

**FACTORS AFFECTING PUPIL PERFORMANCE IN GRANT-AIDED AND NON-GRANT AIDED SECONDARY SCHOOLS:  
A CASE OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE  
WESTERN PROVINCE OF ZAMBIA.**

BY

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A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration.

The University of Zambia

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2012

**DECLARATION**

I Brainley Malambo solemnly declare that this dissertation is my own work and that it has never been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other University.

Signed.....

Date.....

## CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation of Brainley Malambo is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements of the award of the degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration by the University of Zambia.

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

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## **Abstract**

This study aimed at identifying factors affecting performance of learners in selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools in the Western Province of Zambia. The two schools that participated in the study were pseudo named Mungule High School (non-grant aided) and Munyama Secondary School (grant-aided). Teachers found in the two types of schools were, by and large, trained from the same teachers' training colleges and universities.

A case study design was used which combined qualitative and quantitative techniques of data collection and analysis. The target sample comprised teachers, pupils and school administrators of the selected schools. Other informants included Senior Education Standards Officers (SESO's) from the Provincial Education Office in Mongu.

The data were collected through questionnaires, interview schedules, Focus Group Discussions and analysis of documents. Qualitative data were analysed thematically through identification of themes that emerged from the data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 16.0) was used to generate descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages or tables.

The study revealed that pupils from non-grant aided schools were under performing as compared to pupils from grant-aided schools. The unsatisfactory performance of pupils from non-grant aided schools was attributed to inadequate learning and teaching resources, over enrolment, demotivated teachers (low teacher morale), pupil indiscipline, teacher and pupil absenteeism, inactive INSET activities for teachers and lack of school academic policies among other factors.

On the other hand, good performance in grant-aided secondary schools were attributed to adequate learning and teaching materials, high teacher morale (teacher motivation), strong school academic policies, high level of pupil discipline, controlled enrolment levels, prize giving ceremonies in recognition of outstanding pupil performance and close supervision of teachers and pupils among other factors. The study made the following recommendations:

- The MOE should ensure that all secondary schools are well resourced in terms of teaching and learning materials.
- The MOE in conjunction with the schools' Boards/ PTA's should find a way of raising teacher motivation and morale in schools.
- Over enrolment should be discouraged in schools.
- Absenteeism in schools involving pupils and teachers should be addressed by school managers
- MOE should step up supervision of schools and take appropriate remedial measures to stop the deterioration of learning and teaching standards in schools.

## **DEDICATION**

This research report is dedicated to my late grandmother, Bina Mwiinga, my mother, Ruth Malambo and my father, Paul Busiku for the gift of formal education and helping me to realize my full potential in life.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Introduction**

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

#### **Background to the problem**

Historically, formal education in Zambia originated through the work of voluntary agencies, mostly Christian missionaries. To-date, religious bodies make a significant contribution to educational provisions in Zambia through their grant-aided schools and colleges. A grant-aided institution is one that receives from government a grant of 75% of the capital costs of approved projects and an annual grant in aid running costs. The government also pays the salaries of teachers and other approved personnel at these institutions.

The partnership of the voluntary agencies is greatest at the secondary level. There are over 44 grant-aided secondary schools dotted across the country (MOE, 1996) supporting over 15% of the total secondary enrolment in the country. In addition, the religious bodies own four primary teachers education colleges in Zambia.

The regulations governing the grant-aided institutions were updated in 1993. The new regulations provide for the establishment at each aided institution autonomous boards of management which exercise extensive control over every aspect of educational provision at the school or college. A further significant feature of the new regulations is that the boards have been empowered to protect particular ethos through control over the appointment and retention of staff.

The substantially independent boards of management in grant-aided schools appear to be managing their affairs very well. This is evidenced by the outstanding academic performance of pupils especially at grade 12 level.

For some time now, Private and Catholic- run learning institutions have been known to provide quality education. According to the Ministry of Education (2003), in 2001, 65.7% of the pupils at grade twelve level received their certificates with far higher rates in private and grant-aided schools. Little wonder many parents including non-Catholic members choose private and catholic- run learning institutions ahead of government schools for their children because of assured good examination performance provided the children are serious with their school work. Although teachers available in both grant- aided and non grant- aided schools are trained from the same colleges, there are some marked and vivid discrepancies in as far as pupil performance is concerned.

Munyama secondary school and Mungule secondary school (pseudonyms) of the Western Province serve as good examples of a grant-aided and non-grant- aided schools respectively. Munyama secondary school (grant-aided) was established in 1962 as a boys' secondary school. The institution was named after Munyama, the famous evangelist. The first head teacher of the school was Fr. Edwin Flyn. In 1990, the school was turned into a day school due to various reasons and in 1996 because of pressure from the community, the agency agreed to turn the school into a co-educational secondary school the status it has maintained to date. Mungule (non-grant aided) secondary school was previously known as Mongu secondary school. The change was effected in 1966. The first principal of the school was called Bryan. At first, the school was for the boys only but now it accommodates both girls and boys. It has both day scholars and boarders. The history of the two schools above is indicative of the fact that these two institutions have been operational for a long period of time. They have, therefore, made huge and undeniable contribution to the education sector of this country. It is very clear from

the outset that Munyama secondary school has a clear commitment to its catholic pupils and catholic staff but as Carmody (1999) points out: it is involved in Christian unity.

### **Statement of the problem**

The statistics of pupil performance at grade 12 shows that performance of pupils in grant-aided secondary schools is generally better than the non-grant aided secondary schools in the Western Province (MOE, 2010). This picture is not peculiar to the Western Province alone. The Minister of Education, Dr. John Phiri, stated that he was saddened that most government schools were underperforming compared to mission (grant-aided) schools in the country ( Post: May 9, 2012). Meanwhile, very few studies have been conducted to establish the causal factors for this situation. For this reason, this study sought to investigate factors affecting the academic performance of pupils in both grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools in the Western Province of Zambia.

### **Purpose of the study**

The purpose of this study was to find out factors affecting academic performance of pupils in grant-aided and non- grant-aided secondary schools in selected secondary schools of the Western Province.

### **Specific objectives**

(a) To collect the academic performance of pupils from selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools in the Western Province of Zambia.

(b) To establish the views from teachers, pupils and educational administrators on the factors affecting pupil performance from grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools at grade 12 level.

(c) To investigate the academic policies for selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools in the Western Province of Zambia.

(d) To identify measures put in place by selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools aimed at improving pupil performance levels.

### **Research questions**

(a) Is there any difference in pupil academic performance at grade 12 level for grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools for the period 2000 to 2010 in the Western Province of Zambia?

(b) What are the views of teachers, pupils and educational administrators on the academic performance of pupils from selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools at grade 12 level in the Western Province of Zambia?

(c) What are the academic policies of selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools?

(d) What academic interventions have selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools put in place to enhance pupils' academic performance?

### **Significance of the study**

The study has provided information on factors affecting pupil performance in grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools in the Western Province of Zambia. This information may contribute to developing measures to enhance the performance of the learners in non-grant

aided high schools and could also be useful to educational administrators, teachers and policy makers. The study may also contribute to the existing body of knowledge on factors affecting pupil academic performance at grade 12 level. Furthermore, the information obtained would be cardinal as an entry point for researchers intending to pursue the topic of factors affecting pupil performance in schools. The study findings could also be used by agencies like the United Nations Children's fund (UNICEF) and some faith based organizations as they design programmes to advise government on issues of education.

### **Limitations of the study**

This study focused only on two selected secondary schools of the Western Province of Zambia. As a result, the study findings could not be generalized as the research did not cover the whole country.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The Sammons' model of an effective school in Ribbins and Burr ridge (1994) guided this study. According to Sammons, the first attribute of an effective school is that it should have a clear school vision and goal.

The second attribute of an effective school as identified by Sammons is that such a school should have good and highly professional leadership. What he means here is that the school managers should be well qualified and experienced members of staff.

He identifies positive school climate as the third attribute of an effective school. He further explains that a positive school environment does involve the availability of appropriate teaching and learning materials and competent and adequate teaching staff among other things: An atmosphere where teachers can interact freely professionally and share ideas without restrictions.



The fourth attribute according to him is the active parental involvement in school matters. He suggests that in such schools the managers should use Open Days as a way of encouraging parental participation in the school affairs.

The last and fifth attribute identified by Sammons is that an effective school should have a systematic assessment and evaluation procedure of learners' work and that the school managers should also be highly motivating to both the teachers and the learners.

According to Carl (2000:183), a model may simply supply meaningful guidelines for the process which is undertaken. Models do, in fact, differ and are of value in specific circumstances.

## **Operational definitions**

***Grant-aided school:*** A school owned and managed by church organizations in partnership with the government. The government provides grants to these institutions in the form of funds and pays the teachers.

***Secondary school:*** A school with grades eight to twelve.

***Effective school:*** Is a school which treats every student fairly and equally and meets the needs of all the students whether they are at the top or bottom of the ability scale. It also encourages responsibility and ethical behavior among the learners.

***Academic performance:*** A student's involvement in the learning process and the application of his and her cognitive faculty i.e. reading, writing and general performance in school assignments

***Non-grant-aided school:*** These are schools owned and run by the government

***Passing:*** Obtaining a full certificate in grade twelve (12) which entails obtaining at least five (5) subjects (including English) with at least a credit in two of them.

***Regular school:*** Any school operating within the conventional or traditional education system in Zambia. The classes in a school like that run from grades one (1) to twelve (12).

***Learner:*** A student or pupil in a secondary school

***MOE:*** Ministry of Education

***PTA:*** Parents Teachers' Association

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter looks at the relevant literature on the subject of education generally and factors that affect pupil performance in grant-aided and non grant-aided secondary schools. The reviewed literature has been discussed under the following subheadings:

- The significance of formal education.
- Causes of poor academic performance in learning institutions.
- Creating an effective institution

#### **The significance of formal education**

The significance of education to humanity can never be over-emphasised. Education does help to improve the living standards of people. For an individual and a nation to develop, there is dire need to pay special attention to education. An individual can only be successful through a well planned and managed educational system (Alder, 1995). The government has taken education as a pre-requisite for human as well as economic development. It, therefore, correctly puts people at the centre stage of all development. It as well considers the development of people, not things, to be of prime significance. The knowledge, skills, attitudes and let alone values that people acquire through the process of education or training are considered to be equipping its citizens in their own right as autonomous and active participants in the process of socio-economic change and improvement. These and other attributes enable citizens to make constructive impacts on the development of non-human resources, thereby leading to increases in the nation's wealth (Ministry of Education-MOE-, 1992: xxii; MOE 1996: 2). It is for this reason that upon attainment of independence in 1964, the Zambian government has been

striving to increase the number of schools to provide quality educational chances to as many citizens as possible. Quality is, therefore, key in every form of education system. In the Zambian situation, the MOE aims at ensuring that learners attain the highest standards of learning through quality teaching. In the MOE's view, quality emanates from maximizing the efforts of those responsible for the education of learners at all levels of the education system so that learning institutions from pre-schools all the way up to the university become places of effective teaching and learning to enhance the highest standards of achievement according to the ability of every learner (MOE, 1996). Put differently, the government, through the MOE has an outline on how it intends to provide an enabling environment for quality education to be easily attained in the country. In the researcher's view, this approach to education is in line with the humanist stance on individual development. It is believed in this approach that individuals have inherent potentials to develop but the unleashing of such potentiality is dependent, to a large extent, on how enabling the teaching and learning climate is. As Finger and Asun (2001) observe, the human motivation to learn is related to the satisfaction of an individual's needs whose ultimate goal is self-actualisation.

The humanistic approach to development takes an individual to be at the centre of his or her learning. The proponents of the humanistic paradigm state that an individual has the freedom and ability to attain self-development and is capable of directing his or her learning process provided the environment is conducive. They further argue that individuals have control over their own destiny and are free to act and choose a course of action and are also responsible for their own full potential development.

The MOE's approach to educational provision, according to the researcher, is in line with the humanist theories. This is because the MOE also makes the learner central to the entire education process which exists solely for the sake of the learner. It equally recognizes that each learner is unique (MOE, 1996). In support of this, West-Burnham and Carr-Bowling (1999) add

that learning is regulated by the learner. They state that effective learning entails “enabling students to become life-long, self-starting and self-sustaining people.” The above stated point of view, therefore, makes the responsibility of a learning institution like a non-grant aided high school a challenging one. In view of the environment being vital to enhancing or inhibiting teaching and learning in a classroom, the teacher is a key figure in creating a conducive atmosphere for the learners. It is the researcher’s view that teachers, as custodian of the teaching and learning, take time to learn how their learners learn best if they are to be good and competent teachers. In line with this, Rogers states that, “I know I cannot teach any one anything, I can only provide an environment in which he can learn,” (Brandes and Ginns, 1986: v). To achieve quality education, there is need for teachers to focus their lesson plans and every other activity on the learner. As a result, society has high expectations of teachers. Entrusted with our nation’s precious resources, its children and youth, today’s teachers are expected to have advanced knowledge and skills and high academic and ethical standards. Although promoting students’ academic progress has always been their primary responsibility, teachers are also expected to further students’ social, emotional and moral development and to safeguard students’ health and well being. Increasingly, there are public calls on teachers and schools to address social problems and risk factors that affect students’ success.

Even in the most democratic classrooms, teachers have more influence than students because they are responsible for what goes on when students are with them; setting the pace, evaluating the process and deciding whether students should pass or fail. How a teacher utilizes this power is very critical (Lemmer and Parkay, 2001).

Very few people go into education, in the first place, to become rich or famous. On some level, every teacher gets a special thrill out of helping others. Teachers who flourish are those who are loved by their students and revered by their colleagues: those who feel tremendous dedication and concern for others- not just because they are paid to do so, but because it is their

nature and their ethical responsibility (Forrest and Parkay, 2001). Society, among other things, expects teachers to be competent and effective and it holds teachers accountable for student achievement and maintaining their high standards of conduct.

Lemmer and Parkay (2001) further contend that formal education has become the tool whereby states train workers to maintain and develop a common culture and give citizens a shared national identity. Badenhorst et al (1993) agree with the statement by stating that both capitalists and non-capitalists regard the school as an important instrument in maintaining and expanding the economy. Education is unequivocally linked with both citizen formation and national economic development.

Competent and committed teachers are needed for societal and national development: well trained teachers are cardinal to every society because they help mould the nation. Service provided by teachers to the learners is very important because they open the minds of the learners to a life- long search for competencies needed for professional life. Brooks and Kahn (1992) state that literacy helps people acquire necessary knowledge needed for better use of natural resources including the protection of the environment. It also facilitates a change in attitude that can encourage increased productivity.

Thomas (1990) observes that it is a reality that society would always rely on teachers to uplift the entire nation as they play a vital role in the provision of quality education and that quality educational provision entails, among other things, producing highly scoring students in examination results on the part of schools. However, not all schools are able to meet these societal aspirations and expectations currently.

## **Causes of poor Academic Performance in learning institutions**

Throughout the world, education is considered as the key to national development. A MOE (1996) document points out that education is a right for each individual and is also a means of enhancing the well being and quality of life for the entire society. The importance of education received by the learners at the secondary school level cannot, therefore, be ignored. Recent studies have revealed that secondary education increases chances of formal sector employment (M.O.E., 2003). Globally, poor examination performance is caused by so many factors.

Wegner et al (1995) postulate that, in the America, poor examination performance is caused chiefly by substandard quality of education background. They further argue that the lack of teacher competence and not giving tests or examinations to the learners on a regular basis contributes to poor performance in academic work. The other factor responsible for poor academic performance in some learning institutions worldwide is poor leadership. D'souza (1994: 112) says that "leaders and their styles affect everyone and everything in their organization." When leadership is bad, in an educational organization, poor performance will be the result. Lack of effective supervision can adversely affect the performance of learners. Ndoye (2007) cautions that while it is prudent to invest in learning materials such as books, desks, learning and teaching aids, it is important to ensure that the school is well managed and that investment is done in quality management training to establish an effective support structure and inspection system at the district level. These findings suggest that improving school management is cardinal to enhancing the overall quality of the school.

In Africa, studies on poor academic performance have been done. By and large, it has been discovered that the changing of the curriculum by the authorities without preparing the learners and giving out reading materials was one of the causes of poor examination performance (Mitter, 1991). This affected the learners adversely as they had to start from the scratch due to

non-availability of relevant books. In his study of quality education in selected schools in Livingstone and Kazungula districts in Zambia, Mbozi (2008:127) found limited textbooks as a factor affecting the performance of the learner. Researches done in Uganda and Ghana found significant effects leading the researchers to conclude that improving the availability of textbooks is of the most cost effective methods for enhancing learning achievement. While these findings cannot be disputed, the findings in Zambia slightly differ. In Zambia, it was discovered that simply raising the number of books does not automatically improve learning outcomes and that teacher training must be improved in order to ensure effective teaching and use of textbooks (Kelly and Kanyika, 2000). In addition, the findings at Middle basic level revealed that performance improves when books are made available and that improvement only occurs when they are shared. According to the study, the highest achievement was observed when one book was shared between two learners. However, while this was the case in other subjects, achievement in Mathematics was found to be at its best when there were no textbooks for use at all. It was suggested, in the study, that it could be so because the teacher was the only resource available for the learners making him or her to actively endeavour to instill the necessary comprehension and elicit the desired procedures. This was said not be the case when books were available in that the teacher no longer sensed the need for vigorous teaching and simply allowed learners to make their way through texts, exercises and examples provided in books. This made the researchers to conclude that:

*“ Pupil learning will occur merely by distributing books to pupils. Teachers must also learn how to incorporate these additional resources (textbooks) in their teaching strategies in such a way that they do not abdicate their teaching functions to the ‘ the book’ but actively seek to enable pupils to understand the contexts of the book and how to derive maximum profit from it’ (Kelly and Kanyika, 2000: 52-57; Kasanda, 2003: 105).*



Furthermore, poor or unacceptable examination performance on the African scene was due to lack of library facilities in most of the educational institutions. In Zambia, particularly, the establishment of several basic schools gradually caused the existence of substandard education in high schools and this has spilled over to institutions of higher learning (M.O.E., 1996). The other factor responsible for poor pupil performance is absenteeism and late coming of both the learners and teachers for lessons. The National Assessment Surveys carried out in Zambia in 1999 and 2003 reveal that staff and learner absenteeism, late coming and knocking off early have a negative bearing on the learning achievements (Kasanda, 2003: 31-52). Another factor responsible for the poor pupil performance is over enrolment. According to Ndoye (2007:3), most schools in Zambia are characterized by large enrolments which have a negative impact on the quality of education. This in turn results in higher pupil-teacher ratios, pupil-classroom ratios, pupil-book ratios and pupil-desk ratios that eventually affect the performance of the learners. Mbozi (2008:127) argues that over enrolment of about sixty (60) pupils in class made learners fail to concentrate on their work while it also made teachers fail to mark learners' work and avoid using group work which is an effective mode of teaching. Teaching done by teachers faced with such challenges is not exciting to learners at all. Such unfavourable and uninspiring classroom atmosphere promotes absenteeism and may lead to pupils dropping out of school.

Although distance from school was observed as another factor which caused poor pupil performance in Africa, studies done by Kelly and Kanyika (2000:57) in 1999, indicate that there was no correlation between distance to school and learner performance. However, they revealed that the time that learners took to get to school lowered their mean scores. This is because such learners were likely to have less time to study than their classmates and may arrive late and fail to study and do their homework when they got home. This situation was revealed by Mbozi (2008) in her findings. She stated that some learners covered up to ten (10)

kilometers walking to school. This made them too tired to concentrate in class. They equally learnt few subjects each day because they most of the times reached school late. This made them perform poorly at school even though their actual performance was not given in the study. Kelly and Kanyika (2000) do also allude to the fact that manual work and sport can cause poor academic performance among the learners. They reveal that when these were done every day at school and at home, they lowered the performance of the learners concerned. Poor teacher and pupil interaction was cited as one of the factors that caused poor pupil performance by Mbozi (2008). She found out that there were situations that made learners feel threatened by their teachers. According to her, there were incidents when the teachers used bad and threatening language at the pupils for various reasons. In such cases, learners became inactive in class and eventually performed poorly academically. Furthermore, Mbozi (2008) identified the negative attitude of parents and the community as also a factor affecting pupil academic performance. She states that parents would rather send their children to look after cattle than to school because they felt school was not beneficial economically. According to Mbozi (2008), some parents gave practical examples of some of the highly educated people in society who were poverty stricken, to their children, in order to drive their point home. Because of such tangible examples they gave, these parents managed to prevent their children from going to school as they got convinced that going to school was a sheer wastage of time.

The other factor responsible for poor pupil performance is the absence of the homework policy in some schools. Kelly and Kanyika (2000) reveal that there is a positive relationship between learning achievement and frequency of homework. The Ministry of Education policy insists on homework being given to learners at least twice a week in all the subjects (Kasanda, 2001). Some schools performed poorly because of teacher related factors such as, inadequate teacher preparation and teacher's lack of dedication to duty. High school teachers were expected to prepare what they taught in schools. These preparations could be in form of schemes of work,

records of work, and lesson plans to guide the teaching process (MOE, 2001). Other schools performed poorly academically due to the fact that they had poor school facilities. The study carried out in Ghana indicated that a good learning environment had a significant impact on school attendance and learning outcomes. While many details were not given about the meaning of a good learning environment, the study alluded to the fact that the absence of adequate school facilities like desks, blackboards, electricity and water sanitation had a negative effect on pupil attendance and in turn learning achievement (Kelly and Kanyika, 2000).

### **Creating an effective Institution**

The 1996 education policy document of Zambia re-affirms the notion that the effectiveness and quality of an education system relies on the quality and competency of teachers. Effectiveness in the delivery of a sound school system depends on the quality of educational administrators. School head teachers, Deputy Head teachers and Heads of Departments need training in educational management. However, it appeared the majority of staff occupying supervisory and managerial positions in the school system had not received relevant training for their posts. Neither had the Ministry of Education any facility or mechanism for ensuring that those appointed to supervisory positions received relevant training.

This state of affairs led to inefficiencies and poor performance in the management and supervision of the school system. Every school was expected to be characterised by the pursuit of excellence in the intellectual and personal development of its pupils. There was a clearer understanding at the time than was in the past as to what constituted an effective school. Parents had contributed significantly to the understanding. When questioned about placement of their children in certain schools, parents stated that they were influenced by such factors as good examination results, a wide range of subject offerings, dedicated teachers, stability in

staffing and qualified teachers, availability of learning and teaching materials, good school infrastructure, orderliness, sense of purpose and discipline. Kunkhuli (1989) contends that the following are the five indispensable characteristics of effective schools:

- They have high expectation for the performance of every pupil. No pupil is written off. Standards that are both challenging and attainable by all are set and maintained.
- They have a clear focus on learning, with school time being productively used in systematic approach to teaching and learning. The school's instructional tasks take precedence over all other activities.
- They have an orderly, controlled atmosphere, with a clear set of general rules. School discipline, which is definite but not rigid, establishes a predictable framework within which the essential teaching and learning tasks of the school can be carried on.
- Evaluation and assessment are used systematically. Learning is monitored closely so that teachers and the school administrators are constantly aware of pupil progress in relation to established goals.
- They have committed school administrators who pay particular attention to the quality of learning and teaching.

Ballantine and Hammack (2008) observe that the other important point to consider in creating effective schools is the notion of the school culture. Effective schools have a clear vision of what they are supposed to be doing. They develop a coherent set of attitudes, values, beliefs, expectations and goals. This translates into a clearly determined school culture which influences the entire school life and activities of all members of the school community, above all, the pupils. Every school develops its own culture, since every school is unique. But the situation in effective schools according to Ballantine (2009) is that the school vision and the entire culture and ethos which derive from the vision serve the primary functions of the school to promote the

intellectual and personal development of its pupils. Similarly, Ezewu (1982) argues that the values, aspirations and traditions of the school provide a justification for everything that happens in the school. The school culture manifests through the aims the school formulates, stories about its history and its past pupils, its rules and regulations and the way the school is organized including the environment it creates for teaching and learning, its assemblies, routine rituals and special ceremonies, the upkeep and appearance of its buildings and surroundings. All of these and other factors contribute to the corporate culture and identity of the school. Moreover, all these can be harnessed to creating an effective school.

According to Forrest and Parkay (2001), effective schools have the following characteristics:

- Strong Leadership - Successful schools have strong leaders- individuals who have value and see themselves as educational leaders, not just as managers or bureaucrats. They monitor the performance of everyone at school: teachers, staff, students and themselves. These leaders have a vision of the school as a more effective learning environment and they take decisive steps to bring that about.
- High Expectations - Teachers at successful schools have high expectations of students. These teachers believe that all students, rich or poor, can learn and they also communicate this scenario to their students through realistic, yet high ambitions.
- Emphasis on basic skills - Teachers at successful schools emphasize students' achievement in basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematical computation.
- Orderly school environment – The environment of successful schools are orderly, safe and conducive for learning. Discipline problems are at a minimum and teachers are able to devote greater amounts of time to teaching.

- Frequent, systematic evaluation of student learning – The learning of students in successful schools is monitored closely. When difficulties are noticed, appropriate recommendation is provided quickly.
- Sense of purpose- Those who teach and those who learn at successful schools have a strong sense of purpose. From the principal to the students, everyone at the school is guided by a vision of excellence.
- Collegiality and sense of community-Teachers, administrators and staff at successful schools work well together. They are dedicated to creating an environment that promotes not only student learning but also their own professional growth and development.
- Focus on student learning- Planning, implementation and evaluation focus on enhancing the intellectual quality of student learning. All students are expected to achieve academic excellence.
- Emphasis on the authentic pedagogy- Students are required to think to develop, in-depth understanding and to apply academic learning to important, realistic problems. Students might, for example, conduct a survey on any issue of local concern, analyse the results and then present their findings at a town council meeting.
- Greater school organizational capacity- The ability of a school to strive for continuous improvement through professional collaboration is enhanced. For instance, teachers exchange ideas to improve their teaching; they seek feedback from students, parents and community members and they attend conferences and workshops to acquire new materials and strategies.
- Greater external support- The school receives critical financial, technical and political support from outside sources.

The leader of such an institution should use the open systems approach which allows society to make suggestions on how best to improve the system. There should be a cordial relationship between the parents and the teachers such that some competent parents are allowed to take an active role in school matters. For instance, some educated parents should feel free and motivated to also teach their children on cross-cutting issues. An effective institution is where the school climate is conducive and enabling. There should be close monitoring and continuing professional development activities should be encouraged among the teachers. Leaders found in effective schools should have dreams or visions upon which their institutions base their goals. Any goal is as good as reached when it can be clearly envisioned (Alder, 1995). Goals of institutions are reflected through schools' mission statements.

An effective school is where the manager is able to co-ordinate the parents' participation in school matters in such a way that they will be able to make a positive and active contribution in the interests of their children in particular and the school in general (Castetter,1981).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses and describes the general methodology that was used in the study. It presents a research design, target population and sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments data collection procedures and data analysis.

#### **Research design**

A case study design was used which combined qualitative and quantitative methods in data collection and analysis. Case study offers an opportunity to consider a situation, individual, invent, group, organization or whatever is appropriate as the object of study. One of the advantages of using a case study methodology is that it provides in-depth study of a phenomenon in its real life context using multiple sources of evidence (Robson, 1993). The study did combine both qualitative and quantitative methods as a way of reducing on the biases that come with using one paradigm and to also increase the validity of the research findings. The use of both quantitative and qualitative paradigms in a study increases the quality of the final results and does provide a more comprehensive analysis of the phenomena being investigated because the results got using one paradigm could be clarified by the use of the other one (Greene et al.,1989).

#### **Sources of data**

The data in this study were collected from the school managers, teachers and the pupils of both Mungule high school and Munyama secondary school of Mongu district in the Western province of Zambia. The grade twelve (12) results from the year 2000 to 2010 for both secondary schools were another source of data.



The head teachers were used because they were the administrators of the two types of secondary schools while the Senior Education Standards Officers from the provincial Education office in Mongu were also used as one of their roles did involve monitoring and supervision of all the learning institutions in the Province which included assessment of academic performance of schools. As for the pupils, the researcher actively involved them in the study because he felt that they were at the centre stage of this research work.

### **Target population**

The target population for this study included all the teachers and pupils of both Mungule high school and Munyama secondary school. Furthermore, the Senior Education Standards Officers were also used in the study. The researcher deemed it fit to use these officers because they had vast knowledge on the subject under investigation.

### **Sample size**

The sample consisted of 30 teachers from Mungule high school and 28 teachers from Munyama secondary school. Simply stated, 58 teachers including the head teachers of two institutions were used. Additionally, 20 pupils (10 from each school) and 5 Senior Education Standards Officers were also used.

### **Sampling procedure**

Random sampling, which was used in this research, is one of the examples of sampling procedures. In simple random sampling, each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected and the member is not affected by the selection of other members. This procedure is usually used when the size of the population is small. In this research, two types of paper marked Yes and No were put in a box for teachers to pick, according to gender, randomly. Those who selected Yes pieces of paper were involved in the research.

## **Research instruments**

Research instruments used were questionnaires, interview schedules and Focus Group Discussions. In this research, two sets of self – administered questionnaires were used to get data from both the teachers and the head teachers.

## **Data collection procedure**

Before the main study was carried out, a pilot testing of both the questionnaires and interview guides was done to ensure the validity of the instruments. Pilot testing of an instrument gives the researcher a chance to check the respondents' understanding of the meaning of the items and determine the reliability of the instruments to be used.

During the second semester of the 2011 academic year, the researcher sought permission from the Dean of the School of Education to survey factors affecting pupil performance in grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools. After the permission was granted, a pilot study was carried out on 20 teachers (10 from each school). This group of teachers was part of the target population of this study. However, they were not allowed to take part in the final survey. Nunnally (1970) argues that a pilot study should be conducted on the sample of subjects similar to the group with which the final study is to be conducted. Over the same, another scholar, Babbie (1973) postulates that the pilot samples should be chosen in exactly the same fashion as is intended for the final survey.

## **Main study**

The main study was done in the first semester of the 2012 academic year. All the respondents in the study gave their informed consent to take part in the study. Moreover, they had the right to withdraw from the study any time they felt like doing so. It was put vividly to them by the researcher that the information gathered was for academic purposes only. The participants were also assured that the information collected would be treated with utmost confidentiality.

The questionnaires were self-administered and as such, the researcher had left the instruments with the participants for a period of time and got them after the agreed spell of time. The distribution return rate for the instruments was about 97%.

## **Data analysis**

Data analysis consisted of content analysis of interview responses and item analysis of the questionnaire responses.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences and Microsoft Office Excel were the main statistical tools used in analyzing statistical data quantitatively. Thematic analysis was used in the analysis of qualitative data from interviews and Focus Group Discussions. In this regard, qualitative data generated in this study were categorized in order to examine emerging themes.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

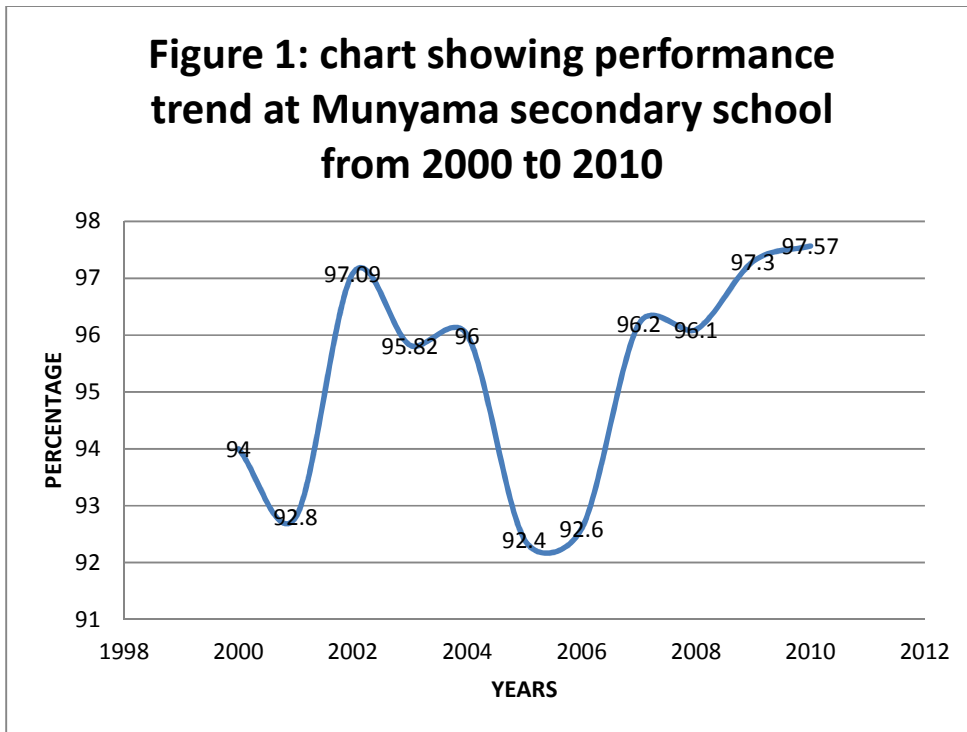
#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the study in accordance with the research questions which were as follows:

- (a) Was there any difference in pupil academic performance at grade 12 level for grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools for the period 2000 to 2010 in the Western province of Zambia?
- (b) What were the views of teachers, pupils and educational administrators on the academic performance of pupils from selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools at grade 12 level in the Western Province of Zambia?
- (c) What were the policies of selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools on academic work?
- (d) What academic interventions had selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools put in place to enhance pupils' academic performance?

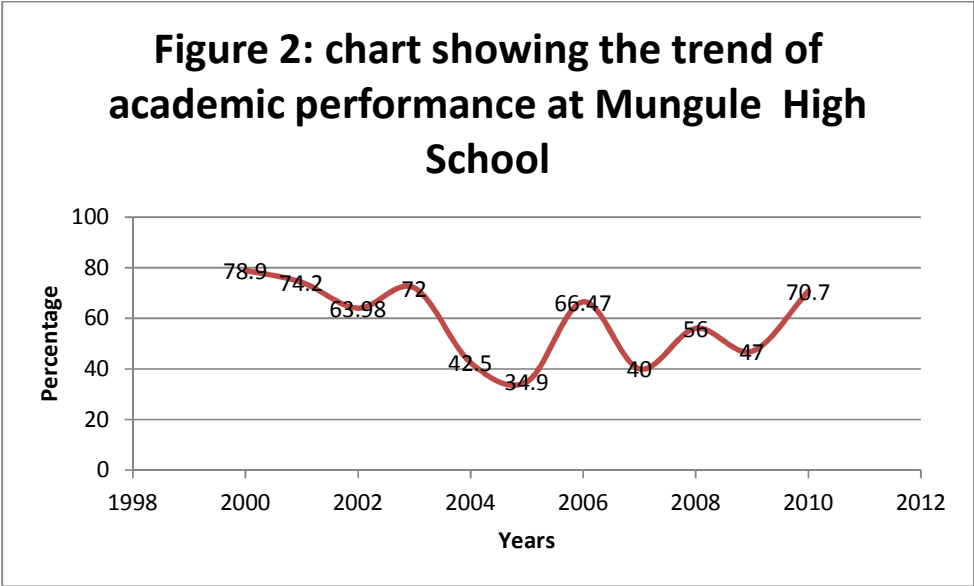
To make the analysed data much easier to comprehend and interesting to the reader, the presenter used table and bar charts to present it.

**Performance of Mungule and Munyama secondary schools from 2000 to 2010 at grade 12 level**



**Source:** MOE/PEO-Western Province

Figure 1 shows that from the year 2000 to 2010, Munyama secondary school's grade 12 pass rate was above 90%. It is evident that the performance of pupils at this grant-aided secondary school had been consistent for a decade (2000-2010).

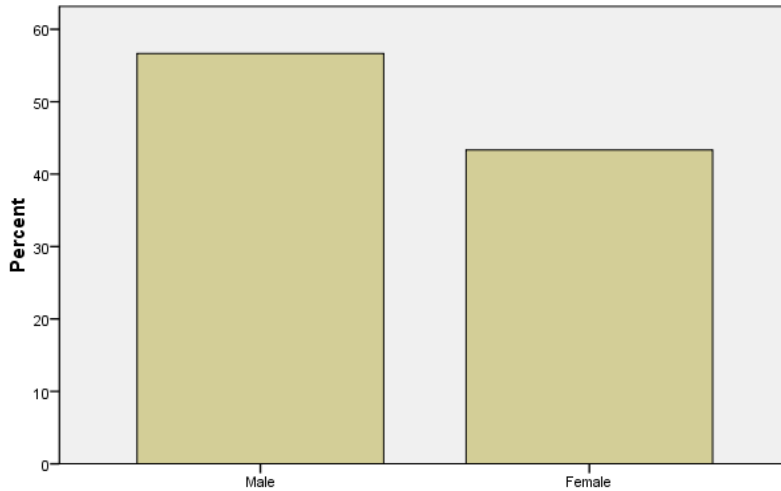


Source: MOE/PEO-Western Province

Figure 2 shows that Mungule High school’s performance at grade 12 level from 2000 to 2010 was below 80% and in 2004,2005,2007 and 2009, the pass rate was even below 50%. The chart shows that the results for this government school pseudo named Mungule high school had been declining.

**Gender of respondents (Teachers).**

**Figure 3: Bar chart showing the gender of respondents at Mungule high School (Government school).**



**Figure 4: Bar chart showing the gender of respondents at Munyama Secondary School (Grant-aided school).**

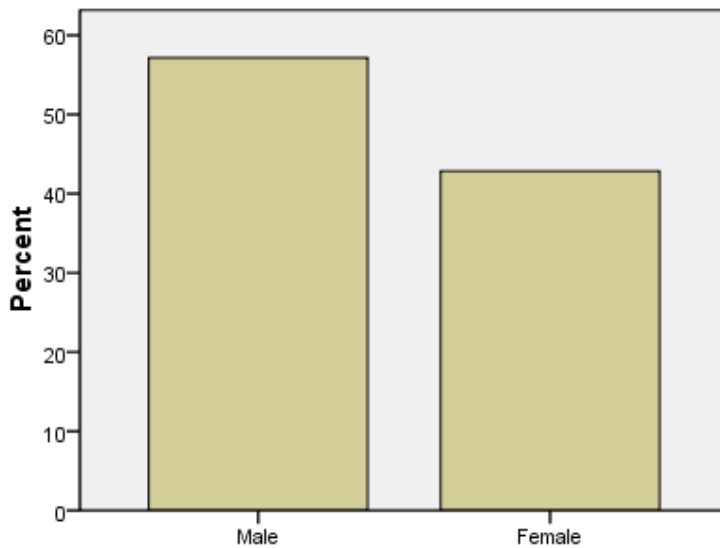


Figure 3 and 4 show that there were more male teacher respondents at both Mungule high School and Munyama Secondary School than female respondents. Mungule high School had

58% of male teacher respondents as compared to 42% female teachers. Similarly, Munyama secondary school had 15(56.7%) male respondents as compared to 13(43.3%) female teacher respondents.

**Figure 5 Qualification of teachers at Mungule High and Munyama Secondary Schools.**

Qualification	Mungule high school (Govt. school)		Munyama secondary school (Grant-aided)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
College Diploma	19	63.3	16	57.1
Advanced Diploma	0	0	8	28.8
University Degree	11	36.7	4	14.3
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 5 shows that there were more degree holders at Mungule High school 11(36.7%) than at Munyama secondary school 4(14.3%).



**Figure 6: Table showing responses on homework policy at Mungule high and Munyama Secondary Schools.**

Responses	Mungule high school (Govt. school)		Munyama secondary school (Grant-aided)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	10	33.3	28	100
No	20	66.7	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 6 shows that all the 28(100%) teachers interviewed at Munyama secondary school indicated that there was homework policy at the School. On the other hand 20(66.7%) indicated that there was no homework policy at Mungule secondary school.

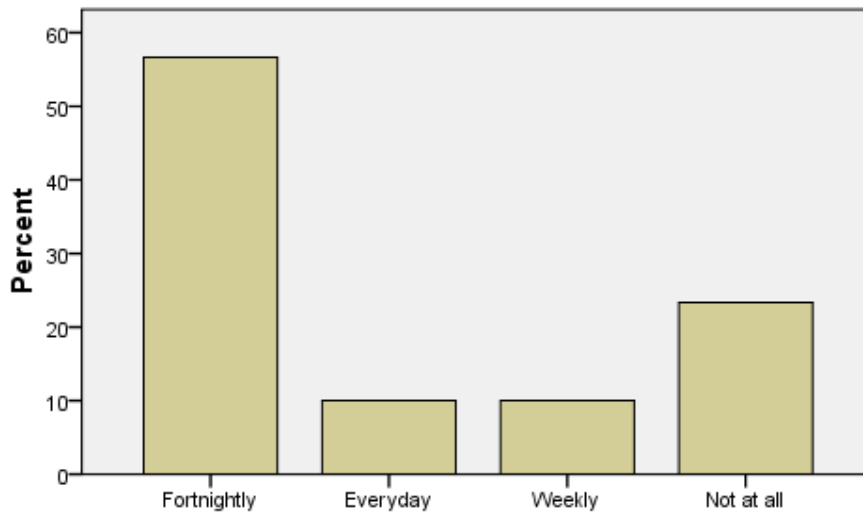
**Figure 7: Availability of teaching and learning materials at Mungule High and Munyama Secondary School.**

Responses	Mungule high school (Govt. school)		Munyama secondary school (Grant-aided)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	7	23.3	28	100
No	23	76.7	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 7 shows that Mungule high school was under resourced in terms of learning and teaching materials. 23 (76.7%) of respondents indicated that the school had inadequate learning and teaching materials. Only 7(23.3%) teachers indicated that the school had adequate learning and teaching materials.

On the other hand, the table shows that Munyama secondary school, a grant-aided school, was well resourced in terms of teaching and learning materials. All the teachers interviewed 28(100%) stated that the school had adequate and appropriate learning and teaching materials.

**Figure 8: Frequency of giving homework to pupils at Mungule high School (Govt. school)**



The chart above shows that most of teachers interviewed at Mungule High school indicated that Homework in their subject areas was administered fortnightly. This group comprised 16(57%) followed by 6(24%) of teachers who indicated that they never gave Homework to their pupils.

**Figure 9: Frequency of giving homework to pupils at Munyama Secondary School (Grant-aided)**

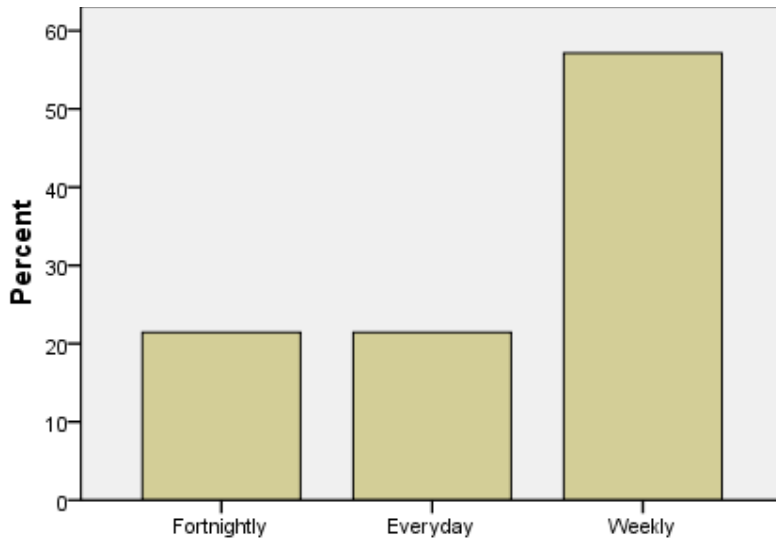


Figure 9 shows that most of the teachers at Munyama secondary school administered homework on a weekly basis. 17(59%) stated that homework was given weekly whereas 4(20%) stated that homework was given on a daily basis. Only 4(20%) of the teachers interviewed stated that homework was given fortnightly.

**Figure 10: Teachers' ratings of teaching standards at Mungule high and Munyama Secondary Schools**

Responses	Mungule high school (Govt. school)		Munyama secondary school (Grant-aided)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	8	10	12	42.9
Good	8	26.7	16	57.1
Fair	6	20	0	0
Satisfactory	13	43.3	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>

Teachers were asked to rate standards of teaching at their school. According to Figure 10, 3(10%) of the teachers at Mungule rated their school as excellent while 7(43%) rated the school as satisfactory. 5(26%) and 4(20%) of the teachers interviewed rated the school as good and fair respectively. At Munyama secondary school the largest proportion of teachers 17(58%) rated the school as good while 7(43%) rated the school as excellent. None of the teachers interviewed rated the school as fair or satisfactory.

**Figure 11: Academic awards/prizes for pupils at Mungule High and Munyama Secondary Schools**

Responses	Mungule high school (Govt. school)		Munyama secondary school (Grant-aided)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Prize giving	8	26.7	28	100
No prize	22	73.3	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>

Teachers were asked to state whether or not their schools had devised ways of rewarding outstanding pupil performance as indicated in figure 11. 8(26.7%) of teachers interviewed at Mungule stated that the school was not consistent in organization of prize giving ceremonies. However, the majority of teachers 22(73.3%) at Mungule high school indicated that the school never had the culture of giving awards or prizes to the academically exceptional pupils at all. The same figure above shows that all the teachers interviewed at Munyama secondary school indicated that the school had a way of recognizing outstanding pupil performance. 28(100%) of the teachers indicated that the school had the practice of giving awards or prizes to the deserving pupils as a way of encouragement.

**Figure 12: Teacher responses on INSET/professional teacher group meetings activities at Mungule high School**

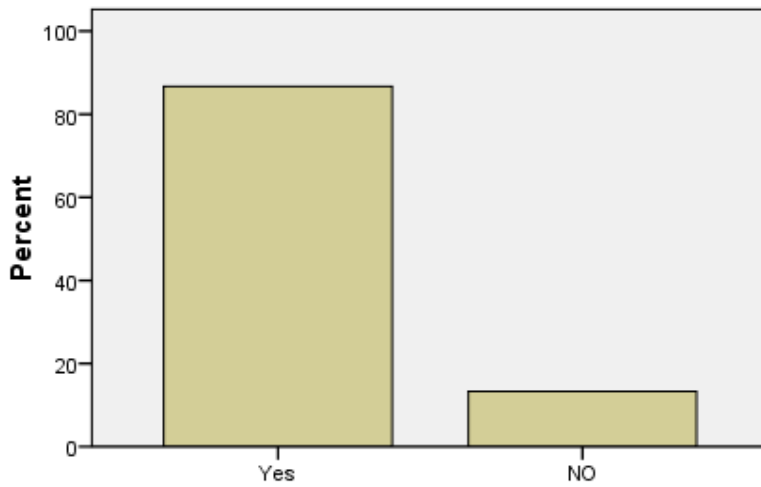


Figure 12 shows that most of the teachers 26(82%) were aware of the INSET activities at Mungule high school. However, 3(8%) indicated that they were not aware of the professional teacher group meetings taking place at the institution.

**Figure 13: Teachers' responses on INSET/professional teacher group meetings activities at Munyama Secondary School**

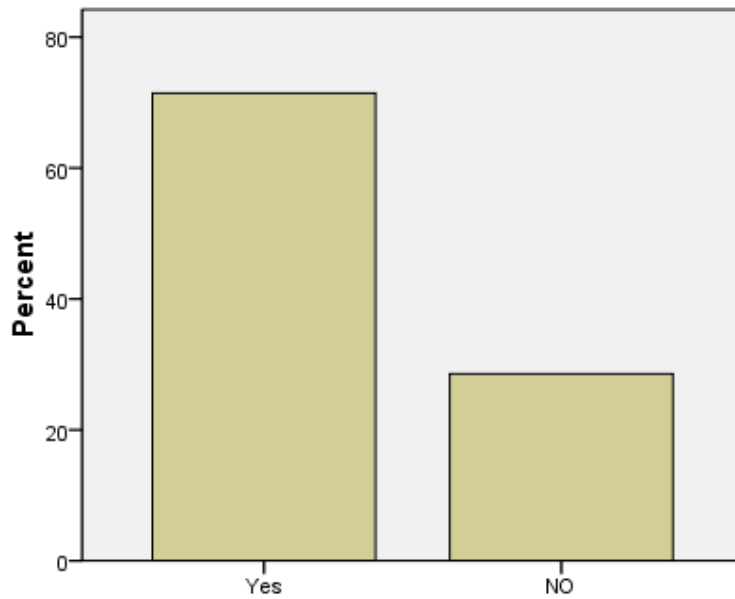


Figure 13 shows teachers' responses on INSET activities at Munyama secondary school. The majority of the teachers 18(68%) indicated that they were aware of the INSET activities whereas 12(27%) stated that they were not aware of INSET activities at the school.

**Figure 14: Frequency of professional teacher group meetings activities at Mungule high School (Govt. school)**

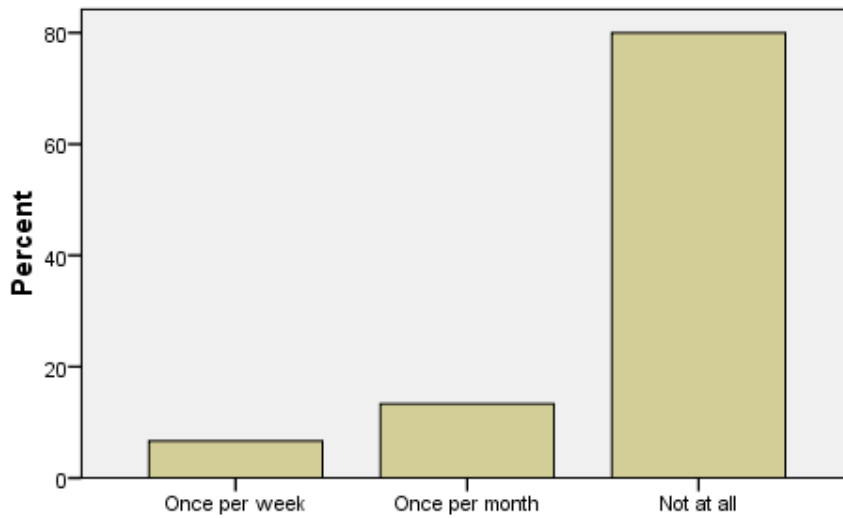


Figure 14 shows that 24(80%) of the teachers interviewed at Mungule High school indicated that there were no INSET activities being done at the school while only 6(20%) indicated that INSET activities were periodically held.



**Figure 15: Frequency of professional teacher group meetings activities at Munyama Secondary School (Grant-aided)**

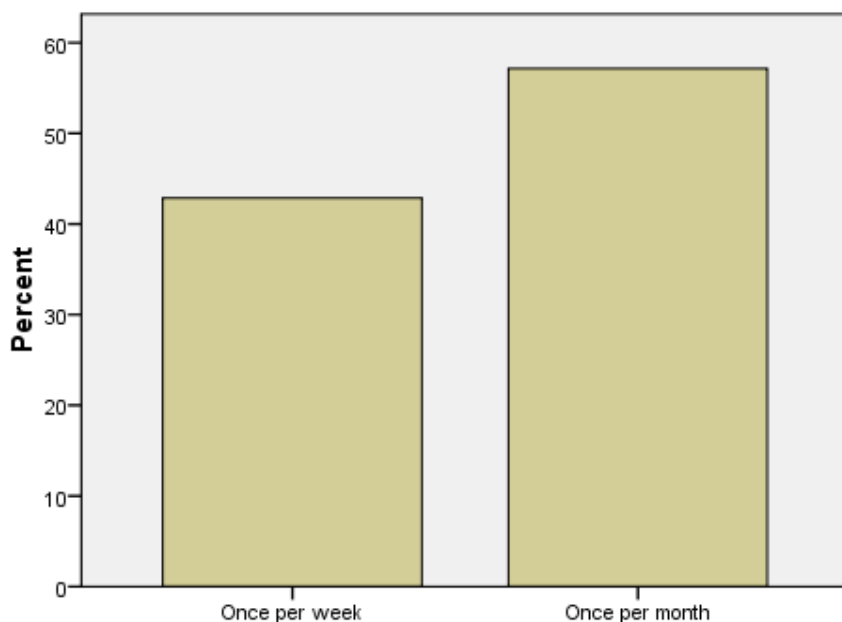


Figure 15 shows that all the teachers interviewed from Munyama secondary school stated that there were INSET activities being done at the institution. They only differed in terms of frequency.

**Figure 16: Frequency of supervisors checking teaching instruments at Mungule high and Munyama Secondary School.**

Responses	Mungule high school (Govt. school)		Munyama secondary school (Grant-aided)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Once per week	0	0	28	100
Once per month	22	73.3	0	0
Never checked	8	26.7	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 16 shows that 22(73.3%) of the teachers at Mungule High school, stated that their work was only checked once per month while 8(26.7%) stated that the work was never checked by their supervisors. For Munyama secondary school, all the teachers interviewed indicated that their work was being checked once per week by their supervisors.

**Figure 17: Awards/prizes for outstanding teacher performance at Mungule high School and Munyama secondary school**

Responses	Mungule high school (Govt. school)		Munyama secondary school (Grant-aided)	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Prize giving	3	10	28	100
No prize	27	90	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>

Figure 17 shows that 27(90%) of the teachers interviewed at Mungule High school stated that the school did not award hard working teachers while only 3(10%) stated that the school had a practice of awarding outstanding teachers. As for Munyama secondary school, the figure shows that all the 28(100%) teachers did allude to the fact that the school upheld the tradition of giving prizes to the deserving teachers.

## **Findings from in-depth focus group discussions:**

### **Teachers:**

During the in-depth Focus Group Discussions done among the teachers, some teachers pointed out that some of the learners, particularly those from rural areas, who had qualified to Mungule high school but their parents and guardians failed to raise boarding school fees for them, rented some homes and ended fending for themselves. The teachers revealed that these learners faced a lot of problems in raising money for food, rentals and school fees through piece works in people's homes in the morning before going to school. They reported that even pupils who were supported by their parents and guardians usually had to supplement equally through piece works. They added that as a result these pupils got tired and failed to concentrate during lessons. In addition, teachers reported that some of the female learners at Mungule high school resorted to prostitution in order to make ends meet, a factor that all the learners interviewed disputed. The learners, however, agreed with the teachers that most male learners in that category usually engaged in bad vices like beer drinking and smoking. Because of the foregoing, teachers observed that the affected learners performed poorly academically due to the fact that they had less time to concentrate on their school work. Some teachers further indicated that the academic performance was not good at their school (Mungule high school) owing to the fact that the selection criteria used to admit pupils into grade ten left much to be desired. One of them said, "How on earth do you expect a school like Mungule high school to produce good grade twelve (12) results when it is given pupils that are rejected in the grant-aided secondary schools due to poor performance?" This factor was also raised by the school administrators at Mungule high school.

**Pupils:** During Focus Group Discussion with pupils, some pupils observed that Grade Twelve (12) results were pathetic at Mungule high school because some teachers teaching Biology, for instance, were got from other departments other than the Natural sciences department. They

reported that this situation was allowed at the school because the school did not have adequate number of trained Biology teachers. The pupils complained that such teachers who were asked to teach subjects they were not specialized in wasted their time by telling useless stories. “There is no way learners can make noise if the teacher is in class. How can they give us someone who is still learning the subject, too?” they asked.

In addition, some pupils said that they were not performing well at Mungule high school because they were crowded in the classes. “Like for my class we are over 80 pupils; four pupils occupying a desk designed to take only two of us. “Due to the large number of pupils in classes, some pupils who seat at the back hardly hear anything during the lessons,” said one of them. They also revealed that teachers at Mungule high were not dedicated to duty.

#### **Policies of Mungule high and Munyama secondary schools on academic work**

When asked about the academic policy of the school, the Mungule High school management stated that the policy of the school was to produce learners who were holistically educated and were able to serve their communities competently. However, 20(66.7%) of the teachers from the school were ignorant of this academic policy of the school. As for Munyama secondary school, the school management stated that the academic policy of the school was to ensure that all the children were effectively taught through close supervision, weekend tests, involvement of parents and giving of awards to the outstanding performers. All the interviewed teachers 28(100%) were aware of the school’s academic policy.

**Measures put in place to improve pupil academic performance by Mungule and Munyama secondary schools.**

During in depth interview with school administrators at Mungule high school, the following measures were mentioned as having been put in place to improve the school's academic performance:

- The school had built a wall fence to ensure all the pupils spend most of their time studying within the school
- The school had procured adequate and appropriate learning and teaching materials.
- The school had promised pupils that whoever became the best academically at each level would be exempted from paying schools fees for one academic year.

As for Munyama secondary school, the school management stated the following as measures put in place to enhance academic performance:

- The school had started giving all the teachers, through the help of the Parents and Teachers' Association, incentives in terms of money per term.
- The school had started sponsoring study tours for both the teachers and the pupils.
- The school management had twinned the school with another school in the United Kingdom.
- The school had started inviting selected and competent parents to teach some topics at the institution.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

Chapter five discusses the findings according to the objectives of this study. The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors affecting pupil performance in grant-aided and non-grant-aided secondary schools in Zambia. The objectives of the study were as follows:

- (a) To find out the academic performance of pupils from selected grant-aided secondary schools and non-grant aided secondary schools from 2000 to 2010 at grade twelve (12) level in the Western Province of Zambia.
- (b) To collect views from teachers, pupils and educational administrators on the factors affecting pupil performance from grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools at grade 12 level.
- (c) To investigate the academic policies for selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools in the Western Province of Zambia.
- (d) To identify measures put in place by selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools aimed at improving pupil performance levels.

**Pupil performance from selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools at grade 12 level in the Western Province of Zambia from 2000 to 2010.**

During the period under review, the results of this study showed that the academic performance of Munyama secondary school was always above 90% pass rate while the academic performance of Mungule High school was below at 80% and in some instances it went even below 40% at grade twelve (12) level. When strategising over the way forward concerning the 2011 poor grade twelve(12) results for the Western Province of Zambia, the then Permanent Secretary of the region addressed Head teachers from the affected schools in the region. What is interesting to note was the fact that among the invited schools, there was no grant-aided secondary school. However, among the secondary schools he praised, all the grant-aided secondary schools in the region were mentioned (POST: March 18, 2012).

Furthermore, the results of the current study indicated that Mungule High school and Munyama secondary school had almost the same number of female respondents (42% and 43% respectively). It can, therefore, be inferred that gender does not play a role in the differences in terms performance at grade twelve (12) for the two schools. The same goes with marital status as the two schools had almost the same number of respondents that indicated that they were not married. However, when it came to teachers' qualifications, an interesting scenario appeared. According to the obtained results, Mungule High school had 11(36%) degree holders while Munyama secondary had only 4(14.3%) out of the interviewed teachers. Although Wegner et al (1995) argue that lack of highly qualified teachers in some schools in the U.S.A. causes poor pupil performance; the results obtained from the current study are at variance with that school of thought. If that was true all the time, Mungule High school could have been doing better academically than Munyama secondary school at grade twelve (12) level. The researcher feels that the teacher should simply be qualified not highly qualified to make pupils pass and that other factors are at play to enable pupils perform well academically.

## **Views from teachers, pupils and educational administrators on the factors affecting pupil performance in grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools in the Western Province**

The results of this study revealed that in terms of teaching and learning materials, Munyama secondary school, a grant-aided school, was well resourced. Of all the Senior Educational Standards Officers interviewed 100% mentioned that Munyama secondary school had better teaching facilities than Mungule High School and that pupils from Munyama secondary school were more disciplined. In addition to that all the 28 (100%) respondents from Munyama secondary school did also state that the school had adequate teaching and learning materials. On the other hand, 23(76.7%) of the teachers interviewed from Mungule High school indicated that the school did not have adequate teaching and learning materials. Out of those interviewed, only 7(23.3%) indicated that the school had adequate and appropriate teaching and learning resources. It can be argued here that this small percentage that felt the school was well resourced may consist of teachers that were frustrated and could not, therefore tell between effective and non-effective teaching methods. Since 76.7% of the interviewed teachers indicated that the school was not well resourced their assertion can be taken to be factual. Even the pupils interviewed from Mungule High School (90%) stated that the school did not have adequate and suitable teaching and learning materials. These results support Castetter (1981)'s argument that an effective school should have, among other things, adequate and appropriate teaching and learning materials. In his study of quality education in selected schools in Livingstone and Kazungula districts of the Southern province of Zambia, Mbozi (2008:127) also found limited textbooks as a factor affecting performance of learners. Connected to lack of adequate and appropriate textbooks in non-grant aided high schools, was the observation made by some interviewed pupils that at Mungule high school even the so called a library was not worth the name at all. For instance one pupil said:



“When in the so called library, I feel out of place and dejected because when I compare it to the library at a school where I was before I came here following my transferred parents, I feel like crying. Unlike what I am exposed to here, a library at that school was modern with appropriate and more than enough textbooks for everyone in the school including the teaching staff. Here at Mungule high school, the room is too small and stuffy, with very few desks and very limited number of textbooks that are out dated and of no use to us learners. The situation is pathetic to say the least, sir. Tell whoever is concerned that we need urgent help here at Mungule high school.”

This indicated that things were very bad where library facilities were concerned at Mungule high school. Pupils were being taken to the so called library not to learn but to waste their precious time.

In addition, Mitter’s (1991) argument that the changing of the curriculum by the authorities without preparing the learners and giving out reading materials was one of the causes of poor examination performance in schools is in line with these findings, too. It, therefore, goes without saying that Munyama, a grant-aided secondary school, performed better than Mungule High school as it was more resourced.

When it came to the frequency of administering homework, the results obtained showed that out of the interviewed teachers from Mungule High school, most of the teachers indicated that homework was administered fortnightly in their subject areas (57%) while 20% said it was given on weekly basis and every day. The remaining 23% indicated that there was no homework being given to the pupils at Mungule High school. As for Munyama secondary school, 57% of the respondents said that homework was given weekly while 21.5% indicated that they gave pupils homework every day. Moreover, another 21.5% indicated that they gave Homework to the pupils fortnightly. Unlike at Mungule High school, no respondent from

Munyama secondary school indicated that the school did not give homework to the pupils. Kelly and Kanyika (2000) reveal that there is a positive relationship between learning achievement and frequency of homework. This study showed that pupil performance is improved by the amount of homework given, which should neither be too much nor too little. Kelly and Kanyika (2000) reported that the highest achievers in their study were pupils who had more than two to three pieces of homework per week.

Kelly and Kanyika (2000:84) contend that:

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

The results of this study are in line with the Ministry of Education Policy that insists on homework being given to learners at least twice a week in all subjects (Kasanda, 2001). Homework and written tests are very important in monitoring learner performance. Performance of pupils in grant-aided institutions such as Munyama secondary school would be explained by the homework policy of the school. From the above, it can be inferred that Mungule high school was performing poorly because homework was not being regularly given to the pupils and that Munyama secondary school was doing better than Mungule High school due to the fact that the school regularly gave the pupils homework.

Additionally, the results of this study revealed that 42.9% of the interviewed teachers from Munyama secondary school rated the teaching standards of their institution as excellent while 57.1% indicated that standards were good. Interestingly, no one rated the school’s standards as

being fair or satisfactory. As for respondents from Mungule High school, only 10% rated the standards as excellent while 43.3% indicated that the standards were satisfactory: 26.7% of the respondents indicated that the standards were good and 20% of the interviewed teachers stated that the teaching standards were fair. What this means is that all the interviewed teachers from Munyama secondary school were very much aware of the fact that the teaching standards of the school were high while the majority (43.3%) of the respondents from Mungule High school alluded to the fact that the teaching standards of the school were simply satisfactory.

When it came to recognition of pupils who do well academically, this study found out that all the 28 respondents from Munyama secondary school stated that the school gave prizes to the deserving pupils as a school policy. However, 73.3% of the respondents from Mungule High school indicated that the school did not give prizes to the pupils who performed exceptionally well in academic work, only 26.7% of the respondents indicated that the school gave prizes. Concerning the giving of prizes to the pupils with outstanding academic abilities by the schools, one Senior Standards Officer observed that the trend was not common at Mungule high school because the pupils sent there were of inferior academic abilities when compared to those who go to grant-aided schools. Although somehow abolished by the government, the issue of a cut-off point is still active and live in grant-aided secondary schools. This also plays a vital role in the pupils' good academic performance, at the end of the day, in grant-aided secondary schools. From these findings, it can be inferred that Munyama secondary school pupils did well academically due to the fact that they were highly motivated through consistent prize giving to outstanding academic performers and the use of cut-off points when it came to the selection of their candidates at grade ten (10) level: a gesture which is in agreement with D'souza (1994) who contends that leaders and their styles affect everyone and everything within the organization such that when leadership is bad in an institution, poor performance is the end result.

Concerning the frequency of the professional teachers' group meetings, this study brought to light the fact that of all the respondents from Mungule High school, 78% indicated that the school did not have INSET activities for the teachers while only 22% of the teachers interviewed stated that there were Continuing Professional Development activities going on at the school. 10% of these stated that they were being done once per week while 12% stated that there were carried out once per month. As for Munyama secondary school, 100% of the respondents alluded to the fact that INSET activities were being done at the school as a school's policy. 44% of the respondents stated that the activities were being done once per week while 56% of the interviewees stated that there were being done once per month. It can be argued here that at Munyama secondary school teachers willingly and enthusiastically hold teachers' professional meetings because the school gives them incentives while at Mungule high school, teachers were demotivated, hence the reluctance to have the INSET activities. On the basis of these findings, the researcher could infer that one of the contributory factors to Mungule High school's poor pupil academic performance was owing to the fact that the school management did not encourage frequent teachers' professional group meetings at the institution and Munyama secondary school performed better than Mungule because teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities were enhanced by the school management. These results are in line with Parkay and Forrest's (2001) argument that in an effective school one should expect to find regular and well organized teachers' professional group meetings taking place.

The other interesting findings of this study were that out of all the 30 teachers interviewed at Mungule High school, 73.3% stated that their supervisors checked their work once per month and that 26.7% of the respondents stated that the supervisors never checked their work at all. When asked over the same, 100% of the teachers interviewed from Munyama secondary school stated that the supervisors checked their work once per week. Unlike at Mungule High school,

the supervision of the teachers' work was well planned and co-ordinated such that all the respondents gave the same answer to the question. However, when asked over the same, Mungule High school teachers gave different responses to the same question a clear indication that supervision was not well planned and co-ordinated at the school. On the basis of these findings it can be inferred that Munyama secondary school performed better than Mungule High school partly because teachers at Munyama secondary school were more regularly supervised than their counterparts from Mungule High school. This school of thought is consistent with Medley and Conyers (1972) who argue that an individual can only be successful through a well planned and co-ordinated educational system. Lack of effective supervision, as already indicated above, affect performance of learners. Ndoye (2007) contends that while it is prudent to invest in learning materials such as books, desks, learning and teaching aids, it is important to ensure that the school is well managed and that investment is done in quality management training to establish an effective support structure at the district level and inspection system. These findings suggest that improving the school management system is pivotal to improving the overall quality of education and performance of learners.

Another factor brought to light through this study which affects pupil performance mostly in non-grant aided high schools was the one concerning over enrolment. Most schools in Zambia, especially the government institutions are characterized by large enrolments which have a negative impact on the quality of education. This in turn results in higher pupil-teacher ratios, pupil-book ratios and pupil-desk ratios that eventually affect performance of learners. Learners also crowd on desks making learning unpleasant. The unfavourable classroom atmosphere promotes absenteeism and may lead to pupils dropping out of school (Ndoye, 2007). It is difficult for some pupils to concentrate in large classes. In addition, teachers have difficulties in providing feedback to pupils in terms of making class exercises and assignments.

The results of this study show that motivating teachers has an impact on pupil performance. As indicated, all the 28 (100%) respondents from Munyama secondary school stated that the school was giving prizes to the deserving teachers as a policy of the school. As for Mungule high school, only 3(10%) of the respondents indicated that teachers were given prizes for performing well while 27(90%) stated that the school never gave prizes at all. One of the reasons why Mungule High school could not compete with Munyama secondary school was that teachers were not motivated by giving them incentives; Mungule School did not have a deliberate policy to motivate teachers.

### **Teacher related factors affecting pupil performance**

Furthermore, other teacher related factors that affect pupil performance were brought to the fore by this study. For instance, the study found that some teachers in non-grant aided schools were not preparing their work; teacher preparation such as lesson planning is a professional requirement for teachers in Zambia. High school teachers are expected to prepare what they teach in schools. These preparations could be in form of schemes of work, records of work and lesson plans to guide the teaching process (MOE, 2001). Most of the teachers interviewed in non-grant aided high schools stated that they did not prepare any schemes of work, records of work and lesson plans as they depended on the subject syllabus. The third teacher related factor stated by the interviewed pupils was teacher absenteeism. Some pupils and school administrators who were interviewed mentioned teacher absenteeism as another factor affecting performance of learners in high schools. It was reported during in-depth interviews that some teachers were sometimes absent from their classes due to illness and social problems. The researcher also noted that during the period of research at least one class each day was without a teacher in a given lesson. Teacher absenteeism appeared more rampant in non-grant aided high schools. Pupils reported that some teachers who were in the habit of absconding from work usually sent notes that their fellow pupils wrote for them on the board. In addition to that,

some pupils hinted that when the teachers in question absconded from work, they still insisted on signing the teacher attendance registers showing that they were present. Some pupils complained that using a fellow learner to write notes was an indirect punishment on the pupil helping the teacher in that the affected pupil would still have to find time to copy the same notes later on. To stress the issue of teacher absenteeism, one Head of Department recalled an incident where pupils complained bitterly to him because of teacher absenteeism. The fourth teacher related factor that has a bearing on pupil performance was the presence of uncommitted teachers in non-grant aided high schools. This was observed by both the interviewed pupils and school administrators. It was reported during in-depth interviews with pupils and school administrators that such teachers would be seen around seated outside chatting with friends and when told that it was their turn to teach, they would just promise that they would come but always came late for lessons or sometimes they would never turn up at all. Such were the teachers who would just send notes and were very eager to sign in the teachers' attendance registers to indicate that they had taught. Some school administrators and pupils complained that such teachers contributed to the poor performance of pupils especially in non-grant aided high schools. The last teacher related factor cited was the mobile phone disturbances. Some pupils interviewed from non- grant aided high schools complained that their lessons were on most occasions distracted by teachers' mobile phones. They said that their teachers at times stopped teaching to go and answer phone calls that would last for at least five minutes. They complained that this affected them as they lost learning time and that some of the teachers usually forgot what they were teaching and wasted more time finding out from the pupils what they had been teaching before answering their irritating phone calls. They added that at times these teachers left classes to go and attend to issues that came up from the phone calls received. It was very common for some teachers to just say ' I am sorry guys, I have to attend to some

very urgent matter, we shall continue later.’’ They would never remember where they ended but would begin another topic in the next class.

### **Pupil-related factors affecting performance**

Learner related factors affecting pupil performance were also discussed. School administrators such as Head teachers and Heads of Departments in both grant-aided and non grant aided schools cited learner absenteeism as the main factor. Some pupils admitted that some of their fellow friends who regularly absented themselves from class were responsible for poor performance. Teachers reported that pupils that absented themselves from classes missed out on lessons and were usually behind in most subjects. On the other hand, some pupils cited teacher absenteeism as the main reason that made some pupils to stay away from classes. Some pupils argued that they saw no need of attending lessons when some teachers were not found at school. Pupils also alleged that as a result of teacher absenteeism, many pupils opted to dodge from classes. Most of these complaints came from non-grant aided high schools. This study revealed also that some of the learners, particularly those from rural areas who qualified to Mungule high school but their parents and guardians failed to get some money for boarding school fees for them, rented some houses and ended up fending for themselves. Because of this, these learners had little time to concentrate on their academic work at school, and consequently their results were poor. So having little time for academic work was one of the reasons why pupils at Mungule high school did not perform well at grade twelve level.

### **Academic policies of selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools in Mongu District.**

During in-depth interviews, some administrators at Mungule High school management stated that the policy of the school was to produce learners who were holistically educated and able to serve their communities competently. However, 20(66.7%) of the teachers interviewed from



the school were ignorant of this policy. As for Munyama secondary school, the school management stated that the academic policy of the school was to ensure that all the learners were effectively taught through close supervision, frequent tests, involvement of parents and giving of awards to the outstanding performers. Over the school academic policy, all the 28(100%) of the respondents from the school knew about it as it was clearly written in the offices. On the basis of these findings an inference can be made that Munyama secondary school did better than Mungule High school academically because the school had a clear policy on academic work. In support of this, Alder (1995) points out that any goal is as good as reached when it can be clearly envisioned.

### **Interventions put in place to improve pupil academic performance levels**

Although the two types of learning institutions gave good examples of what they intended to do to enhance their academic achievements, the researcher has a strong feeling that one measure that needed immediate attention at Mungule High School was ignored by the school management. This measure is the one that has something to do with the motivation of the teaching staff at the school. If the academic results have to be meaningfully improved at Mungule High school, the school management, among other things, should see to it that the teachers are highly motivated by giving them incentives like the case at Munyama secondary school. This can be achievable if the school shared that responsibility with the Parent Teachers' Association. Munyama secondary school's interventions were very good, according to the researcher. However, there is still a lot of room for improvement for the school, too. For instance, the school management should find out why the school has been failing to reach 100% pass rate when schools outside the province were able to achieve that.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

In this chapter, a summary of the findings of the study and conclusions drawn from literature and the results are presented. It also presents the recommendations made based on the findings of the study and a proposed future research

#### Summary

The first objective of this study was to find out the academic performance of pupils from selected grant-aided and non –grant aided secondary schools from 2000 to 2010 at grade 12 level. The findings of the study indicated that the performance of grant-aided secondary schools during the period under review was above 90% pass rate while that of the non-grant aided high schools was below 80% pass rate and sometimes it dropped as low as 40% pass rate. The second objective of the study established the reasons as why grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools performed the way they did from 2000 to 2010. The study showed that grant-aided secondary schools did better in terms of academic performance than non-grant aided ones because of the following factors:

- They were better resourced in terms of learning and teaching facilities
- They had a clearer academic policy
- Their teachers were more committed and dedicated to duty
- They gave homework to their pupils more frequently
- Pupils and teachers from grant-aided secondary schools were more motivated through the giving of prizes to deserving individuals

- Teachers from grant-aided secondary schools had their work checked more frequently by the supervisors
- Pupils from grant-aided secondary schools were more disciplined

The third objective of the study was to investigate the academic policy for the selected grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools of the Western Province of Zambia. The findings of the study were that the grant-aided secondary schools had well stipulated and much clearer academic policy than the non-grant aided high schools. As already observed, when people did not know where they wanted to go, it became difficult to easily get there and it also became difficult to evaluate their work at the end of day.

The final objective of the study was to find out measures that the two types of institutions had put in place to enhance their academic performance. Although the two institutions put good measures, the researcher felt that the non-grant aided secondary schools had ignored more important measures which should be taken into consideration if the pupil performance was to be meaningfully improved upon.

## **Conclusion**

In accordance with the findings of this study, among other factors, the study found that grant-aided secondary schools performed better than non-grant aided high schools because of the following reasons:

- Grant-aided secondary schools had more appropriate and suitable teaching and learning materials
- In grant-aided secondary schools homework was given to pupils more frequently
- In grant-aided secondary schools INSET activities were held more often among the teaching staff.

- The supervisors checked teachers' work more regularly in grant-aided secondary schools.
- Enrolment levels were lower in grant-aided secondary schools.
- The use of mobile phones was more controlled in grant-aided secondary schools.
- Teachers in grant-aided secondary schools were more committed to duty because of being more motivated.
- In grant-aided secondary schools there were lower learner and teacher absenteeism rates.
- In grant-aided secondary schools the academic policy of the school was clearer and well understood by all the teachers.
- Pupils were more disciplined in grant-aided secondary schools.
- Above all, the school administrators were more effective in grant-aided secondary schools.

### **Recommendations**

In the light of the findings of this study, the following recommendations have been made to the Ministry of Education, the heads of non-grant aided secondary schools and educational officers in Zambia.

## **Ministry of Education**

➤ The government through the MOE should ensure all secondary schools have adequate and appropriate teaching and learning materials. Procurement of appropriate course and text books for all the schools in the country should be done by the MOE as a matter of urgency if quality education that is responsive to societal needs is to be guaranteed. Before MOE does the procuring of these required teaching and learning materials, all the learning institutions should be asked to submit, through their District Education Offices and Provincial Education Offices, all their requirements to the government. At the school level, the Heads of Departments (secondary schools) and the Senior Teachers (basic schools) should play pivotal roles in identifying the all the school requirements in terms of the teaching and learning resources. After doing that, these officers should hand over lists of the needed teaching and learning materials to the government for further action.

➤ The MOE should see to it that all the teachers in the country are well motivated to offer quality education. By motivating teachers well, the researcher here means that the MOE should see to it that the conditions of service of all the teachers in country are improved to acceptable and attractive levels such that the Zambian teachers that work outside the country may be tempted to come back home and get employed within the country. To improve the conditions of service, the government should construct good houses for all the teachers throughout the country. Moreover, the government should see to it that the salaries of the teachers are improved every year. Another improvement the government can do, where conditions of service for teachers are concerned, is to see to it that rural schools are electrified and supplied with computers and other pieces of modern equipment to enhance the delivery of quality education. The government should build more schools and train more teachers to reduce

on the enrolment levels in schools and the teaching loads for the teachers throughout the country.

➤ The MOE should re-consider the use of cut-off points, as a selection criterion at grade nine (9) level, seriously. The pronouncement made by the government that at grade nine level all the candidates who get full certificates should be given room in grade ten (10)

has caused more harm than good to the education system. The results are poor especially in non-grant aided secondary schools generally because some of the pupils given places in grade ten are of low caliber. The use of cut-off points should, therefore, be allowed in schools by the government so that only the 'cream' should be allowed to proceed at that level. When that is allowed, grade twelve results will improve more especially in non-grant-aided secondary schools.

➤ The MOE should see to it that all head teachers are afforded an opportunity to undergo management skills training workshops once in a while. Most of the Head teachers in the country are simply appointed to head schools because of having taught for so long. The appointing authorities do not look at whether or not these teachers possess the necessary managerial skills or not. When appointed, these teachers begin learning how to manage an institution on the job sometimes they even get some guidance from the office orderlies which is unfortunate indeed. What the MOE should be doing is to expose these head teachers to some workshops that should involve imparting of management skills to these head teachers in order to enhance the performance of their schools. These workshops should be carried out in the provinces once per year and should involve all the head teachers of all the learning institutions.

➤ The government through the MOE should establish modern libraries with adequate and appropriate textbooks in all the schools. The construction and establishment of good library facilities in all schools, more especially in grant-aided secondary schools, should be treated as

an urgent undertaking by the government if quality education delivery is to be assured in the schools.

➤ The government through the MOE should provide adequate funds and other logistics for a large scale research work on the factors affecting pupil performance in the country. In the researcher's opinion, more research work on this topic which should involve more schools and all the provinces of Zambia should be conducted to get more reliable and conclusive results so that the way forward can be found to enhance pupil academic performance in schools.

#### **Heads of non-grant aided secondary schools**

- They should see to it that the deserving pupils and teachers are given prizes to motivate them.
- They should ensure the few resources available are used towards the improvement of the academic performance of the school.
- They should ensure that the supervisory roles at their schools are made more effective.

#### **Educational Officers**

- They should ensure exchange visits between grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools are encouraged as a way of urging them to learn from each other.
- They should intensify their monitoring visits to all schools.
- They should avail their monitoring visit findings to all the stakeholders in time.

#### **Proposed area for future research**

- Since this study was purely an academic research conducted on a small scale, factors affecting pupil performance in grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools can

be relatively studied and followed up using other institutions of learning falling under the same category country wide so as to have more conclusive and reliable evidence of the general factors experienced in the two types of schools.



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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX A**

#### **Teacher's questionnaire**

Dear respondent,

I am carrying out a study on the factors affecting pupil performance in grant-aided and non-grant aided secondary schools: 2000 – 2010.

- The information from you will be treated as confidential
- Do not write your name

#### **SECTION A (BIODATA)**

1. Sex (a) Male ( )

(b) Female ( )

(c) Other (specify)

2. Age (a) 20-30 years ( )

(b) 31-40 years ( )

(c) 41-50 years ( )

(d) 51 and above ( )

3. Marital status (a) Single ( )

(b) Married ( )

4. Professional Qualification

(a) College certificate ( )

(b) College Diploma ( )

(c) Advanced Diploma ( )

(d) University Degree ( )

5. Period as a teacher?

(a) One to five years ( )

(b) Six to ten years ( )

(c) Eleven to 20 years ( )

(d) More than 20 years ( )

6. Does your school have a homework policy?

(a) Yes ( )

(b) No ( )

7. Does your school have adequate and appropriate teaching and learning materials?

(a) Yes ( )

(b) No ( )

8. How often do you give homework to your pupils?

(a) Fortnightly ( )

(b) Everyday ( )

(c) Weekly ( )

(d) Not at all ( )

9. How do you consider the teaching standards at this school?

(a) Excellent ( )

(b) Good ( )

(c) Fair ( )

(d) Satisfactory ( )

(e) Bad ( )

10. How does your school recognize pupils who do well academically?

(a) By giving them prizes ( )

(b) Nothing is done ( )

(c) Other ways specify.....

11. Does your school have a library?

(a) Yes ( )

(b) No ( )

12. How is the response of parents towards academic work at your school?

(a) Excellent ( )

(b) Good ( )

(c) Fair ( )

(d) Bad ( )

13. Are most parents able to support their children with school requisites?

(a) Yes ( )

(b) No ( )

14. Does your school have INSET activities?

(a) Yes ( )

(b) No ( )

15. How often are teachers' professional group meetings held?

- (a) Once per week ( )
- (b) Once per month ( )
- (c) Not held at all ( )

16. How often do your supervisors check your teaching instruments?

- (a) Once per week ( )
- (b) Once per month ( )
- (c) Never checked ( )

17. How does your school acknowledge good performers amongst the teaching staff?

- (a) By giving them prizes ( )
- (b) Nothing is done to them ( )
- (c) By rebuking them ( )

18. What do you think are the factors responsible for pupil performance from 2000 to 2010 in grade 12 at your school?

- (a) .....
- (b) .....
- (c).....



19. What are your school's plans towards the improvement of its academic performance?

(a) .....

(b) .....

(c) .....

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

.....

.....

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Head teacher's interview guide**

1. How many teachers does your school have?
2. At grade twelve level, what factors affect pupil performance at your school?
3. Does this school have a homework policy?
4. Do you have open days at this school?
5. How often do you check your teachers' teaching documents?
6. What is the academic policy of your school?

## **APPENDIX C**

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE TEACHERS**

1. How is the performance of your learners at this school at grade twelve level?
2. What factors affect your learners' academic performance at grade twelve level at this school?
3. What measures can help to enhance the performance of learners at this school?

## **APPENDIX D**

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR THE SENIOR EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS OFFICERS**

1. How is the academic performance of Mungule high school compared to Munyama secondary school at grade level?
2. What factors cause this discrepancy in academic performance between the two institutions, in your opinion?
3. What measures can help bridge the gap in academic performance between the two schools?

## APPENDIX E

### RESEARCH BUDGET

ITEM	QUANTITY	AMOUNT
<b>Paper and printing</b>		
-Proposal		K200,000
-Dissertation		K500,000
<b>Photocopying</b>	500 copies x k300	K150,000
<b>Transport</b>	4 trips x k100,00	K400,000
<b>Pens</b>	20 pens x k500	K10,000
<b>Pencils</b>	4 pencils xk100	K400
<b>Food</b>	5 days x k50,000	K200,000
<b>Binding</b>	4 copies x k5000	K20,000
<b>Erasers</b>	2 erasers x k100	K200
<b>Total</b>		
<b>Contingency</b>		K100,000
<b>Grand Total</b>		K1,580,600.00

## APPENDIX F

### RESEARCH WORKPLAN

MONTH(S)	ACTIVITY
August 2010	Problem identification
September 2010	Literature Review
October-December 2010	Literature Review and Proposal writing
January-February 2011	Research Proposal writing and handing in
March-April 2011	Data collection and literature review
May-June 2011	Research Report writing and submission