachers should ensure that, coverage of syllabus by second term of the final year is realized so that pupils would have enough time for revision of national examinations.
- iii. The government through Ministry of General education should employ and post more teachers into the area experiencing shortages to facilitate learning. At the same time, qualification of teachers should be considered before posting is done. This would ensure that pupils are taught by people with pre-requisite academic qualifications.
- iv. Teachers should develop a variety of activities and methods to enable pupils of different ages and backgrounds to acquire proper knowledge, skills, behaviour and attitudes. The child needs to be mentally and physically stimulated and helped to mix and live with others, as well as learning how to control his/her emotions.

6.5 Suggestions for further study

The researcher recommends further studies to be carried out in the following indicated areas:

- i. Other than Nchelenge District of Luapula province, social economic and cultural factors affecting performance at national examinations level in public secondary schools should be researched on, in other Districts especially those that are less densely populated.
- ii. A study should be extended to the private institutions within Nchelenge District of Luapula province with a view of comparing the outcome from both settings.

REFERENCES

- Ayot, H.O. (1984). *Language for learning*, Nairobi: Macmillan Publishers.
- Best, J.W. & Khan J.V. (1993). *Research in education*. Boston Allyn and Bacon.
- Broadfoot, H. (1990). *Changing educational achievement: Interpersonal perspective and trend*, London: Rutledge.
- Chapman, I.T. (1994). *Dissin' the dialectic on discourse surface differences*. *Composition Chronicle*, 7(7).
- Duignan, R. (1986). *Research on effective schooling: Some implications for improvement*. *Journal of education administration* 24 (I).
- Egan, R. (2009). *Pisa tests survey*, Wales: Great Britain.
- Eshiwani, G. (1981). *Educational research and evaluation in Kenya*: Directions paper presented to education research seminar workshop. University of Botswana and Swaziland Gaborone.
- Eshiwani, G. (1983). *Factors affecting performance among primary schools and secondary schools pupils in Western province*. A policy study bureau of education research, Nairobi: Kenyatta University.
- Eshiwani, G. (1997). *Education since independence*. Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.
- Fraenkel, J.R. & Warren, N.E. (2000). *How to design and evaluate research in education* (4th edition). New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Co.
- Harbinson, R.W. and Hanushek E.A. (1992). *Educational performance of the poor: Lessons from rural North-East Brazil*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

- Johnson, (2000). *“The peer effect on academic achievement among public elementary school pupils.* A Report on the Heritage Centre for Data Analysis.CDA 00-06.
- J. A. & Ashioya, L. A. (2009). *Poverty alleviation: The educational planning perspective.* Department of Educational Planning and Management, Masinde, Muliro University of Science and Technology.
- Kathuri, N.J. (1994). Some factors which affect performance of pupils in certificate of primary education. University Of Nairobi. I D S Working Paper.
- Kellaghan, C.D. & Greaney, S.P. (1995). *Supervision and instructional leadership: A development approach* (5th Ed). Needham Heights: M.A. Allyen and Bacon.
- Kelly, J.G. (1979). Adolescent boys in high school: A psychological study of copying and adaptation. New Jersey: Hillsdale.
- Kerlinger, F.N. (1973). *Foundation of behavioral research.* New York: Holt, Rinhart and Winton incorporated.
- Kibui, G.P. (1995). A comparative study of factors that affect examination performance of public and private schools in Nairobi. Kenyatta University.
- KNEC (2010). The ‘Curse’ of free primary education, standard media.co.ke
- Kombo, D.K. and Tomp, D.L.A. (2006). *Proposal and thesis writing, An introduction.*Nairobi: Pauline Publication. Published.
- Kothari, C.R. (1990). *Research methodology, methods and techniques* (2nd Ed). New Dheli: Wishwa Prakashan.
- Kothari, C.R. (2004). *Research methodology, methods and techniques.* New Age International, New Dheli.

- Lezotte, L. (2001). *Correlates of effective schools. The first and second generation*.
- Okemos M.I Effective School Products Ltd.
- Mehren, W.A. (1973). *Combining evaluation data from multiple sources*. Okemos M.I Effective School Products Ltd.
- Millman & I. Darling-Hammond (Ed.) *The New Hand Book Of Teacher Evaluation*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Mlama, P (May 2001). *When girls go missing from the classroom, partnership for strategic resource planning for girls' education in Africa*, FAWE
- Mugenda, O. & Mugenda, (1999). *Research methods, quantitative and qualitative approach*. Nairobi: Acts Press.
- Mulusa, T. (1990). *Evaluation research for beginners. A practical study guide*. Bonn.
- Ng'ethe, J.M. (2004). *Investigation into challenges the primary school head teachers are facing with the implementation of free primary education. A Case Study of Ruiru Division of Thika District*, unpublished med theses: Kenyatta University.
- Olembo, J. O. (1989). *Practical primary school administration for pupils, teachers and head teachers*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd.
- Orodho, A. J. (2004). *Techniques of writing research proposal and report in education and social research*. Nairobi: Masola Printers.
- Republic Of Kenya, (1964). *The Ominde Report*, Government Printer, Nairobi.
- Republic of Kenya, (2001). *Education for All (EFA): A National Handbook on EFA 2000 and Beyond*. Government Printer, Nairobi.

Republic of Kenya, (2004). National action Plan on Educational For All. Government printer.

Republic of Kenya, (2005). A Policy Framework for Education, training and research: meeting the challenges of education in Kenya in 21st Century. Nairobi, Kenya: Government Printer.

Reyes, P. (1990). Teachers and their work place: Commitment, performance and productivity. London: Sage Publications.

Rosernberg, K.M. (1993). *Foundation of behavioural research*. Forthwort, Philadelphia: Harcourt Publisher.

Tum, P.C. (1996). *Education trends in Kenya. A vocation perspective*. Nairobi: Jomo Kenyatta Foundation.

UNESCO (1990). World conference on Education For All (WCEFA) Final Report: Meeting Basic Learning Needs (UNESCO; Paris).

UNESCO (2004). Free Primary Education Policy in Kenya.

UNESCO (2005). EFA Global Monitoring Report: The Role of the Organization and Social Context of Schools: <http://Portal.Org/education>;

UNESCO Nairobi Office (2006). *Fact book on education for all (EFA)*. Nairobi:

Wiersma, W. (1985). *Research methods in education. An introduction, (3rd Edition)*, Allyn and Bacon Inc. Massachusetts, Newton.

World Bank (2002). The role of education in development.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I.

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA IN COLLABORATION WITH ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR THE EDUCATION STANDARD OFFICERS.

The purpose of this interview is to collect data on factors that affect academic performance of pupils in government secondary schools of Nchelenge district. The researcher assures you that the information gathered will be treated with utmost confidentiality and for academic purposes only.

1. What is your experience with the running of the schools in District regarding the following issues?

(a) Physical facilities

(b) Human resources

(c) Financial resources

2. What are your views on the factors influencing academic performance in the schools in the district?

3. What are the salient characteristics of effective schools in the district that poor performing schools can adopt?

4. How does your office seek to assist schools improve academic performance of the pupils?

5. What do you propose could be done by the schools, the Ministry of General Education, the government and the Community to improve academic performance of the schools in the district?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

APPENDIX II

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA IN COLLABORATION WITH ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, TEACHERS' FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE.

The purpose of this focus group discussion is to collect data on factors that affect academic performance of pupils in government secondary schools of Nchelenge district. The researcher assures you that the information gathered will be treated with utmost confidentiality and for academic purposes only.

- (1) How has been the general performance in examinations of your school for the past five years (2013-2017)?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- (2) What are some of the common factors that affect your pupils' academic performance in examinations?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- (3) How do you relate with the community as teachers?

.....
.....
.....
.....

- (4) As teachers are there any measures that you have put in place to arrest the situation of pupil performance at this school?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

APPENDIX III

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA IN COLLABORATION WITH ZIMBABWE OPEN UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF EDUCATION, PUPILS' FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE.

The purpose of this interview is to collect data on factors that affect academic performance of pupils in government secondary schools of Nchelenge district. The researcher assures you that the information gathered will be treated with utmost confidentiality and for academic purposes only.

SECTION A: How the status of the following teaching and learning facilities affects the academic achievements in Nchelenge district?

- (i) Science laboratories
- (ii) Text books
- (iii) Stationeries
- (iv) Computer laboratory
- (v) Chemicals
- (vi) Classroom space

SECTION B: give brief explanations to the following questions

- (1) What are some of the things that make pupils not do well in national examinations?.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
- (2) What measures should the school put in place to improve pupil academic performance in your school?
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
- (3) What role should you play as a pupil to improve your academic performance?.....
.....
.....
.....

4. In your own opinion what are?

(a) Economic factors affecting pupils performance in government schools and what kind of measures must be put in place to curb the situation

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

(b) Cultural factors affecting pupil's performance in government secondary schools and what kind of measures must be put in place to curb the situation

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

APPENDIX IV:

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

The University of Zambia,

P.O. Box,

LUSAKA.

1st April, 2018.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam

**RE: STUDY ON FACTORS AFFECTING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF
PUPILS IN GOVERNMENT SECONDARY SCHOOLS. A CASE OF NCHELENGE
DISTRICT OF LUAPULA PROVINCE.**

The above subject refers.

I am a master of education student in Educational Management from the University of Zambia. I wish to request for your permission to allow me carry out a research on Factors influencing academic performance at junior and senior leaving examinations.

I hereby kindly request you to fill in the spaces provided for focus group discussion which will enable the researcher to obtain important information for the research.

The information offered will be treated with the utmost confidentiality and will not be unduly disclosed. The information will only be used as pertaining to this study and not otherwise.

Your positive response regarding the above will be greatly appreciated.

Yours faithfully.

Signature.....|.....

ANTHONY MACHINA

APPENDIX V:

RESEARCH TIMEFRAME

Development of Research topic.....	April 2018
Literature review.....	May 2018
Writing proposal.....	June 2018
Data collection.....	August 2018
Data Analysis.....	September, 2018
Thesis compilation.....	September, 2018
Thesis Submission	October, 2018