



**A COMPARISON OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF SOME SELECTED
COEDUCATION AND SINGLE SEX SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN CHOMA
DISTRICT.**

By

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**A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia and Zimbabwe Open University in partial
fulfillment of the degree of Master of Education in Educational Management**

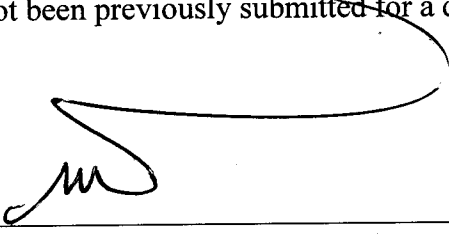
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Signed :  _____

Date : 20/05/2016

APPROVAL FORM

This dissertation by Mumpande Frank .S. is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Educational Management of the University of Zambia and Zimbabwe Open University.

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ABSTRACT

Studies on single sex and coeducation schooling provide a variety of interesting intricacies on effectiveness of their programmes. This paper compares the academic performance of single sex education and coeducation schooling at secondary school with special bias to examination classes, thus Grades 9 and 12 from 2010 to 2015 in Choma District. Two secondary schools that participated in the study were Mukasa Minor Seminary and Choma Day Secondary School. Journal articles and Examination Council (ECZ) results for Grades 9 and 12 were used to synthesize and compare the academic performance of the selected schools.

An ex-post facto causal comparative design was used. This design employed the qualitative techniques of data collection, analysis and interpretation. The target sample was composed of School Managers, teachers and Heads of Departments of the selected schools in Choma District of the Southern Province. The District Education Standards Officer (DESO) also constituted the targeted sample for the study in Choma District.

Data were collected through the use of questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), interview schedules and examination documents from the Examinations Council of Zambia. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed through identified themes that were derived from the data. Descriptive statistics such as percentages, charts and tables were used to show instructional practices and trends of academic performance.

The study revealed that learners from single sex education institutions mostly provided by Grant aided schools were performing better than their counterparts in Government coeducation secondary schools. While it is a fact that by merely putting girls in one room and boys in another room is not a guarantee to their success, it was evident that learners in single sex Grant aided schools perform better than learners in government coeducation secondary schools. The academic excellence of learners in single sex secondary schools mainly run by Grant aided schools is attributed to a wide range of factors including adequate instructional materials, high discipline levels among teachers and learners, classroom order and regulated school enrolments to below 45 pupils per class. Single sex learners are willing to take risks because they do not fear to make mistakes and to be embarrassed by the opposite sex in the same class. In single sex Grant aided schools; learners are not stressed by the desire and ego to impress the other gender as is the case in coeducation environments. Single sex education is strongly advocated by voluntary organizations or churches which stress on academic policies, teacher motivation, prize giving to both outstanding teachers and learners, provision of adequate teaching and learning materials, and effective supervision of teachers. Boys and girls in single sex schools have separate learning environments in cognizance of the differences in the physical development of the two sexes. These attributes and other environmental factors place the learners in single sex Grant aided schools above government coeducation schools.

On the other hand, learners in government coeducation schools face a multiple of distractions such as in-campus pairing. This is where big boys and girls get attracted to each other to the extent where girls end up of being impregnated by their classmates in some cases. Coeducation is largely advocated for by government and in these schools there is over enrolment, low teacher motivation, pupil indiscipline, teacher and pupil absenteeism, dormant continuing professional development meetings, lack or ineffective school academic policies, high pupil /text book ratio

and generally laissez faire work culture. However, coeducation schooling allows boys and girls to develop interpersonal skills that enable them interact with each other as they grow into women and men who understand and respect each other. Coeducation helps each gender to see how the other feels, thinks and reacts and such understanding is a major goal for gender friendly classrooms. In this way public schools supplement the opportunities for young adults to develop socially which exist already within the neighborhood, church, volunteer organizations and the family.

DEDICATION

I thank God for making this accomplishment a reality and for granting me with the aspirations of my heart. I dedicate this work to my parents Samuel Chipwaya Siamuche and ELinah Siamalaba Siamuche for establishing a strong foundation of support for my achievement up to this level of education. I am sincerely grateful to my parents for providing me with an opportunity to rise like an eagle in the family.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This chapter outlines the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, scope of the study and operational definitions.

1.1 Background of the Study

In the past few years, academic performance results have ignited public debate especially during the District Education stakeholders meetings in Choma on why government coeducation secondary schools have been lagging behind single sex secondary schools in terms of academic excellence. The contemporary public debate emanates from the academic performance results where single sex schools mostly provided by grant aided schools have continued to produce better and quality results at both grades 9 and 12 national examinations with pass rates of 80% to 100 % as compared to the coeducation secondary schools with pass rates below 70% (MOE, 2014). There has been a public outcry on why academic performance results are generally of low quality in coeducation secondary schools than in single sex education schools.

According to Ewing (2006), single sex education schooling is the practice of conducting education environments where males and females attend school exclusively with members of their own sex. This form of education is commonly provided at secondary school in Zambia. On the other hand coeducation schooling is where both girls and boys learn at the same school or in the same building. This learning environment is predominant in public schools. The Zambian

government advocates coeducation schooling in most public schools as shown in many policy documents (MOE , 1992 ;MOE,1996)

It has become a common practice for parents to favour taking their children to single sex schools particularly grant aided or private schools instead of taking them to coeducation secondary schools. The major reason for this preference to mission schools is anchored on the high expectancy by parents for good academic results at Grade 9 and 12 national examinations. While teachers working in both grant aided single sex and government coeducation secondary schools are trained and drawn from the same colleges and universities, there are some marked and clear discrepancies in the academic performance of pupils from the two learning settings. This study therefore sought to make a comparison between single – sex education model and coeducation model at secondary school level in Choma District of Southern Province.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The national assessment reports from Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ) show that the performance of learners at Grades 9 and 12 in single sex Grant Aided schools is generally higher than in Coeducation public secondary schools in Choma District (MOE , 2014). This picture is not exclusive to Choma District alone but transcends across the districts and the provinces of Zambia. According to the Post newspaper (9th May, 2012), Dr. Phiri John the Minister of Education by then was saddened that most government schools mainly co education were under performing compared to mission (Grant Aided) secondary schools in the country. This statement was reiterated by the same Minister of General Education in 2014 when he said that Grant Aided Secondary Schools were producing better results than public schools at Grades 9 and 12 national examinations (MOE,2014).

Despite these observations, public concerns and measures that have been put by the government to improve results, the performance results at Grade 9 and 12 have continued to decline or maintain a status quo of low pass rates in the government coeducation secondary schools. At the same time, very few studies have been conducted to compare the academic performance of single sex and coeducation secondary schools in Choma District to ascertain if single sex schools are more or less effective than coeducation schools and establish the causal factors for this situation. If single sex educational environments truly show improved performance in their setting it would be ideal to re- design the coeducation model in order to improve the quality of academic performance. It is for this reason that this study was aimed at making a comparison of academic performance between single education and co education schooling models at Junior and senior secondary school particularly at Grades 9 and 12 level in Choma District to establish the most effective model and consequently enhance the academic performance in the two learning environments.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to compare the academic performance of pupils in single sex and coeducation schools in some selected secondary schools in Choma District. The study was intended to provide insights and understanding on the most effective learning environments at secondary school level.

1.4 Objectives of the study

- (i) To determine the factors that give disparities in academic excellence between single sex and co-education secondary schooling in Choma District.

- (ii) To establish the type of education environment which produces better academic results between Co-education and single- sex schooling at Grades 9 and 12.
- (iii) To explore the problems faced by single sex and coeducation secondary schools in the provision of quality education.
- (iv) To establish measures /strategies set by selected single-sex schools and co- education secondary schools aimed at improving pupils' academic performance.

1.5 Research Questions

This study was guided by thought provoking questions. Thus; is there any difference in academic performance which prevails between learners in single sex-education and co- education at junior and senior secondary level? The following supplementary questions were addressed;

- (i) What factors give disparities in academic excellence between single sex and co-education secondary schooling?
- (ii) In which type of learning environment do Grade 9 and 12 pupils get better academic results between single sex schooling and co-education schooling in Choma District ?
- (iii) What problems do single sex and coeducation secondary schools face in the provision of quality education?
- (iv) What measures/ strategies have the selected schools set designed to improve pupils' academic Performance?

1.6 Significance of the study

This study has provided information on the comparison of academic performance between single sex and co-education secondary schooling models in Choma District in the Southern Province of

Zambia. The study may contribute to a body of knowledge on some of the factors affecting pupils' academic performance in single sex education and co-education secondary schools which may further provide a possible solution to address low pass rates in some schools thereby improving academic performance in Choma District and the country as a whole. The study findings may contribute to develop measures that can enhance academic performance of pupils in single sex and co-education at both junior and senior secondary school. The information could be useful to educational administrators, teachers and policy makers.

The study may be used by researchers contemplating to pursue the topic on the most beneficial learning environment between single sex schooling and co-education schooling at tertiary level in Zambia. Further, the research findings may be used by international organizations such as the United Nations Education, Scientific and cultural organizations (UNESCO) and some faith based organizations that formulate educational programmes and advise government on matters relating to quality education provision.

1.7 Scope of the study

The study focused on two selected secondary schools which comprised a single sex education secondary school and a co-education secondary school within Choma District. This means that tertiary institutions and/ or trade institutes were not part of this study and so the findings can only be generalized to secondary school level and not all levels of classroom instruction.

1.8 Theoretical Framework

This study was guided by the Systems Theory and Sammon's model of an effective school cited in Ribbins and Burrige (1994). The Systems theory stresses on the input –output model

developed by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy in 1956. According to Koontz and Weihrich (1988), the Systems Theory postulates that an organized enterprise does not exist in a vacuum but dependent on its environment in which it is established. The theory contends that inputs from the environment are received by the organization which transforms them into quality products. As adapted in this study, the inputs are learners who are admitted into school with different marks at Grade 8 and 10 from various and different social economic backgrounds. Once they enter secondary school, the role of management and the teaching staff is to transform them through the process of teaching and learning while the output is seen through their academic performance especially when they sit for Grade 9 and 12 examinations.

Robbins (1980) argues that schools were increasingly deemed as absorbers, processors and generators and that the school organizational system could be envisioned as composed of several interdependent factors. It follows that the inputs (learners), the processors and generators (management and staff) should function well in order to attain the intended educational outcomes. The studies by Robbins (1980) were supported by Saleemi (1997) who argued that all the school systems (sections, departments and administration) must work in harmony in order to achieve the desired overall organizational goals.

According to the input, process and output model, the learners who are admitted into school with different abilities perform well if the school facilities are good, teachers and management are devoted to duty although this may not always be the case and to a large extent this possess short comings of the Systems Theory. The interrelationship among the various parts of a system should be understood by all parties involved (Oso and Onen, 2005). This theory requires schools to have a shared vision and mission so that all stakeholders in the school have a clear idea of what they are expected to achieve from all parties involved; a task that is not easy to attain.

The literature revealed shows that admission boards world over use prior academic performance results to select learners for higher levels of education, for example the Grade 9 national results in Zambia are used for certification and selection into Grade 10 while the Grade 12 results are used for admission into tertiary or higher education (MOE , 2014). Candidates who obtain good academic results at Grade 9 are selected to proceed to Grade 10 (high school) while those with low academic performance are repeated and sometimes excluded from the education system.

Sammons model of an effective school cited in Ribbins and Burrridge (1994) is also adapted for the purpose of this study. According to this model, there are five attributes of an effective school and these include;

- The first attribute of an effective school is that it should have a clear school vision and mission.
- Sammons identified good and highly professional leadership as the second attribute of an effective school. This means that the school administrators should be well qualified and experienced members of staff.
- The model identifies positive school climate as the third attribute of an effective school. A positive school environment is a school with availability of relevant and appropriate teaching and learning materials as well as competent and adequate teaching faculty. It includes the existence of an atmosphere where teachers interact freely professionally and share ideas without limitations.
- The fourth attribute of an effective school is the active participation of parents in matters that concern the school where their children learn. The model proposes that school

administrators should use open days as a means of engaging and encouraging parental involvement in the school matters.

- The fifth attribute for an effective school identified by Sammons is that it should have a well-organized and systematic assessment and evaluation procedure of learners' work and that the school administrators should also be highly inspiring to both the teachers and learners.

Sammons model of an effective school could be instrumental in addressing low pass rates in some schools(Sammons ,Hillma and Mortimore, 1995).The Systems Theory and Sammons' model of an effective school are important to both administrators and teachers because the two theories help to enhance learners' performance abilities. Models however, differ in many ways from each other and each model attempts to provide guidelines for a desirable process of learning in order to produce good and quality academic results as discussed in the two theories above. The Government of Zambia through the Ministry of Education (MOE) envisages the provision of quality education from Early Childhood Education (ECE) or preschool up to university education. The government has put several strategies in an attempt to enhance the highest standards of achievement according to the ability of the learner (MOE, 1996). The attempts by government to provide quality education are aimed at equipping every individual to acquire values, attitudes, knowledge and skills by ensuring that every learning institution provides an enabling learning environment. This approach to education provision is in line with humanist theories. This is demonstrated by the governments' deliberate policy to provide free education from grade one to seven (MOE, 1996). The government places the learner at the center of everything in Zambia.

1.9 Operational Definitions and acronyms

Academic Excellence:	Exhibiting high cognitive abilities in school learning processes which translate into high pass rates at Grade 9 and 12 national examinations.
Academic Performance:	A learner's involvement in the learning process and the application of mental faculty in school assignments.
Co- education :	Provision of education setting where both girls and boys attend classes in the same school or building. It is also called mixed gender education.
Effective School :	A school which treats every learner fairly and equally meets the needs of all learners whether they are higher performers or under achievers. It encourages high level responsibility and ethical behaviour among learners.
Government School :	A school owned and run by the government of the Republic of Zambia. It is also referred to as Public school.
Grant aided school :	A school owned and managed by voluntary organizations / church in partnership with the government. The government provides annual grants in aid to meet running costs and pays the salaries of teachers and approved auxiliary staff at the institution. These schools are also called mission schools.

Junior Secondary School:	Grade 8 to 9 level of education.
Open days	: Public school days in which performance of learners' Achievement are recognized and appreciated.
Learner	: A pupil or student at a secondary school.
Passing	: attainment of a full certificate at Grade 9 and /or 12 level expressed as a percentage of total number who sat for examinations.
Sex	: Biological term which refers to the state of being male or female.
Senior Secondary School:	Grade 10 to 12 level of education.
Single sex education	: refers to education at Secondary school level in which boys and girls attend school exclusively with members of their own sex. It is also called segregated education.
Quality	: The degree of excellence
DEBS	: District Education Board Secretary
DESO	: District Education Standards Officer.
ECE	: Early Childhood Education.
ECZ	: Examinations Council of Zambia.
HODS	: Heads of Department.

FGD	: Focus Group Discussion.
MOE	: Ministry of Education.
SBCPD	: School Based Continuing Professional Development.
SPRINT	: School Programme of In-Service for the Term.
UNESCO	: United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNZA	; University of Zambia.
ZOU	; Zimbabwe Open University.

1.10 Ethical Considerations

In order to conduct the research on the comparison of academic performance in some selected coeducation and single sex secondary schools in Choma District, permission was obtained from the University of Zambia (UNZA) in collaboration with the Zimbabwe Open University (ZOU). Consent was also obtained from the Choma District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) and the two selected schools to conduct a research in their schools. Respondents were informed that the study was for academic purposes only and therefore the information was to be held with outmost confidentiality. Respondents were further informed that they were at liberty to participate or withdraw from the study at any time and that they would be treated with respect and dignity in the whole process. The findings of the study would be shared among them for their reactions.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

In the previous chapter, the introduction, background, statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the study, research questions and significance of the study were discussed.

This chapter presents relevant literature on the comparison between single sex education and coeducation schooling at secondary school. Literature review as defined by Baglione (2012) is a text of a scholarly paper which includes the current knowledge including substantive findings, as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic. It is an evaluative report of studies related to one's choice area of study. This means that it is an account of what has been published on a topic by accredited scholars. Literature review provides the theoretical grounds for the research and enables the researcher to determine the nature of the research and gives the researcher direction in view of the study to be undertaken. This study has been reviewed under three major themes which include historical and current perspectives. These themes are *academic achievements, causes of poor academic performance and creating an effective school*.

2.1 Academic Achievement

In the United States (US) , single sex education enjoy overwhelming support from research organizations, the Federal Department of Education and the general public (Riordan, 2011) . Research has shown that single sex schools have great advantages for example, learners gain more confidence and make academic gains against those of their coeducation counter parts in similar schools (Davis , 2002; Datnow and Huddard , 2002; Riordan, 2009).

Studies show that in 1943, a decision to have separate schools and policies in urban elementary school was made in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Governments in the USSR proclaimed that coeducation instruction had overlooked the particular physical development of boys and girls (Ewing, 2006). Single sex education takes into account the social or biological differences between boys and girls. This pedagogical realization makes the learning process more effective. Not only that, single sex education eliminates that perceived negative impact on learning which manifests from social interaction between boys and girls, for instance, they may suppress themselves intellectually by trying to impress the opposite sex.

Studies which were conducted on the comparison of coeducation schools and single sex schools by Berge (2002) indicate that in single sex schools learners are willing to take risks because they do not fear falling on their face in front of the other sex and as a result classrooms are often dynamic, free and busting with ideas. This means that learners are not worried about making mistakes but determined to do their best in class. These studies are supported by Sax (2007) who contends that boys and girls have a number of differences that are best accommodated by single sex schooling.

Further, Halpen (2011) asserts that single sex schools provide a more relaxed environment for learning. The studies argue that many boys and girls in single sex schools are on top of their game academically because they often have a relaxed environment. This is created in part because none of the sexes want to impress the other gender as the case is in coeducation settings.

Based on findings done by Riordan (2009), many would agree that single sex education in private and religious schools has enhanced learner achievement more than hindered them, but the greatest question is whether students in these schools succeed because of the specific structure of

single sex schooling or as a result of other factors such as family background, home and school environment, the socio economic status of learners and local school policies. The most outstanding studies are those cited by Riordan (2011) who showed that both sexes of learners perform better in single sex on all test scores nearly a year above their counterparts in coeducation schools.

In Zambia, most single sex education schools are run by grant aided schools across the country (MOE, 1996). This means that Government schools largely provide coeducation setting environment both at Junior and senior secondary school. Like any other formal school in the country, secondary education started in the Zambia as a result of missionary work that established Munali Secondary School as single sex school in 1939 (Snelson, 1990). Subsequently a number of single sex secondary schools were built across the country by missionary workers. Some of the single sex schools include Lubwa mission school for boys in Chinsali District of Northern Province, Lwitikila Girls secondary school in Mpika District in Muchinga Province, Kafue Boys Secondary Schools in Lusaka province and St. Marks Secondary School in Southern Province.

Large Government Secondary schools were built in the country just after the attainment of political independence in 1964 and among them were Pemba Boys secondary school, Monze Boys' secondary school and Chipepo Boys' Secondary school all in Southern Province (MOE, 1992; MOE, 1996).

However, in the early 2000, government transformed most single sex secondary schools into coeducation secondary schools in an attempt to respond to the national outcry for increased access of girls' education (MOE, 1996). This was due to increasing disparities in education

provision between boys and girls where it was realized that most boarding secondary schools were for boys. It was argued that providing girls with education has greater benefits, for example maternal education reduces the risk of girl children dying by 20 percent more than boys. During this time, government allowed and encouraged the creation of management boards of both government and mission schools to embrace the idea of coeducation (MOE, 2008).

On one hand, the government argued that there was need for schools to prepare learners for adult life, thus questioning how boys and girls could learn to interact as equals in work places if they have no interacting experiences in secondary schools. Following this realization, government crafted a guideline which saw the transformation of some government secondary schools transformed into coeducation secondary schools for example Monze Boarding secondary school, Chipepo secondary school and Pemba secondary school in Southern Province to mention but a few(MOE,1996). Subsequently a number of mission /grant aided secondary schools changed from being single sex secondary schools to coeducation schools for instance Masuku secondary school in Southern Province.

In spite of this debate there has been a resurgence of interest in single sex secondary schooling in modern societies across the international boundaries, both in the private and public schools due to increasing research that show that boys and girls learn differently (Riordan, 2011).

This situation is not different from Zambia. Recently the Zambian government has made a reverse to single sex education and has demonstrated a strong desire to do so by building new single sex secondary schools across the country for example, Lunte Secondary School in Mporokoso District of Northern Province and Nickel Technical secondary school in Namwala District of Southern province(MOE,2014).

World over, education is regarded as the engine to national development. The importance of education received by learners at secondary school cannot therefore be underrated or undervalued. Recent studies show that secondary education increases opportunities for formal employment. This is consistent with the Galloway and Bernasek (2002) study which found that people with the highest levels of education were likely to work in the formal sector while those with the lowest education levels had the highest probabilities of working in the informal sector.

2.2 Causes of Poor Academic Performance

Globally, poor examination performance is caused by so many factors. In the United States (US), poor academic performance is largely attributed to substandard quality of education background. Wegner, Saunders and Allan (1995) postulate that lack of teachers' competence and giving regular homework, tests or continuous assessment to learners contribute to poor academic performance. The other paramount factor for poor academic performance in some learning institutions is poor and inexperienced leadership. When leadership in an organization is of substandard, consequently the result will be poor performance. These studies are supported by D' Souza (1994:112) where he stated that, "leaders and their leadership styles affect everyone and everything in their organization". This means that leaders may lead to improved or poor performance depending on their leadership styles and capabilities.

Lack of supervision of teachers can adversely affect performance of learners. This is the more reason that Ndoye (2007) cautions that while it is prudent to invest in teaching and learning materials like text books, desks, wall charts, flip charts and audio video aids, it is cardinal to ensure that the school is well managed and that investment is done in quality management training to establish support structures and inspection systems in schools and the district as a

whole. These studies suggest that improving schools' performance is paramount to enhancing the overall quality of the school.

In Africa, poor academic performance has been attributed to curriculum changes that educational authorities effect without first adequately preparing for the changes and without learners' orientation in curriculum change (Milter, 1991). In Zambia for example, the 2013 curriculum framework change which introduced compulsory computer studies at Grade 9 did not ensure that the physical infrastructure and the teaching and learning materials such as text books, computers and computer software were provided for before the commencement of the programme. As a result the Grade 9 computer studies examination in 2015 was marred with a wide range of challenges (MOE, 2015).

2.3 Creating an Effective School

The effectiveness of an education system refers to how well the system enables the graduates at any level to master the learning competencies (MOE, 2005). The effectiveness of a system largely depends on the quality of educational administrators. It entails that the Head teachers, Deputy Head teachers and Heads of Departments need training in Educational Management or leadership skills to provide quality education. This means that education should allow learners to reach their fullest potential in terms of cognitive, social, emotional, spiritual and creative capacities (MOE, 2008). This is in line with Sammons theory of an effective school. However, studies show that the majority of the staff occupying administrative and supervisory positions do not have relevant training for their posts and neither has the government crafted a deliberate mechanism for ensuring that those appointed to supervisory positions receive training in administration or leadership. Having an effective school entails the existence of qualified

teaching staff, experienced and qualified administrators, and availability of teaching and learning materials which are effectively used (Ribbins and Burrige, 1994).

CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

In chapter two, a review of literature related to this study was covered to guide the development of the research methodology which is in this chapter.

This chapter describes the strategy or action that was be used to collect data from the field of study. According to Macmillan English Dictionary (2011), methodology refers to methods and principles used for doing a particular kind of work especially scientific or academic research. On the other hand, methods are a way of doing something especially in a planned or established way. The methodology therefore presents a research design ,target population and sample size , sampling procedure ,research instruments , data collection tools and data analysis processes.

3.1 Research Design

A research design is the researchers' aggregate /overall plan for obtaining responses to the research questions or for testing the research hypotheses. It forms the basic strategies that the researcher employs to develop information that is reliable and interpretable (Leedy, 1997).

This study used the ex – post facto comparative research design. Like the experimental design, ex – post facto design addresses causality and employs statistical analysis although it does not allow for the manipulation of variables. By using this design, the researcher takes the effect (dependent variable) and examines that data retrospectively to establish causes ,relationships or association and their meaning,” (Cohen and Manion 1994:148). Thus, the study used data from the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) to compare and contrast the academic performance

of schools from 2010 to 2015. This research design was used because it enables the researcher to establish causes for good or poor academic achievement for the selected secondary schools.

Qualitative data were collected for the study. The qualitative design enables the researcher to solicit in depth answers from respondents to understand the phenomenological academic trends of each selected school. This means that qualitative data allows non numerical examination and interpretation of observation for the purpose of discovering underlying meanings and patterns of relationships (Cohen and Manion, 1994). Thus, the study on comparing the academic performance between single sex and coeducation schools relied on past performance results for Grades 9 and 12 from the examination council of Zambia and in depth interviews with participants. The interviews, questionnaires and focus group discussions were conducted with teachers, Heads of Departments and District Education Standards Officer. The involvement of these officers was as a result of the key roles they play in the delivery of quality education in schools. Academic results for Grades 9 and 12 from 2010 to 2015 were processed to make a comparative analysis and subsequently graphs, charts and tables were employed in describing the trends and patterns. This is called descriptive data (Mhlanga and Ncube, 2014)

3.2 Study Site

The comparative study of academic performance of coeducation and single sex education was carried out in Choma District.

The schools which were selected included a coeducation secondary school and a single sex secondary school with both junior and senior classes. The single sex secondary school was grant aided and the coeducation secondary school was a public school, namely Mukasa Minor Seminary and Choma Day Secondary School respectively.

The single sex secondary school was grant aided and the coeducation secondary school was public school because only Grant aided secondary schools have the same gender while all government secondary schools have mixed gender education in Choma District. These schools were chosen because they were easily accessible.

3.3 Study Population

Population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples may be drawn from for measurement (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The target population for this study were schools with junior and senior secondary school learners within Choma District for the period from 2010 to 2015 school years. Two schools were included in the study. Both secondary schools were within Choma District but located in different areas of the district. Teachers and officials from Choma DEBS office participated in the study. The researcher engaged the teachers and the District Education Standards Officer because they have vast knowledge on the subject that was being investigated.

3.4 Study Sample

According to Leedy (1997), a study sample is a pool of participants chosen from the total population under investigation and that such sample is representative enough of a larger population. The sample consisted of officials from DEBS office, Head teachers and teachers from Choma Day Secondary school and Mukasa Minor Seminary. The total number of participants in the study was 52.

3.5 Sampling Techniques

The study compared the academic performance of learners in single sex schools and co-education secondary schools in Choma District. Simple random sampling was applied in this study. This technique was used because in simple random sampling, each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected and the member is not affected by the selection of other members (Leedy, 1997). This means that whatever unit goes into the sample, it enters there absolutely by chance and that every unit in the population stands an equal chance of qualifying into the sample.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

The instruments for the collection of primary data was done by using the questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group discussions and documents analysis. These instruments provide an in depth detail about the phenomenon being studied.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure and Time Line

Before the main study was conducted, a pilot testing of both the questionnaire and interview guides was done to ascertain their validity. Pilot testing of instruments provides the researcher an opportunity to check on the respondents' understanding of the meaning of items and determine the reliability of the instruments used (Tuckman, 1994).

During the first semester of the 2015 /2016 academic year, the researcher obtained permission from UNZA /ZOU authorities to undertake a research on the comparative study of academic performance of some selected single sex and coeducation secondary schools in Choma District. After permission was granted, a pilot study involving teachers was conducted. The group of

teachers who were piloted was part of the target population of the study but were not allowed in the final study. This is because a pilot study should be conducted on the sample of subjects similar to the group with which the final study is to be conducted (Nunnally, 1994). Data was collected from teachers, head teachers, DEBS officials and Secondary Sources such as results documents, thus the results for Grades 9 and 12 from the Examinations Council of Zambia for each selected school for the period 2010 to 2015. The results were essential because they provided substantial and reliable data for comparing academic performance between the schools.

3.8 Data Analysis and Interpretation

The purpose of study was to compare the academic performance of learners in single sex and coeducation secondary schools to find out whether single sex education is more or less effective than co-education in terms of academic excellence. Data analysis is the scientific treatment of data so as to make it easier for the researcher to draw interpretation and / or find answers to the research problem (Leedy, 1997). The analysis of data was done by using the results documents for 2010 to 2015 from the Examinations Council of Zambia for both Grades 9 and 12 of each selected school. The data from the schools was processed to show trends in academic performance and make to deductions, comparative analysis and inferences.

CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed and described the general methodology that was used in this study. It presented a research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection procedure and data analysis. This chapter presents the findings of the study in accordance with the research questions which included the following:

- (i) What factors give disparities in academic excellence between single sex and co-education secondary schooling?
- (ii) In which academic setting do Grade 9 and 12 pupils get better academic results between single sex and co-education schooling in Choma District?
- (iii) What problems do single sex and co-education secondary schools face in the provision of quality education?
- (iv) What strategies have you set designed to improve pupils' academic Performance?

The following field data presented in figure 1 and 2 through table 3 to table 10 show the demographic trends in response to research question number (i) which sought to determine the factors that give disparities in academic excellence between single-sex and co-education secondary schooling. The findings for research question number (ii) which was designed to establish the type of education environment which produces better academic results between co-education and single sex schooling at Grade 9 and 12 are presented in figure 11 and 12. The interviews and in depth findings for the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) which were held with

Heads of Departments (HODs) and the Standards Educational Officer (DESO) were in response to research question number (iii) which sought to explore the problems faced by single- sex and co-education secondary schools in the provision of quality education. Research question number (iv) established the measures /strategies that were set up by the selected single sex and co-education secondary schools designed to improve pupils' academic performance. It is also important to note that these data culminated from the research instruments.

Figure 1: Bar chart showing the gender of respondents at Choma Day Secondary School (Government Co-education School).

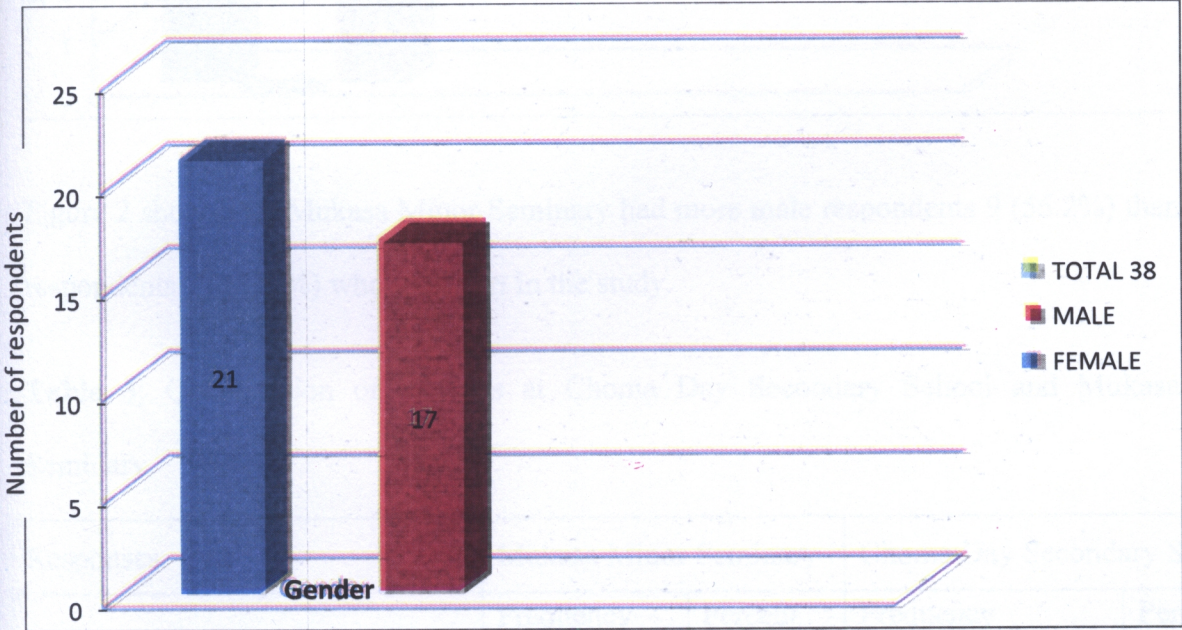


Figure 1 shows that Choma Day Secondary school, a government coeducation secondary school had more female respondents 21(55.3%) than male respondents 17 (44.7%) who participated in the study.

Figure 2: Bar chart below showing the gender respondents at Mukasa Minor Seminary (single sex, grant aided secondary school).

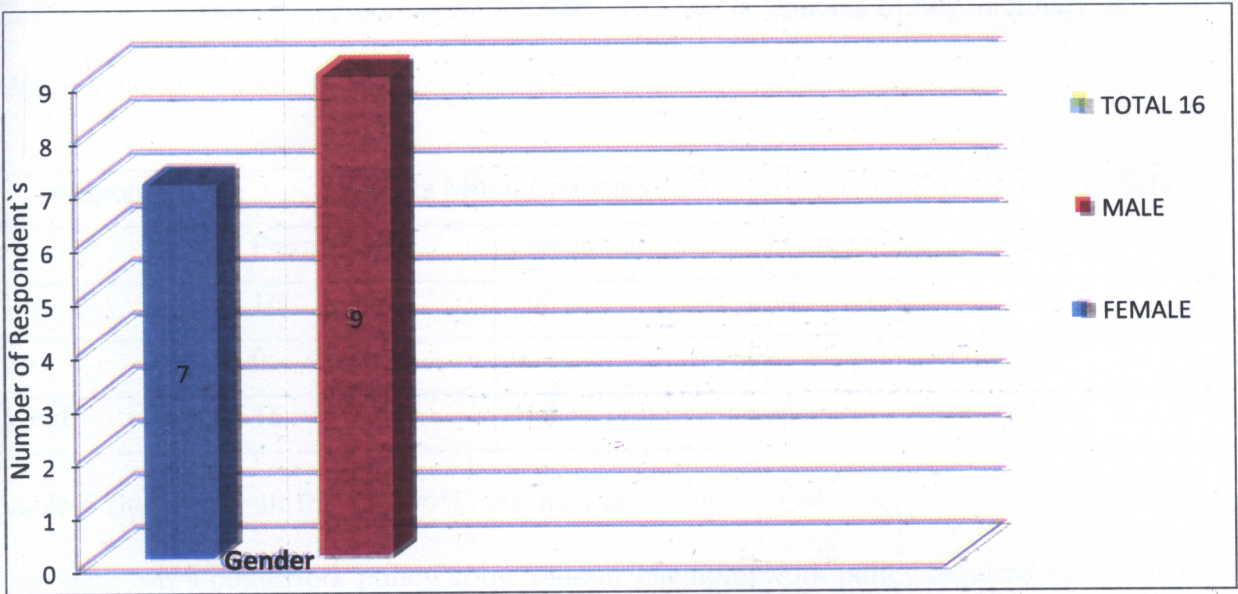


Figure 2 shows that Mukasa Minor Seminary had more male respondents 9 (56.2%) than female respondents 7 (43.8 %) who took part in the study.

Table 3; Qualification of teachers at Choma Day Secondary School and Mukasa Minor Seminary

Responses	Mukasa Minor Seminary		Choma Day Secondary School	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
College Diploma	9	56.2	12	31.5
Advanced Diploma	2	12.5	10	26.3
University Degree	5	31.2	16	42.1
Total	16	100	38	100

Figure 3 shows that there were more teachers with college diplomas at Mukasa Minor Seminary 9(56.2%) than at Choma Day Secondary School which had 12(31.5%) diploma holders. Comparatively Choma Day Secondary had more degree holders 16 (42.1%) respondents than

Mukasa Minor Seminary which had 5 teachers with degrees constituting 31.2% of the teaching staff who participated in the study.

Table 4: Table showing responses on homework policy at Mukasa Minor Seminary and Choma Day Secondary School.

Response	Mukasa Minor Seminary		Choma Day Secondary School	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	16	100	30	79
No	0	0	8	21
Total	16	100	38	100

Table 4 shows that all the 16(100%) teachers interviewed at Mukasa Minor Seminary indicated that there was a homework policy at the school. The homework policy required every teacher to give homework every week. In addition to homework, all learners were given continuous assessment fortnightly. For Choma Day Secondary School, 30 (79%) teachers stated that there was a homework policy. The policy required teachers to give homework every fortnight. Continuous assessment at Choma Day was given fortnightly too.

Table 5: Shows availability of teaching and learning materials at Mukasa Minor Seminary and Choma Day Secondary School.

Response	Mukasa Minor Seminary Single sex Granted aided		Choma Day Secondary School Government Co-education	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Yes	16	100	25	66
No	0	0	13	34
Total	16	100	38	100

Table 5 shows that 16(100%) teachers at Mukasa Minor Seminary indicated that the school was sufficiently stocked with teaching and learning materials. In the same vein no teacher (0%) indicated that the school lacked teaching/learning materials. However, for Choma Day Secondary School only 25(66%) of the teachers interviewed said the school had adequate teaching and learning materials while 13(34%) of the respondents said the school did not have adequate teaching and learning materials.

Figure 6: Bar chart showing frequency of Professional Teachers’ Group meetings at Mukasa Minor Seminary and Choma Day Secondary School.

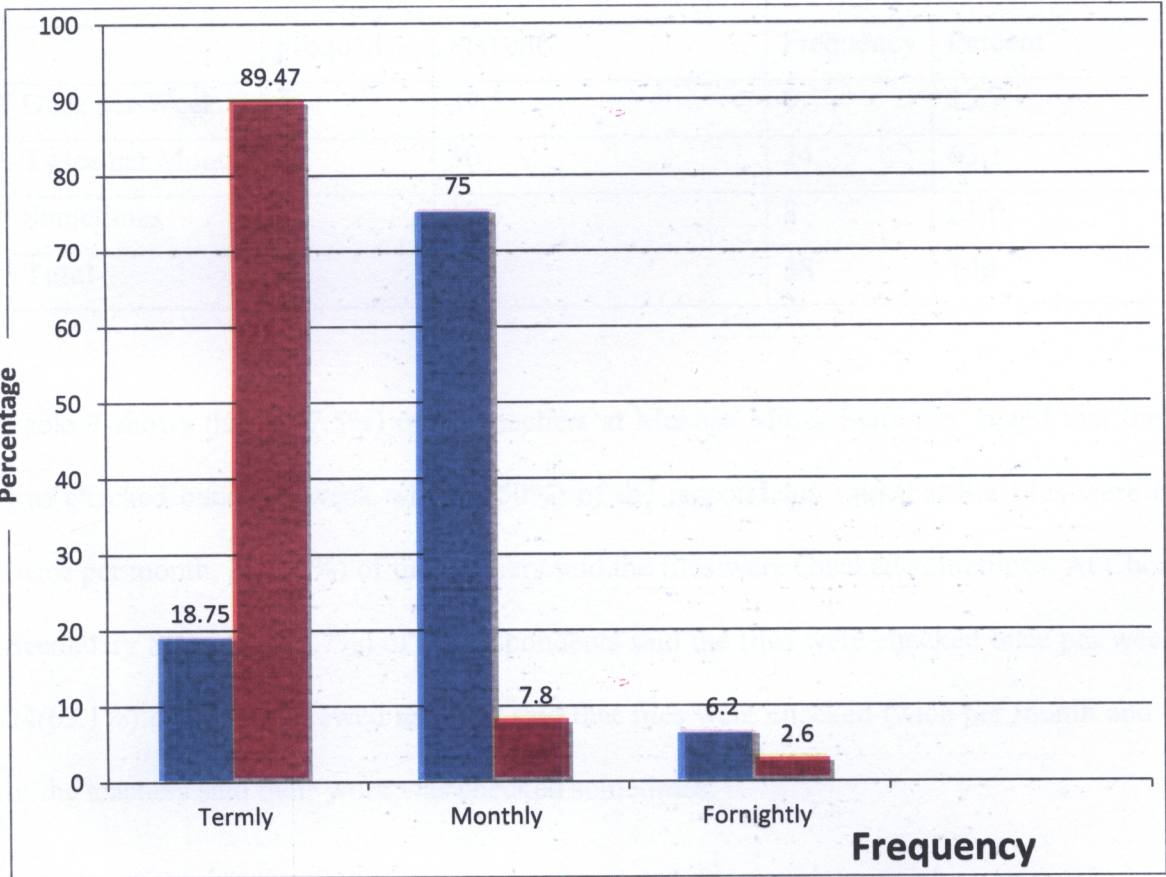


Figure 6 shows that 3(18.8%) teachers of the interviewed respondents at Mukasa Minor Seminary said that the School Based Continuing Professional Development (SBCPD) meetings

were held termly while 12(75%) teachers indicated that these meetings were held monthly. Further, 1(6.3%) teacher said the meetings were held fortnightly. At Choma Day Secondary 34 (89.47%) of the interviewed teachers said the School Based Continuing Professional Development (SBCPD) meetings were held termly, 3 (7.3%) teachers said these meetings were held monthly while 1(2.6%) teacher stated that the meetings are held fortnightly.

Table 7: Frequency of supervisors checking teaching files at Mukasa Minor Seminary and Choma Day Secondary School.

Responses	Mukasa Minor Seminary (Granted aided single sex education)		Choma Day Secondary School (Government Co-education)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Once per Week	6	37.5	6	15.7
Twice per Month	8	50	24	63.1
Sometimes	2	12.5	8	21.0
Total	16	100	38	100

Table 7 shows that 6(37.5%) of the teachers at Mukasa Minor Seminary stated that their work was checked once per week while 8(50%) of the respondents said that the files were checked twice per month, 2(12.5%) of the teachers said the files were checked sometimes. At Choma Day Secondary School, 6(15.7%) of the respondents said the files were checked once per week while 24(63.1%) of the interviewed teachers said that files were checked twice per month and 8(21%) of the teachers said their work was checked sometimes.

Table 8: Awards for outstanding teacher performance at Mukasa Minor Seminary and Choma Day Secondary School.

Responses	Mukasa Minor Seminary (Granted Aided Single Sex)		Choma Day Secondary School (Government Co-Education)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Prize giving	16	100	38	100
No awards	0	0	0	0
Total	16	100	38	100

Table 8 shows that the 16(100%) of the teachers interviewed at Mukasa Minor Seminary indicated that the school awards hardworking teachers and 0 (0%) of the respondents said the school does not reward staff for outstanding performance. It was also reported that the school awards the non teaching staff for outstanding performance. On the other hand, 38(100%) of the teachers interviewed said that Choma Day Secondary School awards teachers for hardworking in various disciplines during the teachers’ day which falls on 5th of every October. However, the teachers at Choma Day school were worrisome of the parameters used to award the teachers. The criteria for giving these awards remain a contentious issue at this government co-education secondary school.

Table 9: Academic awards/prizes for pupils at Mukasa Minor Seminary and Choma Day Secondary School.

Responses	Choma Day Secondary School (Government Co-Education)		Mukasa Minor Seminary (Granted Aided Single Sex)	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Prize giving	30	78.9	16	100
No Prize	8	21	0	0

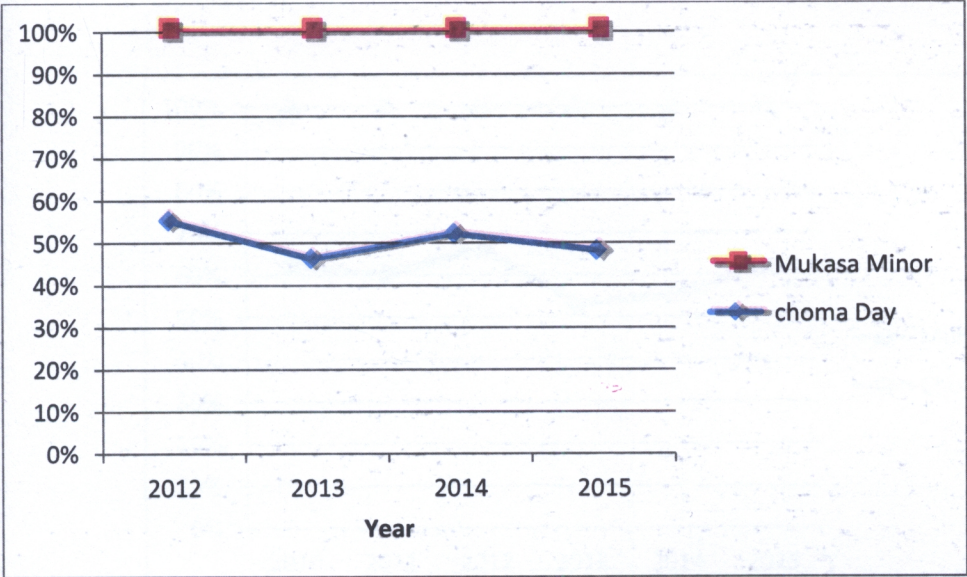
Table 9 shows that 30(78.9%) of the interviewed teachers at Choma Day Secondary School consented that pupils were given awards for outstanding performance while 8 (21%) indicated that they were not given awards .On the other hand 16 (100%) of the respondents at Mukasa Minor Seminary indicated that pupils were given awards for outstanding performance and 0(0%) of the teachers said to the contrary.

Table 10: Frequency of lesson observation by supervisors at Mukasa Minor Seminary and Choma Day Secondary School

Responses	Mukasa Minor Seminary (Granted aided single sex)		Choma Day Secondary School (Government Co-Education)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Every week	11	68.8	20	52.6
monthly	5	31.2	10	26.3
Sometimes	0	0	8	21.1
Total	16	100	38	100

The table above shows that 11(68 %) of the respondents at Mukasa Minor Seminary indicated that teachers were observed every week by supervisors and 5(31%) teachers explained teachers were monitored in classroom instruction monthly. For Choma Day secondary, 20 (52%) of the respondents explained that teachers were observed weekly, 10(26.3%) indicated that a teacher may be observed once per month while 8(21%) of the teachers explained that teachers were observed in an irregular manner.

Figure 11: Grade 9 academic performance trends of Choma Day Secondary and Mukasa Minor Seminary from 2010-2015.

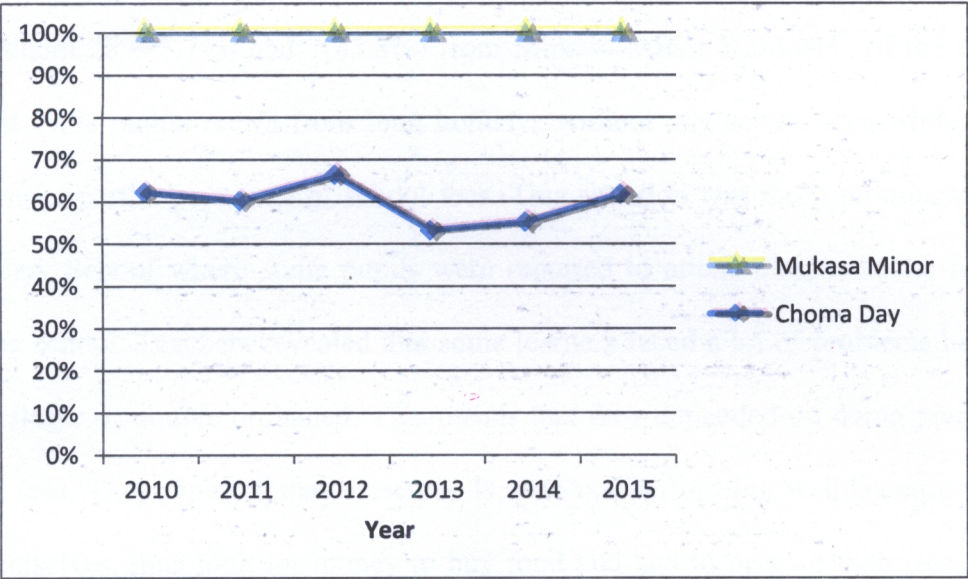


Source: Ministry of Education-Examinations Council of Zambia

Figure 11 shows that from 2010 to 2015, the pass rate for Mukasa Minor Seminary at grade 9 was 100 percent. It was evident that the academic performance of pupils at this school was consistent from 2010 to 2015. The information given by the Rector (Head teacher) was that the school had been achieving a 100 percent pass rate for the 15 previous years.

On the other hand, the chart shows that the academic performance trends for Choma Day Secondary School had been below 60 percent in the previous four years. This is a government co-education secondary school. The grade 9 academic results trends for Choma Day Secondary for 2010 and 2011 were not available because by then the school had only senior classes running from grade 10 to 12. The junior classes were not yet created.

Figure 12: Grade 12 academic performance trends of Choma Day Secondary school and Mukasa Minor Seminary from 2010 to 2015.



Source: Ministry of Education- Examinations Council of Zambia

Figure 12 shows that the pass rate for Mukasa Minor Seminary at grade 12 level was consistently 100 percent from 2010 to 2015. The School Rector (Head teacher) reported that the school’s pass rate had been 100 percent for the previous 15 years. However, during the same period under study, 2010 to 2015, the pass rate for Choma Day Secondary School at grade 12 was below 70 percent. In the years 2011, 2013 and 2014, Choma Day school recorded 60, 52 and 55 percent pass rate respectively. This means that the performance was declining in some years.

4.2 In-Depth Findings from the Focus Group Discussions

During the focus group discussions which were held with Heads of Departments in the selected schools, it was revealed that one of the major challenges facing both secondary schools was late returning of pupils from long holidays such as April, August and December. At Choma Day secondary school 28 (73.7%) and 7(43.8%) from Mukasa Minor Seminary of the respondents reported that some pupils return from long holidays without any school fees while some only manage to make partial payments of school fees. This situation was more prominent at Choma Day Secondary School where some pupils were reported to attend classes in the fourth week after opening school. Teachers revealed that some learners faced a lot of problems because they were either single or double orphaned. This means that they depended on doing piece works to raise school fees. They reported that some pupils were not performing well because they had to fend for themselves, thus look for money to buy food and had to prepare their own food since they were not in a boarding school. This consumed much of their time for studying. In addition these teachers revealed that some pupils who come from far flung areas for school ended up looking for their own rental apartments where five to seven learners found themselves in one room for accommodation purposes. As a result of the social economic hardships, some girls ended up in prostitution as a way of raising the much needed income for food, rentals and school fees. Most of the pupils who were renting were those learning at Choma Day Secondary school because only few pupils at Mukasa Minor Seminary were day scholars while the majority of the learners were boarders. In the case of boys, it was reported that some boys engaged themselves in beer drinking and consumption of various narcotic drugs such as daga due to peer influence. However, 10(26.3%) of the respondents at Choma Day school argued that although there were

pupils who engaged in bad vices, the proportion of those learners was small and no accurate records were available at the school.

19(50%) of the teachers interviewed revealed that the results were better at grade 12 than grade 9 at Choma Day Secondary school because grade 12 pupils were more serious with academic work than Grade 9 pupils. For Mukasa Minor Seminary 16(100%) respondents alluded to the fact that academic results for both grade 9 and 12 were good with quality for the previous 15 years.

The issue of dating (pairing) was raised by 15(39.5%) of teachers at Choma Day Secondary School, a Government Co-education school. The teachers conceded that dating among senior pupils was common and posing serious challenges on the learning processes. Teachers reported that some girls got pregnant through such bad vices. Teachers agreed that the pupils who were involved in such bad vices had little or no time to concentrate on school work and so performed poorly academically especially during the grade 12 public examinations.

21 (55.3%) of the respondents said that the grade 9 results were gradually improving at Choma Day Secondary School. However, they indicated that the academic performance was not very good because they receive pupils with generally low marks from feeder basic schools. The teachers explained that the largest proportion of learners they receive from the feeder schools could hardly read or express themselves in the official English language and so they bear the burden to improve their literacy and basic arithmetic skills.

5(83%) of the Heads of Department at Choma Day School explained that the number of teachers who were recommended to teach the junior classes in the basic schools without the relevant specialized subject areas or relevant qualification was high. In addition, 30(78.9%) of the interviewed teachers said it was difficult to pay individualized attention to slow learners or

effectively conduct remedial work for slow learners because the class enrolments were too large. One teacher at Choma Day Secondary School said *“one of the classes I teach has over 78 pupils, so how can I effectively help slow learners with such a large number of learners in one class?”*

The other factor that was raised by 30(78.9%) and 9(56.3%) of the teachers interviewed at Choma Day Secondary school and Mukasa Minor Seminary respectively was that the changes on the curriculum have had their own share to contribute to poor academic performance especially at grade 9, for example where the government introduced compulsory computer studies and public examinations for that subject in 2013 (MOE, 2013).

When the Heads of Departments were asked about the measures the two schools have put in place to improve academic performance, it became apparent, that the two schools were striving to improve the academic performance of their schools. In both secondary schools, 11(100%) of the HODs explained that School Based Continuing Professional(CPD) meetings, provision of incentives to teachers, availability of teaching/learning materials especially the revised curriculum text books and supervision of teachers play a significant role in enhancing quality education. They also unanimously agreed that implementing the repeat policy is a functional strategy for good academic results. A repeat policy is where any pupil who does not perform well is repeated or not allowed to proceed to a higher grade unless he/she improves (MOE, 2008).

In order to address the problem of late reporting pupils after long holidays which was common at Choma Day Secondary School,38(100 %) of the respondents said that it was resolved that period and attendance registers should be used effectively to identify absentees. The parents /guardians would also be held answerable while pupils who report late would be punished. The

HODs said that the school should be starting lessons on the first day of opening school as opposed to wait for learners to increase per class.

When teachers were interviewed about their school's academic policies, the question was easily answered by Mukasa Minor Seminary teachers. 14(87.5%) of the teachers were able to state their academic policy as, *"prayer and hardwork"*. For Choma Day Secondary School, 25(65.7%) of the teachers said there was an academic policy, but when asked to state it, they gave varying statements, for instance one teacher said, *"pupils are supposed to perform to the required standard academically and if they do not, they are not allowed to proceed after their grade 9 examination"*. Another teacher, said, *"To attain 85% pass rate by the year 2018"*. Yet another teacher said, the academic policy is *"to educate all pupils so that they can be somebody in future."* However, 30(78.9%) of the respondents at Choma Day Secondary School said they were not aware of the academic policy the school.

4.3 Factors that give disparities in Academic Performance at Choma Day Secondary

School and Mukasa Minor Seminary

In response to research question number (i) which sought to determine factors that give disparities in academic excellence, the Head teacher and 30 (78.9%) of the respondents at Choma Day Secondary School indicated that the homework policy which required teachers to give homework weekly, internal monitoring by HODs, Deputy head teacher and Head teacher were cited as important strategies. It was reported that teachers were encouraged to hold the School Based Continuing Professional Development (CPD) meetings and the School Programme of In-service for the Term (SPRINT). These teachers' group meetings would make teachers abreast with new developments in their areas of specialization and would help to equip them with latest

pedagogical skills. This is in line with government guideline on Teachers Group Meetings (MOE, 2007). It was also reported that class enrolments would be regulated while compulsory study time (prep) would be given to both morning classes and afternoon classes to afford learners sufficient time for studying. It was reported that class enrolments would be regulated to eliminate overcrowding in classes with a view to improve on the *Teacher /Pupil ratio*. The school agreed to procure adequate teaching/learning materials. Choma Day Secondary School further resolved to hold scheduled counseling sessions to address the problem of pupils engaging in bad social vices such as dating, prostitution, beer drinking and abuse of technology to cite but few examples.

For Mukasa Minor Seminary, 16(100%) respondents said the school had good results because of the small Teacher/Pupil ratio which was 1:20, emphasis on academic policy, excellent pupil/teacher rapport, availability of teaching/learning materials with a well stocked library and clinical supervision of teachers by the School Rector and subject heads. The School Rector stated *“implementation of the Grade repeat policy, discipline, mandatory mid term examinations coupled with weekly continuous assessment and setting minimal benchmarks for learners is a blended achievement package for the school”*. 16(100%) of the respondents attributed the good performance of the school at Grade 9 and 12 to the hard work by teachers, team spirit and remedial work for slow learners.

CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The previous chapter presents findings of the study in accordance with the research questions. This chapter discusses the findings according to the objectives of the study. The purpose of the study was to compare the academic performance of some selected co-education and single sex secondary schools in Choma District. The objectives of the study were:

- i. To determine the factors that give disparities in academic excellence between single-sex and co-education secondary schooling in Choma District.
- ii. To establish the type of learning environment which produces better academic results between single sex schooling and co-education schooling at Grades 9 and 12 levels
- iii. To explore problems faced by single-sex and co-education secondary schools in the provision of quality education.
- iv. To establish measures/strategies set by selected single-sex and co-education secondary schools designed to improve pupils' academic performance.

5.1 Academic performance of pupils from single-sex schools and co-education schools at Grades 9 and 12 level in Choma District from 2010 to 2015.

The results of the study for the period under review show that the academic performance of Choma Day Secondary school was below 70% and in some years fluctuated to below 50% at both grade 9 and 12 levels. The pass rate for Mukasa Minor Seminary had been 100% for more than a decade at both Grades 9 and 12. This picture obtaining from Choma Day Secondary

School and Mukasa Minor Seminary is a common feature of other government co-education and single sex grant aided Secondary schools (Post Newspaper 12th March, 2012). This has been the concern raised by the stakeholders meetings held in Choma District each time of the year a review of academic performance was made.

Although the number of female respondents 8(43.7%) at Mukasa Minor Seminary and 21(55.2%) at Choma Day Secondary is at variance, it does not suggest any effect on the performance of grade 9 and 12 for the two schools. In the same vein the two schools indicated that they had almost the same number of respondents who said that they were not married. It can therefore be inferred that marital status does not play any significant role in the differences in academic performance either at grade 9 and 12 levels of education.

The most fascinating and interesting episode in this study was the teachers' qualifications. Wegner et al (1995) postulated that lack of highly qualified teaching staff in the United States causes poor learners' performance. However, the results obtained from this study show that Choma Day secondary School had 16(42.1%) degree holder teachers while Mukasa Minor Seminary had 5 (31.1%) degree holders. If the assertion that highly qualified teachers enable pupils to produce good results all the time, then Choma Day Secondary School could have been producing better academic results than Mukasa Minor Seminary at grade 9 and 12 levels of education. However, the results of the study show that Mukasa Minor Seminary with a smaller percentage of degree holders was performing better than Choma Day Secondary School. This means that in order for pupils to produce good results, the teachers should be qualified as opposed to being highly qualified. Further it entails that there are many other factors that enable pupils pass an examination.

5.2 Educational Views from Teachers, Heads of Departments, Head Teachers and District

Administrators on Factors Affecting Learner Performance in Single-Sex and Co-

Education Secondary Schools in Choma District.

The results of this study revealed that in terms of teaching and learning materials, Mukasa Minor Seminary, a grant aided single-sex secondary school was well resourced. The District Education Standards Officer (DESO) attributed the good academic performance of Mukasa Minor seminary at grades nine and twelve level to the availability of teaching/learning materials. The DESO said that apart from the academic policy of the school, which says, “prayer and hard work,” the vision and mission of the school is very important. The DESO also said discipline is also a major attribute to the success story of Mukasa Minor seminary because discipline is drawn from the mission of the school. These findings of this study are supported by Kangai, Senah and Mubika (2011) who contended that the vision is expressed as a set of goals and objectives to guide the institution in its decision making so as to realize the goals and objectives of the organisation.

All the respondents, 16 (100%) interviewed on why Mukasa Minor seminary was achieving a 100 percent pass rate every year during public examinations; the teachers alluded the good performance to discipline, availability of teaching/ learning materials as well as the schools’ vision and mission which they said were well understood among the teaching faculty. On the other hand 25(66%) of the interviewed teachers at Choma day secondary school indicated that the school had instructional resources but 13(34%) said the school did not have adequate teaching/learning materials but nevertheless conceded that teaching resources play a major role in enhancing the teaching/learning processes as was propounded by sammons etal (1995).

Both schools indicated that they had a homework policy aimed at increasing the learners' study time. Homework was given to the learners weekly at Mukasa Minor Seminary and that was alluded to by all the 16(100%) respondents interviewed and further indicated that homework was given every fortnight. However, both schools were unable to clearly show how the homework policy was implemented considering that there were many subjects offered at each school. If for example all the teachers at both schools gave homework weekly or fortnightly in the classes that they taught, the learners would be overloaded with school work. Subsequently, that would put undue pressure on the learners thereby compromising the quality of the learners' work. Nevertheless this study showed that homework improved pupil performance at both grade nine and twelve levels. The work given to the learners should neither be too much nor too little. This study is supported by Kelly and Kanyika (2000) who reported that the highest achievers in their study were pupils who had more than three home works per week. Kelly and Kanyika (2000: 119) stated that:

learner assessment in form of homework and the testing extends the time pupils actually spend learning. It provides them with opportunities to practice their skills and discipline extent to which they grasp the concept and procedures. It provided teachers with an insight into the understanding gained by pupils. It serves the basis for reinforcing ideas that are correct. Frequent pupil assessment is a sound pedagogical practice with a significant positive relationship to pupil achievement.

The findings of this study are in line with the Ministry of Education policy that stresses on giving homework to learners at least twice a week in all subjects being studied (Kasanda, 2001). Written tests and homework are important in monitoring learner achievement. Nevertheless, the

implementation of the homework policy should be well streamlined to reduce work overloads on the learners.

From the above, it can be inferred that Mukasa Minor Seminary was performing well because tests and homework were given regularly to the learners while Choma Day Secondary school was doing poorly because homework and tests were not given regularly to the pupils. The researcher feels that schools should develop well-coordinated homework programmes in their institutions in order to avoid overloading the learners to the detriment of failing to find time for studying. That would be done by designing a homework timetable which would only permit a maximum of two departments to give homework per week as opposed to all departments giving homework at the same time. Such an approach to homework policy would provide adequate time for all learners to concentrate on all the subjects offered in the school curriculum.

The findings of this study that changing the curriculum by educational authorities without adequately preparing the learners and distributing the resource materials to both the teachers and learners adversely affects the performance of the learners is supported by Mitter (1991). This was evident in the 2015 academic results in computer studies at Choma Day Secondary school where the pass rate was 46 percent compared to 100 percent at Mukasa Minor seminary, a grant aided and single sex school. It can therefore be argued that Choma Day secondary school underperformed due to inadequate resources while Mukasa Minor Seminary performed well (100% pass rate) in computer studies because the school was well stocked with the resource materials such as text books, computers, computer software and teachers. In 2013, the Zambian government through the Ministry of Education introduced compulsory introduction of computer studies in all the junior secondary schools. However, most junior secondary schools had not yet acquired the necessary teaching/learning resources and facilities such as computer rooms. This

situation was evident at Choma Day secondary school and most other government schools (MOE, 2014).

The frequency of professional group meetings was another interesting finding of this study. The results of the study show that at Choma day secondary school, 34(89.4%) teachers interviewed indicated that the School Based Continuing Professional meetings were held termly while 3(7.8%) said that the professional meetings were held monthly. Only 1 (2.6%) teacher stated that the meetings were held fortnightly. This shows that the frequency of the teachers meetings was higher at Mukasa Minor Secondary school than at Choma day school.

On the basis of these findings it could be inferred that the School Based Continuing Professional Development (SBCPD) meetings play an important role in the academic performance of learners. These results are in line with the Ministry of Education (2007) which stresses that teachers have a responsibility to themselves and their profession, to deepen their knowledge and professional skills, and keep themselves up to date on major developments affecting their performance. This means that teachers would be improving their pedagogical skills through the framework of the School Programme of In-service for the Term (SPRINT). This is important because it maximizes the use of the existing resources to support continuing studies of teachers at school level.

In terms of awards, both schools showed that they award teachers for outstanding performance. At Choma Day Secondary 38 (100%) of the respondents explained that the school gives rewards to the hardworking teachers during teachers' day which falls on the 5th October every year. Similarly 16 (100%) of the interviewed teachers alluded to the fact that the school gives awards regularly to both dedicated professional and support staff for outstanding performance.

This study therefore reveals that there should be other motivational factors that make teachers improve the performance of learners apart from merely giving awards. This is in line with Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory which argues that both the lower and higher order needs should be met for a person to perform in an outstanding manner (Schermerhorn, Hunt and Osborn, 1995).

The other interesting scenario of this study was on the frequency of teachers checking the teaching files and observing lesson delivery. Of the 38 teachers interviewed, 24 (63%) respondents at Choma Day Secondary school said that their teaching files were monitored and checked twice per month. In other words, it means the files were checked fortnightly and 8 (21%) teachers said that their files were only checked sometimes while 6 (15.7%) teachers explained that the teaching instruments were checked weekly. For Mukasa Minor Seminary, 8 (50%) teachers said that files were checked fortnightly while 6 (37.5%) indicated that the checking was done weekly and 2 (12.5%) respondents stated that the files were checked only sometimes. Further, all the 16 (100%) respondents at Mukasa minor Seminary indicated that lesson observation was conducted by the subject heads and School Rector at least three times for each teacher in a term.

The results of this study show that the higher the frequency of monitoring the teachers in class and checking their teaching files, the more likely that the teachers will put in their best and consequently improve the academic performance of learners. This practice promotes quality assurance. The findings of this study are supported by MOE (2005:42) which stipulate that quality assurance is based and relies upon the following principles:

- Regular and systematic monitoring of performance of all management and delivery systems, processes and provisions.
- Ongoing development and use of agreed performance indicators that relate to the expected outcomes on the part of both teachers and pupils.
- Analysis of acceptable evidence obtained from performance observation schedules to be used in monitoring of the management of the school and evaluation of teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Also feedback reports from standards officers and the boards.

According to MOE (1996), quality assurance involves developing a set of achievable indicators in the various areas of school operation and evaluating schools and individual teachers on performance in relation to established indicators. The purpose of monitoring and inspecting is to determine how successful schools and teachers are working towards predetermined educational objectives.

5.3 Social Factors Affecting Pupil Academic Performance in Coeducation and Single Sex

Secondary Schools

Social economic factors were reported by both institutions of learning as affecting the academic performance of learners. Poverty was raised as one of the issues troubling vulnerable children especially those who are single or double orphaned. Although Mukasa Minor Seminary indicated that there were some pupils who were unable to pay school fees during the term, the failure to pay school fees was prominently raised at Choma Day Secondary school where administrators and some heads of departments said that some pupils report for classes in the fourth week of the

term after long holidays because of financial challenges. Late returning of pupils from long holidays impacts negatively on the performance of the learners.

The study revealed that some girls engage themselves into bad vices such as prostitution in order to raise money for up keep where they rent apartments. In some cases, Choma Day Secondary school, a government co-education school had cases of girls getting pregnant from fellow classmates especially at senior level. Children from poor homes encounter a lot of problems as they attend school. The MOE (1996) and MOE (2008) show that the education provision does not always take sufficient account of these factors of the needs of the poor. Children of the poor need an enriched school environment to compensate for the deprivations experienced in their families.

5.4 Strategies to Improve Academic Performance at Choma Day Secondary and Mukasa Minor Seminary

The two institutions of learning have put measures on how to enhance the performance of learners. The researcher feels that both institutions of learning could still do better if they combined their strategies. These strategies include the following:

- Vision and functional mission statements shared and understood by all teachers.
- Emphasis on academic policy and homework policy
- Clinical supervision of the teaching staff by heads of departments, senior teachers, deputy head teachers and head teachers
- Regular holding of teachers' group meetings such as SPRINT
- Regulated class enrolments
- Adequate and effective use of teaching/ learning resources

- Formation of clubs or associations for pupils
- Compulsory implementation of study time for all pupils from grade 8-12
- Effective continuous assessment procedure and scheduled weekly tests could greatly expose learners to a variety of examination material.

These findings are in line with the establishment of an effective school as proposed by (kangai etal, 2011; sammons, 1995).

CHAPTER SIX

6.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents a summary of all the findings of the study and the conclusion drawn from the literature and the results of the study. It also presents the recommendations made based on findings and suggests a proposed future research.

6.1 SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to compare the academic performance of pupils in single sex and co-education schools in selected secondary schools in Choma District. The first objective of the study determined the factors that gave disparities in academic excellence between single sex and co-education secondary schooling in Choma District from 2010-2015. The study reviewed that the single sex grant aided secondary schools did better in academic excellence than the co-education government secondary schools due to the following reasons:

- They had a vision and functional mission statement which was understood by the entire teaching staff.
- They had a clear academic policy, i.e. repeating under achieving learners.
- The schools were better resourced with teaching and learning materials.
- The learners were rated highly disciplined.
- Homework and tests were given to learners weekly.
- Teachers are dedicated to duty and promoted team spirit.
- Administrators conduct clinical supervision of staff.

- Teachers and pupils from single sex grant aided secondary schools were motivated by giving them awards. Incentives were also given to teachers on a timely basis.

The second research objective was to establish the type of schooling environment which produces better academic results between single sex and co-education schooling at grades 9 and 12 from 2010-2015. The findings of the study indicated that the performance of single sex secondary schools, which are grant aided secondary schools during the period under review was 100% pass rate while the co-education government secondary school was below 60% pass rate and sometimes fluctuated to between 40% and 50% at grade 9. This situation was the same with grade 12 academic performance in which the single sex grant aided secondary school was 100% pass rate for more than a decade. In the same vein the co-education secondary school during the same period under review was below 70% pass rate.

The third objective was to explore problems faced by single sex and co-education secondary schools in the provision of quality education. The findings of the study were that both institutions had common and unique problems. The common problems were abuse of technology such as mobile phones and failure by some pupils to pay school fees.

However, the government co-education secondary schools had their own unique challenges which include the following;

- Late reporting to school after long holidays.
- Poor behavior such as beer drinking, smoking among the senior boys and prostitution among the senior girls.
- Dating (in campus pairing) especially among the senior pupils.
- Pregnancies among the girls

The fourth objective was to establish strategies set by the two types of institutions designed to improve academic performance. The findings of this study show that both institutions had put good measures. However, the researcher feels that both types of environments needed to learn from each other hence the need to combine the strategies from single sex grant aided secondary schools and the co-education secondary schools environment discussed earlier in this report.

6.2 CONCLUSION

In view of the findings of this study, it is evident that the single sex grant aided schools are performing better than the co-education government secondary schools. However, the study does not suggest that by merely putting the girls in one classroom and the boys in another exclusively would render good academic performance. The study established many factors contributing to good performance of the single sex schools than the co-education government secondary schools. The following below are the major attributes of good academic performance by the single sex grant aided secondary schools:

- Vision and functional mission statements.
- Regular School Based Continuing Professional Development (SBCPD) meetings.
- Supervision, monitoring and evaluation of teachers work and performance.
- Adequate and effective use of teaching / learning resources.
- Regulated class enrolments with low pupil/ teacher ratios.
- Strict regulations governing the use of technology such as mobile phones in the school.
- Dedicated and motivated teaching faculty coupled with team spirit.
- Existence of clear academic policies which are understood by all the teachers.

- High level discipline among pupils.
- Provision of incentives either monthly or termly to the teachers.

6.3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of this study, the following recommendations have been made to the educational managers, educational officers and the ministry of education.

6.3.1 Education managers of co-education government secondary schools

- Implement systematic procedures on homework and assessment of learners.
- Head teachers should intensify monitoring of the teachers.
- They should award deserving teachers and learners.
- Head teachers should ensure that the teaching/learning resources are made available to both teachers and pupils.

6.3.1 Educational Officers

- Regular routine monitoring of schools and feedback to the schools.
- Promote school exchange visits between single sex grant aided schools and co-education government secondary schools.
- Recognize and reward outstanding teachers and heads of schools.

6.3.2 Ministry Of Education

The Ministry of Education should put a deliberate policy for all heads of schools to undergo through management training in leadership or educational management to equip them with school management skills. This could be done through the distance learning programme in each

province in the school holidays or through regular holding of workshops. This is from the realization that most heads of schools are appointed to these positions without going through any leadership or management training.

The government through the ministry should establish libraries and computer laboratories stocked with adequate and appropriate teaching and learning resources such as text books and computers. This is because most schools do not have libraries and adequate computers and those that have do not have the relevant teaching/learning resources.

The government should build adequate good staff houses which are connected to Hydro-Electro Power (HEP) or solar power to alleviate accommodation challenges faced by most junior secondary schools especially in rural areas where the majority of the junior secondary schools are established. This would consequently motivate teachers working abroad and those in urban areas to willingly go to rural schools most of which have a critical shortage of qualified teachers.

The government should allocate adequate funds in the annual budget to go towards research. This would provide wider opportunities for research into the factors affecting co-education government secondary schools and single sex grant aided secondary schools. The results of such further research would provide solutions to the current challenges faced by schools in the provision of quality education.

6.3.3 PROPOSED FUTURE RESEARCH AREA

This study has identified the need to investigate and analyze the academic performance of learners from co-education and single sex secondary schools into higher education. This would promote understanding the input-output Systems Theory model in higher education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Dear respondent,

I am a post graduate student carrying out a comparative study of academic performance between co-education and single - sex education in secondary schools for the period 2010 to 2015.

I write to request your indulgence in this matter. The information from you will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used for academic purposes only.

HEADTEACHER'S INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is the highest level of your educational attainment?

.....

2. What is the institutional status of your school?

a) Grade 3 Secondary School b)

Grade 2 Secondary School c)

Grade 1 Secondary School

3. How many female and male teachers does your school have?)

Female Male

4. Is your school single-sex education or co-education school?

.....

5. Why is your school single sex or co - education school?

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6. What is the academic policy of your school?

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7. What is the homework policy of your school?

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8. How regularly do you check your teacher's teaching files?

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9. Do you have open days at this school?

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10. What factors impact positively on Grade 9 and 12 results?

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11. What factors impact negatively on Grade 9 and 12 results?

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12. What have been the academic performance trends from 2010 to 2015 at Grade 9 and 12?
(Progression Results Analysis chart)

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APPENDIX B

TEACHER'S QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear respondent,

I am a post graduate student carrying out a comparative study of academic performance between single sex education and co -education in secondary schools for the period 2010 to 2015.

I write to request for your inputs in this matter as regards your school. The information obtained from you will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used for academic purposes only.

You do not need to write your name.

Name of school:

SECTION A

PLEASE TICK APPROPRIATELY

1. Sex (a) Female
(b) Male
2. Age (a) Below 30 years
(b) Between 30 and 39 years
(c) Between 40 and 49 years
(d) Above 50 years
3. Marital status
(a) Single
(b) Married
4. Professional qualification
(a) College certificate
(b) College diploma

- (c) Advanced diplom
 - (d) University degree
 - (e) Any other - specify
5. Teaching experience
- (a) Zero to five years
 - (b) Six to ten years
 - (c) Eleven to twenty years
 - (d) Above twenty one years
6. Running agency of the school
- (a) Government
 - (b) Grant Aided / mission
7. Type of school
- (a) Co -education Secondary School
 - (b) Single sex Secondary School
8. Does your school have adequate relevant teaching and learning materials?
- (a) No
 - (b) Yes
9. Does your school have a homework policy?
- (a) No
 - (b) Yes
10. How often do you give continuous assessment in a term to your learners?
- (a) Not at all
 - (b) Sometimes
 - (c) Weekly
 - (d) Fortnightly
 - (e) Once per month
11. What is your homework policy? Homework is given
- (a) When subject teacher sees need to do so
 - (b) Everyday
 - (c) Weekly
 - (d) Fortnightly

12. How do you rate the teaching and learning standards at this school?

- (a) Poor
- (b) Fair
- (c) Satisfactory
- (d) Good
- (e) Excellent

13. How does your school recognize and encourage pupils who perform well academically?

- (a) Nothing is done
 - (b) Giving them prizes
 - (c) Any other specify
-
-

14. Does your school have a library

- (a) No
- (b) Yes

15. How do parents respond towards academic work at your school? (a) Poorly

- (b) Fair
- (c) Good
- (d) Excellent

16. Are most parents able to support their children with school requirements such as school fees

- (a) No
- (b) Some
- (c) Yes

17. Does your school conduct school based continuing professional development (SBCPD) programmes for the teaching staff?

- (a) No
- (b) Some departments/ sections
- (c) Yes

18. How often are teachers' professional group meetings held?
- (a) Not held
 - (b) Once per term
 - (c) Once per month
 - (d) Twice per term
 - (e) Any other, Specify
 -
19. How regularly do your supervisors check your teaching instruments?
- (a) Not at all
 - (b) Once per week
 - (c) Twice per month
 - (d) Once per month
 - (e) Sometimes
20. How does your school motivate and acknowledge dedicated performers amongst the teaching faculty?
- (a) Nothing is done
 - (b) Sometimes given awards
 - (c) Given awards yearly
 - (d) Given accreditation letters
21. What factors do you think have impacted positively on pupils' performance from 2010 to 2015.
- a)
 - b)
 - c)
22. What factors do you think have impacted negatively on pupils' academic performance from 2010 to 2015
- a)
 - b)
 - c)
23. What are some of your strategies to improve academic performance?
- a)
 - b)

c)

d)

24. What is your school's policy on academic work?

a)

.....

.....

25. Does your school have computers and software?

(a) No

(b) Partially stocked

(c) Yes

APPENDIX C

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS (HODS)

1. How is the performance of your learners at this school at Grade 9 and 12?
2. What factors affect your learners' academic performance at Grade 9 and 12 at this school?
3. What are some of the measures that you have put to enhance the performance of learners at this school.
4. Late reporting from long holidays affects the teaching and learning process, how does your school address this problem?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE DISTRICT EDUCATION STANDARDS OFFICE (DESO)

1. How is the academic performance of Mukasa seminary school compared with Choma Day Secondary school?

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2. In your opinion, what factors cause discrepancies in academic performance between the two secondary schools?

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3. What measures do you think can help bridge the gap in academic performance between the two secondary schools?

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APPENDIX E
RESEARCH WORK PLAN

MONTH	SCHEDULE OF ACIVITIES
January – February, 2016	Research proposal writing and handing in
27 th March, 2016	Revised dissertation proposal submission
27 th April, 2016	Collection of field data completed
15 th June, 2016	Submission of first draft dissertation
30 th June, 2016	Submission of final draft dissertation

APPENDIX F

RESEARCH BUDGET

DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
Cost of ream of paper	1	K50.00
Proposal typing and printing	20 pages x K3.00 x 2 copies	K120.00
Dissertation typing and printing	100 pages x K3.00	K300.00
Photocopying dissertation	100 pages x K1.00 x 1 copy	K100.00
Cost of fuel to and from Choma	2 trips x K200.00	K400.00
Food	2 days x K75.00	K150.00
Pens	15 pens K2.00	K30.00
Pencils	2 pencils x K0.50	K1.00
Erasers	2 erasers x K2.00	K4.00
Total		K1,155.00
Contingency fund		K200.00
GRAND TOTAL		K1,355.00