FACTORS AND THE NATURE OF LOW READING ACHIEVEMENT AMONG GRADE TWO PUPILS: THE CASE OF SELECTED SCHOOLS IN MPIKA AND MBALA DISTRICTS

BY

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DECLARATION

I, Mwambazi Stanley, declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted for a degree award at any other university.

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CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by Mwambazi Stanley is approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Education (in Literacy and Learning) degree of the University of Zambia.

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DEDICATION

To my beloved family: my wife and children, who, in my absence endured, tolerated but lived with hope. To my late mother, Beatrice, who, is departed to u n worlds. Though departed to unknown worlds, her encouragement to study still lives on, and to Uncle Robert, also departed, whose good reading habits arealways an inspiration.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
Declaration	ii
Certificate of Approval	iii
Dedication	iv
Copyright	v
Acknowledgements	vi
Table of Contents	vii
List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xii
Abstract	xiii

CHAPTER ONE……1

Introduction……1

Background……1

Theoretical Framework……3

Statement of the Problem……5

Purpose of the Study……5

Objectives of the Study……5

Research Questions……5

Significance of the Study……5

Definition of Terms……6

CHAPTER TWO……7

Literature Review……7

CHAPTER THREE……19

Methodology……19

Research Design……19

Target Population……19

Sample Sizes……19

Sampling Procedure……19

Research Instruments and their Administration……20

Data Collection Procedures……22

Data Analysis Procedures……22

Ethical Issues……23

Study Limitations……23

Delimitation of the Study……24

CHAPTER FOUR……25

Findings of the Study……25

Tests with Basic Skills Assessment Tool (BASAT)……25

Performance in Reading from Respective Schools……31

Test Results from Reading List……35

Data from Questionnaires……49

Lesson Observation……54

Data from Interview with Head teachers, SICs and Teachers……55

CHAPTER FIVE.....61

Discussion.....61

CHAPTER SIX.....73

Conclusion and Recommendations.....73

Conclusion.....73

Recommendations.....74

REFERENCES.....76

APPENDICES.....83

Appendix 1 Basic Skills Assessment Tool (BASAT).....83

Appendix 2 Reading List for Grade 2.....88

Appendix 3 Lesson Observation Form.....89

Appendix 4 Letters of the Alphabet.....91

Appendix 5 Questionnaire for Teachers.....92

Appendix 6 Interview Guide.....94

Appendix 7 Informed Consent Form for PEO.....95

Appendix 8 Informed Consent Form for BEBS.....96

Appendix 9 Informed Consent Form for Head teachers.....97

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
1	Letter Knowledge	26
2	Letter-Sound Knowledge	27
3	Syllable Segmentation	28
4	Initial Sound Identification	28
5	End Sound Identification	29
6	Sound Blending	30
7	Reading	30
8	Reading Comprehension	33
9	Reading *'a'*	35
10	Reading *'ba'*	36
11	Reading '*mona*'	36
12	Reading '*aleya*'	36
13	Reading '*batata'*	37
14	Reading '*bamucena*'	37
15	Reading '*talafika'*	37
16	Reading '*kafundisha*'	38
17	Reading '*umukashana'*	38
18	Reading '*balesambilila*'	38
19	Reading Bemba by grade two	49
20	Reading Englishby grade two	50
21	Teaching/learning materials	50
22	Reasons Grade two were unable to Read Bemba	51

23 Reasons Grade two were unable to Read English..... 52

24 Summary of Lesson Observations.....54

25 Interview with Head teachers, SICs and Teachers..... 58

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE **PAGE**

1 Reading Performance School by School……..32

2 Reading Comprehension School by School…….34

3 Reading *'a'* School by School……..39

4 Reading '*ba' S*chool by School…….40

5 Reading *'mona'* School by School……41

6 Reading '*aleya*' School by School……42

7 Reading '*batata*' School by School……...43

8 Reading '*bamucena*' School by School……..44

9 Reading *'talafika'* School by School……..45

10 Reading '*kafundisha*' School by School……46

11 Reading '*umukashana*' School by School……..47

12 Reading '*balesambilila'* School by School……48

ABSTRACT

The study aimed at exploring the factors and the nature of the low reading achievement among grade two (2) pupils. Sixty grade two (2) pupils, thirty girls and thirty boys, comprised the samples while six basic school Head teachers, six School In-service Coordinators (SICs) and seventy-six grade two teachers were the respondents. The respondents and the samples were drawn from selected basic schools in Mbala and Mpika districts of the Northern Province of Zambia.

The instruments used to collect data include the Basic Skills Assessment Tool (BASAT),questionnaires, the Interview Guide, and the Lesson Observation Form (LOF).Test results of the study confirm that grade two (2) pupils in target schools were not able to read Zambian Language and English according to their grade level.The related Chi-square tests which were done on the test results from BASAT show that there was no significant difference in performance among the six basic schools.

The study revealed that grade two pupils were not able to read according their grade level due to absenteeism; shortage of suitable teaching/learning materials; shortage of teachers particularly those trained in PRP methodologies; large classes; poor family and educational back ground; poor and inadequate infrastructure; pupils not breaking through in grade one; inadequate time allocated for literacy/reading lessons; and un familiar language of instruction.

Basing on the findings of the study, recommendations were made to the relevant authorities of the education system. The recommendations include: Adequate appropriate teaching/learning materials for literacy/reading in English should be continually supplied tobasic schools; grade two teachers should be closely supervised and supported, and should be encourage to establish closer links with learners' homes; teachers of the first two grades of lower basic section should be adequately trained in NBTL and SITE methodologies in order to ensure pupils who do not break through in grade one are assisted to read in grade two; more teachers should be deployed so that there should be two teachers per lesson in grades one and for adequate supervision of the many learning activities in NBTL and SITE; and construction of school infrastructure should be increased and should be more equitably distributed.