

**AN ANALYSIS OF THE CAUSES OF GRADE TWELVE PUPILS' LOW  
PERFORMANCE IN LITERATURE IN ENGLISH IN SELECTED SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS OF LUSAKA DISTRICT OF ZAMBIA.**

BY

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Administration.

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## **DECLARATION**

This work has not previously been presented in any form to the University or to any other body whether for assessment, publication or for any other purpose (unless otherwise indicated). I therefore confirm that the intellectual content of the work is the result of my own efforts and not anyone else's.

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APPROVAL

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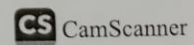
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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents (Grace Mulima K Mubiana and Sifuniso R. Akakandelwa), my husband Gerald K. Shawa and my children (Inutu, Waana, Joshua, Luwi and Wamundila) for their inspiration, financial, spiritual and moral support they gave me during my time of study.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATION

CDC	Curriculum Development Centre
CPD	Continuing Profession Development
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
EAP	English for Academic Purpose
ECZ	Examination Council Zambia
ELL	English Language Learner
ESL	English Second Language
FL	First Language
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
ICT	Information and Technology Studies
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoGE	Ministry of General Education
MoI	Media of Instruction
PLIP	Public Library Innovation Program
PRP	Primary Reading Programm

## **OPERATIONAL DEFINATION**

**PERFORMANCE:** The act of doing something successfully using knowledge as distinguished from merely possetting it.

**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH:** This is the collection of written work or the body of written works

## ABSTRACT

The study investigated the causes of low performance among twelfth-grade students in Literature in English within three selected secondary schools in Lusaka District. Three objectives were addressed: to review the performance of pupils in Literature in English at School A, B and C of Lusaka Central Zone from 2020 to 2022; to establish the views of teachers, examiners, and learners on factors contributing to pupil's low performance in Literature; and to determine the challenges and prospects of literature as a subject in secondary schools. The study's ontological aim was to ascertain the reality of teaching literature in secondary schools by examining factors influencing low performance. Employing a qualitative approach, the research utilized a descriptive research design and collected primary data through questionnaires and interview guides. The study's paradigm was constructivism, aiming to construct views on literature through qualitative research. Purposive sampling was employed, selecting ten teachers/examiners and thirty students from three schools in Lusaka Central Zone. Thematic analysis was used to analyze gathered data, addressing three objectives: reviewing pupils' performance in Literature in English from 2020 to 2022, exploring stakeholders' views on factors contributing to low performance, and determining literature's challenges and prospects in secondary education. The study revealed a pattern of low academic performance in English literature compared to other elective subjects like Additional Mathematics and Physics. It identified challenges such as lack of motivation, inadequate learning resources, absence of visual aids, and insufficient counseling contributing to poor performance. Additionally, factors such as absenteeism, disinterest, peer pressure, academic procrastination, time management, and academic overload were found to affect performance adversely. Despite adherence to recommended teaching schedules and qualified instructors, variations in teaching effectiveness, novel selection, and delivery methods were observed among schools. Novel selection criteria were based on recommendations by the Examination Council of Zambia, novel availability, and complexity. The study recommended incorporating visual aids in teaching literature and providing motivation to both teachers and students to enhance academic performance.

Keyword: Literature In English, Low performance, School administrators, Curriculum, Educational policy.

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.0 Overview**

This chapter is going to look at the background of the study, the statement of the problem and purpose of the study. It will also present the objectives of the study, research questions, and limitations of the study. Lastly, the chapter explains the significance, delimitation, theoretical and conceptual framework of the study. This chapter also looks at some of the important definitions in the study.

### **1.1 Background**

Literature in English in Zambia can be traced back to the days of colonization. The missionaries used it in order to teach the natives how to read and write. Later on, when Zambia got its independence, this subject was incorporated in the school curriculum. Currently, Literature is a subject that is studied at senior level in most of the Zambian schools. In most cases, it is learnt as an optional subject under the department of literature and languages. Most administrators have seen the importance of including this subject to the school curriculum. Over the years, the subject that was once very popular has slowly lost its popularity. So many reasons could be attributed to this. Among them is that the world is becoming digital. Albalawi (2015) states that the influence of technology on people's lives is one of the causes of the decline of the importance of literature. Halim et al (2020) further states that people would rather spend time with either their laptops or phones than reading a book or novel.

Another reason regarding the study of literature in schools focusses on the attitude of learners towards the incorporation of Literature in English in an English Language class due to the fact that learners feel that they are studying the same skills acquired in English as a language. They feel that if they are proficient in the four skills of language, which are reading, writing, listening, and speaking, they do not see the need to learn literature in English as subject. (Halim et al, 2020). Hence, this indicates a lack of motivation in the study of literature. Al-Qhtany (2016) points out that most of the learners lack the necessary reading habits, resulting in them not to have interest in literature. They find it difficult to study and understand the

subject. Halim et al (2020) also states that students consider Literature in English as a difficult subject and find it of no use in their career prospects.

This situation cannot be allowed to continue because Literature in English is beneficial to the learners who take it. The school management team need to be wary of this growing concern and have a major role in mitigating the situation. El-Helou (2010) states that learners of literature are able to develop insightful responses, literal comprehension, personal connection, cross cultural themes, interpretations and evaluation of texts. Brumfit (1986) as cited in Shazu (2014) states that Literature is a skills subject as it mainly focuses on the skills the learners acquire as opposed to the content. This implies that though the study of literature is based on different texts, learners are able to acquire a number of skills and competences. Sanoto (2017) opines that in addition to improving on their acquisition of the English language, studying literature develops learners' fluency in language use and builds vocabulary.

### **1.1.1 Importance of literature to learners**

Sanoto (2017) also adds that the value of literature in society cannot be under-estimated. This is because of the fact that literature offers the learner various benefits and opportunities for development. Literature has a holistic coverage; it encompasses every aspect of human endeavour. Apart from that, through the study of literary works, learners are availed with unique opportunities to develop their intellectual or cognitive faculties.

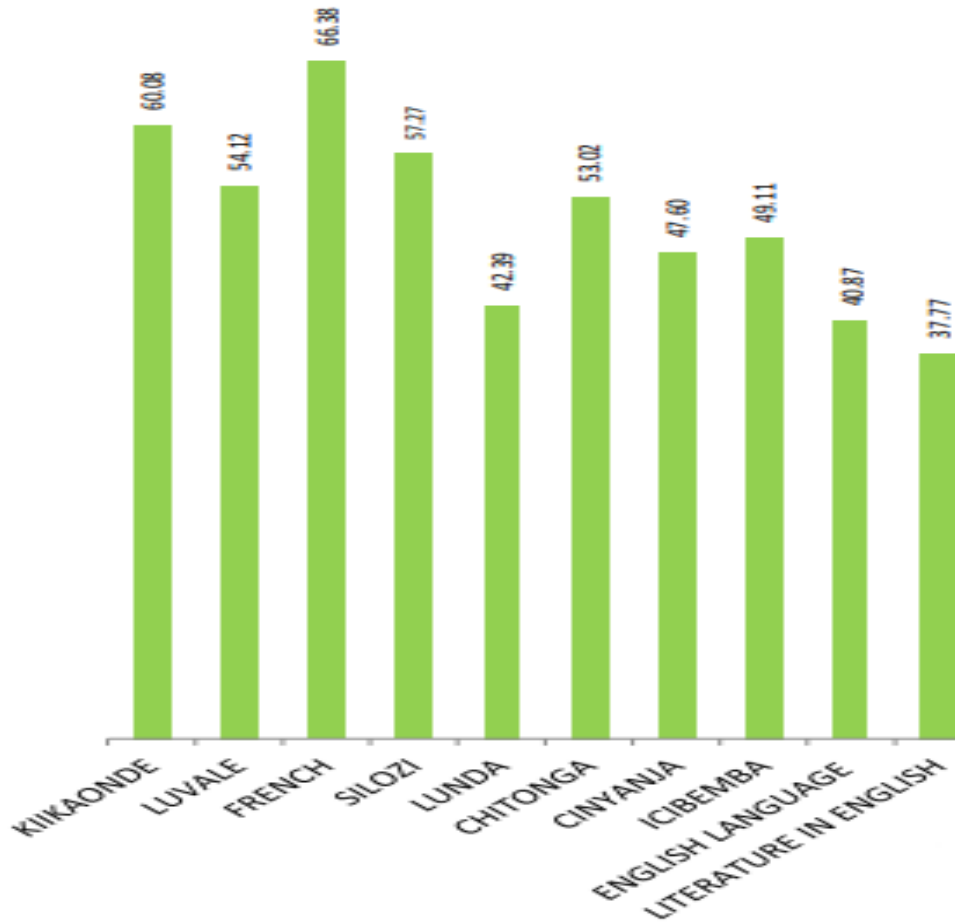
Despite the benefits associated with the subject, Literature in English, there exists a concerning trend of low in the subject within Zambia. This low performance suggests that learners are not fully achieving the prescribed objectives of the subject. According to the Examination Council of Zambia's (2014) National Examination Performance Review Report, in 2013, out of 6721 candidates who undertook the Literature in English Examination, only a 27.6% pass rate was recorded. Subsequently, in 2014, out of 6710 candidates, the pass rate marginally increased to 34.7%, representing a meager 7.1% improvement which falls below acceptable standards. This low performance was further evidenced in a selected school from district reports. For instance, the 2020 Lusaka District

Grade 12 analysis by subject revealed that out of 155 candidates who sat for the Literature in English Examination, a mere 8% pass rate was achieved.

Furthermore, the statistical data analysis gathered from guidance teachers within the selected schools highlighted consistent low performance across two out of the three sampled schools, prompting the researcher to initiate this study. These statistics underscore a substantial issue necessitating empirical investigation. Moreover, no school administrator would find satisfaction in perpetuating a pattern of low academic achievement since administrators play a pivotal role in enhancing academic performance and thus should exhibit concern regarding the performance of each subject within their institution. Consequently, it becomes imperative for school administrators to conduct comprehensive evaluations, particularly in subjects exhibiting poor performance, such as Literature in English.

### **1.1.2 The Performance of Grade 12 Pupils in Literature**

Over the years, the performance of learners in Literature across the country has been exceptionally low. The Examinations Council of Zambia (2022:12) school certificate examination performance review report indicates that the mean scores percentage performance of learners in literature was lower compared to other languages as shown in Figure 1 below.



**Figure 1: 2021 Means Scores (%) in all Languages and Literature Subjects.**

Source: ECZ (2022). Performance Review Report/School Certificate Examination.

Figure 1 shows that the performance of learners in Literature was lower than any other language subject. This was an indication that there was much that needed to be done to improve the performance of learners in literature. Multiple variables needed to be investigated. Furthermore, Table 1 below shows the performance of learners by grade and gender.



Table 1: 2022 Grade 12 Proportion of Learners by Grade and Gender in Literature and Languages

Subject	Sex	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Quality Pass	Seven	Eight	Nine	Pass Rate
Chitonga	Females	4.67	7.99	16.31	5.51	5.98	14.37	<b>54.83</b>	28.35	11.75	5.07	<b>94.93</b>
	Males	4.67	6.27	16.44	4.82	6.77	14.34	<b>53.31</b>	28.87	12.21	5.61	<b>94.39</b>
	Total	4.67	7.12	16.38	5.16	6.38	14.36	<b>54.07</b>	28.61	11.98	5.34	<b>94.66</b>
Cinyanja	Females	3.02	6.26	18.10	9.85	8.29	20.04	<b>65.57</b>	19.09	9.94	5.40	<b>94.60</b>
	Males	2.59	5.31	17.45	9.04	8.77	18.15	<b>61.31</b>	21.18	11.87	5.65	<b>94.35</b>
	Total	2.78	5.73	17.73	9.40	8.56	18.98	<b>63.18</b>	20.26	11.02	5.54	<b>94.46</b>
English Language	Females	3.66	7.07	20.59	5.89	9.40	17.72	<b>64.33</b>	14.23	11.31	10.12	<b>89.88</b>
	Males	2.07	5.23	17.89	5.83	9.25	18.79	<b>59.06</b>	15.88	13.30	11.76	<b>88.24</b>
	Total	2.86	6.14	19.23	5.86	9.32	18.26	<b>61.67</b>	15.06	12.32	10.95	<b>89.05</b>
Kiikaonde	Females	3.17	8.68	22.96	6.46	6.46	16.51	<b>64.23</b>	15.03	9.63	11.11	<b>88.89</b>
	Males	3.58	8.79	22.89	5.75	7.81	16.81	<b>65.62</b>	16.27	7.81	10.30	<b>89.70</b>
	Total	3.37	8.73	22.92	6.11	7.12	16.66	<b>64.92</b>	15.64	8.73	10.71	<b>89.29</b>
Literature In English	Females	4.42	6.05	16.43	6.83	7.94	15.32	<b>57.00</b>	10.92	8.39	23.69	<b>76.31</b>
	Males	1.93	3.48	10.80	5.17	6.12	13.54	<b>41.04</b>	11.95	11.11	35.90	<b>64.10</b>
	Total	3.34	4.94	14.00	6.12	7.15	14.55	<b>50.10</b>	11.37	9.57	28.97	<b>71.03</b>
Lunda	Females	3.47	7.19	22.28	8.14	9.22	16.05	<b>66.35</b>	11.02	7.19	15.45	<b>84.55</b>
	Males	3.93	9.02	26.49	9.21	10.56	14.30	<b>73.51</b>	10.56	7.29	8.64	<b>91.36</b>
	Total	3.73	8.20	24.61	8.74	9.96	15.08	<b>70.32</b>	10.76	7.25	11.67	<b>88.33</b>

Source: ECZ (2022: 20). Performance Review Report/School Certificate Examination.

**Table 1 shows the performance of grade twelve learners by gender in Literature and Languages**

### 1.2 Statement of the problem

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) school certificate examination performance review reports for 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019, 2018 and 2017 consistently indicated that the performance of learners in literature was lower compared to other languages. The factors contributing to this poor performance are not known. Although the ECZ reports mainly covers the national performance across subject areas, this trend does not only affect the ECZ reports but also the various school reports, which is a growing concern to every school

administrator. The current research investigates learners' performance in Literature at three purposively selected secondary schools of Lusaka Central Zone.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to analyze the causes of the grade twelve pupils' performance in Literature in English at three selected secondary schools (School A, School B and School C) of Lusaka District of Zambia.

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The following will be the objectives of the study:

- (i) To review the performance of pupils in Literature in English at School A, B and C of Lusaka Central Zone from 2020 to 2022.
- (ii) To establish the views of teachers, examiners, and pupils on factors contributing to pupil's low performance in Literature.
- (iii) To determine the challenges and prospects of Literature as a subject in secondary schools.

### **1.5 Research Questions**

The following questions guided the study:

- (i) What was the performance of pupils in Literature in English at the three selected schools in Lusaka Central Zone?
- (iv) What were the views of teachers, examiners, and pupils on factors contributing to pupil's performance in literature?
- (v) What were the challenges and prospects of Literature as a subject in secondary schools?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The importance of this study is that it may highlight the causes of low performance in Literature in English. Additionally, the study may offer strategies to school Administrators on how to improve learner performance in Literature in English and make people appreciate Literature as a subject offered at secondary school level. The study may also contribute to existing literature on why pupils perform poorly in Literature in English in schools.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

The study was delimited to three selected secondary school in Lusaka district of Lusaka Province. The study focused on the analysis of the causes of the grade twelves' low performance in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools.

### **1.8 Limitation of the Study**

Kombo & Tromp (2006) argues that limitations identify potential weaknesses of the study. These include whether the findings could be generalized to the entire population or not and geographical restrictions that prejudiced the autonomy of the study, data inaccessibility and unexpected occurrences. The results of this study cannot be generalized as it was restricted to Lusaka District alone. This study was limited to three government schools.

### **1.9 Theoretical Framework**

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006:56), a theoretical framework is 'a collection of interrelated ideas based on theories. It is a reasoned set of prepositions which were derived and supported by data or evidence'. Furthermore, they state that a theoretical framework 'attempts to clarify why things are the way they are.' This study utilized the Attribution Theory of Weiner & Leman (1979).

Makondo (2020) argues that human beings attribute their success or failure to something; the researcher has hence found it reasonable to adopt the Attribution Theory of Weiner & Leman (1979) as the theoretical framework for this study. The choice of this theory was based on the fact that it states that people attribute their success or failure in terms of causes. In order to understand causation of behaviour, they search for explanations or causes and effect. The theory further states that people attempt to maintain a positive self-image when they do well by attributing the success to their own effort or abilities but if they do poorly, they believe it is because of factors beyond their control (Makondo, 2020). The theory further states that failure diminish self-esteem where learners attribute failure in a subject to uncontrollable causes such as lack of ability. This will lead to lack of motivation to work hard and to seek help. McLeod (2012) states that the situational attribution usually focusses on assigning the cause of behaviour to some situation or event outside a person's control rather than to some internal characteristics. This is similar to Makondo's (2020) statement

that causes of poor academic performance are also attributed to other factors other than the learners themselves.

This theory was relevant to this study because it investigated the causes of poor performance in Literature in English; hence, the utilization of this theory will give learners who fail Literature in English an opportunity to attribute their failure to stable factors, which helped the researcher come up with a proper recommendation to improve learners' performance in the aforementioned subject. Weiner (2005) states that the importance of the attribution theory is that the attributions reflect personal beliefs about the sources or causes of success and failure. As such, they tend to affect motivation in various ways, depending on the nature of the attribution.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents related literature that was reviewed by the researcher. The presentation of the literature will be in the following themes: Literature in English as a subject, concept of academic performance, learners' performance, factors affecting academic performance, review of empirical studies, and research gap.

### **2.1 Literature in English as a Subject**

Literature in English is among the subjects that are taught in Zambian secondary schools. In its case, it is taught as an elective subject. Nonetheless, the teaching of Literature in English in Zambian schools can be traced back to the colonial period. The subject was introduced by colonialists to equip natives with skills and competences which would enable them communicate effectively using the English Language medium (Mwape, 1984; Simuchimba, 2016). At that time, all learners were mandated to take the subject.

The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) (2013) states that the main purpose of teaching Literature in English in Zambian secondary schools is to help students in terms of language skills and knowledge of the varying cultures in the English-speaking world. The curriculum also stresses the importance of English as a lifelong skill that can be further developed after completion of schooling and the importance of students being motivated to want to improve their skills both while at school and afterwards. Furthermore, L  roplan (2002) as cited by Norling (2018) explains that the curriculum's aim in the study of Literature in English is for the students to "improve their ability to read literature in English with good understanding and reflect over texts from different perspectives". The ability to read, understand and reflect on texts "from different perspectives" emphasizes the curriculum's ambition to widen students' perception of the world around them. Through literature, it is believed that students gain insight, develop a sense of understanding and toleration and experience new perspectives.

In terms of aims and objectives generally, the inclusion of English literature in the school syllabus benefits language learning in educational, psycholinguistic and linguistic ways. The learners will be able to recognize the protagonist's perspective, as well as different social,

physical, racial, historical and emotional perspectives. Hence, the study of literature becomes essential to the learners. According to Hill (1986: 12), the study of literature contributes “both to the development of the student as an individual and to his or her command of the language”. The reading of literature provides an opportunity for the language to be internalized whereby grammar rules, phrases and vocabulary already learnt can be reinforced and at the same time new words and phrases encountered as they study literature. Furthermore, authentic texts give the reader a possibility to experience a genuine language context and the motivation to when to use it in their daily lives. Hill alludes that another benefit of literature is that it acts as a stimulus that ignites interest and motivates the student by involving them on a personal, emotional level.

Ur (1991: 201) brings out other advantages of teaching literature in secondary schools. She points out in her book titled “*A Course in Language Teaching: Practice and Theory*” that Literature is enjoyable to read, it provides examples of different styles of writing while also being a basis for vocabulary expansion. She argues that teaching literature also fosters reading skills and acts as a “jump-off” point for both writing and discussions in the classroom. In this sense, students benefit from Literature in the sense that, by becoming emotionally involved, they are motivated and this in turn contributes to their personal development and the way they handle matters in society. Other benefits listed by Ur include the encouragement of empathy, critical and creative thinking, increased knowledge of the target culture, world knowledge and finally, a heightened awareness of humanity and conflicts.

## **2.2 Concept of academic performance**

According to Ballotpedia (2020), academic performance is the measurement of student achievement across various academic subjects. Teachers and education officials typically measure achievement using classroom performance, graduation rates and results from standardized tests.

Rono (2013) states that academic performance of students is a key feature in education. It is considered to be the center around which the whole education system revolves. Narad and Abdullah (2016) stated that the academic performance of students determines the success or failure of any academic institution. Singh, Malik and Singh (2016) also argued that academic

performance of students has a direct impact on the socio-economic development of a country.

The complexity of the academic performance starts from its conceptualization. Sometimes it is known as school readiness, academic achievement and school performance, but generally, according to Lamas (2015), the difference in concepts are only explained by semantics as they are used as synonyms. Several authors agree that academic performance is the result of learning, prompted by the teaching activity by the teacher and produced by the student. From a humanistic approach, Martinez (2007) states that academic performance is “the product given by the students and it is usually expressed through school grades”. Pizarro (1985) referred to academic performance as a measure of the indicative and responsive abilities that express, in an estimated way, what a person has learned as a result of a process of education or training.

For Caballero *et al.* (2007), academic performance involves meeting goals, achievements and objectives set in the program or course that a student attends. These are expressed through grades which are the result of an assessment that involves passing or not certain tests, subjects or courses. On the other hand, Torres and Rodríguez (2006) define academic performance as the level of knowledge shown in an area or subject compared to the norm, and it is generally measured using the grade point average.

Lamas (2015) argues that the purpose of the school or academic performance is to achieve an educational goal, learning. In this regard there are several components of the complex unit called performance. They are learning processes promoted by the school that involve the transformation of a given state, into a new state, and they are achieved with the integrity in a different unit with cognitive and structural elements. He further states that performance varies according to circumstances, organic and environmental conditions that determine skills and experiences.

Marti (2003:376) argues that academic performance involves factors such as the intellectual level, personality, motivation, skills, interests, study habits, self-esteem or the teacher-student relationship. When a gap between the academic performance and the student's expected performance occurs, it refers to a diverging performance. An unsatisfactory

academic performance is the one that is below the expected performance. Sometimes, as argued by the aforementioned scholar, it can be related to teaching methods.

### **2.3 Learners’ performance**

Literature in English as an elective subject offered in Zambian secondary schools has for some time now had a poor record of performance (ECZ, 2013). Poor performance is defined by Asikiha (2010) as any performance that falls below a desired standard, while in the case of Okoye (1982), it is defined as a candidates’ inability to attain a set performance standard in a given evaluation exercise such as an examination. In the Zambian case a learners’ work may be lacking in aspects stipulated by the senior secondary school Literature in English teaching syllabus (2013). The syllabus states that performance of pupils in Literature should be based on the outcomes that supposedly meet the learners’ educational needs and the expectations and assignments of the society (Curriculum Development Centre 2013).

In Zambia, the performance of students in Literature in English and other subjects are gauged by performance indicators such as marks scored and grades earned by a student in respect to the standards of the Examination Council of Zambia (ECZ). Below is the ECZ’s criterion of awarding marks:

<b>GRADE</b>	<b>STANDARD</b>
One	Distinction
Two	Distinction
Three	Merit
Four	Merit
Five	Credit
Six	Credit
Seven	Satisfactory
Eight	Satisfactory
Nine	Unsatisfactory

***Table 2. Grading system in Zambia***



The table above indicates the set standards for academic performance. A candidate who scores below these set standards is regarded as showing poor performance.

According to the Examinations Council of Zambia's (2013) performance analysis for Literature and Languages subjects, the general performance of candidates in 2013 examination at Grade 12 level was generally poor-average, with majority of candidates obtaining lower grade division. Reports of a slight improvement in the performance from 2012 to 2013 were noted but no major improvement has been reported to take place in 2014 and 2015.

The poor performance of students in Literature in English is something that is known to the Examination Council of Zambia. With reference to the 2013 examinations conducted in Zambia, Simuchimba J. (2016) reports that the Examination Council of Zambia intended to use them to analyze the challenges it faces in running examinations at national level and in teaching languages. However, the aforementioned scholar states that poor performance of students in Literature in English still remains the same.

Sanoto (2017) states that the value of literature in society cannot be under-estimated. This is because of the fact that literature offers the learner various benefits and opportunities for development. Literature has a holistic coverage; it encompasses every aspect of human endeavour. Apart from that, through the study of literary works, learners are availed unique opportunities to develop their intellectual or cognitive faculties.

Inasmuch as Literature in English has so many benefits, there has been a record of poor performance in this subject in Zambia. The poor performance in Literature in English is an indication that learners are not fully attaining the set objectives of the subject. According to the Examination Council of Zambia (2014) on the National Examination performance review, it indicates that out of the 6721 candidates that sat the Literature in English Examination in 2013, there was only a 27.6% pass rate. In 2014, out of the 6710 candidates that sat the Literature in English Examination there was only a 34.7% pass rate giving an increase of 7.1% which is not very good. This is also a similar vein at Lusaka Boys Secondary school, according to the 2020 Lusaka District Grade 12 analysis by subject, it

indicates that out of 155 candidates that sat the Literature in English Examination there was only a 08% pass rate.

## **2.4 Factors affecting academic performance**

Since this study has its focus on the factors that affect academic performance in Literature in English, it was inevitable but to review literature that bring out diverse aspects that affect academic performance. Below is a summary of the literature pertaining to factors that affect academic performance:

### **2.4.1 Family background**

The first theme to emerge from the literature that was reviewed pertaining to factors that affect academic performance was family background.

According to Smith (2004), family background influences student performance in school subjects, it is identified that students' cultural backgrounds differ and can affect students' influences to study. Furthermore, students from different cultural backgrounds are influenced differently based upon parental experiences, interests in a particular subject and cultural views and attitudes towards that subject. Additionally, Smith's research indicates that students who are studying at a higher level are influenced differently as compared to students who are studying at a lower level or those that choose to refrain from a particular subject.

Sirin (2005) states that one of the most stable and consistently observed phenomena in the field of education is the impact of students' home background on achievement. Students whose parents have a higher level of education, a more prestigious occupation, or greater income tend to have higher achievement than students whose parents have a lower standing on such socio-economic status indicators. This is also supported by Cowen (2011) who states that the social and economic status of parents is a key factor to determine the academic performance of students.

### **2.4.2 Negative attitude towards a subject**

Literature reveals that having a negative attitude towards a particular subject has an effect on the academic performance. Kaballa and Crowley (1985) as cited in Weinburg (1998) attitude and success or achievement have shown a relation in academic performance

The reason is that attitude influences one's behaviour, inner mood and therefore learning gets affected, (Weinburgrg,1998). Stern (1983) claims that the affective component contributes at least as much as and often more to language learning than the cognitive skill. The problem arise from students' inability to understand the literature due to their deficient proficiency in English and the poor reading skills. They may read a text but my fail to interpret the ideas of the because they are unfamiliar with the standard of language used in a particular text. The negative attitude dose not only affect students in literature but also in other subject as in indicated from one of the studies conducted by Sparks and Sarah (2011) with reference to Mathematics, they hold that having a negative attitude towards the subject can lead a student in having a lower performance in the subject. A negative attitude could be telling oneself that a particular subject is difficult or having fear in it.

#### **2.4.3 Lack of relevant teaching experience**

The third theme to emerge from the literature that was reviewed with regard to factors that contribute to poor academic performance was the lack of relevant teaching experience.

There is a significant correlation between academic performance and teaching experience. Lack of relevant teaching experience contribute to poor academic performance. Literature reviewed indicate that unqualified teachers do not have the experience and skills to properly instruct pupils in a particular subject. In his study Armstrong (2009) noted that teachers who have specialised in the subject which they teach or in the education of that subject and had around 26 to 30 years of teaching experience, influence student performance positively. This concurs with a study by Adeyani (2008) which revealed that teachers' teaching experience was significant to student's learning outcomes as measured by their performance. Thus, lack of relevant teaching experience may have a negative impact on the performance of pupils in a certain subject. Shumba (1988) noted that a significant number of teachers in Zimbabwe lack long teaching experience and they have weaker practical instructional skills. Therefore, according to him, the longer a teacher teacher takes in teaching 'O' Level classes the more equipped he or she becomes in preparing learners for public examinations.

#### **2.4.4 Lack of appropriate materials**

Lack of appropriate materials for a particular subject was also identified as a factor that cause poor academic performance. A number of studies (Mambwe, 2020; Mambwe, 2019;

Mambwe et al., 2019) have showed that lack of appropriate materials for use by mathematics teachers compounds the problem of poor academic performance in the subject. In his study, Ale found out that 60% of the students interviewed indicated that they performed badly in Mathematics because there were no adequate text books in their schools. Similar observations were also made by Kalejaiye (2005) when he noted that teachers need to have resources and that a variety of textbooks should be consulted by the teacher and pupils as they give different points of view.

Similarly, Ale (2000) showed that some pupils fail their exams due to inadequate text books in their schools. Lance (2002) also made similar observations when he pointed out the shortages of essential materials such as text books, has an adverse effect as a whole. Fagbamije (2004) in his study revealed that inadequate supply of text books in schools is having a toll on teaching and learning activities in many countries in the world hence affecting the performance of learners across subjects.

## **2.5 Review of related studies**

This section presents studies that were reviewed, Dissertations that related to the current study with a focus on poor academic performance of students.

Mubita & Mwanza (2020) conducted a study titled “*Factors Contributing to Pupils’ Poor Performance in Literature in English*”. This study was conducted in Zambia. The study sought to establish the factors contributing to the poor performance of learners in the subject in relation to motivation. A study qualitative design was used employing a case study strategy of inquiry. 150 participants comprising 10 Heads of Literature and Language departments, 20 teachers of Literature, 100 Grade 12 learners of literature and 20 former learners who failed the subject were recruited for the study using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The study established that teachers and learners faced a number of challenges such as inadequate teacher preparation, use of inappropriate techniques, negative attitudes and lack of teaching and learning resources. The study also established that motivation was a major factor. The study recommended retraining of teachers through Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in order to build their capacity in the teaching of Literature in English.

Inadequate teacher preparation, use of inappropriate techniques, negative attitudes and lack of teaching and learning resources among other factors were also reported by Mambwe (2020) in his study on teacher preparation, Mambwe (2019) in his study on Social Studies Student Teachers' Views on the implementation of Learner-Centred Approach in Zambian Primary Schools, and Mambwe et al. (2019) in his study on Student Teacher Preparation and Self-Efficacy Beliefs.

Ngambi (2014) did a study titled "*Factors contributing to poor academic performance in certificate of secondary education examination for community secondary schools in Urambo district, Tabora, Tanzania.*" This study was carried out in Urambo District to determine the factors leading to poor academic performance in Community Secondary Schools. Both simple random and purposive sampling were used to select the respondents; primary data were collected using questionnaires, interview and field observation whereas secondary data were collected from statistical records found in the district education office. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics incorporated in Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 16.0. The findings indicated that the poor performance in form four examinations was associated with poor working environment for teachers, poor supply of teaching and learning materials (61.6%), high teacher-students' ratio (1:65) and poor teaching methodology (46%).

Khan & Shah (2024) conducted a study titled "*Causes of Poor Performance in English at Secondary School Level in Pakistan*". This qualitative study explored causes of poor performance of students in English language at secondary school level. The sample of the study consisted of 31 teachers of English, teaching in public sector schools in Abbottabad, Pakistan. Data was collected using semi-structured interviews and was analyzed using thematic analysis. Findings revealed that lack of adequate administration, lack of facilities, inadequate examination system, large class size, under qualified teachers, inadequate language teaching methods, and lack of cooperation on the part of parents were major causes of poor performance of students in English language at secondary level.

Njuguna (2012) conducted a study titled "*Factors Influencing performance of English language in Public Secondary Schools in Bomet district, Kenya*". The sample size for this study were 26 English Language teachers and 374 students selected through stratified

sampling procedure. The data collected was presented in frequency distribution tables and analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings of this study indicated that a majority of the teachers of English were qualified and highly experienced to guarantee good results in the subject. However, dismal performance in English was caused by an increased work load faced by these teachers, very large class sizes as a result of the Free Primary Education and Free Day Secondary School programs initiated by the government to boost enrollment in Kenyan schools. Secondly, inadequate teaching and learning resources also contributed to a decline in the performance in English.

## **2.6 Research Gap**

Most of the literature reviewed which was found focused on poor academic performances of students focusing on Literature in English and English as supporting subjects in the study of Literature in English. Many of scholarly works that have been conducted were done both within and outside Zambia. However, for the studies which were done in Zambia, most of them focused their studies on either in rural schools or boarding schools; hence the need to conduct a study on some selected government schools in an urban setting to assess if the causes and effects are the same as those conducted by other scholars. Therefore, with the current evidence of a low record in performance in Literature in English, the researcher sought to conduct research in selected schools of Lusaka District an urban setting.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

### 3.0 Introduction

The researcher discusses the methodology that will be used in this study. Thus, the chapter deals with different strategies that were used in the study to achieve the research objectives. It describes the research design, population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, and data collection techniques, data analysis process as well as ethical considerations.

### 3.1 Research Design

The study employed a descriptive research design under the qualitative approach because the researcher sought to develop deeper understanding towards the issue of learner performance in Literature in English. The study, being qualitative, made use of a descriptive design to collect, describe, analyzed and interpreted the data. A design can be used for either quantitative or qualitative method (Lambert *et al*, 2012; McCombes, 2020). According to Fouché and De Vos (2005:106), “descriptive research presents a picture of the descriptive specific details of a situation, social setting or relationship, and focuses on ‘how’ and ‘who’ questions”.

Neuman (2003:30) further states that descriptive research begins with a well-defined subject, therefore presenting a detailed picture of the subject. Many qualitative studies, according to Marshall and Rosmann (1999:2), make use of descriptive studies, as the research looks to build a rich description of the complex circumstances that are unexplored in the literature. Ghosh (1992: 207) argues that “a research design is not a highly specific plan to be followed without deviation, but rather a series of guide posts to keep one headed in the right direction.”

The descriptive type of research was suited for this research as the researcher was aiming to gain an understanding of the causes of poor performance in Literature in English. By employing the descriptive design, the researcher was be able to describe ‘how’ teachers, and students take this subject.

### 3.2 Research Site

Kombo & Tromp (2006) stresses that the selection of the study site is essential as it influences the usefulness of the information produced. This study was conducted at selected

schools in Lusaka. Lusaka constitute many schools, both public and private schools, including those that are affiliated to a particular faith. A thriving reason for choosing Lusaka is because of the geographical location of the schools and the researcher for easy data collection and making follow-ups. More also, there exist well-established schools that offer Literature in English. Another reason that facilitated the choice of the aforementioned schools was because of the existence of a variation of performance in Literature in English in the selected schools.

### **3.3 Population**

MacMillan and Schumacher (2001) postulates that a population is a group of elements or cases whether individuals, objects or events that conform to specific criteria, and to which we intend to generalize the results of a research. In this research study, the population will comprise teachers/examiners, and students.

### **3.4 Sample Size**

According to Bless and Smith, (1995), sample is a subset of elements taken from a population which is considered to be a representative of the population. In other words, a sample is the number of participants selected from the universe to form a desired sample. It is just a fraction of what should be studied. The sample for this study comprised ten teachers and thirty pupils.

### **3.5 Sampling Procedure**

Kombo & Tromp (2006: 77) defines sampling as the procedure a researcher uses to gather people, places or things to study. Orodho and Kombo (2002) state that sampling is a process of selecting a number of individuals or objects from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group. Sampling is an important process in conducting research because researchers cannot collect data from all persons that have the suitable characteristics needed for a study.

Sampling designs are divided into two broad areas, namely, probability and non-probability designs. Each design has its own strengths and weaknesses. Kombo and Tromp (2006) state that the main feature of probability sampling designs is randomization, or random selection of respondents, things and places. The aim of randomizing is to give each unit of the



population an equal chance of selection. This kind of sampling warrants the researcher to generalize to the greater extent and make inferences. Non-probability design, according to Kombo & Tromp (2006), aims to be theoretically representative of the study population by maximizing the scope or range of variation of the study'. Bless and Achola (1988: 68) state that non-probability design 'is one in which the probability of including each element of the population in a sample is unknown, that is, it is not possible to determine the likelihood of the inclusion of all representative elements of the population into the sample.' Therefore, under this kind of sampling some elements of the population might not have a probability of being included in the sample for this reason it is not easy to determine the extent to which the sample represents the population hence making it difficult to warrant generalizations, (Bless and Achola, 1988).

This study, being a qualitative one, adopted one of the non-probability sampling designs which was purposive sampling. Pupils were sampled using homogeneous sampling. Homogenous sampling is a purposive sampling technique that aims to achieve a homogeneous sample; that is, a sample sharing or having similar traits like age, gender occupation etc. (Laerd, 2012). Pupils have a similar trait, that is, learners, age group, and gender. Teachers will be sampled using expert sampling. Expert sampling is a purposive sampling technique that is used when a research needs to glean knowledge from individuals that have a particular expertise (Laerd, 2012). Teachers were sampled using this technique because of their expertise in the study area.

### **3.6 Research Instruments**

Research instruments refer to the tools or devices that the researcher uses in collecting the necessary data. This included the following: questionnaires, interview schedules (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The instruments which the study used were Interviews (Semi-structured), Questionnaires and Document analysis.

#### **3.6.1 Semi-Structured Interviews**

These kinds of interviews are based on the use of an interview guide (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). An interview guide is a list of questions on topics that need to be covered by the interview. Such kind of interviews are flexible for they consist of both open and closed-

ended questions hence allowing the researcher to get a complete and detailed understanding of the issue under research. For this study, interviews were conducted in a way that there was face-to-face and one-to-one encounter between the interviewer and the interviewee.

### **3.6.2 Semi-structured Questionnaires**

Kombo & Tromp (2006) argues that a questionnaire is a research instrument that gathers data over a large sample. This instrument allowed the researcher to save time in the collection of data. Furthermore, one other advantage of using this instrument, as argued by Kombo & Tromp, is that since they are presented in paper format there would be no opportunity for interviewer biasness.

### **3.6.3 Documentary Analysis**

The researcher utilized documentary analysis to gather information. This instrument allowed the researcher to check through the result analysis forms in the three schools to find out the performance of pupils in Literature in English Subject.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

Punch (2009) defines data collection as ‘a process of finding information on research, or a process of gathering information aimed at providing solutions to the research questions. In this study, both the primary and secondary sources of data was utilized. In the collection of primary data, the semi-structured interview guides and questionnaires were used while as in the collection of secondary information, an analysis of published material, internet, or relevant documents were done. Forty questionnaires were formulated: ten questionnaires were used for the pupils from each of the selected schools, and three for the teachers/examiners, except for one school where four questionnaires were used. As for the interviews, five learners were interviewed from each selected school.

### **3.8 Credibility and Trustworthiness**

According to Shenton (2004) credibility is an “attempt to demonstrate that a true picture of the phenomenon under scrutiny is being presented”. Credibility essentially asks the researcher to link the research study’s findings with reality in order to demonstrate the truth of the research study’s findings. Questions such as “How do you know that your findings are true and accurate?” need to be addressed. Wesley (2010:5) argues that trustworthiness

“concerns the establishment of the credibility of the research by protecting the authenticity or ‘truth value’ of the research.” From the views of Shenton (2004) and Wesley (2010), it can be stated that an authentic analysis is based on “true interpretation” of reality from the primary and secondary data gathered.

This study observed both credibility and trustworthiness in its findings. The researcher utilized external and internal criticisms. External criticism aims at evaluating the nature of the sources to establish their originality. Internal criticism focuses on the information contained in those documents with the aim of establishing their accurateness and worthiness (Oso & Onen, 2008; Kombo & Tromp, 2006). The external criticism for this study aimed at ensuring that the sources or documents which were used were not forgeries. This involved a careful scrutiny of the author’s characteristics and qualifications so as to establish his or her ability as reporters of the events in question. On the other hand, internal criticism aimed at ascertaining the truthfulness of the information contained in the documents and that received during interviews. This was done by examining the competence of the authors or respondents of the said events and any possible biases and motives on their part to distort facts. Their honesty was determined by agreement with the available information on the same topic provided by other respondents or sources. The researcher protected the authenticity of the research by providing a right interpretation of the data.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Data analysis is the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass collected data (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The researcher made use of thematic analysis. Braun & Clarke (2006:79) defines thematic analysis as “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns within data”. During fieldwork, Interview responses from the respondents were recorded on a recorder. This form of analysis helped the researcher to categorize related topics or themes that emerged from the discussions. Hence, via this analysis, major concepts or themes were identified from the data.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Ethics concern what is wrong and what is right in the conduct of research. Since research was a form of human conduct, it therefore followed that such conduct had to follow generally accepted norms and values. Cresswell (2002: 145) states that a researcher has an obligation

to respect the rights, needs, desires and values of the participants. In ensuring ethical research, the researcher adhered to the principles cited by Lincoln and Guba (1994: 300), namely informed consent, indication to participants of the voluntary nature of their participation, assurances of safety in participation as well as privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and the principles of trust.

### **3.11 Chapter Summary**

This Chapter has described the research design and methodology used in gathering data. It has explained the population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments and procedure, credibility and trustworthiness conditions, data analysis and the ethical considerations which employed in the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

### **4.0 Overview**

The preceding chapter described the methods that were used in carrying out this research study. This chapter presents the findings of the current study. The findings were guided by emerging themes from the three research questions which guided the study. The following were the research questions of the study:

1. What is the performance of pupils in Literature in English at the three selected schools in Lusaka Central Zone?
2. What are the main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject?
3. What other factors lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools?

### **4.1 Performance of pupils in Literature in English**

The first research question for this study was for researcher to find out the performance of pupils in Literature in English Subject in the three schools. A documentary analysis was done using the result analysis forms.

#### **4.1.1 Result Analysis for the past three years**

The researcher conducted a result analysis for the past three years to have an overview on how pupils performed in Literature in English in relation to other subjects. Below is a table indicating the findings of the study.

SUBJECT/YEAR	2020			2021			2022		
	SCH A	SCH B	SCH C	SCH A	SCH B	SCH C	SCH A	SCH B	SCH C
Lit. in English	8%	51.8%	50%	52%	80.7%	48%	50%	80.3%	55%
English language	70%	87.5%	76%	91%	82.8%	80%	96%	90.8%	91%
Add Math	76%	52.4%	62%	95%	56.5%	76%	86%	83.3%	80%
Art	99%	74.6%	100%	85%	100%	92%	100%	90.3%	95%
Pure Physics	70%	69.2%	72%	57%	54.2%	56%	93%	57.1%	60%

**Table 3 shows the performance from the three selected schools Lit. in English, English language, addition mathematics, Art and Pure Physics.**

The findings of the study indicate that there is a low academic performance in Literature in English subject in two schools, except for school B which recorded a high pass rate in 2020 and 2021. This is evidenced through a comparison with the performance of pupils in other subjects like Additional Mathematics, English, and Physics, and Art.

The findings of the study indicate that the highest pass rate recorded at average is 52% while other subjects like additional mathematics is at 95% a subject which considered to be one of the most difficult subjects.

#### **4.2 Main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject**

The second research question of this study aimed at investigating the main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject. The researcher asked all the participants on the main challenges that pupils faced in Literature in English subject which resulted in low academic performance in this subject. Hence, under this section, the researcher presents the findings of the study which dealt with the main challenges.

#### **4.2.1 Lack of Motivation**

The study established that among the main challenges that contributed to poor academic performance of pupils was due to lack of Motivation.

The study established that both teacher and pupil motivation in school had great influence on the academic performance of pupils. It was revealed by participants that motivation encourages both pupils and teachers to work hard, and as a result good academic performance is hoped. Further, school B strongly motivated their teachers; this reflected in their good teacher performance and dedication, while School A and C neither motivated their pupils nor teachers and this reflected in their academic performance. Some participant had the following to say:

*My parents at home are just too busy that they have little time to spend with me reading the books am supposed to read for literature in English (Pupil 1, sch A)*

*Sometimes the teachers will the novels with the monitor. We are left to read on our own. It only takes a pupil who is self-motivated to read under no supervision. (pupil 5, sch C)*

*Some teachers are boring and make it difficult to follow what they are teaching. even when you want to participate. (pupil 18, sch C)*

*I have never seen anyone who is successful because of literature, (pupil 26 sch A)*

In the case of the teachers, the following was said:

*We organize an Awards Day Celebration annually where deserving pupils in all disciplines are given various prizes. The teachers as a way of instilling hard work are also awarded (only deserving) during the World Teachers' Day celebrations. (Teacher 10, sch B)*

*It is very hard to teach Literature to learners who have challenges in reading. No matter how much you motivate the learners, they will still not like the subject because of the many difficulties they find when reading the novels. The language is too complex for them (teacher5, sch A)*

#### **4.2.2 Lack of enough Novels or Text books**

The study established that another main challenge that contributed in poor academic performance in Literature in English Subject was due to the lack of enough Novels or Text books to use during a class.

The data that was collected from the participants indicated that the schools had some recourse for teaching such as textbooks. Teacher 4 revealed to the researcher that most schools have many Arts textbooks like those of teaching Civic, Geography, Religious Education to mention but a few. However, the participant remarked that the textbooks or novels for teaching Literature in English subject are not enough. Similarly, Pupil 8 proclaimed that there is a concept that most teacher use; pupils sharing one novel, this method makes some pupils not to fully participant during class, hence making it difficult for to them comprehend the story.

Teacher 8 had the following to say:

*During class, you would notice pupils surrounding one novel as a result of not having enough text for the activity. Because of this, some learners would not recall or capture the story in the novel fully (teacher 8, sch C).*

*Since the books are not enough, sometime I resort to reading for them the novel. This method is time consuming. Much as I enjoy reading for my leaners, this method of teaching takes a lot of time to cover the chapters of the novel in the prescribed time. Hence affecting the syllabus coverage. (teacher 6, sch B)*

Another participant revealed to the researcher that the issue of not having enough books to use in Literature in English Subject makes her not to understand the stories in the novel. Because of this, she explained that she usually fails to understand the essay questions during exams. (pupil 7, sch A) had the following to say:

*My own reason why I perform bad in Literature in English Subject compared to other subjects is because I don't usually understand the stories during class, this is also because of a lack of enough novels to share amongst us, hence when am sitting for an exam I also fail to understand the questions because of the shortage on novels in school (Pupil 7, sch A).*

Similar to pupil seven, sentiments, pupil 21 stated that:

*We read the novels only during the lesson and even then not everyone has a copy we fail to answer the questions during tests or examinations because we don't have to after the lesson*



*is done. We do not understand the questions and we not able to relate the questions to the text. (pupil 21, sch C)*

#### **4.2.3 Lack of Visual Aids**

The study established another challenge that contributed to the poor academic performance in Literature in English Subject. This was the issue of a lack of visual aid in the teaching of Literature in English.

Pupil 6 revealed to the researcher that Literature in English Subject could be better understood if teachers were to utilize visual aids in the teaching of the subject. Other participants revealed to the researcher that if the stories read in the novels were acted, as it is with “Animal Farm”, and then teachers come with a laptop and projector to just screen it, “we sit back and watch, we would remember most of the things than just reading from the novel”. Participant 3 had the following to say:

*Mostly, our teachers just come with the novels, share the novels in groups of three or more due to lack of enough novels, then either the teacher or a pupil would read the novel until class ends. I think a better method of instruction would be utilizing movies that have been acted in relation to the novels, and then the school should provide a laptop and a projector which a teacher should come with, along with the novels. And then project the movie on the screen, we sit back and watch, we would remember most of the things than just reading from the novel. (Pupil 3, sch B)*

Most of the participants revealed this fact to the researcher that one of the strongest reasons for low academic performance in Literature in English is due to the usage of a less effective teaching methodology when compared to the utilization of visual aids. One other participant actually indicated that “we are now in the days of technology, hence teachers are supposed to fully embrace and adopt this strategy.” (Pupil 13, sch B).

*‘It is believed that it is easy to remember what you have seen than what you have heard or read. When I am teaching a particular text, I ask the learners to study the plot of the novel and identify the climax of the story. Then I ask the learners to do a sketch depicting the scenario. This has helped me in lesson delivery because of the learners will actively participate even those who have challenges in reading’ (teacher 4, sch A)*

#### **4.2.4 Lack of adequate counselling**

The data collected from the interviews and questionnaire showed that the schools had not put much emphasis on guidance and counseling. The participants indicated that no much counselling was done on various social and academic matters. Participants indicated that counselling is needed to help pupils be in the right track as they pursue their academic goals. It was indicated that different psychological, social, or emotional barriers disturbed them from concentrating on academic issues. More also, some participants indicated that some pupils suffer from addiction which eats much of their time rather than using time to study. Participant 5 revealed to the researcher that counselling in line with how to handle subjects which are elective in line with their career prospects is very important. Some learner reviewed the subject was just imposed on them. hence examination questions or overcoming your fear is inevitable. In her own words, this is what she said:

*Our schools are not like the private or mission schools where the students are given time and counseled on how to take elective subjects. Secondly, we are not guided on how to tackle the question and the strategies of using time during the examination, when we enter the examination room, we are trembling even if we know the answers. Our fellow students in seminarians are given counseling to be confident to accept own challenge and to be confident in the issue they know so they do very well in their examinations. (Pupil 5, sch C).*

*Teacher 9, sch A, revealed to the researcher that even parents are supposed to be part of this counselling activity. However, it is not like that because some parents also lacked information of the importance of literature to learners. Especially on the importance of developing interest of reading books. Because of this, pupils were not motivated to put much effort in developing the reading culture. It was also noted that most of the learners did not have the reading skills from the Primary Reading Program (PRP). Hence the challenges in reading at secondary school level. .*

#### **4.3 Factors that lead to low performance of pupils in Literature in English**

The third objective of the study was to investigate other factors that lead to poor academic performance in Literature in English Subject. Hence this section presents the factors.

### 4.3.1 Absenteeism

The study established that among the factors that contributed to low academic performance was absenteeism. The study established that pupils would at times, due to various reasons such as sickness, miss classes. Once a pupil misses a lesson, it becomes difficult for a pupil to catch up. And this is because not all pupils have novels used in Literature in English to study at home.

Majority of the participants indicated that they bunk classes more often. Different factors contributed to absenteeism among pupils with low academic performance such as feeling of hopelessness, less encouragement to attend classes, sicknesses and many other reasons. (Pupil 1 had the following to say:

*I have missed classes for Literature in English before. Some of the reasons why I have missed classes were due to feeling unwell or I needed to take care of someone at home who was sick. Unfortunately, I don't have any novel and it is difficult for me to catch up with classes. (Pupil 17, sch A)*

Another participant, with regard to absenteeism, revealed to the researcher that it is difficult to study when you are at home because of house chores or in an event when you are taking care of a patient. The participant had the following to say:

*"My grandma was sick at home, so I had to take some days off from school, and not attend classes to look after her and my siblings. I couldn't study at home because of house chores and the patient". (Pupil 3, sch, B).*

*I was not prepared for the test and did not want to be least in class, so bunked class. I did this most of the time because I had no interest in the subject. Little did my parents know about this trick. This really affected my performance in Literature. (pupil 28, sch C)*

Hence, the study established that among the main factors that contributed to the poor academic performance in Literature in English Subject was also absenteeism. Learners skip school for various reasons. Some find the subject or the teacher to be boring, others want to attend to their personal needs and not academic requirements, other seem not to know the relevance of the subject content.

### 4.3.2 Lack of Interest in the Subject

The study established that among the factors that contributed to poor academic performance was also a lack of interest in Literature in English.

The data that was collected through interviews and questionnaires indicated that a lack of interest in Literature in English contributed to poor academic performance. The reason of not having interest in the subject was attributed different reasons. (Pupil 23, sch C) revealed to the research that the lack of interest in Literature in English was because the teacher of this subject wasn't entertaining when teaching this subject. (Pupil 11, sch A) also gave in that the lack of interest in Literature in English was because no counselling was given to him over the importance of Literature in English. Furthermore, it was established that many participants were not revealed to on the career path of learning Literature in English. Participant 6 had the following to say:

*I do not have interest in taking this subject because my teacher is not entertaining or motivating when teaching this class. (Pupil 16, sch C)*

Pupil 30 had the following to say:

*I do perform well in other subjects because I have some interest in them. But for Literature in English, I do not have interest in the subject which makes me not to put in much effort in it...the reason why I don't have interest is because I do not know what I can use it for in the future, I was not enlightened. (Pupil 30, sch B)*

*Teacher 2, sch B. I enjoy teaching literature because it makes the learners express themselves. during class discussions learners are able to bring out their views and ideas over a particular subject matter. I have managed to develop the interest in reading among my learners due to the emphasis I put when I am teaching the subject.*

*If we had Public Library Innovation Programs in our communities (PLIP), reading for personal knowledge and for academic purposes would not have been a challenge in most learners. PLIP strive integrate creative learning through the practice of public library programs. (teacher 9 sch A)*

The study established that lack of interest in the subject is a factor for poor academic performance. It was indicated that teachers ought to be entertaining when teaching. Furthermore, it was noted that guiding or motivating pupils on the importance and available careers prospects associated with the study of Literature in English be availed to pupils for them to develop interest.

#### **4.3.3 Peer pressure**

The majority of the participants echoed that peer pressure is the most influencing factor to their poor academic achievements. Some participants reported that they spent much time with their peers, receive pressure to commit on negative engagements and eventually lack focus to improve academic arrangements. The following excerpts were recorded:

*“I spend most of my time with friends, go to the shops at plaza, buy some things and spend the whole day not studying”. (Pupil 4, sch C)*

Another participant revealed to the researcher that as a result of her friends having partners, they spent time with, she decided to also have a partner who eventually took most of her time and couldn't spare time to study. She revealed that even when she decides to go study with him, they actually don't seriously study. In her words, *(pupil, 15, sch B)*

*“Most of my friends have boyfriends, it's like a trend to have one.... they mock me not have one and that stresses me a lot as I am incomplete...I ended up having one [boyfriend], the bad thing is that I no longer have time to study neither do we seriously study together”. (Pupils 15, sch B)*

(Pupil 15, sch A) revealed to the researcher that some pupils perform poorly because they indulge themselves in activities that consume most of their time. Instead of studying, they prefer playing around with friends.

#### **4.3.4 Academic procrastination**

The Findings of the study indicated that students failed to perform better in Literature in English as a result of procrastination in their studies. This is an effect of poor time management. Students revealed that they lacked focus which is why they kept on postponing

their reading of novels until the last date. This directly affected their school performance. (Pupil 8 sch C) and (pupil 7, sch A) had the following to say:

*“I always promise myself that I will study but when its time, I will shift time table and say to myself it’s still early to study, there’s still time. This catches me badly coz I fail”.* (Pupil 8 sch C)

*“I don’t want to lie some; I am lazy to study and sometimes feel that the modules demand too much from us as students”.* (Pupil 7 sch A)

#### **4.3.5 Time management**

The findings of the study showed that poor academic performance was affected by lack of time management and is being attributed to a lot of extraneous variables which make it difficult for pupils to be able to manage their time well. Some pupils, especially the female participants indicated that house chores took most of their time and as such they could not focus on their school work. They did not have enough time to go through the novels even when they asked for the novels. Participants indicated that they failed because of poor time management on their side. To support the above, the following excerpts were recorded:

*“I am not disciplined when it comes to make time to study, I will tell myself I will study at night but huh I love to sleep a lot...its’ a big problem to make time shame”.* (Pupil 10, sch B).

*“I have a printing machine in my room, I make copies for students and sell airtime so most of the time so I hardly make time to study very well”.* (Pupil 9, sch A)

#### **4.3.6 Academic overload**

The findings of the study revealed that among the factors that contributed to poor academic performance was as a result of academic overload. Some of the participants complained that their academic overload was high for them to handle. Participant 1 claimed that the combination of Literature in English and History isn’t a good combination because these subjects are full of stories and require memorization. Some other participants complained about the large number of novels needed to read. To support the above discussion, the following excerpts were recorded:

*“I find my work too much, it’s difficult for me take up Literature in English and History, this is a bad combination. These two subjects both require memorization.”. (Pupil 19, sch C )*

*“The novels to read through, like Song of Lawino, Things Fall Apart, Animal Farm, I can’t complete them in time, I feel that our novels are just too many”. (Pupil 18, sch C)*

The study established that pupils would prefer separating some subjects like Literature in English and History, not putting them in one class.

#### **4.3.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has presented the findings of the current study. The findings were guided by emerging themes from the four research objectives that guided the study. The study sought to investigate the performance of pupils in Literature in English, the main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject, and factors that lead to low performance in the subject.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

### 5.0 Overview

The previous Chapter presented the findings to the study. This Chapter discusses the findings. The purpose of this study was to investigate the causes of poor performance in Literature in English national examination. The research objectives that guided the study were: To review the performance of pupils in Literature in English at the three selected schools in Lusaka Central Zone; To find out from stakeholders (school certificate examiners, pupils and teachers of literature in English) the main challenges pupils face in Literature in English subject; and to investigate other factors that lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools.

### 5.1 Performance of pupils in Literature in English

In the initial stages of all semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis, the researcher took time to investigate on how pupils performed in Literature in English against other subjects. The result analysis forms for the past three years for the three selected schools where utilized. Below is a summary of the pupils' performance in Literature in English against other subjects.

**Table 4:** Result Analysis Forms for three years

SUBJECT/YEAR	2020			2021			2022		
	SCH A	SCH B	SCH C	SCH A	SCH B	SCH C	SCH A	SCH B	SCH C
Lit. in English	8%	51.8%	50%	52%	80.7%	48%	50%	80.3%	55%
English language	70%	87.5%	76%	91%	82.8%	80%	96%	90.8%	91%
Add Math	76%	52.4%	62%	95%	56.5%	76%	86%	83.3%	80%
Art	99%	74.6%	100%	85%	100%	92%	100%	90.3%	95%
Pure Physics	70%	69.2%	72%	57%	54.2%	56%	93%	57.1%	60%

**Table 4:** Result Analysis Forms for three years



The above performance of the pupils in the past three years indicate that there is a poor academic performance in Literature in English subject. This is evidenced through a comparison with the performance of pupils in other subjects like Additional Mathematics, English, and Physics and the like. This low performance is similar to the findings of Mubita and Mwanza (2020) who argue that there is a poor performance of pupils in Literature in English, and when compared to other subjects, you realize that there could be a problem which needs to be worked out.

As it is indicated above, the highest pass rate for Literature in English at average in the past three years is 52%, while other subjects like Art stand at 92%. The above result analysis even indicates a 95% pass rate in Additional mathematics, and yet this is the subject considered to be among the hardest subjects. This purely indicates that there is a problem that needs to be worked out.

## **5.2 Main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject**

The second research objective of this study aimed at investigating the main challenges that pupils faced in Literature in English subject. The researcher asked all the participants on the main challenges that pupils faced in Literature in English subject which resulted in low academic performance in this subject. Hence, under this section, the researcher discusses the findings of the study which dealt with the main challenges.

### **5.2.1 Lack of Motivation**

The study established that both teacher and pupil motivation in school has great influence on the academic performance of pupils. The study established that motivation encourages both pupils and teachers to work hard, and as a result good academic performance is hoped. Further, the school that at least motivated their teachers resulted in their good teacher performance and dedication, while Schools that didn't motivate their pupils nor teachers reflected in their poor academic performance. This finding is in agreement with Nkanzela (2015) who contend that motivation has a positive and significant impact on successful learning. Filgona *et el* (2020) argues that motivation drives learners in reaching learning goals. It is important to recognise the fact that motivating learners is a central element of good teaching. This implies that learner's motivation is probably the single most important element of learning.

It is important for teachers to motivate learners of literature because this will foster learners reading ability both in academic and social situations. The intrinsic motivation that is developed in the learners will enable them contribute positively to life situations.

### **5.2.2 Lack of enough Novels or Text books**

The study established that another main challenge that contributed to poor academic performance in Literature in English Subject was due to the lack of enough novels or textbooks to use during a class.

The study found out that lack of teaching and learning resources largely contributed to the poor pupil academic performance. In subjects that had enough textbooks, a good performance was noticed. The study established that the situation where pupils share a novel made it is difficult for pupils to grasp everything. Hence leading to difficulties in learning. This finding is supported by Malambo (2012) who found that limited textbooks is also a factor affecting performance of learners. He argued that lack of teaching and learning materials affects pupils' academic performance as it greatly hampers teaching. More also, Mupa (2015) argues that lack of adequate textbooks, revision books, and resource books that extend children's knowledge affects performance. According to The Heald (2010) the critical shortage of textbooks and other teaching and learning materials has greatly affect the educational sector a great deal.

It can be noted that lack of teaching and learning material have a significant effect on the academic performance of learners. The school may have qualified teachers but if the teaching resources are not enough, delivery of content may be affected. This is usually attributed to low funding for teaching and learning materials learning institutions.

### **5.2.3 Lack of Visual Aids**

The established another challenge that contributed to the poor academic performance in Literature in English Subject; this was the issue of a lack of visual aid in the teaching of Literature in English.

The study indicated that 75% of the pupils argued that one of the strongest reasons for poor academic performance in Literature in English is due to the non-utilization of virtual aid. The study established that the non-utilisation of visual type of teaching made pupils not to recall much as they could during exams if it were used.

This finding is in line with Omrod (2008) who argues that in classes where only one type of method, either verbal or visual type of teaching, is used, a number of students find that learning environment less interesting thus affecting academic performance. There is a positive relationship between students learning preferences and recalling memory and understanding.

Dalali and Prosperity (2022) states that effective visual aids enhanced teaching and learning process in public schools in Ilemela Municipality, Tanzania. Their study was guided by BF Skinner's instruction theory (1974). The study conducted by Agwu and Ogochi (2019) in secondary schools in Nigeria showed that using visual ads in the teaching and learning process helps to explain certain ideas and concepts.

From these studies, it can be analyzed that visual aids contributes to positive performance. visual aids help in memory retention and active participation during the lesson. to improve learner performance. teachers of literature should utilize visual aids in the delivery of their lessons.

#### **5.2.4 Lack of adequate counselling**

The study established that schools had not put much emphasis on guidance and counselling; no much counselling was done on various social and academic matters. The study indicated that counselling is needed to help pupils be in the right track as they pursue their academic goals. It was indicated that different psychological, social, or emotional barriers disturbed them from concentrating on academic issues. This finding is similar to that of Evodia (2014) who argues that not effectively practicing guidance and counselling lead to learners turning to the misuse of drugs and bad habits. Hence failing at school. Springer (2021) state that counselling students helps learners to improve their knowledge, attitude, actions in academic and social situations. Lack of guidance and counselling to the learners leads to morals and behaviour. Most learners who have not had adequate counselling are usually found in bad vices such as dropping subjects or frailer to concentrate in that particular subject, absenteeism and fail. Arfasa,A.J. and Weldmeskel,F.M(2020).

Student counselling can be an intervention to foster positive choices and appreciating the subjects being offered as part of the curriculum. The group counselling given to learners before and during the course work helps the learners to remain focused in their studies.in addition counselling has

shown that psychological or anxieties are managed. It also helps to get rid of subject matter challenges.

### **5.3 Factors that lead to low performance of pupils in Literature in English**

The third objective of the study was to investigate other factors that lead to poor academic performance in Literature in English Subject; hence, this section discusses the factors.

#### **5.3.1 Absenteeism**

The study established that among the factors that contributed to poor academic performance was absenteeism.

The study established that pupils would at times abscond school, due to various reasons. And this resulted in missing important information during class. It was further indicated that most of the pupils that missed class couldn't even study at home due to chores or other activities. Fraser & Killen (2003) argue that students who do not attend classes are not aware of the scope which are given in class for later assessments. Ready (2010) state that better attendance results to good academic achievements for students in all backgrounds. Hence this stood out as one of the factors that cause poor academic performance.

Ministry of Education (MOE) Education policy states that attending school is compulsory to all children of school going age. It is the responsibility of the parent to see to it that their children attend school. If a child is absent from school, the parent should provide an explanation. Where appropriate, a medical report must be provided however it is sad to note that some parents are not perturbed with attendance of school for their children.

It is important for teachers to conduct registration each time they go to teach. This will help in early identification of students who are always absent. both the parents and the learners must be engaged as soon as the problem is identified.

#### **5.3.2 Lack of Interest in the Subject**

The study established that among the factors that contributed to poor academic performance was also a lack of interest in Literature in English. Below is what one of the participants echoed in relation to this sub theme.

The study established that a lack of interest in Literature in English contributed to poor academic performance. The reason of not having interest in the subject was attributed to different reasons such as: the teacher not being entertaining when teaching this subject; because no counselling was given to pupils over the importance of Literature in English; and not knowing the career path of learning Literature in English.

This lack of interest in the subject made pupils not to put in their very best in this subject when compared to other subjects. Hence leading to poor performance. Some learners indicated that they used to dodge lessons owing to the fact that they found literature difficult and uninteresting. Poonam (2014) and Lewis (2017) propose the use of a multimodal approach involving the inclusion of Information Creative Technology ( ICT) in literature lessons as a way of enhancing learner engagement and motivation. It has been established that the use of appropriate methods by teachers can help enhance learner engagement and interest in literature lessons thereby enhancing learner performance (Ghazali, 2008).

In addition to this, pupils need to be told on the importance of this subject because it one of the subjects that bring a lot of benefits and opportunities to individuals. Sanoto (2017) adds that the value of literature in society cannot be under-estimated. This is because of the fact that literature offers the learner various benefits and opportunities for development. Literature has a holistic coverage; it encompasses every aspect of human endeavor. There is no area of human existence one can think of which has not been reflected in literary works. Apart from that, through the study of literary works, learners are availed unique opportunities to develop their intellectual or cognitive faculties.

### **5.3.3 Peer pressure**

The influence of peer pressure can be both positive and negative. On one hand, it can serve as an important initiative for learners who come together to do work for good calls. Learners can come together to encourage one another through doing homework. On the other hand, it can be bad if students are influencing each other on bad vices, it is sad to note that most learners. The majority of the participants echoed that peer pressure is the most influencing factor to their poor academic achievements. Some participants reported that they spent much time with their peers, receive pressure to commit on negative engagements and eventually lack focus to improve academic arrangements.

The study revealed that students were influenced by their peers not to study well and would sometimes please their peers to fit in the groups to socialize. This is supported by Aklog et al. (2013) assertion that the most common causes of poor academic performance are peer pressure, poor social factors, and poor adjustment related factors. Students regard their peers as most influential on decision making and time spent.

#### **5.3.4 Academic procrastination**

The study indicated that students failed to perform better in Literature in English as a result of procrastinating their studies. This is an effect of poor time management. This directly affected their school performance.

Academic procrastination makes pupils not to have time for studies, making them perform poorly in exams. This finding is supported by Steel (2007) when he made mention of meta-analysis study that there is a positive correlation between academic procrastination and irrational thoughts. He states that procrastination is usually intentional delay and aware of the students act careless as they are faced with role identity and independent decision-making. Jones<sup>2021</sup> state that for many students, academic procrastination is associated with dysfunctional learning outcomes. Just as Solomon and Rothbum<sup>1984</sup>) defined academic procrastination as a pervasive permanent desire on the part of the learn to postpone academic work, which always results in submitting work which is incomplete or poorly done because of the discrepancy between work submitted and the standard of word required for a particular level.

#### **5.3.5 Time management**

The study established that pupils do not make time to study; they fail to prioritize between their leisure time and academic time. Some of the factors influence involve spending too much time with their peers, and when it comes to females, house chores take their time.

This is supported by Torres and Solberg (2001) who argued that students with high self-efficacy may perform better academically and have superior skills and academic knowledge because there is a positive relationship between hours devoted towards studying and self-efficacy. Similarly, Barnsley (1999) states that factors affecting academic performance are due to lack of time management on academic studies and psychological factors.

Poor time management has a negative effect on academic performance. This can result in learners performing very poorly. This can also lead to anxiety and cause learners to lose focus because of failing to manage time. Students who fail to manage time tend to perform negatively due to stress and panic to beat the deadlines.

In this study, the impact of time management on both the teacher and the learner is explored. The teacher needs to plan for a time frame for syllabus coverage from grade ten to twelve. The teacher needs to prepare the learners adequately for their final examination. Sometimes learners experience academic overload if the teacher is giving too much work which could have been given earlier. On the other hand, students also need to be trained how to manage time and balance attention for each subject on their timetable.

### **5.3.6 Academic overload**

The study revealed that among the factors that contributed to poor academic performance was as a result of academic overload.

Some of the participants complained that their academic overload was high for them to handle. One of the solutions to this would be to separate subjects that require too much of memorisation. Other than this, pupils need to develop proper study skills and time management that can help them cope with challenging subjects. This is supported by Watts and Pickering (2002) who indicated that students may cope well and avoid academic overload by learning how to effectively manage their curriculum and study techniques and academic style. According to Reupert (2019) in her book *Mental Health and Academic Learning in Schools*. Approaches for facilitating the wellbeing of children and young people, there is a strong connection between students' wellbeing and academic learning.

There is a study done by Lemon et al (2011) entitled '*Identification of Potential High School Drop-out*'. This study is an investigation of the relationship among At-Risk Status, wellness, perceived stress, and matriculation that was published in the journal *Risk*. From this study, the researcher focused on the relation between wellness of students as the state of students, wellbeing and their perceived stress which is due to factors like academic overload and can result in dropping out or subject in high school.

In reference to the Zambian curriculum, students have no reason to complain about the academic overload because the curriculum is such designed that all the subjects allocated to a particular stream are balance in line with the career pathway. This would be especially with the vocation career pathway and the academic career pathway.

#### **5.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has discussed the findings of the current study. This was guided by emerging themes from the three research objectives which guided the study. The study sought to investigate the performance of pupils in Literature in English, the main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject, and also on the factors that lead to low performance in the subject.



## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

The study investigated the causes of poor performance in Literature in English national examination at the three selected Secondary Schools in Lusaka District. The study analyzed the performance of pupils in this subject for the past three years. It further went and investigated on the main challenges and factors that contributed to the poor performance of pupils in this subject.

### **6.2 Conclusion of the study**

After analyzing the performance of pupils, the study confirms that there was a low academic performance in Literature in English subject. This was evidenced through a comparison with the performance of pupils in other subjects like Additional Mathematics, English, and Physics and the like.

Pupils faced challenges that resulted in poor performance in Literature in English. Among the challenges are: Lack of Motivation, Lack of enough Novels or Text books, Lack of Virtual Aid, and Lack of enough counselling.

The study further concluded that other than the challenges that pupils faced, there existed factors that contributed to poor academic performance. Which includes Absenteeism, Lack of Interest in the Subject, Peer pressure, Academic procrastination, Time management, and Academic overload.

### **6.3 Recommendations of the Study**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- i. The teachers employed to teach Literature in English should make use of visual aids in their teaching of the subject to make subject more interesting and for easy retention.
- ii. The schools should ensure not to put subjects that require a lot of memorizations in the quest to adhere to the career path (literature with a social science for example Literature in English and History or Literature / Religious Education).

- iii. Parents and teachers should offer counselling to the pupils and ensure that pupils are guided in the choice of subjects with an informed mind set.
- iv. Schools are encouraged to offer motivation to both teachers and pupils so as to ignite their desire to work hard.

#### **6.4 Suggestion for Further Research**

For further research, a study could be conducted on the benefits of studying literature in English. This would be helpful to ignite interest in both teachers and learners.

#### **6.5 Chapter summary**

The chapter focused on the conclusions and recommendations of this study. Both its conclusion and the recommendations were provided in the light of its objectives and findings of the study.

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## Appendix 1: Consent Form

The University of Zambia

P.O Box 32379

Lusaka

Dear Participants

The purpose of this letter is to request you to participate in a dissertation study titled “*An investigation of the causes of poor performance in Literature in English National Examinations: A case study of Lusaka Boys, Kabulonga Girls, and Twinpalm Secondary Schools in Lusaka*”. I am a Postgraduate student at the University of Zambia. I would like us to engage in an interview were I will ask questions over the causes of poor performance in Literature in English national examinations.

Would you be willing to participate in an interview? If so, please complete the attached consent form, and I will collect it when we meet for an interview. Your participation in my study is voluntary. The information described above is so, in order to make an informed decision about your participation. Please be assured that personal information of the all participants, will remain strictly confidential and anonymous. You may withdraw your consent at any time. There are no foreseeable risks associated with this study, nor are there any direct benefits to you. I thank you in advance for your participation and look forward to beginning my work. Please feel free to contact me at any time.

Yours Faithfully

Akakululubelwa Akakandelwa

I have read the consent letter, and understand that:

- My participation is voluntary, and that my personal information will be anonymous
- I will be interviewed and that I can withdraw my consent any time
- There are no foreseeable risks associated with this project, nor are there any direct benefits to me

I consent to be a participant in this study

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix 2: Interview Guide for Stakeholders**

Dear respondents

The researcher is a post-graduate at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University. You are picked to take part in an interview, which consist of various questions. You are assured that the information you will give will be treated confidential and be used for the purpose of the research only.

1. What is the performance of pupils in Literature in English at your school?
2. What are the main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject?
3. What are the main challenges that you face in teaching or examining Literature in English subject?
4. What are the home factors that lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools?
5. What are the school factors that lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools?
6. What possible measures would be taken to mitigate poor performance in Literature in English subject?

### **Appendix 3: Interview Guide for pupils**

Dear respondents

The researcher is a post-graduate at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University. You are picked to take part in an interview, which consist of various questions. You are assured that the information you will give will be treated confidential and be used for the purpose of the research only.

1. What is your performance in Literature in English?
2. What are the main challenges that you face in Literature in English subject?
3. What are the main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject examinations?
4. What are the home factors that lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools?
5. What are the school factors that lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools?
6. What possible measures would be taken to mitigate poor performance in Literature in English subject?

#### Appendix 4: Questionnaire for Stakeholders

Dear respondents

The researcher is a post-graduate at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University. You are picked to take part in an interview, which consist of various questions. You are assured that the information you will give will be treated confidential and be used for the purpose of the research only.

1. What is the performance of pupils in Literature in English at your school?  
.....  
.....
2. What are the main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject?  
.....  
.....
3. What are the main challenges that you face in teaching or examining Literature in English subject?  
.....  
.....
4. What are the home factors that lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools?  
.....  
.....
5. What are the school factors that lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools?  
.....  
.....
6. What possible measures would be taken to mitigate poor performance in Literature in English subject?  
.....  
.....

## Appendix 5: Questionnaire for pupils

Dear respondents

The researcher is a post-graduate at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University. You are picked to take part in an interview, which consist of various questions. You are assured that the information you will give will be treated confidential and be used for the purpose of the research only.

1. What is your performance in Literature in English?  
.....  
.....
2. What are the main challenges that you face in Literature in English subject?  
.....  
.....
3. What are the main challenges that pupils face in Literature in English subject examinations?  
.....  
.....
4. What are the home factors that lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools?  
.....  
.....
5. What are the school factors that lead to poor performance of pupils in Literature in English in the three selected secondary schools?  
.....  
.....
6. What possible measures would be taken to mitigate poor performance in Literature in English subject?  
.....  
.....

**APPENDIX 6: WORK PLAN**

Gantt chart Presentation of Work Schedule for the Study

Task to be Performed	April 23 Week				May 23 Week				June 23 Week				July 23 Week				August 23 Week				September 23 Week				October 23 Week							
Finalize & submit for approval	█	█	█	█																												
Clearance from school, ethics & funding authorities					█	█	█	█																								
Revision & pretesting of Data tools						█	█	█																								
Data collection									█	█	█	█																				
Data Analysis										█	█	█	█	█																		
First draft submission																	█	█	█	█												

