

**LEARNER ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN BOTH PRIVATE AND PUBLIC  
SCHOOLS: A CASE OF SELCTED SCHOOLS IN KITWE DISTRICT**

**BY  
BANDA MARY**

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## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

**This dissertation by Mary Banda is approved as partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Masters of Education in the Educational Management in the School Education by UNZA/ZOU**

**Examiners signature**

.....

**Date:** .....

**Signed:** .....

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## **DECLARATION**

**I Banda Mary hereby declare that this research report submitted in partial fulfillment for the award of the degree of master of education in educational management is original. It is entirely my own work except where reference to other sources had been indicated. I further certify that the script has not previously been presented for a degree to this or any other university/faculty.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study was meant to explore learner academic performance in public and private Schools, a case of selected schools in Kitwe District using the following objectives namely ;to a certain main factors that affects the academic performance of learners at both private and government school ,to assess difference in the academic performance of learners of private and public schools , to establish availability of schools equipment/facilities in private and public primary schools and to compare qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools in selected schools in Kitwe District.

Four (4) primary schools were chosen and the choice was based on the status of the school (government funded or not), therefore two schools were government funded and two (2) were private. From each of the four (4) sampled schools, 10 teachers (5 males and 5 females) from each of the selected primary schools were picked as respondents for the study. Teachers handling examination classes were considered on this part.

The Instruments used were Semi Structured Interview guide and Self-Administered Questionnaires which were given for the respondents to answer and later the researcher was given the answered questionnaires which the researcher used for analysis.

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were employed in this study.

The quantitative data from questionnaires were analysed using the computer generated tables of frequencies and percentages to describe distributions of the variables which were presented in the form of tables. The findings of the study were inter alia that the geographical location of the school, quality of the teaching staff , the size of the class and availability of certain facilities normally leads to good academic performance among the learners.

The conclusions were that a good learning environment plays an important role in the learning life of a person and this is characterized by some of the following depending on the immediate community, subjects demand etc.

Finally it was recommended that The District Education Officer (DEBS) should go to private schools to check on the facilities which the public schools do not have and compile a report to which should be sent to the higher offices for the ministry to consider improve these conditions in the public schools and the provincial Educational officer should be going round the schools to check on the number of learners a teacher handles per class.

## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to my parents, my late father Mr. E.G. Banda and my mother Mrs. Ainedi Phiri Banda for bringing me up and shaping my future, my husband Webster Kunta Mulenga (Kuntobulo) for his support and for taking care of our children while I was perusing my studies. My beloved children Rebecca, Chama, Mwansa, Chikondi, Esther and my grandson Paul for enduring long days of longing for my presence at home and giving me the much needed support.

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## **ACRONYMS**

DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
ECZ	Examination Council of Zambia
NCLB	No Child Left Behind
NFE	Non Formal Education
PEO	Provincial Education Officer

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.0 Overview**

This chapter presents, the background of the study, the problem statement, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, the conceptual and theoretical framework, and operational definitions among other things.

### **1.1 Background**

Most developing countries provide education public free or at minimal cost to their citizen. Across the Third World, public schools enroll approximately 90 percent of all primary and 70 percent of all secondary students. But because of recent increasing fiscal constraints, many countries have limited free public education (Heinesen, 2010). In particular, this trend has created a serious problem for the poorest countries, where the demand for schooling is projected to increase dramatically during the next decade. One way around this problem is picking the option to rely on private schools to handle at least part of the educational needs of the public.

The combination of factors influencing the academic performance of students varies from one academic environment to another, from one set of students to the next, and indeed from one cultural setting to another. More often than not, students have worked hard but their input has not been positively correlated to their output.

In educational institutions, success is measured by academic performance, or how well a student meets standards set out by institution. As career competition grows ever fiercer in the working world, the importance of students' doing well in school has caught the attention of parents and government education departments alike (Indabawa 2014). Although, education is not the only road to success in the working world, much effort is made to identify, evaluate and encourage the progress of students in schools. Parents care about their child's academic performance because they believe that good academic results will provide more career choices and job security

Academic performance in school is evaluated in a number of ways. For regular grading, students demonstrate their knowledge by taking written and oral tests, performing presentations, turning in homework and participating in class activities and discussions. Therefore, teachers evaluate in the form of letter or number grades and side notes to describe how well a student has done.

Schools though invested in fostering good academic habits for the same reason, are also often influenced by concerns about the school's reputation and the possibility of monetary aid from government institutions which can hinge on the overall performance of the school (Smith, 2011).

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Since the liberalization of the Zambian economy in the third republic, Zambians were allowed to own businesses in various sectors of the economy and the education sector was not left out. The educational sector received an increase in the number of private owned schools with better facilities than government owned schools.

Pupil academic performance is an area which has been investigated by many researchers and each taking a different perspective (Nzabihimana 2010). Despite the Zambian government's effort to improve the conditions of service for public school teachers, the problem of poor academic performance is still on the increase. In the recent past, the trend has been that private schools have been more effective and produce good results than public schools Sitondo (2014). The differences in the academic performance between private and public school in Zambia was also noted when Dr. John Phiri announced the 2013 results for Grade 12 examinations, which were generally very poor, he attributed the deplorable performance to the high levels of illiteracy among Grade 12 pupils. He said, "The general performance of 2013 Grade 12 examination results were attributed to the fact that majority of pupils today cannot read with understanding nor write." The minister further announced that Grant-Aided and Private schools produced better results than government schools and in that year, majority of those pupils that performed well were from private Schools. This study therefore was set out to explore factors that affect pupils academic performance in both selected private and public schools of Kitwe district in the copperbelt of Zambia.

## **1.3 Purpose of the study.**

The purpose of this study was to explore learner academic performance in public and private Schools, a case of selected primary schools of Kitwe District.

## **1.4 General Objectives**

To explore learner academic performance in public and private schools

## **1.5 Specific Objectives**

- a) To establish factors that affect the academic performance of learners at both private and public schools
- b) To assess academic performance of learners of private and public schools in selected schools in Kitwe District
- c) To establish availability of school equipment/facilities between the private and public primary schools in selected schools in Kitwe District
- d) To compare qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools in selected schools in Kitwe District

## **1.6 Research questions**

- a) What are the factors that affect the academic performance of learners at both private and government schools?
- b) How is the academic performance of learners of private and public schools in selected schools in Kitwe District?
- c) Are there any differences in availability in terms of school equipment/facilities between the private and public primary schools in selected schools in Kitwe District?
- d) Are there any differences in terms of qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools in selected schools in Kitwe District

## **1.7 Significance of the study**

This study is significant in that it informs school managers and other interested parties on the factors which result in the difference in academic performance of learners at both private and public schools. It also helps the researcher to establish whether there are any differences in academic performance with learners in private and public schools. The other beneficiaries of this study are the teachers in both private and public schools as they may be provided with the information on the factors which affect learners' performance. Last but not the least the educational Authority may benefit from this study in that the outcome of this research may give them a clear picture of the level of academic performance of public and private primary school pupils in Kitwe District, this may help come up with solutions to this problem. The information will also add on to the already existing body of knowledge.

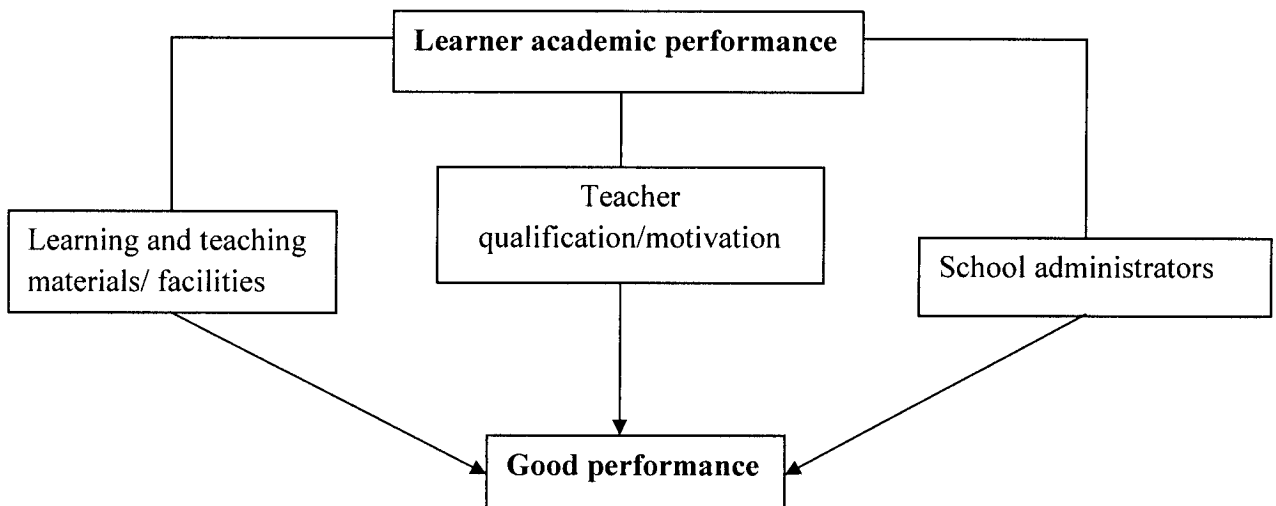
### 1.8 Limitations

The limitations of this study were that it was not possible to fully explore learner academic performance in all the public and private schools within the proximity of the researcher as time was not enough due to the tight schedule of the researcher. The Second limitation was that there was no organisation which was willing to fund the study making it impossible for the researcher to cover a large number of schools this means that the findings may not be generalised to the entire country but could only apply to the sampled schools. The last limitations was to do with access to data as some of the learners and teachers were not willing to participate in answering the research instrument.

### 1.9 Delimitation

This study was conducted in Kitwe District and the public schools which were used for the study were Mindolo Primary School and Mama Monty Primary School while the Private schools were Chatsen Academy and Nkana Trust School respectively.

### 1.10 Conceptual framework



The conceptual frame work of this study has 3 dependent variables namely; teaching qualification/ motivation, school administrators and one independent variable which is learner performance. It can be noted that good performance is as a result of having well organized learning and teaching facilities, well qualified and motivated teachers and a good school administration. Without these variables not being well organized it is difficult to get the best from

the learners. The quality of learning is directly related to the quality of instruction in the classrooms. It is a fact that the academic qualifications, knowledge of the subjects leads to good learner academic performance.

### **1.11 Theoretical Framework**

This study is informed by Ludwig von Bertalanffy system theory, which relates to learner performance. Ludwig system theory explains that a general system concept is a functional analysis of all the sub-units interacting and interrelating to function as a whole system. It is a functional analysis of sub-systems which seeks to explain the character of the system as a whole Finn and Achilles (2009).

Synergy is one of the aspects of system concept; it is a collective effort that is more than a single effort. The expression of synergistic function connote a derive demand function where its sub-units of the system is dependent on one another to function. The development of system theory in the 1950s is an attempt to explain and predict the behaviour of the organization as a whole. Flanders (2007) defined a system as a group of related parts working together to accomplish the same pre-determined goals and objectives. All parts are important and indispensable in a system because nonperformance of a part (individual) will disrupt the achievement of overall objective of the system

Hanushek (2008) stated that a system is any ordered interrelated set of things and their attributes, linked by flow of energy and matter, as distinct from the surrounding environment outside the system. The elements within a system may be arranged in a series or interwoven with one another.

A system comprised any number of subsystems. In relation to this study, the performance of learners in both private and public schools will be determined by a web or rather connectivity within the school environment. Things like the quality of teachers, infrastructure and other factors which makes up a school system, so if the elements of a school system are not conducive for learning, then performance is likely to be affected otherwise.

System theory is the interdisciplinary study of organization within the context of a definitive system. It is a framework for analyzing and describing any group of objects (individuals) that work in concert to produce some result. This could be a single organism, any organization, society or a group of individuals (Hanushek 2008).

Specifically, the systematic approach to school as a formal organization sees the organization as a purposeful system composed of interactive parts, rather than dealing separately, the approach gives the administrators the opportunities to look at the various components of the organization in a large external environment working together towards a predefine objectives.

All these must in exclusive principle interrelate / interact with one another to form a single whole. None of these sub-units of the organizational system can function on its own without the co-operation and the ancillary relationships of other functions of the sub-units to form a single whole or system. Therefore system theory is the best to describe the school as a formal organization via student-teacher relationship which determines the performance of learners. Since a system is aimed at achieving a stated goals and objectives within an organization, also the students and teachers in the school organization is an interactive.

### **1.12 Ethical Consideration**

Ethics were considered in this study. All the data collected was strictly treated as confidential and was not used for any purposes other than the intended one. Consent was sought from the respondents and the researcher ensured that the subject participants voluntarily participated in the study and maintained an open and honest approach to the study.

### **1.13 .Operational Definitions**

**Academic performance** is the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goal (Bossaert, 2011).

**Public school:**"A public school is a school that derives its support, in whole or in part, from moneys raised by a general state, county, or district tax (Wenglinsky, 2007).

**Private schools:**, also known as independent schools, non-governmental, or nonstate schools, are not administered by local, state or national governments; thus, they retain the right to select their students and are funded in whole or in part by charging their students tuition, rather than relying on mandatory taxation through public (government) funding (Weiss.2011).

## **Summary**

Chapter one has given a synopsis of the background to the present study. An attempt has been made to explain certain concepts that are used in this study in order to make it clear to the reader. It has presented the background of the study, the problem statement, purpose of the study, objectives, research questions, significance of the study, limitations, delimitation, conceptual framework, theoretical framework, ethical consideration and operational terms. Chapter two takes you to literature review.

## CHAPTER TWO

### 2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Over view

This chapter presents the objective of reviewing the literature related to the topic of learner academic performance in public and private schools. The source of the material used to review this section came from published and unpublished dissertations, journals, magazine, text books, the internet and other documents within and outside the field of education within and outside Zambia.

#### 2.2 factors that affects the academic performance of learners

##### 2.2.1 Social Economic Status and Learner Achievement

Socio economic status plays an important role in the life of a person. The status opens the ways for his progress. Intelligence, attitudes, aptitudes and even interests are patterned by socio economic background of the individual. The socio economic status pays rewards and punishment both to a person Chaudhari *et al* (1998) cited in Abba (2004). Socio economic status refers to the position that an individual and family occupies with reference to prevailing average standards, cultural possession and participation in group activity of community.

According to Chain (2009) cited in Philias & Wanjobi (2011), socio economic status includes both the social and economic status of the individual in the group. The variations in achievement are also due to the differences in socio economic status of the children, differential treatment given by parents, parent's educational level, influence of the surroundings and so on. The influence of socio-cultural factors on various aspects of individual's development has particularly caught the attention of educationists including the current researcher.

Individual success and failure can also be judged by facilities and environment provided for his study, self-concept and study habits. As pointed out by Vandiver, and Telford (2011) children belonging to higher socio economic status are not only brilliant but are also provided with better opportunities for developing intellectually, physically and emotionally. The type of intellectual environment in the home will definitely have an impact on the school achievement of the child and this intellectual environment in turn is determined by intellectual level of parents, parent's education, occupation, income, size of the family etc.

During the lifespan of an individual adolescence is a stage highly influenced by so many things around the world. Adolescents are highly influenced by society, socio economic status, self-concept, study habits, emotional maturity among others, which may enhance the academic achievement of adolescence or disturb the academic achievement of adolescence in high school period.

## **2.2 Environment as Factor of Differences in Academic Performance Among Learners**

The concept of learning environment is very broad and its effects on learning cannot be over-emphasized. Akinboye et al (2009) explained that the physical environment is complex, its effect on learning are also complex. In the physical environment there are forces such as temperature, pressure and humidity which affect the individual and consequently his learning. He further stressed that leaning is a product of an individual's interaction with his environment; this position maintained that, a conducive environment is necessary for effective learning.

However, when the environment appears to be harsh not conducive for teaching and learning then learning is adversely affected. Learning environment therefore refers to the total surrounding where learning takes place. Alexander (2009) is of the opinion that the classroom, is the pupils temporary home and his immediate learning environment must appear very comfortable, colorful, clean and educationally attractive. A good learning environment is characterized by some of the following depending on the immediate community, subjects demand etc. There is the need of well-spaced classrooms for effective teaching and learning to take place. Instructional spaces such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories and technical workshops are so importance in teaching –learning. The extent to which these spaces could enhance effective teaching and learning depends on their location within the school premises, their structure and facilities (Ezekiel, 2008).

It is not unlikely that well planned instructional spaces in terms of location, size, structure and facilities will facilitate teaching and learning process and as well enhance good academic performance of the pupils. It is important at this juncture to note that well-spaced and adequate classroom will facilitate and make effective teaching and learning process, but when there are no adequate lighting and ventilation in the classrooms, the pupils cannot perform better, and there are instances where classrooms are located very close to the technical workshops.

Consequently for effective teaching and learning to take place, there must be well equipped laboratories. According to Bajah (1997) cited in Wenglinsky (2007), laboratories are essential in the teaching and learning of science subjects. It has been observed that laboratories are not well planned in some of the secondary schools. Apart from the fact that the required facilities are not in the laboratories, and some of the laboratories are not spacious, not properly located while some do not have cross ventilation and adequate lighting, such laboratories may not enhance effective teaching and learning thereby impeding the students' academic performance.

Thus, there is also the need for well-equipped library for effective teaching and learning to take place. The importance of school library in teaching and learning cannot be over-emphasized. Peterson & Laudet (2006) found that school library significantly influences students' academic performance. It appears that some secondary school lack adequate library facilities. In some cases school libraries are not spacious enough and not well located within the school premises.

Another factor that enhances academic performance among learners according to some findings is gender. That is to say that there are indications of gender bias in examination performance i.e. male tend to perform higher than females in examination due to certain extraneous factors (Kabir 2009), In the same way to maintain the view that past performance was found to be related to future performance.

The need for good learning environment is emphasized by Olatoye. & Agbatogun (2009) when they say, "Attention must be given to the position of furniture in relations to light, to movement and to supervision. Therefore, the individual's learning is affected by the physical setting of learning i.e. classrooms, library, laboratories, and other places where formal learning takes place. The setting therefore must be attractive enough to make children wish to spend long hours.

As for education in school to be effective the environment needs to be conducive to learning, allowing the pupils' space and time to interact within the learning and teaching process. Creating and maintaining stimulating learning environment can be achieved through effective and classroom organization, interactive and whole school displays and a climate of innovation (Olatoye. & Agbatogun (2009). It is important to note that good learning and teaching displays in classrooms and corridor reflecting a broad and balanced curriculum which is well matched to the needs of the pupil.

### **2.3 Teachers' Qualification and Pupils' Academic Performance**

The quality of education is directly related to the quality of instruction in the classrooms. It is a fact that the academic qualifications, knowledge of the subjects. The teachers' characteristic is related to the subject matter knowledge that teachers require during their formal studies, and pre-services teacher education courses.

Several studies showed a positive relationship between teachers' preparation in the subject matter, that they later teach and student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2009 and Brewer 2008 cited by Okpala, P. (2010). While others have less unequivocal results Mouth and King (1999) also cited by Okpala, P. (2010) found both positive and negative effects of teachers in field preparation on student achievement.

Consequently, studies on the effect of teacher experience on students learning have found positive relationship between teachers' effectiveness and their years of experience, but relationship observed is not always significant. The evidence currently available made it clear that while the inexperienced teachers are less effective than more senior teachers, the benefits of experience level off after few years (Philiat & Wanjobi 2011). Therefore, the relationship between teacher experience and student achievement is difficult to interpret, because this is highly affected by motivation of women teachers to work during the child-rearing period.

The qualified teachers who have good and considerable qualifications are those who usually engaged in participating in professional development activities. The professional development activities can be conducted by different organization in school and out of school, on the job or during sabbatical leave.

On these occasions, practicing teachers update their content knowledge and teaching skills so that they can meet the requirements of new curricular, continue new findings on teaching and learning and adapt to changes in the needs of the student population and so on.

Therefore, it was found that teachers who are well-trained in teaching profession are likely to enhance pupil's academic performance. This is because, the qualified and certified teachers learned teaching method as a result of this, the student/pupils proved to perform better than the students who studied under unqualified teachers. All in all, it can be inferred that teachers' qualifications greatly affect the students' academic performance.

The quality of education is directly related to the quality of the instructions in the classrooms. It is a fact that the academic qualifications, knowledge of the subject matter, competence, and skills of teaching and the commitment of the teacher have effective impact on the teaching –learning process (Philiat&Wanjobi 2011). Quality improvement in education depends upon proper training of teachers. The teachers cannot play any of the roles unless properly trained (Yadred and Siugh, 2008) Therefore, teaching is an art. It can be refined by training and practice, the competent teachers are central in the reconstruction of the educational system.

#### **2.4 Difference in the academic performance of learners of private and public schools**

According to Burke and Sass (2013), Learning has been so much associated with the school that some people almost think that learning goes on only in schools. This view of learning has been greatly reinforced by such reference to schools as institutions of learning and to Universities, and College of Education as institutions of higher learning (Okoye, 1987 cited in Burke and Sass (2013). There is no doubting the fact that much learning goes on in school. The school is particularly and specifically arranged so as to facilitate effective learning. Unfortunately the poor condition of schools, particularly the primary schools today in most countries raises a lot of anxiety.

A cursory look at these school in spite of government efforts reveals schools dominated by dilapidated buildings, school void of good furniture and equipment, schools where instructional materials are either not provided or are inadequate; school that are under-staffed; schools, where teachers salaries and allowances are not promptly paid, schools that have not been inspected for many years; schools where there are no discipline among other things.

The government, and especially the parents are very much concerned with the quality and volume of learning acquired by their children, wards and citizens as this is related to the quality and quantity of the contribution which the individual can make to his immediate family, community and the nation as a whole (Burke and Sass 2013). Several studies by Sociologist, Psychologists and Educationists showed that the type of schools a learner attends has profound influence on his academic achievement. For instance, Bibby and Peil (1974) cited in Burke and Sass (2013) noted that children who attended private primary schools performed better than pupils in public schools. This view is also supported by Liloyd (1996) cited by Burke and Sass (2013) as he contended further that the public schools which saw education as a good thing,

tended to leave the question of educational success or failure in the hands of the public and their parents. This implies that the business of education is not taken with all the seriousness it demands in the public schools. This of course is what may be regarded as the general apathy of the citizenry to government's owned business or property. A situation that has resulted in lackadaisical attitude of government's workers, including teachers in the public schools tend to believe that an intelligent child would succeed automatically at school without any active assistance coming from them.

### **2.5 Possible explanations of effectiveness differences between public and private schools**

The literature on the possible causes of effectiveness differences between schools is extensive, but although we shall not review it here, we draw on the most recent overviews (Sammons, Hillman & Mortimore, 1995) cited in Burke and Sass (2013). Thus, for example, Coleman, Hoffer and Kilgore (1982) cited in Burke and Sass (2013) analysed the effectiveness differences between public and catholic schools in the USA, with Coleman and Hoffer (1987) and Bryk, Lee and Holland (1993) cited in Burke and Sass (2013) providing comprehensive follow-up studies of these same differences on the other hand proreviews the empirical evidence of effectiveness differences between public, catholic and protestant schools in Europe.

### **2.6 Differences in student characteristics and in school composition**

Given the higher probability that private schools will ask fees from parents, the social background of students in private and public schools will vary, especially in terms of the occupational, educational and financial characteristics of both parents. Consequently, more students from a more favourable background will go to private schools, which in turn might improve the social composition of the school population (Wenglinsky, 2007). More students of a favourable background will increase the opportunities of reaching higher levels of scholastic achievement, both as a result of a higher level at the start of secondary school, and of better teaching and learning conditions (especially more teaching, due to a lower level of non-academic disturbances). This will promote a potentially better reputation of academic quality for private schools in comparison to public schools, thus attracting different students

### **2.7 Deliberate school choice**

According to Wenglinsky, (2007) he argued that closely related to the reputation of academic quality of private schools is the argument of a deliberate educational choice. A deliberate choice

for an 'unconventional' school (as compared to a 'traditional' choice for a common school) will increase the possibility of this 'unconventional' school becoming a community in which students perform better. Depending on a deliberate education choice, and the self-selection following on from such a choice, both private and public schools can become a community of shared values and decent social ties which can affect student achievement. Public schools are the most common, private schools will be the deliberately chosen schools. Parents, students and teachers of deliberately chosen schools will expect more efforts from each other, and will tend to form a community of shared values and dense social ties, and will generally be more ready to help the school.

### **2.8 Different conditions for teaching, learning and school administration**

Public and private schools differ in their administrations and conditions for teaching and learning. While public schools are fully dependent on the state for their finances and their administration, private schools depend more on student to pay fees and private charity, and only occasionally on the state for additional support.

It is not self evident that private schools have the optimal conditions compared to public school (for instance the student/staff ratio), but differences in these conditions might influence effectiveness. There is also a variation in educational administration between public and private schools (Hofman, 1993 by Wenglinsky, (2007) and this can also help explain some of the differences in educational performance. These differences refer, not to the formal differences in educational administration, but rather to the tendency for stronger informal relations between board and teachers in private schools, which may partly explain the better performance of their pupils.

### **2.9 Differences in terms of school equipment/facilities between the private and public primary schools**

Many school reform efforts have focused on the organization and management of schools in the search for ways to increase school effectiveness. Public and private schools, in the aggregate, are organized differently in terms of school and class size and the focus of responsibility for decision making in a number of important policy areas (National Centre for Educational Research (2003)). The relative merits of various school sizes have been studied extensively as researchers

have searched for the ideal school size .Smaller schools are generally thought to be easier to manage and to promote a greater sense of community among both students and teachers; however, larger schools (within limits) are often more equipped to offer a wider range of academic programs and support services. The advantages of larger schools are more relevant to secondary than elementary schools.

### **2.10 Concept, Nature and Types of School Facilities**

Schools exist for the purpose of teaching and learning. Human and material resources are deployed for this purpose. School facilities are the material resources provided for staff and students to optimize their productivity in the teaching and learning process (Xu&Gulosino, 2006) The realization that the transfer of knowledge does not only take place in the four walls of the classroom from the teacher to the students but rather that learning takes place through discovery, exploration, interaction with the internal and external environment has necessitated the creative and innovative development of teaching and learning facilities that reflect these changes.

Xu&Gulosino, (2006) further noted that schools exist to serve socio-economic and political needs of the ever-changing society, consequently, they are in constant interaction with their external environment. They receive inputs from the external environment in the form of human and material resources, processes them and empty same into the society as finished products and services. The quality of the products bears a direct relationship with the quality of the facilities deployed in the process of the production. This demands that state of the art facilities are provided in schools to prepare school leavers for life in the global village.

### **2.11 Need for Facilities in Schools**

Facilities are materials designed to serve specific purposes. In the school system, there are multiplicity of facilities, which facilitate teaching and learning. According to Iowa Association of School Boards (2002), They are used;

- (1)To illustrate concepts
- (2)Provide opportunity for firsthand experience
- (3)For experimentation and demonstration
- (4)For scientific investigation and discovery
- (5)To provide diversity of thoughts
- (6)For observation and inquiry

(7) For development of scientific attitudes and skills

(8) To protect the individual and also provide comfort

The indirect or teaching support facilities such as offices, cafeteria, acoustics, toilets, laundry, mowers, residential halls, common rooms, cleaning materials ground and similar items satisfy the individual's physical and emotional needs. They are used to:

(1) Increase instructional effectiveness

(2) Improve the cleanness, orderliness and safety of facilities

(3) Reduce the operational cost and life cycle cost of a building

(4) Extend the useful life of a building

(5) Increase efficiency and effectiveness of the staff and students

(6) Improve building appearance

(7) Use data collection and analyses for decision making

## **2.12 Differences in terms of qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools**

Teachers in public schools are state certified, which means that they have gone through the training required by the state including student teaching and coursework. They are required to hold college degrees and to be licensed by the state. Additionally, as part of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, all public school teachers must demonstrate that they are "highly qualified." This designation is achieved if teachers hold at least a bachelor's degree in the subject area in which they teach and are state certified, or if they do not hold a degree in their subject area they must demonstrate competency in their area of teaching through some other means, such as testing.

Public schools cannot terminate the terms of their teachers abruptly. After completing a probationary period, teachers are granted tenure by law. They cannot be dismissed without first going through a twelve-month rehabilitation period. This too, can only be done after a public hearing in which charges of incompetence or misconduct must be proven.

On the other hand, private school teachers may not be required to have certification, and often have subject area expertise and a degree in the subject they teach. Private schools have their own personnel requirements. Private schools can terminate the terms of their teachers abruptly. Schools are free to deal with personnel matters (Smith, 2011).

Public schools are obligated by law to educate all children, so to enroll in a public school you simply register your child by filling out the necessary forms. Public schools must accept any resident student who applies for admission, regardless of sex, race, religious affiliation, economic status or physical or mental handicap. Public schools must also meet state graduation requirements, which vary from state by state. Public schools can kick children out if their behavior is too disruptive; but the public school system will usually have in place an alternative school that the child will attend until they are no longer under the care of the public (18 years of age).

Private schools are not obligated by any laws regarding admission. Therefore, private school admission is competitive. Also, private schools are not required to provide educational programs for children with special needs. Private schools are also under no obligation to keep a student enrolled. If a child's behavior disrupts the school's milieu, they can be kicked out. Another scenario to keep in mind is that if a child's academic progress is not acceptable, they may be kicked out as well. Graduation requirements for private schools are decided by each school and are not subject to any state requirements. Many private schools do choose to align themselves with private school associations which will mandate graduation requirements. In Zambia the system is almost the same because entry to some school is strictly by good national examination results. Some Private schools usually set a cut of points for the pupils to meet before they are admitted to the school. The employment of teachers is usually strictly based on merit unlike the govern school were everyone provided they have been trained by recognized institution can be deployed

### **2.13 Teacher Motivation**

A highly motivated employee puts in the maximum effort in his or her job. Young (1988) cited by Berliner (2005) examined the motivation and job satisfaction of Californian public school teachers in the USA and found that one of the overall job predictors was the salary one earned from it. Studies by Lock heed et al. (1991) cited by Duluth (2008) indicated that lack of motivation and professional commitment produced poor performance Buckland (2000) cited by Duluth (2008) established that employing low-cost teachers who are unqualified or under-qualified may turn out to be a false economy as this option comes itself with considerable hidden costs.

Duluth (2008) also observed that the perceived teacher-cost problem is a feature of education in the Africa and has been tackled in a slightly different fashion through community schools and non-formal education (NFE) that have an equal resonance regarding the status through employment of contract teachers. It is however noted that for contract teachers to be effective they must be given ongoing support in the form of curriculum materials, in-service training and guidance. Employment on contract impacts on the motivation of teachers.

Duluth (2008) further noted that most teachers in community schools are not trained and are temporarily employed by school committees with no formal contracts and with monthly salaries of less than a half of government primary teachers. However, contract teachers have played a critical role in expanding access to the hard-to-reach populations in rural and remote areas where regular teachers are usually least attracted to or where there are not enough pupils to open a regular school.

#### **2.14 Student achievement (factors and variables)**

Student achievement is one of the most important topics in the education cycle, especially since different practices in education are aimed at effecting a radical change for the better in a student's behavior (McEwan & Trowbridge, 2007). It contributes to the development of personal differences and to the comprehensive growth of the student, but is also an indicator of the teacher's success in delivering knowledge, and developing students' skills (Celik&Keskin, 2009).

Academic achievement and learning depend in the first place on students' capabilities, talents, skills, training level and the surrounding environment. The achievement process cannot produce its desired results and outcome if not associated with strong motivation (Alhashimi&Alibrahim, 2010) cited in Smith, (2011)..

Strong motivation will urge students toward a high level of achievement and accelerate their learning curves, as  $\text{productivity} = \text{ability} + \text{motivation}$  (Bakish, 2008). Therefore, creating situations that increase students' motivational level will have a positive impact on their academic achievements.

Physiologists have discovered that individual needs are main drivers of physiological activity, as by nature the individual learns to differentiate between good and bad, success and failure (from environmental stimulus). Accordingly we can direct individual motivation toward social motives which include wealth, power, status, co-operation and prestige (Mohammed, 2004).

## **2.15 Educational achievement motives and importance**

The academic achievement motives reflect the individual's and students' preparation for achieving success which results in satisfaction in situations including performance assessment through tests (Celik & Keskin, 2009) cited in Smith, (2011).

Also, motivations for academic achievement are reflected in a student's desire to perform school work, duties and tasks properly. The term achievement motivation, in relation to students, applies to those who have strong motives for achievement. These allow the student to learn more quickly than those with low motivation. People with strong motives perform better spontaneously in all businesses. They may not outperform in routine work that does not contain something of a challenge, therefore it is necessary for their motivation to be strong.

## **2.16 Teaching methods and processes in general and factors that affect them**

Teaching process and strategy are one of the important factors that must be taken into account when managing education, as they are considered to be one of the most important success factors in achieving educational goals (Rich, 1993) cited in Smith, (2011). As teaching methods or strategies represent groups of procedures and methods used by the teacher to enable students to gain educational experiences, also the teaching strategy reflects the ability to use the capabilities and the means available in an optimal way to achieve the desired goal.

Strategic teaching is a coherent set of incremental steps that the teacher can turn into teaching methods and tasks that suit the nature of the teacher and the learner and the course and conditions of the educational situation (Taweel, 2006) cited in Smith, (2011).

Teaching is a process of formulating the learner environment to enable the student to learn specific behavioural practices; it is a set of successive events, which work in line with a specified timeframe for what is expected from activities. Also teaching is considered to be a medium for learning.

The learning process depends on three complementary elements that contribute to the integration of the educational process in the classroom. These are the student, teacher, and curriculum, and the teacher is considered as one of the most important variables in this process. His role cannot be ignored in educational aims to reform and develop, as he is considered an educational leader who can offer behavioural training, exploit all opportunities, and create conditions for the development of a student's expertise and skills, directing them towards the path that will help them to cope with themselves and society (Mohammed & Gawi, 1998).

## **Summary**

This chapter reviewed the literature related to the topic of learner academic performance in public and private schools under the following headings inter alia; factors that affects the academic performance of learners, Social economic status and learner achievement, environment as factor of differences in academic performance among learners, teachers' qualification and pupils' academic performance, difference in the academic performance of learners of private and public schools, possible explanations of effectiveness differences between public and private schools, differences in student characteristics and in school composition, different conditions for teaching, learning and school administration and differences in terms of school equipment/facilities between the private and public primary schools. The review has shown that they are a number of factors that are linked to the academic performance of learners.

## CHAPTER THREE

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Overview

This chapter discussed the research methods which were employed in this study. It outlined the research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, data collection techniques, data analysis and data interpretation.

#### 3.2 Research Design

A research design is defined as, ‘the planning of any scientific research from the first to the last step. It is a specification of the most adequate operations to be performed in order to test a specific hypothesis under given conditions’ (Bless & Achola, 1988:54) cited by Creswell, (2012). A descriptive survey design was used to conduct this research. Both qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis were employed because the quantitative was used to represent the number of respondents who responded to the various parts of the research instruments while the qualitative methods were used to conduct this research study. As a process, qualitative research is fundamentally rooted in a concern for “developing depth of understanding of a particular phenomenon and the construction of meaning that individuals attribute to their experiences” (Jones, 2002, p. 461). In developing viable research questions and methodological strategies, qualitative researchers make important decisions which reflect epistemological and theoretical considerations and are evident in the core characteristics of all qualitative research. This research design was used because it provided a clear picture on the prevailing situation in schools and to strengthen and verify the research findings.

#### 3.3 Target Population

In the context of research the term “target population” has been defined as all members of any well-defined class of people, events, or objects which have been designated as being the focus of an investigation (Creswell, 2012). It is also known as a universe. It is called special universe in order to distinguish it from the general universe or population to which the study’s findings can be generalized. Whereas, population is defined as “all those people about whom a researcher

wishes to make statements”( Creswell, 2012).The target population for this study was all primary schools in Kitwe District of Zambia.

### **3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure**

Using a stratified random sampling, out of 82 primary schools in Kitwe, four (4) primary schools were chosen and the choice was based on the status of the school (government funded or not), therefore two schools were government funded and two (2) were private. From each of the four (4) sampled schools, 10 teachers (5 males and 5 females) from each of the selected primary schools were picked as respondents for the study. Teachers handling examination classes were considered on this part. Five (5) heads of departments from each of the schools were also issued with questionnaires and this made the sample size to be sixty (60).

### **3.5 Research Instruments**

The Instruments used were Semi Structured Interview guide and Self-Administered Questionnaires which were given for the respondents to answer and later the researcher was given the answered questionnaires which the researcher used for analysis. A focus group is a group discussion which involved forming a group of four (4) teachers per school. The researcher guided the group based on the questions set on the focus group interview schedule which is attached on the appendix. The researcher created an environment that encouraged participants to share their perceptions and points of view on the topic while the researcher was writing in the spaces on the focus group discussion.

### **3.6 Data Collection Procedure**

The Semi Structured Interviews were given to the heads of departments. The researcher prepared some questions in advance. This helped the interviewee to be flexible and the interviewer to probe for more details. The interview guide allowed a two way conversation.

The Self-administered questionnaires were administered to the teachers. The researcher asked for permission from the head teachers of the selected schools. Focus group discussion, were administered to the teachers. The researcher sought for permission from the school administration to administer the discussion. The researcher asked the respondents to answer the questions as they understand them. The group was guided by the moderator who was the researcher.

### **3.8 Data Analysis.**

Both quantitative and qualitative methods of data analysis were employed in this study.

The quantitative data from questionnaires were analysed using the computer generated tables of frequencies and percentages to describe distributions of the variables which were presented in the form of tables. Qualitative data which was obtained through interviews and Focus Group Discussions was analysed by coding the responses in the SPSS computer software which produced the responses in the tabular form for easy interpretation.

### **3.9 Data Interpretation**

Since Quantitative and qualitative data was gathered in this research. Interpretation of quantitative data included mainly the use of tables of frequencies and in some cases percentages. The general views from the respondents were derived from responses with the highest frequencies or percentages. Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were interpreted by considering the most significant categories of themes which was actually the views of the respondents.

#### **Summary**

This chapter presented the research design, target population, sample size and sampling procedure, data collection techniques, data analysis, and data interpretation.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

#### 4.0 Overview

Chapter three outlined the research methodology in this study. Chapter four presents the findings of this study by answering the objectives outlined in chapter one according to the research questions ..

- a) What are the main factors that affect the academic performance of learners at both private and government schools?
- b) What is the significant difference in the academic performance of learners of private and public schools in selected schools in Kitwe District?
- c) Are there any differences in terms of school equipment/facilities between the private and public primary schools in selected schools in Kitwe District?
- d) Are there any differences in terms of qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools in selected schools of Kitwe District

Before going in the details of the analysis the researcher found it necessary to present the response rate and it was as follows; from the sample size of sixty (60) respondents only fifty two (52) respondents successfully returned the research instruments to the researcher hence the analysis was based on the total of fifty two respondents.

#### 4.1 Gender of the respondents

**Table 1 Gender of the respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Male	26	48.1
Female	26	48.1
Total	52	96.3
Missing System	2	3.7
Total	54	100.0

The table above showed that half of those that successfully attended to the research instruments were male with a total number of twenty six (26) respondents with a percentage of fifty (50%)

and the other half which was also made up of twenty six (26) respondents with a percentage of fifty (50%) represent females respectively.

#### 4.2 Age of the respondents

**Table 2 ; Age of the respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid 26- 30 years	2	3.7
31-35 years	13	24.1
36 and above	18	33.3
25 and below	19	35.2
Total	52	96.3
Missing System	2	3.7
Total	54	100.0

The age distribution of the respondents were found that two (2) respondents indicated that they were in the range of 26- 30 years and this represented three point eight percent (3.8%), those that said were in the range of 31-35 years were found to be thirteen (13) and this represented a twenty five percent (25%), while those who said that they were thirty six years and above (36 plus ) were eighteen (18) with a thirty four point six percent (34.6%) and the last group said that they were twenty five years (25) and below were found to be nineteen (19) and this gave a thirty six point five percent (36.5%) respectively.

#### 4.3 Qualifications of the respondents

**Table 3; Qualification of respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Certificate	7	13.0
Diploma	16	29.6
Degree	21	38.9
Master's Degree	8	14.8
Total	52	96.3
Missing System	2	3.7
Total	54	100.0

The above table shows that seven (7) respondents were Certificate holders and this represented a thirteen point five percent (13.5%) response rate, those with Diplomas were sixteen (16) giving a thirty point eight percent (30.8%) while those respondents who were Degree holders were twenty one (21), this represented forty point four percent (40.4%) and those who indicated that they were Master's Degree holders were eight (8) and this gave a fifteen point four (15.4%) percent respectively.

#### 4.4 Findings from Public schools

##### Question 1; Factors that affect the academic performance of learners

**Table 4; Which of the following can affect the academic performance of learners.**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Class size	13	52.0
Quality of teachers	9	36.0
Social Economical Background	3	12.0
Total	25	100.0

Findings from the first research question were that most of the respondents from the public schools indicated that the size of the class was one of the factors which affected the academic performance of learners. As this was seen from the thirteen (13) respondents who ticked this option and this represented fifty two percent (52%) of the respondents from the public schools. Those who said that the quality of teachers was one of a factor which affected academic performance of learners were nine (9) and this represented thirty six percent (36%) of the total respondents from the government schools and those who said that social economic background was one of the factors which affected academic performance of learners were three (3) and this represented twelve percent (12%) of the total respondents from the public schools respectively.

**Question 2; Difference in the academic performance of learners of private and public schools**

**Table 5; Any difference in academic performance of learners in private and public schools.**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Sometimes	7	28.0
	Always	11	44.0
	Not sure	5	20.0
	Total	23	92.0
Missing	System	2	8.0
Total		25	100.0

On the second research question, the findings were that; seven (7) respondents indicated that sometimes there were differences in academic performance between learners in the public and private schools and this represented twenty eight (28%) of the respondents. Those who said that there is always a difference in academic performance between those learners who go to private and public schools were eleven (11) representing forty four percent (44%) of the respondents and five (5) respondents said that they were not sure whether there was any difference in the academic performance of learners who went to private and public schools and this represented (20%) twenty percent of the respondents.

**Question 3; Are there any differences in terms of school equipment/facilities between the private and public primary schools?**

**Table 6; Any differences in equipment between equipment/facilities between the private and public schools**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Sometimes	10	40.0
	Always	12	48.0
	Not sure	1	4.0
	Total	23	92.0
Missing	System	2	8.0
Total		25	100.0

The third research question was on whether there were any differences in equipment/facilities between the private and public schools and the findings from the public schools were that ten (10) respondents indicated that sometimes there were differences in the equipment found in private and public schools. This response represented forty percent (40%) of the respondents. Twelve (12) respondents from the public schools said that always there is a difference in equipment found in public and private schools and this represented forty eight (48%) of the respondents and only one (1) person here indicated that she was not sure whether there was any difference in equipment and facilities between private and public schools and this represented four percent (4%) of the respondents respectively.

**Question 4; Any differences in terms of qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools**

**Table 7 ; Any differences in academic qualification of teachers in private and public schools**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Sometimes	9	36.0
	Always	11	44.0
	Not sure	3	12.0
	Total	23	92.0
Missing	System	2	8.0
Total		25	100.0

The findings from the last research question from the public schools were that nine (9) respondents said that sometimes there were differences in terms of qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools and this represented thirty six percent (36%) of the respondents.

It was further found that eleven (11) respondents indicated that always there was a difference in the qualifications of teachers in private and public schools and this represented forty four (44%) percent of the respondents and the last group of three (3) respondents were not sure whether there was any differences in the qualifications of teachers in private and public schools and this represented twelve (12%) of the respondents respectively.

#### 4.5 Findings from Private schools

##### Question 1; Factors that affect the academic performance of learners

**Table 8; Which of the following can affect academic performance of learners**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Class size	12	44.4
Quality of teachers	8	29.6
Social Economical Background	7	25.9
Total	27	100.0

The findings from the private schools on the first research questions were that twelve (12) respondents said that class size was one of the factors which affected the academic performance of learners and this represented forty four point four percent (44.4%) of the respondents while eight (8) respondents from the private schools said that the quality of teachers affected the academic performance of the learners and this response made up twenty nine point six percent (29.6%) of the respondents and seven (7) respondents said that social economical background of the learners affected their academic performance and this was represented twenty five point five percent of the respondents respectively.

##### Question 2; Difference in the academic performance of learners of private and public schools

**Table 9; Is there any difference in academic performance of learners of learners in private and public schools**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Sometimes	11	40.7
Always	10	37.0
Not sure	2	7.4
Total	23	85.2
Missing System	4	14.8
Total	27	100.0

The findings on the second research question from the private schools were that eleven (11) respondents indicated that sometimes there were differences in the academic performance of learners in private and public schools, this made up forty point seven percent (40.7%) of the respondents from the private schools. Ten (10) respondents indicated that always there has been a difference in the academic performance of learners in the private and public schools and this represented thirty seven percent (37%) of the respondents and the last two (2) respondents said that they were not sure whether there is any difference in the academic performance between private and public school going learners and this gave seven point four (7.4%) of the respondents from the private schools respectively.

**Question 3; Are there any differences in terms of school equipment/facilities between the private and public primary schools?**

**Table 10; Any difference in equipment/facilities in private and public schools**

	Frequency	Percent
Valid Sometimes	6	22.2
Always	13	48.1
Not sure	3	11.1
Total	22	81.5
Missing System	5	18.5
Total	27	100.0

Findings on the third research question were that six (6) respondents said that sometimes there were differences in equipment and facilities in private and public schools and this represented twenty two point two percent (22.2%) of the respondents from the private schools. Those respondents who said that always there was a difference in equipment and facilities in private and public schools were thirteen (13) and this represented forty eight point one percent (48.1%) of the respondents and the last three (3) respondents said that they were not sure whether there was a difference in the facilities found in private and public schools, representing eleven point one percent (11.1%) of the respondents respectively.

**Question 4; Any differences in terms of qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools**

**Table 11; Any differences in qualifications of teachers in private and public schools**

		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Sometimes	8	29.6
	Always	8	29.6
	Not sure	5	18.5
	Total	21	77.8
Missing	System	6	22.2
Total		27	100.0

The findings on whether there were any differences in the qualifications of teachers in private and public schools were that eight (8) respondents said that sometimes there were differences in the qualifications of teachers in private and public schools and this represented twenty nine point six percent (29.6%) of the respondents from the private schools.

The other eight (8) respondents said that always there was a difference in the qualification of teachers in private and public schools and this represented twenty nine point six percent (29.6%) of the respondents from the private schools and the last five (5) respondents indicated they were not sure whether there was any difference in the qualifications of teachers in private and public schools and this represented eighteen point five percent (18.5%) of the respondents respectively.

**4.6 Findings from the interview guide- Private schools**

The first question from the interview guide was to find out from the school manager on the qualifications of the teachers, the findings were that the lowest qualified teacher had a diploma from a teacher’s training school and one of the head teachers from one private school was quoted saying

*“Our teachers are employed on merit and our recruitment procedure involves engaging new teachers in a practical classroom interview and we only consider those from recognized teachers training colleges”*

The above statement is an indication that teachers who are employed in private schools are thoroughly screened. On the experience of the teachers, the findings were that according to the most teachers had taught for more than two years in the private schools as most of them were deployed in the government. The teachers were encouraged to prepare lessons which allowed learners to practice both in class and at home as one of the school managers was quoted saying;

*“Children learn by doing, not just by hearing. We encourage our teachers to engage learners in the lesson by having them partake in hands-on activities through the use cooperative learning techniques”*

It can be noted that the teaching style from the private schools were found to be full of practical work as the school had the facilities like computers and full laboratory equipment to demonstrate what was being taught. The teachers were found to be very committed in private schools because each class had a maximum number of twenty (20) learners pay class. The school manager indicated that they avoided overcrowd the class so that teachers could handle all the learners within their teaching periods. The other factor which was found to have influenced academic performance in private schools was the lower rate of teacher absenteeism as one school manager was quoted saying

*“A considerable number of teachers considered it an insult to their professional integrity that they should be associated with potential failures as a result of their absenteeism”.*

The system of monitoring teacher attendance and deductions from the salary for unexplained absenteeism was found to be a factor which helped teachers to be committed towards their work. Parents were also noted to have contributed towards the academic performance of their children through the home work policy were they were required to check and counter sign on what the children had written.

#### **4.7 Findings from the interview guide- Public schools**

From the public schools the findings from the interview guide were somewhat different in that the way teachers were being employed in the schools was through the Ministry of Education unlike in the private school were the school management would use its own criteria of recruitment.

One school manager was quoted saying “Our teachers are qualified and we are allocated these teachers by the government” This situation was different from the private schools where school management would hire and dismiss.

It was further found from the public schools that the minimum number of pupils per class was 50 learners and this was an over load to a teacher as it proves difficulty for the teacher to attend to all the learners within the teaching time. One school manager said that

*“Our classes are overcrowded with the minimum number of 50 pupils per class”*

. These findings indicate that it is not possible for the public school going learners to perform well in class in examination because they do not have the full attention which a learner in a private school receives from the teacher. The other thing which the public school did not do was the home work policy were parents and guardians were to counter check and sign on what the learner had been assigned to work on well at home. One school manager from the public school said that.

*“The home work policy at this school is not taken seriously; our teachers mostly do not bother to check if the parents or guardians signed on the work of the learners”*

This simply tells us that there is little collaboration between parents and teachers in public schools as this was not the case with the private schools. The provision of exercises, home assignments and feedback given to the pupils was missing in the public schools. Doing exercises, completing home assignments and getting feedback in proper way enhances learning and hence better achievement. The findings from this study show that teachers in public primary school gave exercises soon after ending the lesson. The exercises comprised not more than five questions. In the case of home assignments it was found that home assignments were given once in a blue moon.

The above findings show that there were lack of exercises and home assignment in public school. My findings further show that teachers in public school did not check the exercises properly. The common way which was used to give feedback was writing of the correct answers on the blackboard and each pupil marked his/her own work.

Sometimes pupils exchanged their exercise books so that one would not mark ones own work. Sometimes teachers themselves marked the exercises and gave comments. I personally checked pupils' exercise books and observed the above findings.

I also, sought to investigate the availability of teaching and learning materials in both schools. These materials include textbooks, teachers'- guide, maps and other teaching aids. I found that the teaching materials were scarce in public school. The situation was different in private school where teaching materials were not a problem. Below is a school manager's narration about the availability of textbooks in the public school.

*“The school does not have sufficient textbooks. In the case of teachers guide every teacher has a copy”*

### **Summary of Findings**

The major findings of this study have been presented and analyzed. Prior to data presentation, and analysis, the chapter has briefly described the research questions. The presentation and analysis have been done following the trends of specific research questions of this study. The findings show that private primary school pupils largely performed better than public primary school pupils. Furthermore, the findings indicate that public primary schools partly lack certain learning resources. Teachers in private primary school do not face the above mentioned problems. Moreover, the findings show that provision of sufficient exercises, home assignments, and feedback, parental supports and availability of learning materials at home contribute much to learners' achievement.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSIONS OF THE FINDINGS

#### 5.0 Overview

Chapter four presented the research findings according to the research questions. Chapter five presents the discussions of the findings according to the objectives which are; to establish factors that affect the academic performance of learners at both private and government schools, to assess academic performance of learners of private and public schools, to establish availability of school equipment/facilities between the private and public primary schools, and to compare qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools respectively.

#### Objective one

#### **Factors that affect the academic performance of learners at both private and government schools**

From both the literature review and the primary data collected during the study, it was found that socio economic status, class size and the quality of teachers greatly affected the academic performance of the learners in both private and public school. These findings were consisted with those found in the literature review that socio economic status plays an important role in the life of a person. The status opens the ways for his progress. Intelligence, attitudes, aptitudes and even interests are patterned by socio economic background of the individual.

The socio economic status pays rewards and punishment both to a person Chaudhariat *al* (1998) cited in Abba (2004).As pointed out by Vandiver, and Telford (2011) children belonging to higher socio economic status are not only brilliant but are also provided better opportunities for developing intellectually, physically and emotionally. A person who comes from a poor family is more likely to perform poorly in school than that one who comes from a well to do family.

The environment was also found to have an effect on the learners' academic performance because in the literature review, it was found that when the environment appears to be harsh not conducive for teaching and learning then learning is adversely affected. Learning environment therefore refers to the total surrounding where learning takes place.Alexander (2009) is of the opinion thatthe classroom, is the pupils temporary home and his immediate learning environment and it must appear very comfortable, colorful, clean and educationally attractive. A good

learning environment is characterized by some of the following depending on the immediate community, subjects demand etc.

There is the need of well-spaced classrooms for effective teaching and learning to take place. Instructional spaces such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories and technical workshops are so importance in teaching –learning. According to Ezekiel, (2008), the extent to which these spaces could enhance effective teaching and learning depends on their location within the school premises, their structure and facilities.

### **Objective two**

#### **The academic performance of learners of private and public schools**

From both the private and public schools the findings here indicated that there was always a difference in academic performance between those learners who go to private and public schools. In the literature review, several studies by Sociologist, Psychologists and Educationists showed that the type of schools a learner attends has profound influence on his academic achievement. For instance, Bibby and Peil (1974) cited in Burke and Sass (2013) noted that children who attended private primary schools performed better than pupils in public schools. This view is also supported by Lioyd (1996) cited by Burke and Sass (2013) as he contended further that the public schools which saw education as good thing, tended to leave the question of educational success or failure in the hands of the public and their parents. This implies that the business of education is not taken with all the seriousness it demands in the public schools hence the differences in the academic performance of learners with those from the private schools outperforming those from the public schools.

### **Objective three**

#### **To establish availability of school equipment/facilities between the private and public primary schools**

The findings here indicated that private schools had better facilities than government funded schools. In the literature review it was also found that Public and private schools, in the aggregate, are organized differently in terms of school and class size and the focus of responsibility for decision making in a number of important policy areas(National Centre for

Educational Research 2003).The relative merits of various school sizes have been studied extensively as researchers have searched for the ideal school size.

Smaller schools are generally thought to be easier to manage and to promote a greater sense of community among both students and teachers; however, larger schools (within limits) are often more equipped to offer a wider range of academic programs and support services. In the Zambian situation, most private schools are smaller and easy to manage than government schools.

#### **Objective Four**

##### **To compare qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools**

Here it was found that the qualifications of teachers in both private and public schools were just the same because all the schools both private and used teachers from government recognized colleges and universities and in the literature review there was nothing much which talked about the differences in the qualifications of the teachers because there was little to no study which was found to have talked about differences in teacher qualifications of private and government schools within Zambia.

#### **Summary of the discussions**

The discussions presented above were guided by the research objectives, with the first objective it was found that socio economic status, class size and the quality of teachers greatly affected the academic performance of the learners in both private and public school, the second objective, the findings were that indeed there was a difference in the academic performance between learners who went to private schools and those who went to public schools and that difference was as a result of the lack of good facilities in public schools which private schools had and last but not the least, the qualifications of teachers in both private and public schools were not different as both types of schools relied on teachers trained from government recognized colleges and universities.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.0 Overview

This chapter presents with the conclusion and recommendations

#### 6.1 Conclusion

Following the review of related literature, the researcher found out that difference in academic performance among learners is attributed to such factors like socio economic status which plays an important role in the life of a person. The status opens the ways for his progress. Intelligence, attitudes, aptitudes and even interests are patterned by socio economic background of the individual. The socio economic status pays rewards and punishment both to a person Chaudhari *et al* (1998) cited in Abba (2004).

The main findings were that private schools performed better academically than public schools and the reasons behind this includes the availability of good facilities in private schools such as un crowded classrooms, good learning environment and teachers in private schools are well paid hence they have the motivation to work hard and produce good results.

It was also found that private schools have the optimal conditions compared to public school (for instance the student/staff ratio), but differences in these conditions might influence effectiveness. There is also a variation in educational administration between public and private schools.

It was further found that a good learning environment plays an important role in the learning life of a person and this is characterized by some of the following depending on the immediate community, subjects demand etc. For learning to take place, there is the need for well-spaced classrooms to be provided. Instructional spaces such as classrooms, libraries, laboratories and technical workshops are so importance in teaching –learning. The extent to which these spaces could enhance effective teaching and learning depends on their location within the school premises, their structure and facilities (Ezekiel, 2008). The quality of education is directly related to the quality of instruction in the classrooms.

It is a fact that the academic qualifications, knowledge of the subjects. The teachers' characteristic is related to the subject matter knowledge teachers require during their formal studies, and pre-services teacher education courses.

From the raw data collected it can also be concluded that the geographical location of the school, the quality of the teaching staff and the size of the class greatly affected the performance of learners and most private school were well located hence they provided conducive learning environment. Private schools were found to have better facilities than public schools.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

1. There is need for the government to provide a conducive learning environment in the public schools by reducing the number of learners from each class from 60 pupils per class to about 20 pupils per class
2. More teachers should be recruited to meet the number of pupils in the public schools
3. The government should provide the necessary facilities in schools for learners to have hands on practice
4. Government should inject more funds into public schools for the procurement of teaching and learning facilities. This responsibility lies on the educational planners and administrators in the Ministry of Education. Also, corporate organizations and individuals should be encouraged by the government to donate generously in cash and kind for the provision of educational facilities especially the needed one for the core subjects in public schools.
5. All public schools should have libraries so that learners can be using them to do their studying
6. The home work policy should be taken seriously and parents and guardians should be encouraged to check and sign on the home work given to learners.

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## APPENDIX A; Questionnaire for the Head of Departments

Research Topic: An investigation into learner academic performance in public and private schools: A case of selected schools in Kitwe District

Dear Respondent

The researcher of this study is a Postgraduate Student at .....University in the School of Education pursuing a Master's Degree of Education in Education. The purpose of meeting with you is to request you to spare some time to answer questions in this questionnaire. The information that will be gathered from this questionnaire will not be used for anything else other than academic purposes only. I, therefore, wish to guarantee your safety and .Kindly do not write your name.

1.) Sex (a) Male ( ) (b) Female ( )

2. Age range

(a) 20 – 25 years ( ) (b) 26- 30 years ( ) (c) 31-35 years ( ) (d) 36 and above ( )

3. Professional Qualifications

(a) Certificate ( ) (b) Diploma ( ) (c) Degree ( ) (d) Master's Degree ( )

4.) Which of the following do you think affects the academic performance of the learners at your school?

- a) The support and availability of the parents
- b) The geographical location of the school
- c) The Quality of the teaching staff

5) Do you think that the size of a class can also affect the academic performance of learners at your school?

- a) Strongly agree
- b) Strongly disagree
- c) Not sure

6) which of the following do you think your school has enough of to meet the number of learners at your school.

- a) Classrooms, (b) Textbooks (c) Equipments, (d) School supplies (e) None of the above

7) Do you think that there is a difference in academic performance between a private school and a government school?

- a) Strongly agree (b) Strongly disagree (c) Not sure

8). Do you think that private schools are better than public schools?

- a) Strongly agree (b) Not sure (c) Disagree (d) Strongly disagree

9). Do you think the environment of the school can affect the learner's academic performance?

- a) Strongly agree (b) Strongly disagree (c) Not sure

10) Do you think private schools have better equipment/facilities than public schools in your area?

- (a) Sometimes (b) Always (c) Often

11) If yes to the above question, list of the facilities/equipment which private schools have and public schools do not have.....

.....

12) Do you think that there are any differences in terms of qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools?

- a) Rarely (b) Sometimes (c) Often (d) Always

## **APPENDIX B ;INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS**

1. To what extent are your teachers qualified?
2. What is the average experience of teachers?
3. What strategies do your teachers apply in preparing for lessons
4. How are the teachers committed to pupils and their learning
5. How do you rate your teachers in terms knowledge of the subject they teach
6. How effective are your teachers in managing and monitoring pupils learning
7. How do you compare teachers experience and pupils performance
8. To what extent do the parents and guardians of your pupils collaborate with the school for the better education of their children?
9. What is the absence rate for teachers in this school?
10. Has there been a staff meeting within the past 6 months?
11. How is the evaluation system in this school? Are tests given weekly? Monthly? Per term ?Occasionally? No test other than regular exams?

## **APPENDIX C -Self-Administered Questionnaires (SAQ) for teachers**

Kindly do not write your name.

1). Sex (a) Male ( ) (b) Female ( )

2). Age range

(a) 20 – 25 years ( ) (b) 26- 30 years ( ) (c) 31-35 years ( ) (d) 36 and above ( )

3). Professional Qualifications

(a) Certificate ( ) (b) Diploma ( ) (c) Degree ( ) (d) Master's Degree ( )

4) Which of the following do you think affects the academic performance of the learners at your school?

d) The support and availability of the parents

e) The geographical location of the school

f) The Quality of the teaching staff

5) Do you think that the size of a class can also affect the academic performance of learners at your school?

(a) Strongly agree (b) Strongly disagree (c) Not sure

6) which of the following do you think your school has enough of the to meet the number the number learners at your school.

(a) Classrooms, (b) Textbooks, (c) Equipment, (d) School supplies

7) Do you think that there is a difference in academic performance between a private school and a government school?

(a) Strongly agree (b) Strongly disagree (c) Not sure

8). Do you think that private schools are better than public schools?

(a) Strongly agree (b) Not sure (c) Disagree (d) Strongly disagree

9). Do you think the environment of the school can affect the learner's academic performance?

- (a) Strongly agree (b) Strongly disagree (c) Not sure

10) Do you think that the home environment can affect a learner's academic performance?

- (a) Rarely (b) Sometime (c) Often (d) Always

11) Do you think private schools have better equipment/facilities than public schools in your area?

- (a) Sometimes (b) Always (c) Often

12) If yes to the above question, list of the facilities/equipment which private schools have and public schools do not have.....  
.....

13) Do you think that there any differences in terms of qualification of teachers in private and public primary schools?

- (a) Rarely (b) Sometimes (c) Often (d) Always

**APPENDIXD;Focus group discussion**

**Research Topic: An investigation into learner academic performance in public and private schools: A case of selected schools in Kitwe District**

**Dear Respondent**

The researcher of this study is a Postgraduate Student at .....University in the School of Education pursuing a Master's Degree of Education in Education. Your contribution is very important in this study. I request you to answer the following questions. All the information will remain confidential and will be used for academic purposes of this research only. I request you to answer the following questions. All the information will remain confidential and will be used for academic purposes of this research only.

1. School Name.....
2. Total number of students in the examination class in 2015.....Boys .....Girls.....
3. Number of students who passed the exams.....
4. Number of students who failed.....
- 5.How is teacher-Student Ratio (TSR) .....
- 6What is the Book-Student Ratio (BSR) .....
7. What causes more students to joining your school?
  - (a) Low School fees
  - (b) High Pass rate, [ ]
  - (c) Others [ ]
  - (specify) .....
8. Does your school have a library?
  - (a) Yes, (b) No
9. If yes, does it have enough facilities such as:

(i) Books

(a) Yes, (b) No

(ii) Tables and chairs

(a) Yes (b) No

10. Do you have enough teachers for every subject per stream?

b) Which subjects don't you have enough teachers?

i..... ii..... iii.....

iv. .... v. .... vi. ....