



Effects of School Administration and Management on Grade Twelve (12) School Certificate Performance of Day Secondary Schools: A Case Study of Three Schools in Petauke District, Eastern Province of Zambia

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Abstract- The performance of learners at school certificate level or grade twelve level has not been consistently good among day secondary schools despite the so many efforts that the government and its cooperating partners have provided to uplift the education opportunities of learners like free education policy and many others, still the outcomes have not been proportion to the inputs. A study therefore was done to try to unveil the leading factors to this under-performance of learners academically at school certificate level specifically dealing with day secondary schools. In this study, administration and management of a day secondary school was to be tasked for the under-performance of learners. The study made use of qualitative method with real data of performance of learners collected from guidance department, and information collected from learners, teachers, HODs and head teachers through questionnaires and interviews respectively. A case study research design was used to collect data from three selected day secondary schools of Petauke District, Eastern Zambia. The findings indicated that administration and management of the day secondary schools contributed a lot to the performance of learners academically through identification of key roles that institutional leadership played. Further, the findings indicated that indeed the performance of learners at school certificate level greatly depended on the administration and management of a day secondary school. Lastly, some practical practices of management were pointed out as proven to guarantee producing and maintaining of good results at the identified level. In summary, it was clearly revealed that with the right administration and management of day secondary schools, practicing best management practices, good academic performance at school certificate level would be harmonized. Additionally, the study made recommendations that included, putting up boarding facilities in day secondary schools so that learners were monitored to curb indiscipline, appointment of leadership with appropriate qualifications and experience, increase on existing infrastructure, establish good flow of information to and fro in the structure of management, have frequent career talks with learners, have a compulsory well defined program of rewarding and giving incentives to deserving learners and teachers, government to deploy good number of qualified teachers to day secondary schools and many other measures.

Keywords- Academic Performance, School Administration, Educational Management, Day Secondary Schools, School Leadership, School Certificate Examination, Student Achievement.



I. Introduction

Overview

In this chapter is a presentation on the introductory part of the study that was conducted under the title, “Effects of school administration and management on Grade Twelve (12) school certificate performance of day secondary schools: A case study of Three schools in Petauke District, Eastern Province of Zambia”, a study conducted at three selected day secondary schools of Petauke District, Eastern Zambia. As the title indicates, the study tried to establish the role played by management and administration of a school in trying to regulate the performance of learners at school certificate level. This was carried out only in the context of day secondary schools which almost have the same facilities and similar conditions of operations.

The relationship of administration and management of a school and performance of learners at school certificate level, is not well confirmed that they are variables dependent. It is therefore with this regard that the research saw a gap and tried to unveil the phenomenon behind performance of learners at the identified level and the administration and management of a school.

Background of the study

The education sector of the country, Zambia has undergone different reforms that range from education policies to curriculum changes. The action behind all this has been to meet the global demands of the 21st century challenges. Zambia has not been left out in these reforms, having seen the gaps that exist between what is being taught in institutions of learning and what is expected in the production and service delivery sectors leaves much to be desired, hence calling for reforms.

The school certificate level of education serves as the foundation to attainment of tertiary education in trade schools, colleges and universities. Day secondary schools outnumber boarding secondary schools which gives an implication that many learners come from day secondary schools. The narrative clearly indicates that national pass rate at school certificate level is greatly affected by the performance of learners from day secondary schools.

There were great efforts invested in the education sector globally, like the ones embedded in the MDGs, that was the one which clearly showed a roadmap of the future of the education of this country, Zambia. Universal primary education, meant a lot to the Zambian context as primary education served as the foundation for secondary school education whose outcomes clearly were measured through performance at school certificate level.

The struggle to improve the education of the Zambian children brought so many initiatives starting from the government to its cooperating partners, local or international ones. Initiatives like the KGS, FAWEZA, the free education policy, were a few of the many programs that were put in place to see education of children not failing. These were just examples of initiatives in the context of Zambia. Additionally, other global focus directions were issued with some financial and material support to see the education of all children a reality.



With so many efforts and policy directions made clear, however, one thing was certain, there was no significant difference in terms of outcomes of education proportional to the inputs. The reason for the discrepancy was not well established, whether it was because of the learners, type of policies or the teachers who were at the centre of the implementation stage of the policies and initiatives, the reason was not clear.

Therefore, the study conducted presumably might have dealt with one or two of the factors that led to performance that was not well pleasing to the entire country and most specific, the education sector. Dealing with day secondary schools, Petauke, Nseko and Kaulu of Petauke District, Eastern Zambia was a unique experience that brought about different concerns that deserved a very listening ear that would lead to action, if the narrative of the education sector of this country, Zambia was to have some significant difference.

Statement of the problem

There was still continuous poor performance at school certificate level in many of the day secondary schools despite having continued support by the government in terms of finances and materials. On the other hand, few of the day secondary schools were performing to the expectations of the set standards by the education sector. The striking difference between well performing day secondary schools and the non performing school raised a concern that was worth studying. Therefore, a study was so appropriate to be conducted, as it would help to unveil the underlying phenomenon which would eventually help in addressing the discrepancies experienced and facilitate good policy planning and formulation, and implementation.

Purpose of the study

The main purpose of the study was to ascertain if there was any relationship between the performance of learners at school certificate level and the administration and management of a day secondary school. While other day secondary schools produced good results, others produced results not desirable, despite having same human resource, same infrastructure, and other facilities but there still existed a gap. Hence only an in depth investigation was ideal to try to establish the reasons, whether they had to do with learners, management styles or practices, or teachers, or other things that were to be unveiled.

The other purpose was to investigate if there were any proven principles of management that were to be embraced uniformly by all day secondary schools managers and administrators to guarantee producing good results which in this case meant results at school certificate level.

Lastly, make recommendations to the education stakeholders on what was expected to be put in place for all day secondary schools to perform as expected and contribute positively to the country's pass rate at school certificate level.

Objectives of the study

General objective

The main objective of the study was to:



- Investigate the effects of administration and management on performance of Grade Twelve (12) school certificate of day secondary schools.

Specific objectives

The study went with the following specific objectives:

1. To identify key roles that administration and management of day secondary schools play to determine good academic performance of learners.
2. To investigate if the administration and management of an institution greatly determines the academic performance of learners at school certificate level.
3. To ascertain practices of management and administration of a day secondary school that would be recommended to produce and maintain good academic performance of learners at the identified level.

Research questions

The research was guided by the following research questions:

1. What key roles do administration and management of a day secondary school play to determine the performance of learners Grade Twelve (12) school certificate?
2. Is the academic performance of learners at school certificate level greatly determined by the administration and management of a day secondary school?
3. What are practices of administration and management that would be recommended to day secondary schools' institutional leaders to produce and maintain good academic performance of learners at school certificate level?

Significance of the study

The study was carried out to clear the gaps in academic performance of learners in day secondary schools, investigate if it was a matter well attributed to by management and administration of schools or just some other factors. The study would not only add to the body of knowledge but would also clearly indicate to the managers and administrators of day secondary schools about some proven practices of management which were practical to bring about good academic performance of learners at school certificate level and just generally would empower individuals with effective management practices. Lastly, the investigation was to make plain some of the action measures in form of recommendations to be made to education stakeholders to come on board and put in place what it takes to produce and maintain good academic performance of learners at school certificate level, be it service delivery or policy formulation.

Delimitation

The study with the title, "Effects of school administration and management on Grade Twelve (12) school certificate performance of day secondary schools: A case study of Three schools in Petauke District, Eastern Province of Zambia," covered three day secondary schools of Petauke District, namely Petauke Day, Nseko Day and Kaulu Day secondary schools. All of which were from within Petauke District of Eastern Zambia, easily accessed and because they had the experience of having different managers and administrators at different times for a good long time, hence guaranteeing perfect experiences of both success and failure in terms of performance of learners academically.



Additionally, the same schools were chosen because of the fact that they had large population at school certificate level from which the sampling was done as the study required. It was the time of the year when learners were preparing for the 2025 national examinations such that all whatever concerned their performance was of special importance.

The study took into consideration qualitative type of research and considered a case study research design because of the specific area and specific population from which data was collected and it was at the convenience of the researcher. In the research method used and the research design used both objective and subjective data was collected.

The study was prepared to be conducted in the last one third of the year 2025, specifically the months from September to December, while taking note of the national examinations that were starting towards the end of the month of October.

Limitations of the study

The study was intended to be done by the end of the year 2025 in which data was collected. However, some setbacks were encountered that dragged the process to a time not intentionally prepared for. The data collected and presented was not a general representation of the day secondary schools of the entire country but limited only to the context of the three sampled schools of Petauke District, Eastern Zambia.

The first issue had to do with the same selected schools from which data was to be collected. From the two schools data collection went successfully. However, one of the schools gave problems on the part of the HODs and the head teachers, who were not able to give needed data immediately, hence the process was lengthened.

The factor of time for data collection paused a challenge also. It was the third term of the year when the schools had concentrated all their programs in preparing for the end of year national examinations even though there was good response generally from all respondents, but only the aspect of time was not strictly adhered to.

The other constraint had to do with finances. The researcher was financially unstable to carry out the study by putting in place all what it took to undertake the study in the determined time-frame. This setback equally had a negative effect on the entire process of the research writing.

Lastly, the usual factor of commitments at the place of work. This could not easily provide for time which was needed to attend to the demands of the research writing. Despite all the constraints, there was still determination that saw all impossibilities converted into opportunities and had the research done.

Operational definition of key terms

The research had the title “effects of school administration and management on Grade Twelve (12) school certificate performance of day secondary schools: A case study of Three schools in Petauke District, Eastern Province of Zambia” had key terms defined and described as they were used in the research work.



Administration and management

Administration defined in the context of education is “the social process concerned with identifying, maintaining, motivating, controlling and unifying formal and informal organized groups of humans, financial and material resources within an integrated system designed specifically to achieve predetermined goals and objectives”, MOE (2003:7). On the other hand, management was defined by the same document as the “science and art of mobilizing and organizing human, financial and material resources in order to achieve organizational goals and objectives in terms of goods and services”. Therefore, the two terms, administration and management are concerned with effective use of available human, financial and material resource to achieve set institutional goals and objectives.

Day secondary schools

Day secondary schools are simply organized institutions of learning offering formal education running from Grades 8 to 12 within the guided framework of education provision. These schools may either belong to the government or other private entities, but one thing in common among them is that they don't offer boarding facilities and their learners have to walk from their homes to schools and back on daily basis.

Good academic performance

Good academic performance simply describes the learners' scores in the subjects they learn at school, during the school certificate national examinations. The expected scores for one deemed to be successful are to start from 50% and above in all the studied subjects at school, while school certificate level simply refers to the level also called Grade Twelve as it is commonly known by many.

Conclusion

The chapter began by giving the background of the study in which the importance of education was highlighted and how the government has been taking up its role through massive support. Then academic performance of the learners at school certificate level not being according to the expectations tasks the management and administration of the day secondary schools perceived to be behind this, were to be engaged to get to know the phenomenon and see the way forward.

It is therefore from such a background set that the study developed on, giving clear indication of the situation of poor performance of learners being a problem. This was done through the different parts of the chapter to try to magnify the importance of such a study done and later on create a basis that would not only add to the body of knowledge but also serve as a basis for good policy formulation and implementation by the stakeholders in education for a changed tomorrow.

II. Review of Related Literature

Overview

This chapter presents the concept of administration and management of schools in relation to learner academic performance at school certificate level, which starts with conceptual framework that expands into elements of the variables involved. The



theoretical framework comes through towards the end as also the research gaps over the study are addressed.

Introduction

The administration and management of a school is at the centre of the operations of an institution, determining the system through which it functions. According to (UNESCO, 2009), the effectiveness of administration and management of a secondary school is judged by the extent to which schools generally meet the expectations of the society within which they are established. Additionally, the role of educational management in secondary schools involves the application of management principles in designing, developing and effecting resources towards achievement of educational goals (Okumbe, 2001). The society on the other hand, expects good academic performance of learners at the at school certificate level as in the context of Zambian education.

Therefore, this chapter outlines the basis of how the performance of the learners is much dependent upon the input of the management and administration schools. It starts by pointing out the conceptual framework which gives a clear indication of the factors or variables that indeed give the relationship between management of a school and the performance of the learners. In the second case there is an attempt to unveil why it is inevitable to cite management and administration of a school as the determining factor for its success or failure.

Lastly, the four major groups of independent variables are pointed out and how they are as such in determining performance of the learners at the identified level of education in secondary schools. These also serve as source of insightful information in the section of research gaps of the study.

Conceptual framework

The study basically worked with the concept that good academic performance is the sure outcome of effective management and administration of government day secondary schools. According to Ogunbameru, (2004) Management is the process of attaining organisational goals by effectively leading and controlling the organization's human, physical, financial and informational resources, while management practices refer to the administrative activities carried out in the school for the attainment of the school goals and objectives (Makuto, 2014). Educational management is the application of management principles in designing, developing and effecting resources towards achievement of educational goals, judged by the extent to which schools generally meet the expectations of the society (Nzoka and Orodho, 2014).

Having noted the significant relationship between management and administration in secondary schools and academic performance of learners, then it can further be elaborated that different factors of the school's management contribution matter and determine student outcome in the process of education. Heneveld (1994), identified a number of factors that are school-related, which are organized into four groups determining or influencing student outcomes. The figure below identifies the four groups of factors as independent variables while the outcomes of the learners or learner performance as dependent variable.

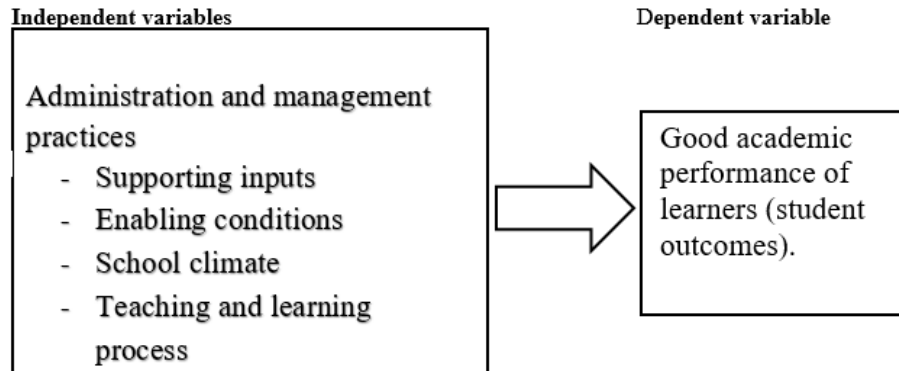


Figure 2.1: Independent and dependent variables

Source: The Origins and Development of Education in Zambia (Book) - 2025.

The figure above has four groups of independent factors will have a detailed explanation on how they are such significant to influence the outcomes of the learners in education at school certificate level in the work that follows.

School Management roles and strategies

School management according to Lamb and Fullarton (2018), has increased attention to school improvement has brought great contribution on school effectiveness and the effective management strategies also give a clear line that enhance school performance. The key factor of good school performance is school management as it was acknowledged that effective management is critical in shaping success in schools (Spillane et al, 2014). The expensive school management studies have indicated and documented management roles believed to contribute and nurture schools' academic performance. There is a great deal of evidence indicating that school management has a big impact on academic attainment (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2015).

In the management of education indeed there lies power to determine school performance and that of learners. This is so in the sense that as earlier pointed out, the role management plays is critical as it institutes a culture that is the main feature to producing the desired performance of learners. According to Beare, Caldwell & Millikan (1989), Edmond identified one feature associated with most successful schools. The feature identified was the leadership of the institution. Therefore, according to Heneveld (1994), the major groups of the features necessitated by management and administration of the school to guarantee its success are discussed below.

Supporting Inputs

In supporting education of an institution, there is expected to have a combined effort of the school management and the community or the parents or guardians. This is so because learners come from their homes where it is expected that they are in good health and prepared to learn. Not alone, communities are also a source of financial and material resources and also they effect a good communication that maintains collaboration in implementing governance and authority of the school.



Stakeholder Engagement

The process of education does not only start in the classroom and end there. It is a process that is also a product of so many efforts put in place by interested groups sharing a common purpose of wanting education to serve as foundation of all manner of development. Effective stakeholder engagement has increasingly been recognized as a key factor in improving learners' academic performance. When stakeholders collaborate, they create supportive learning environments, enhance accountability, and ensure that learners' academic, social, and emotional needs are addressed. According to Freeman (1984), stakeholders are those who can affect or are affected by the achievement of an organization's objectives. In education, stakeholder engagement involves participation in decision-making, policy formulation, resource mobilization, monitoring of learning progress, and support for teaching and learning activities.

Stakeholder engagement enhances academic performance by creating supportive learning environments, improving resource availability, strengthening accountability, and promoting holistic learner development. Collaborative efforts help identify learning challenges early, provide appropriate interventions, and sustain learner motivation. Additionally, stakeholder engagement ensures that education is relevant to learners' social and economic contexts, thereby increasing its effectiveness.

The teachers and school leaders are central stakeholders in education. Effective collaboration among educators promotes curriculum alignment, effective teaching strategies, and continuous assessment of learner progress. According to Bush & Glover (2014), strong leadership encourages professional development, teacher motivation, and a culture of high expectations, all of which positively influence learners' academic performance.

The role played by parents in the education of their children is so critical to academic success, in that they are the ones who monitor homework, communicate with teachers, and encourage learning at home, hence help reinforce classroom instruction. Studies show that learners whose parents are actively involved in their education demonstrate higher academic achievement, better attendance, and improved motivation (Epstein, 2011). Parental involvement also fosters positive attitudes towards the process of learning and the discipline of learners.

Government stakeholders, on the other hand, provide policy direction, funding, and quality assurance to the process and hence guarantee the quality of education good academic performance. Government also carries out timely inspections that also exert pressure on the schools to work hard towards the expected performance standards. Understanding the role of leadership in organizational success, the education system ensures that authority is given to the right people to enhance the needs of the education system, Kelly (1999).

Learners themselves are equally stakeholders of their own education and play a very significant role in the success of their education. When students are engaged in decision-making processes, such as school governance or classroom activities, they develop a sense of ownership and responsibility for their learning. Active learner



participation increases motivation, self-confidence, and academic engagement, which are essential for improved performance (OECD, 2019).

According to UNESCO (2017), partnerships between schools, communities, and governments help address inequalities, improve infrastructure, and ensure access to quality education, leading to better academic outcomes for learners. Community involvement contributes resources, mentorship, and real-world learning opportunities that enrich the educational experience.

Teaching and learning materials

Teaching and learning materials play a critical role in the educational process, particularly at the secondary school level where learners are introduced to more complex and abstract concepts. These materials include textbooks, charts, laboratory equipment, audio-visual aids, digital resources, and other instructional tools used by teachers to facilitate learning. The availability and effective use of teaching and learning materials significantly influence learners' academic performance, motivation, and overall understanding of subject content. One of the major importance of teaching and learning materials is their ability to enhance learners' understanding of subject matter. Abstract concepts, especially in subjects such as mathematics, sciences, and geography, become easier to understand when supported with concrete instructional materials. According to Bruner (1966), learners grasp concepts more effectively when instruction moves from concrete experiences to abstract ideas. Visual aids such as diagrams, models, and charts help learners visualize content, leading to deeper comprehension and improved academic performance.

Teaching and learning materials also increase learners' motivation and interest in learning. When lessons are supported with relevant and engaging materials, learners are more likely to pay attention and actively participate in classroom activities. Schunk, Meece, & Pintrich, (2014), stressed that, motivation is a key factor influencing academic success, as motivated learners tend to invest more effort in their studies. For instance, the use of videos, experiments, and interactive digital tools makes learning more enjoyable and reduces boredom, thereby enhancing learners' academic outcomes.

According to UNESCO (2015), the availability and proper utilization of instructional materials improve teaching effectiveness and learner achievement. Effective teaching largely depends on the appropriate use of instructional materials. Teaching and learning materials assist teachers in organizing lessons, explaining content clearly, and achieving lesson objectives. Teachers who use a variety of materials can address different learning styles, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners, ensuring that all students benefit from instruction.

Teaching and learning materials encourage active learning by involving learners directly in the learning process. Practical activities, experiments, and group tasks supported by instructional materials help learners develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and practical skills. Active learning has been shown to improve retention of knowledge and academic performance (Prince, 2004). In secondary schools, laboratory equipment and practical tools are especially important for science subjects, as they enable learners to apply theoretical knowledge in real-life situations. Studies have



shown that schools with adequate instructional resources tend to record higher student achievement compared to poorly resourced schools (Owoeye & Yara, 2011). When learners have access to textbooks and other learning resources, they are better prepared for examinations, assignments, and independent study, which leads to improved academic results.

Enabling conditions

The school itself should render a very suitable environment that offers the conditions so important for learning to successfully happen, like leadership, the teaching staff and other important needs. The leadership of the school plays a significant role in making available all what it takes to teach and learn while maintaining high instructional standards through clearly and frequently sharing the mission and goals of the institution, (Kelly, 1999).

Further, reminding learners of the expected high standards in performance as well as coordinating learning process enables learners to be focused in their learning and perform so well in their studies, (Levin & Lockheed, 1991). The communication of the school leadership to all stakeholders is so important because while keeping an open door administration it eliminates information gaps. Indeed creation of enabling conditions is such an important aspect to producing good performance in learners academically as it shall be noted in details below.

Institutional leadership

Institutional leadership plays a critical role in shaping the academic performance of educational institutions. Effective leadership influences teaching quality, student motivation, organizational culture, and the efficient use of resources, all of which contribute significantly to academic success. In schools, administrators are responsible for setting a clear vision, fostering collaboration, and creating an environment that supports learning and achievement. According to Leithwood, Harris, and Hopkins (2008), leadership that emphasizes learning-centered goals has a strong indirect effect on student achievement by influencing teacher commitment and instructional quality.

Effective leaders articulate shared goals focused on academic excellence and communicate these goals to teachers, students, and other stakeholders who play their part support academic excellence. When institutional goals are clear, staff members are more likely to align their teaching practices with academic standards and institutional priorities. Leaders who support Continuous Professional Development (CPD), encourage teachers to update their skills, adopt innovative teaching strategies, and use assessment data to improve instruction. By providing mentoring, training opportunities, and constructive feedback, leaders help teachers become more effective in the classroom.

According to Hallinger (2011), institutional leadership, which focuses on curriculum, teaching methods, and assessment, is closely linked to improved academic performance. When teachers feel supported and valued, their motivation and effectiveness increase, leading to better student outcomes. Another key aspect of institutional leadership is the creation of a positive school climate. A supportive and inclusive environment enhances student engagement, discipline, and academic focus.



Leaders who promote respect, collaboration, and ethical behavior help reduce conflict and create a safe learning atmosphere. Bush, (2020) stresses that positive institutional culture has been shown to increase student attendance, persistence, and academic success. Effective leaders also model integrity and professionalism, setting standards that influence both staff and students. Institutional leadership is also essential for effective resource management. According to Northouse (2021), leaders who make informed and ethical decisions regarding resource allocation contribute to organizational effectiveness and improved performance outcomes.

Academic performance depends not only on teaching quality but also on the availability and proper use of resources such as learning materials, technology, and infrastructure. Leaders are responsible for budgeting, planning, and allocating resources in ways that directly support academic programs. Strategic leadership ensures that resources are used efficiently to enhance learning opportunities, especially in resource-constrained environments. The participation in planning for what is appropriate in terms of resources and time for each needy area helps in addressing matters that hinder attainment of higher standard in education (Beare, Caldwell & Millikan, 1989).

Furthermore, institutional leaders act as a link between the institution and external stakeholders, including parents, governing bodies, and the wider community. Strong partnerships with stakeholders provide additional support for academic programs and student development. Leaders who engage stakeholders in decision-making foster trust and accountability, which can enhance institutional reputation and student achievement. Collaborative leadership strengthens the institution's capacity to respond to challenges and adapt to changing educational demands.

Teaching staff

Effective teaching staff serves a critical role in shaping students' academic performance and overall educational outcomes. Teachers are not only transmitters of knowledge but also facilitators of learning, motivators, mentors, and role models. Research consistently shows that the quality of teaching is one of the most significant school-related factors influencing students' academic achievement.

According to Darling-Hammond (2000), students taught by well-qualified teachers demonstrate higher achievement levels than those taught by less qualified or inexperienced teachers. Effective teachers possess strong subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical skills that enable them to present content clearly and adapt teaching strategies to meet diverse learners' needs through a variety of instructional methods, such as differentiated instruction, formative assessment, and feedback, to ensure that students understand concepts and can apply them meaningfully.

Hattie (2009) emphasizes that teacher effectiveness has a powerful influence on student learning, with teaching practices such as clear learning intentions, constructive feedback, and active engagement producing substantial gains in academic performance. When teachers are skilled in lesson planning and delivery, students are more likely to grasp complex concepts, perform well in assessments, and develop higher-order thinking skills. Effective teaching staff also influences academic performance through their expectations and ability to motivate students. Chetty et al. (2014) found that



effective teachers not only improve test scores but also positively affect students' future earnings and educational attainment. This highlights the far-reaching impact of effective teaching on both academic performance and broader societal outcomes. Teachers who hold high expectations encourage students to believe in their abilities and strive for excellence. Research indicates that students tend to perform better when teachers communicate confidence in their potential (Rubie-Davies, 2014). Positive teacher expectations can lead to increased student effort, persistence, and engagement in learning tasks.

Motivation is a key determinant of academic success, and effective teachers create learning environments that foster intrinsic motivation. By using praise appropriately, setting achievable goals, and making learning relevant, teachers help students develop a positive attitude toward education. When students are motivated, they are more likely to attend classes regularly, complete assignments, and actively participate in learning activities, all of which contribute to improved academic performance.

The classroom environment established by effective teaching staff significantly affects students' academic outcomes. Effective teachers create safe, supportive, and inclusive classrooms where students feel respected and valued. Such environments reduce anxiety and behavioral problems, allowing students to focus on learning. According to Emmer and Sabornie (2015), effective classroom management is associated with increased instructional time and better academic outcomes. A positive learning climate encourages collaboration, critical thinking, and open communication. This structured yet supportive environment enables students to engage deeply with academic content and develop self-discipline and responsibility for their learning. Teachers who manage classrooms effectively minimize disruptions and maximize opportunities for meaningful learning.

Effective teaching staff are committed to Continuous Professional Development (CPD), which enhances their instructional competence and adaptability. Education systems are constantly evolving, and teachers must update their skills to incorporate new technologies, curricula, and teaching strategies. Ongoing training enables teachers to respond effectively to students' changing academic and social needs. Studies suggest that schools that invest in teacher professional development tend to experience improvements in student achievement (Guskey, 2002). When teachers engage in reflective practice and collaboration with colleagues, they improve instructional quality, which directly impacts students' academic performance. Thus, effective teaching staff are lifelong learners who continuously refine their practice for the benefit of their students.

The influence of effective teaching staff extends beyond immediate academic performance to long-term educational and life outcomes. Teachers help shape students' study habits, critical thinking skills, and attitudes toward learning. Students who experience effective teaching are more likely to succeed in higher levels of education and develop skills necessary for lifelong learning.



School climate

The climate of the school rather the culture of the school plays and communicates a lot of things. A positive school climate contributes to students' motivation and willingness to learn, which in turn improves academic achievement (OECD, 2017). It is through this that learners are well guided on what is expected of them in conduct and performance while that of teachers is also observed in the routine activities of each and every day. Evertson and Weinstein (2006) noted that structured school environments promote positive behavior and self-regulation, which are closely linked to improved academic performance. It is in this same regard that the learners are reminded of their need to work hard and attain academic excellence through past performances shared. In other ways, schools put all things in place that are a necessity to support desired academic performance of learners.

The school climate will have to do with teachers with positive attitudes towards their work through confidence in their delivery and collaboration among themselves to foster collective attainment of the goals of the institution, (Kelly, 1999). This is done through establishing order and clear indication of the rules to govern their conduct in classrooms and at school, which is also well seen in the organisation of teachers as they carry out their daily activities of the school.

The teachers may also clearly communicate what learners are expected to acquire, shared objectives of the different subjects and the syllabus that gives them a roadmap and enable them to prepare in advance for what is expected. The aspect of rewards and incentives is well clearly defined and serves a significant part in encouraging learners to work hard so as to maintain academic excellence, (Hawes & Stephens, 1990). The school climate can be seen in some of the things below, that if they happen then they make the school environment supportive for academic excellence.

Effective communication

Effective communication plays a vital role in the academic success of students at all levels of education. Communication is the process through which information, ideas, thoughts, and feelings are exchanged between individuals using verbal, non-verbal, written, and digital means. In an academic environment, effective communication enhances understanding, promotes collaboration, supports critical thinking, and strengthens relationships between students and educators. Bandura (1997) explains that self-efficacy, which is influenced by effective communication, plays a key role in academic success. When communication is clear and purposeful, it significantly contributes to improved academic performance.

One of the primary ways effective communication influences academic performance is by enhancing comprehension of learning materials. Students who can clearly understand instructions, lectures, and feedback are more likely to grasp academic concepts and apply them correctly. According to McCroskey (2015), effective communication reduces ambiguity and misunderstandings, allowing students to focus on learning rather than clarification. When teachers communicate learning objectives clearly and present information in an organized manner, students are better equipped to process and retain knowledge, which leads to improved performance in assessments and examinations. According to Graham and Perin (2007), students who demonstrate



strong writing and communication skills tend to achieve higher academic results because they can clearly express their understanding of subject matter.

Effective communication also fosters active participation and engagement in the learning process. Classroom discussions, group work, and presentations require students to express their ideas confidently and listen attentively to others. Johnson and Johnson (2009) highlight that cooperative learning environments supported by effective communication improve academic achievement, motivation, and social skills. These interactive communication practices encourage deeper learning by allowing students to analyze, question, and reflect on academic content. Vygotsky's social development theory emphasizes that learning occurs through social interaction and communication with others (Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, students who actively communicate in academic settings tend to develop higher-order thinking skills, which positively impact their academic achievement.

Another important aspect of effective communication is the relationship between students and teachers. Open and respectful communication builds trust, encourages students to seek help, and creates a supportive learning environment. When learners feel comfortable asking questions or expressing difficulties, teachers can provide timely guidance and feedback. Hattie and Timperley (2007) argue that constructive feedback is one of the most powerful influences on learning and academic performance. Effective communication ensures that feedback is understood and used appropriately to improve future academic work.

Furthermore, effective communication skills are essential for academic writing and assessment. Essays, reports, research papers, and examinations require students to communicate their knowledge logically and coherently. Strong written communication skills enable students to organize ideas, present arguments clearly, and support claims with evidence.

Order and discipline

Order and discipline are fundamental components of an effective school environment and play a critical role in promoting good academic performance. Schools are not only centers for intellectual development but also institutions where learners acquire values, attitudes, and behaviors necessary for success in life. As Bear (2010) notes, discipline that is fair and consistent helps students develop character and social skills that are essential for long-term academic and personal success. When order and discipline are maintained, teaching and learning can take place in a safe, organized, and supportive atmosphere, thereby enhancing students' academic achievement.

Order in schools refers to the structured arrangement of activities, clear routines, and adherence to established rules that guide behavior. Discipline, on the other hand, involves self-control, respect for authority, and compliance with school regulations. Together, order and discipline create an environment that minimizes distractions and maximizes learning time. According to Emmer and Sabornie (2015), orderly classrooms allow teachers to focus more on instruction rather than managing disruptive behaviors, which leads to improved academic outcomes.



One of the most significant ways discipline contributes to academic performance is by fostering effective classroom management. In disciplined classrooms, students are attentive, respectful, and actively engaged in learning activities. This encourages meaningful interaction between teachers and students, improves concentration, and enhances understanding of subject matter.

Research by Evertson and Weinstein (2006) indicates that well-managed classrooms are associated with higher levels of student achievement and motivation. Discipline also promotes the development of positive study habits and self-regulation among students. Learners who are disciplined tend to manage their time effectively, complete assignments promptly, and prepare adequately for examinations. These behaviors are directly linked to higher academic performance. Zimmerman (2002) emphasizes that self-discipline and self-regulated learning are strong predictors of academic success across different educational levels.

Furthermore, order and discipline contribute to a safe and supportive school climate. A positive school climate has been shown to improve students' emotional well-being and academic engagement (Thapa et al., 2013). When students feel secure and protected from bullying, violence, or disruptive behavior, they are more likely to attend school regularly and participate fully in academic activities.

Organized curriculum content

Curriculum content plays a central role in shaping learners' academic experiences and outcomes. An organized curriculum refers to content that is systematically planned, logically sequenced, and aligned with educational objectives, teaching strategies, and assessment methods. Such organization is essential for promoting meaningful learning, supporting teachers' instructional practices, and enhancing students' academic performance (Tyler, 1949). When curriculum content is well structured, learners are better able to understand concepts, retain knowledge, and apply skills effectively across disciplines.

One of the primary ways organized curriculum content improves academic performance is by promoting clarity and coherence in learning. When topics are arranged from simple to complex and from known to unknown, students can build new knowledge on existing understanding. According to Bruner's spiral curriculum theory, learning becomes more effective when key concepts are revisited progressively with increasing depth and complexity (Bruner, 1960). This logical sequencing reduces confusion, prevents cognitive overload, and enables learners to grasp concepts more easily, which positively impacts academic achievement.

Organized curriculum content also supports effective teaching and learning processes. According to Ornstein & Hunkins (2018), teachers rely on curriculum guides to plan lessons, select appropriate teaching methods, and allocate instructional time efficiently. When curriculum content is clearly outlined and aligned with learning objectives, teachers can deliver lessons more confidently and consistently. Tyler's model of curriculum development emphasizes alignment among objectives, content, learning experiences, and evaluation. Such alignment ensures that instruction remains focused



on intended learning outcomes, thereby improving students' performance in assessments.

Furthermore, well-organized curriculum content enhances student motivation and engagement. Students are more likely to participate actively in learning when they understand what is expected of them and see a clear connection between lessons and academic goals. A structured curriculum helps learners track their progress and recognize the relevance of what they are studying. This sense of direction fosters positive attitudes toward learning, which research has shown to be strongly linked to improved academic performance (Biggs, 1996). Another important benefit of organized curriculum content is its role in ensuring continuity and consistency in education.

Across grade levels and subjects, a well-structured curriculum minimizes unnecessary repetition and gaps in learning. This continuity allows students to develop essential skills progressively, such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication. Print (1993), commenting on the consistency and standardization that an organized curriculum brings, states that it ensures that learners in different schools or regions receive a similar quality of education, which is important for equity and national development. When learning experiences are coherent and cumulative, students are better prepared to meet academic challenges and perform well in examinations and other evaluations.

Rewards and incentives

Rewards and incentives, whether intrinsic or extrinsic, play a significant role in motivating students, reinforcing desirable behaviors, and fostering a conducive learning environment. Rewards and incentives are closely linked to motivation, which is a critical determinant of academic success. Motivation can be broadly categorized into intrinsic motivation, which arises from internal interest or enjoyment, and extrinsic motivation, which is driven by external rewards such as grades, praise, or material incentives (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

Rewards and incentives primarily support extrinsic motivation by providing students and educators with tangible or social recognition for their efforts. When students and teachers are motivated, they are more likely to engage actively in learning tasks, persist in the face of challenges, and invest time and effort in their core business, ultimately leading to improved academic performance.

According to behaviorist learning theory, behaviors that are followed by positive reinforcement are more likely to be repeated (Skinner, 1953). According to Hidi & Renninger (2006), when students with their educators feel that their hard work is acknowledged, they are more likely to feel valued and respected, which can enhance their emotional well-being and engagement in school.

In an educational context, rewards such as certificates, praise, scholarships, or privileges can reinforce behaviors like completing assignments on time, participating in class, and achieving high grades. By consistently rewarding such behaviors, educators can help students develop productive study habits and a strong work ethic, which are essential for sustained academic success.



Rewards and incentives are particularly important for students who may struggle with motivation or confidence. For learners who experience academic difficulties, incentives can serve as an initial push that encourages engagement and effort. Small, achievable rewards can help build a sense of competence and self-efficacy, which Bandura (1997) identifies as a crucial factor in academic achievement. As students begin to experience success, their confidence grows, and they may gradually develop intrinsic motivation toward learning. In this way, rewards can act as a bridge that supports students until internal motivation is strengthened.

Moreover, non-material incentives such as verbal praise, positive feedback, and opportunities for leadership can be just as effective as tangible rewards in both educators and students. These forms of incentives support students' psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness, which are central to self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000). By meeting these needs, educators can encourage deeper engagement and long-term commitment to learning.

Teaching and learning process

Quality of outcomes at a school is a result of lengthy of time learners spent on learning while the learning time in the classroom is also used efficiently, Hawes & Stephens (1990). It also takes eclecticism of teachers to cater for every learning ability of each and every learner. There should also be the use continuous and comprehensive evaluation through variety of given assessments and checked to give feedback and for remediation purposes so that every learner is covered, *ibid*.

School Time

School time plays a crucial role in shaping students' academic performance and overall educational outcomes. It provides a structured environment where learners engage with curriculum content, teachers, and peers in ways that promote cognitive, social, and emotional development. Adequate and effective use of school time has been widely recognized as a key factor influencing students' academic success. One of the primary ways school time contributes to academic performance is through instructional time. Instructional time refers to the amount of time students spend actively learning under the guidance of qualified teachers.

Research has consistently shown that increased instructional time, when used effectively, leads to better academic outcomes (Carroll, 1963). School hours allow teachers to deliver lessons, explain complex concepts, and assess students' understanding. Without sufficient school time, students may struggle to grasp essential knowledge and skills required for academic success. School time also ensures equal access to learning opportunities for students from diverse backgrounds.

Many learners rely heavily on school as their main source of academic support, learning materials, and exposure to structured education. According to UNESCO (2015), schools help reduce educational inequalities by providing a common learning platform for all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status. Regular attendance and adequate school time enable students to benefit from resources such as libraries, laboratories, and technology, which may not be available at home.



Another important aspect of school time is the development of discipline and routine. Attending school regularly helps students build habits such as punctuality, time management, and responsibility. These habits are essential for academic success, as they encourage students to complete assignments on time, prepare for examinations, and remain focused on their studies. School time also promotes student engagement and interaction, which are critical for effective learning.

Active engagement helps students retain information better and develop higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, problem-solving, and critical thinking (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Through classroom discussions, group work, and extracurricular activities, students actively participate in the learning process.. These skills are essential for achieving strong academic results across subjects.

Furthermore, school time allows for continuous assessment and feedback. Teachers use class time to evaluate students' progress through tests, quizzes, and informal observations. Feedback provided during school hours helps students identify their strengths and weaknesses, enabling them to improve their performance. Hattie and Timperley (2007) emphasize that timely and constructive feedback significantly enhances learning outcomes. In addition, school time supports social and emotional development, which indirectly influences academic performance. Interaction with peers and teachers helps students develop communication skills, teamwork, and emotional resilience.

Teaching Strategies

Effective teaching strategies not only enhance students' understanding of subject matter but also foster motivation, critical thinking, and lifelong learning skills. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to adapt content, process, and assessment methods to meet individual student needs (Tomlinson, 2014). Therefore, the deliberate selection and application of appropriate teaching strategies are essential for attaining good academic performance. Teaching strategies refer to the methods, techniques, and approaches educators use to facilitate learning.

Research consistently shows that students learn more effectively when instruction is well-organized, student-centered, and aligned with learning objectives (Hattie, 2009). For example, strategies such as explicit instruction, cooperative learning, and formative assessment help students grasp complex concepts and monitor their own progress. When teachers employ clear explanations and structured lessons, students are better able to connect new information with prior knowledge, which improves retention and understanding.

Another important contribution of effective teaching strategies is increased student engagement. Active learning strategies, such as group discussions, problem-based learning, and project-based activities encourage students to participate actively in the learning process. According to Prince (2004), active learning improves student performance by promoting deeper cognitive processing rather than passive memorization. Engaged students are more likely to stay focused, develop positive attitudes toward learning, and achieve higher academic outcomes.



Teaching strategies also support diverse learning needs within the classroom. Students differ in learning styles, abilities, and backgrounds, and a single instructional approach may not be effective for all learners. By using a variety of teaching strategies such as visual aids, hands-on activities, and technology-enhanced instruction, teachers can create inclusive learning environments that promote academic success for all students.

Additionally, effective teaching strategies contribute to the development of self-regulated learning skills. Strategies that encourage goal setting, self-assessment, and reflection help students take responsibility for their own learning. Zimmerman (2002) emphasizes that self-regulated learners tend to perform better academically because they can plan, monitor, and evaluate their learning processes. Teachers who integrate metacognitive strategies into instruction empower students to become independent and confident learners.

Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment (CCA)

Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment refers to a systematic process of evaluating students' progress throughout the learning period using diverse assessment methods. Unlike one-time examinations, CCA integrates formative and summative assessments such as quizzes, projects, presentations, observations, portfolios, and classroom participation. According to Black and William (1998), continuous assessment provides timely feedback that helps learners identify their strengths and weaknesses, thereby improving academic performance. Regular assessment allows students to monitor their progress and take responsibility for their own learning, which leads to deeper understanding and long-term retention of knowledge.

One major importance of CCA is its role in promoting holistic development. Academic performance is not solely determined by examination scores but also by skills such as critical thinking, creativity, collaboration, and problem-solving. CCA evaluates both scholastic and co-scholastic aspects of learning, ensuring balanced development. Rao and Kumar (2015) argue that comprehensive assessment enables educators to recognize individual differences among learners and support their unique learning needs. As a result, students are more engaged and motivated, which positively influences their academic achievement.

Another significant advantage of Continuous Comprehensive Assessment is the reduction of examination-related stress. High-stakes examinations often create anxiety and pressure, which can negatively affect students' performance. CCA distributes assessment over time, reducing dependence on a single exam. This approach creates a supportive learning environment where mistakes are viewed as part of the learning process rather than as failures. Studies indicate that students assessed continuously tend to show improved confidence and better academic outcomes (Kaur, 2018). CCA enhances the quality of teaching and instructional decision-making. Through continuous evaluation, teachers gain valuable insights into students' learning progress and can adjust their teaching strategies accordingly. Formative assessment data help educators identify gaps in understanding and provide remedial support when necessary. According to Nitko and Brookhart (2014), effective assessment practices guide instruction and contribute significantly to improved student achievement.



Thus, CCA not only benefits learners but also strengthens teaching effectiveness. In addition, Continuous Comprehensive Assessment fosters active learning and student participation. Since assessment methods are varied and interactive, students are encouraged to engage in discussions, collaborative projects, and experiential learning activities. This active involvement increases motivation and promotes meaningful learning experiences. When students are actively engaged, they are more likely to perform well academically and develop positive attitudes toward learning.

School administration and management

School administration and management play a critical role in shaping the quality of education and influencing students' academic performance. Effective administration provides direction, coordination, and support for teaching and learning processes, while sound management ensures the efficient use of resources to achieve educational goals. In modern educational systems, the success of schools is increasingly linked to the competence of school administrators and managers, particularly principals and senior leadership teams.

One of the primary ways school administration contributes to academic performance is through instructional leadership. Research indicates that strong instructional leadership positively influences teacher effectiveness, which in turn enhances student achievement (Hallinger, 2011). School administrators set the academic vision, establish high expectations, and create an environment that prioritizes teaching and learning. When administrators actively support curriculum implementation, monitor classroom instruction, and encourage professional development for teachers, instructional quality improves.

Effective school management also ensures the proper utilization of human, financial, and material resources. According to Bush (2020), efficient management practices create stability within schools, which is essential for sustained academic improvement. Schools that are well-managed tend to have adequate teaching and learning materials, well-maintained facilities, and equitable distribution of workloads among staff. Proper resource management reduces disruptions to learning and allows teachers and students to focus on academic tasks.

Another important aspect of school administration is the creation of a positive school climate. Administrators influence school culture through policies, communication styles, and interpersonal relationships. A safe, inclusive, and supportive environment fosters student motivation, discipline, and engagement, all of which are crucial for academic success. Studies show that schools with positive climates experience higher levels of student achievement and lower rates of absenteeism and dropout (Hoy & Miskel, 2013).

School administration also plays a key role in monitoring and evaluating academic performance. Through regular assessment, data analysis, and feedback mechanisms, administrators can identify areas of weakness and implement targeted interventions. This data-driven decision-making helps schools improve teaching strategies, provide remedial support, and track progress toward academic goals. Leithwood, Harris, and



Hopkins (2020) emphasize that effective leadership practices, including performance monitoring, significantly contribute to improved student outcomes.

In addition, effective school management promotes collaboration among stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and the wider community. Administrators who encourage parental involvement and community partnerships strengthen support systems for students. Such collaboration enhances accountability and reinforces learning beyond the classroom, leading to better academic performance.

Management styles

Academic performance is a crucial indicator of students' learning outcomes and overall development. Among the many factors influencing academic achievement, management styles in educational settings play a significant role. Management style refers to the approach, methods, and strategies that school leaders and educators employ to guide, supervise, and motivate students and staff (Bush, 2019). Understanding the impact of different management styles is essential in creating an environment that fosters high academic performance.

Several management styles are commonly observed in educational institutions, including authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire approaches. An authoritarian management style is characterized by strict rules, high control, and clear expectations, which can ensure discipline but may limit creativity and student autonomy (Leithwood & Sun, 2012). In contrast, a democratic management style encourages participation, collaboration, and shared decision-making, which has been linked to increased motivation, engagement, and better academic outcomes (Bush, 2019). Laissez-faire management on the other hand, involves minimal supervision, allowing students and teachers to operate independently, which may foster self-directed learning but risks lack of guidance and inconsistency.

The relationship between management style and academic performance is mediated by several factors, including teacher motivation, student engagement, and classroom climate. Studies have shown that schools led by principals who adopt participative and transformational management styles often report higher student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2020). Such leaders foster professional development, encourage collaboration, and create a positive school culture that supports learning. Conversely, overly rigid or unsupportive management styles can lead to low morale among teachers, disengaged students, and lower academic performance (Hallinger, 2011).

Understanding the significance of management styles can inform policy and practice in educational institutions. For instance, administrators can adopt flexible, student-centered approaches that balance discipline with empowerment. Teacher training programs should also emphasize leadership and management skills, equipping educators to apply styles that enhance learning outcomes. Furthermore, regular feedback mechanisms can help school leaders adjust their management strategies to meet the evolving needs of students and staff.



Professional qualifications and experience

Professional qualifications cover the formal education, certifications, and specialized training that teachers or academic mentors possess, while professional experience refers to the practical exposure and years of practice in the relevant field. Both these elements play a pivotal role in shaping a conducive learning environment, enhancing teaching quality, and ultimately improving student performance.

Firstly, professional qualifications ensure that educators possess the requisite theoretical knowledge and pedagogical skills to deliver effective instruction. Teachers with higher academic qualifications are more likely to employ evidence-based teaching strategies, foster critical thinking, and adapt lessons to diverse learning needs (Darling-Hammond, 2017). For example, a mathematics instructor with advanced qualifications in education and mathematics is better equipped to explain complex concepts, design challenging exercises, and assess student understanding comprehensively. Such proficiency directly correlates with improved student outcomes, as learners benefit from accurate, structured, and meaningful instruction.

Secondly, professional experience complements formal qualifications by providing educators with practical insights and problem-solving skills. According to Hattie (2009), experience allows teachers to manage classroom dynamics, anticipate learning challenges, and implement strategies that have been proven effective in real-world settings. Experienced educators can identify students' weaknesses early, provide targeted feedback, and mentor learners in ways that promote sustained academic growth. Moreover, they often serve as role models, demonstrating discipline, professionalism, and a commitment to lifelong learning, which can motivate students to emulate these behaviors.

Additionally, the combination of qualifications and experience contributes to curriculum development and instructional innovation. Teachers who are well-qualified and experienced can integrate contemporary research, technological tools, and interdisciplinary approaches into their teaching, creating engaging and relevant learning experiences (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Thus enriched learning environment fosters critical thinking, creativity, and independent learning key components of academic excellence.

Indispensable Practices

The administration of education of a country is so important that the main objective would be to offer solutions to the problems that society faces, and as such inputs of different stakeholders are the only solution to attaining this. Different suggestions can be arrived at as the way off attaining desired learner performance, however a few are going to be stressed out. Some of the practices to be emphasized have already been stressed out with only some addition of valuable information while others have to be added to the ones indicated.

Leadership style on academic performance

Leadership of an institution plays a very significant role in determining its culture, and that translates into the academic performance of the learners. School management practices play a pivotal role in shaping the behavior and discipline of students in



secondary schools. Effective management ensures a conducive learning environment is maintained, promotes respect among students and staff, and minimizes behavioral issues, Phiri and Chanda (2025).

Effective leadership styles, such as transformational and participative approaches, foster a positive school culture, where students feel valued and respected. Transformational leaders inspire students and staff by setting high expectations and modeling ethical behavior, which promotes self-discipline among students (Booth, 2011). On the other hand, participative leaders engage teachers, parents, and students in decision-making processes, ensuring a collaborative approach to addressing disciplinary issues that contribute greatly to academic performance of the learners.

It is therefore only with a leadership that is transformational and participatory that educational and institutional goals can be achieved, as all stakeholders are engaged with their contribution valued so much. This inclusivity enhances students' sense of responsibility and accountability, as they feel involved in creating and adhering to the school's disciplinary policies that are a very significant ingredient to attaining academic excellence.

Teacher-student relationship

The relationship between teachers and learners add greatly to the performance of the learners academically. Their health relationship eliminates information gaps in terms of needs of learners and expectations of teachers from learners. According to Phiri and Chanda (2025), teachers are central figures in fostering effective classroom management, as they are responsible for creating an atmosphere where students can focus on learning and personal development.

The ongoing support by teachers encourages students to embrace discipline as part of their personal development, improving academic performance and social integration within the school environment which is the only way through which academic performance can be of value since the positive modification of behaviour is a holistic one. Chanda (2024), noted that these relationships create a foundation for effective communication, enabling teachers to address disciplinary issues constructively and guide students toward better behavior. By implementing strategies such as teacher mentorship programs and regular teacher-student interaction sessions, school management enhances the quality of relationships, which can reduce instances of indiscipline, hence improved academic performance is equally attained.

Parental and community involvement

The involvement of the parents and community in attaining good behavior in learners that translates into good academic performance is so practical and achievable. It is the parents who are the owners of the children or the learners and these parents and guardians form the community which is so pivotal in instituting the culture of the school to which learners are expected to adhere. In addition, parents' involvement in school management, including decision-making processes related to curriculum, extracurricular activities, and school policies, contributes to the overall effectiveness of school operations. Ncube (2013) added that when parents are proactive, their presence and influence can deter student misbehavior, guide students in making responsible



choices, and cultivate an atmosphere where both academic achievement and discipline are prioritized.

Moreover, parental engagement help schools better understand the socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of their students, enabling the development of tailored interventions that address specific behavioral and academic challenges, Chanda (2023). Ultimately, active parental engagement enhances student outcomes by creating a collaborative partnership between the home and school, fostering discipline, responsibility, and academic success, Phiri and Chanda (2025).

Monitoring and evaluation

School management teams can use monitoring and evaluation tools to ensure that interventions are applied consistently across all students, regardless of their socioeconomic background or academic performance. Chanda & Siyunda (2023) explained that frequent evaluation through feedback from students, teachers, and parents fosters a participatory approach that enhances accountability and supports the development of a positive school culture. The continuous assessment of discipline programs also promotes equity and fairness in the application of disciplinary measures, minimizing the risk of bias and favoritism.

Moreover, data-driven insights derived from these practices help school administrators identify emerging challenges, such as bullying or absenteeism, and design proactive strategies to address them, (Curran et al., 2019). By fostering transparency and inclusivity in decision-making, monitoring and evaluation reinforce students' trust in the disciplinary system, ultimately contributing to improved behavior, academic performance, and overall school harmony.

Theoretical framework

The subject on management of schools in this thesis was grounded in the contribution of Henri Fayol (1841-1925), one of the classical theorists of management also called the father of modern management. The proponent asserted that "to manage is to forecast and plan, organize, command, co-ordinate and control" which should be very key for any institution to meet its objectives and goals.

Management is all pervasive and common to all human-undertakings, whether in home, business or government. It is concerned with drawing up the broad-plan of operations of an organization with assembling personnel, coordinating and harmonizing effort and activity. The five common activities of management that he precisely identified are planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating and controlling discussed in brief below.

Planning

The planning function is crucial for an organisation because it is a guide to achieving goals, a basis for decision-making and risk management, and facilitates monitoring and evaluation (Rahman, 2012). Managers therefore are expected to design practical plans, consider tangible and intangible resources, as well as take into account work processes and future trends.



Organizing

This process includes job identification, task classification, activity coordination, performance evaluation, and delegation of authority and responsibility. Through this approach, organisations can ensure that each department has the expertise to suit their needs, creating an efficient framework for achieving common goals (McNamara, 2009; Rahman, 2012).

Commanding

Commanding function, or direction, is an integral part of the daily operational process that aims to ensure the smooth implementation of tasks (Edwards, 2018). According to Rahman (2012), the function involves providing direction and instructions to workers so that existing tasks can be completed effectively and efficiently.

Controlling

The fourth function is controlling which is a supervisory function which serves a pivotal role in verifying that all tasks are carried out as directed. In addition, in producing goods or services, the control function guarantees that the quality meets predetermined standards (Edwards, 2018).

Coordinating

The final function is coordinating, which is a function to create working relationships between individuals and between divisions so that good synergy occurs. According to McNamara, (2009), the coordination process is carried out to avoid communication chaos, unsupported worker vacancies, and many other matters.

Summary

The function of the management at a school set up is important, as it makes use of the identified activities above and implementing them to the latter so as to guarantee the attainment of institutional goals and objectives. Workplace relations can only mean something to the extent of producing good performance of learners in conduct and academic work if the identified activities of management incorporate and value each member's contribution to the running of the school.

Methodological strengths and weaknesses in the literature

The literature basis of the study had both limitations and strengths and these are as follows:

Strengths

- Availability of information from the studies conducted before gave a very good foundation for addressing the identified research problem.
- The information on the subject was widely sourced from African education context that made possible a critical analysis of what it tried to address in relation to the study.

Weaknesses

- The case study design used in the process of study was only appropriate for a short period of time and was only able to analyze the status of the problem for a short



time compared to a longitudinal one that would take some good long time to unveil everything of importance.

- The study may only be of help to the African context of education that share almost same challenges in their education because of similar education systems.
- The previous studies done were also limited to only few selected schools and if not all, most of them were either located in urban or peri-urban areas that had a limitation of giving a comprehensive picture of the problem.

The above situation of merits and demerits was only helped by the research approach type that the study adopted, the qualitative. The approach or method with its design enabled the research problem to be rationally identified and have some possible solutions unveiled as a way of addressing it.

Gaps in research important to Petauke District

Many of the studies that were conducted before, on the subject, were not in the context of Zambian educational administration, specifically Petauke District. The same studies conducted have not had the school certificate level failure of learners as a problem while not also narrowing the problem to Day Secondary Schools only.

Therefore, the case of Petauke will greatly benefit from the outcome of the studies conducted, including those other places that perhaps are in the situation of Petauke District and being a day secondary school. Additionally, the findings will offer an encouragement and understanding that management should be positive-outcome oriented for it to be called functional.

The issue of academic performance of learners at school certificate level will be addressed from a different approach that is collectively calling for involvement of relevant stakeholders while also management and administration of day secondary schools will have a clear understanding that making learners perform well academically is mostly dependent or entirely on them.

In other words, the process of policy formulation in schools and district level will take a different approach, based on the outcomes of the study. There are certain neglected factors in education that should be given attention if the desire of the country is to have the best academic performance from learners.

Conclusion

In the attempt to attain academic excellence, the literature started by pointing out the conceptual framework that highlighted the independent and dependent variables, management and administration of day secondary school and performance of learners at school certificate level respectively. The independent variables were described in details including their role they played in the education process of learners.

The practices of management including the indispensable ones were equally pointed out as the ones that were to be behind academic success of learners at school certificate level. In the same vein, it was clearly indicated that practices of management as suggested and contributed by Henri Fayol, the father of management covered under the theoretical framework are so practical to produce results.



The literature basis of the study was described as having both limitations and strengths, in that it covered a wide range of studies conducted on the subject but not in the context of the Zambian education administration and from Petauke specifically where the study was conducted.

Lastly, with so many elaborations made it has been indicated that indeed the academic performance of learners at school certificate level greatly is dependent on the administration and management of an institution. It is therefore, with the above insightful knowledge that the identified problem of poor academic performance at school certificate level in all Day Secondary Schools would be reduced

III. Research Methodology

Overview

In this chapter are the research design, research site, the population, sampling techniques, research instruments and data collection procedure covered. The study with the title “Effects of school administration and management on Grade Twelve (12) school certificate performance of day secondary schools: A case study of Three schools in Petauke District, Eastern Province of Zambia namely, Petauke Day Secondary, Nseko Day Secondary and Kaulu Day Secondary Schools. The study was conducted in a systematic way, putting into consideration all the factors that enabled it to bring out and present reliable process and valid outcomes.

Research design

In this chapter a research design is said to be a roadmap or structure through which a research is done. It clearly indicates and clarifies the steps involved in the research process from the data collection stage to its analysis. A research design as described by Orodho (2003) is a scheme, outline or plan that is used to generate answers to research problems. Tromp and Kombo (2006) added that a research design is an arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance and purpose.

The study made use of case study research design because of the fact that detailed information of the phenomenon was needed. The study also needed to give a general and comprehensive picture of the problem and solutions. The study was intended to describe a unit in detail, in context and holistically, for which only a case study research design was appropriate for the challenge.

A qualitative research type was ideal for the study while a case study research design was considered appropriate. It was qualitative in nature because of the fact that all information collected through engagement of learners, subject teachers, HODs and head teachers was analyzed as such. In qualitative research, feelings and insights are considered important (Orodho and Kombo, 2002). The guidance departments of the schools were also able to provide quantitative information about the performance of the schools at the identified level which served as substantiated data about inconsistent differences in performances in some selected years.



Research site

According to Orodho and Kombo (2002) the selection of a research site should start with a larger population and through progressive elimination, end up with the actual site where data is collected. Therefore, the selected research site was arrived at through a purposive sampling, starting with the part of the country Eastern Zambia because of the fact that the region has been outperforming other provinces in the country at school certificate national examination level consecutively for four years. Petauke District was selected through purposive sampling because of the fact that it was easily accessible to the researcher.

Finally the three selected day secondary schools were equally selected through purposive sampling because of having large population from which reliable and systematic sampling was done and they were easily reached by the researcher besides being established day secondary schools for a long time. The selected schools were in a state of being able to provide the answers to the research questions and also offer recommendations to help improve the situation of poor performance to the users of the information in the research.

Population

A population is a group of individuals, objects or items from which samples are taken for measurement (Tromp and Kombo, 2006). A population also refers to the entire group of persons or elements that have one thing in common, from which a sample is taken.

A population was identified that met the above descriptions and shared the same qualities of being in the school certificate level or Grade Twelve as commonly known, like in the case of learners, subject teachers, heads of departments (HODs) and lastly head teachers, from all the Three selected day secondary schools.

Therefore, in the entire population, a target population of learners was selected in Grade Twelve, subject teachers, Heads of Departments (HODs) and head teachers. These groups were identified as so important to providing the data that was needed for the research and due to the fact that they were the key stakeholders at the centre of the matter of study.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The sample size and sampling procedures of the population are covered in this section of the chapter.

Sample size

A process of sampling was done to come up with the sample for study following some guidelines for selection. Sampling is the procedure a researcher uses to gather people, places or things to study (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). Sampling is a process of selecting a number of individuals or objectives from a population such that the selected group contains elements representative of the characteristics found in the entire group (Orodho and Kombo 2002).



The process of sampling is finally to give a sample from which the study is to be done. A sample is a finite part of a statistical population whose properties are studied to gain information about the whole (Webster, 1985). Therefore, sample size of the study comprised of 50 learners from grade twelve classes, 14 subject teachers, 6 HODs and the three head teachers from all the three schools.

Sampling procedure

The sampling was done following different techniques for each needed sample. A sampling design guided the selection of the sample. Sampling design refers to the part of the research plan that indicates how cases are selected for observation (Kombo & Tromp, 2006).

The sampling procedure used both probability and non-probability sampling systems. The selection of grade twelve learners from the three schools used a probability sampling design called systematic random sampling in which 50 learners were selected from all the three schools. The selection of the 14 subject teachers and 6 heads of departments used probability sampling called simple random sampling.

The selection of head teachers was done using non-probability sampling design called purposive sampling. Purposive sampling involves selecting information rich sources for in-depth analysis related to the central issues being studied (Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Therefore head teachers were selected because of the fact that they constituted a sample that was directly engaged in administration and management of the schools involved.

Research instruments

Research instruments are simply tools that a researcher uses in the data collection process from the selected sample. Appropriate research instruments are chosen based on the objectives of the research, the respondents selected, availability of time for data collection. The researcher should be aware that some types of instruments are unsuitable to some groups of people due to factors such as the literacy level, profession and culture (Tromp & Kombo, 2006). Therefore, the main methods adopted for use in the data collection activity involved questionnaires and guided interviews for the two categories of respondents.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were resorted to as data collection instruments for the learners, subject teachers and heads of departments. The contents of the questionnaire were made in such a way that they would gather qualitative data. They contained the role of school administration and management providing necessary needs to support good performance of learners at school certificate level. They were structured in such a way that each group of respondents were able to see appropriateness and clear sentiments to which they gave their responses and opinions.

Structured interview questions

In the last category of respondents, were head teachers involved. Interview questions were structured in such a way that they were able gather information that was rightly



needed to meet the information needs of the study. Same questions were asked to each participant so that all had guided way through which responses came out.

Data Collection Procedures

The time for data collection exercise had come and all the data collection instruments were made ready. Before the actual activity of data collection engagement of school authorities was sought for, starting with the district education office.

The feedback from the district education office and the school authorities was a positive one and it enabled the exercise of data collection proceed without serious difficulties. The selection of respondents in these institutions was so accurate such that all what was needed in terms of information was given without reservations.

The prepared data collection instruments were given to the selected respondents like in the case of learners as assisted by researcher assistants. Appointments were equally made for data that needed to be gathered through interviews like the case of head teachers and other teachers and HODs who were very busy to respond to respond to the challenge immediately.

Data analysis

Data analysis refers to examining what has been collected in a survey or experiment and making deductions and inferences. It involves uncovering underlying structures; extracting important variables, detecting any anomalies and testing any underlying assumptions (Tromp & Kombo, 2006).

The data collected was qualitative and needed its specific analysis. The responses of the participants were grouped into categories of various classes called categorical variables. The analysis of qualitative data according to Orodho and Kombo (2002), vary with purposes of the research, the complexity of the research design and the extent to which conclusions can be reached.

Therefore, the data collected from the respondents was summarized into themes and topics, according to the variables involved. The data was then coded thematically accordingly, to facilitate an analysis using Survey Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) and by use of descriptive statistics, like frequency tables, graphs and other means even using Microsoft excel the data was presented.

Validity and Reliability

Validity of a test or instrument is the extent to which it measures what it supposed to measure. In this case results or findings of an activity are said to be valid if only they are able to give same results even when the tests or fact finding activities are done repeatedly by different researchers.

On the other hand, reliability of an instrument is that feature that measures consistently under varying conditions and at different times. This feature of research instrument simply signifies its ability to measure the same properties consistently even when it's done at different times under different conditions.



The prepared questionnaires and question formats for the interviews were subjected to expert checkups for adjustments. With adjustments after a pre-test was done, then they were ready with both elements of validity and reliability taken care of, hence making them of standard as advised.

Ethical considerations

The entire process of the research was done within the strict adherence to the ethical guidelines of conducting a research. It all started with the process of data collection which was preceded by seeking consent from the district education office, and further engagement was done to ask for permission to collect data, from the schools' authorities and lastly the respondents were engaged before data could be collected from them.

The collected data was also handled with delicacy that was needed according to the ethical guidelines. In this regard respondents were allowed throughout not to indicate their mark of identity so that confidentiality was maintained through anonymity. The collected data was therefore entirely for the purpose of research, value addition to the body of knowledge and where possible influence the process of policy formulation so as to improve in the practice of educational administration and management.

Conclusion

The research methodology began with the research design that was chosen, a case study with qualitative approach, while a research site was settled for through purposive sampling. The population was identified where some probability and non-probability sampling techniques were used to come up with the required sample. Systematic random sampling was used to come up with a sample for learners, simple random sampling was done to come up the subject teachers and heads of departments while a purposive sampling method was used to identify the head teachers that were needed.

Data collection instruments were identified for the respondents involved. These being questionnaires and structured interview questions, were subjected to expert review and pre-test before they were administered to the respondents, to enable their validity and reliability features to be attained.

Analysis of the collected data was done following its qualitative nature, it was coded and categorized in themes for easy analysis using SPSS. The data was also handled with the confidentiality that it deserved to preserve the privacy of the respondents as guided by the ethical guidelines for conducting a research.

IV. Data Collection, Analysis and Presentation

Overview

This chapter presents the outcomes of the third chapter. It presents the analysis of the data collected from the three day secondary schools through learners in school certificate level or Grade Twelve, subject teachers, heads of departments (HODs) and head teachers. Thematic statements from which respondents were giving their responses for generalization of results to be possible are equally indicated. The presentation is based on the findings from the research with a title, "Effects of school administration and management on Grade Twelve (12) school certificate performance of day secondary



schools: A case study of Three schools in Petauke District, Eastern Province of Zambia”.

Performance of the learners

The figures below are representations of performance of learners at school certificate level in the three schools that were selected for studies. The picture confirms the inconsistency in performance that is usually experienced in the schools for which reasons are indicated by other presentations in this same chapter.

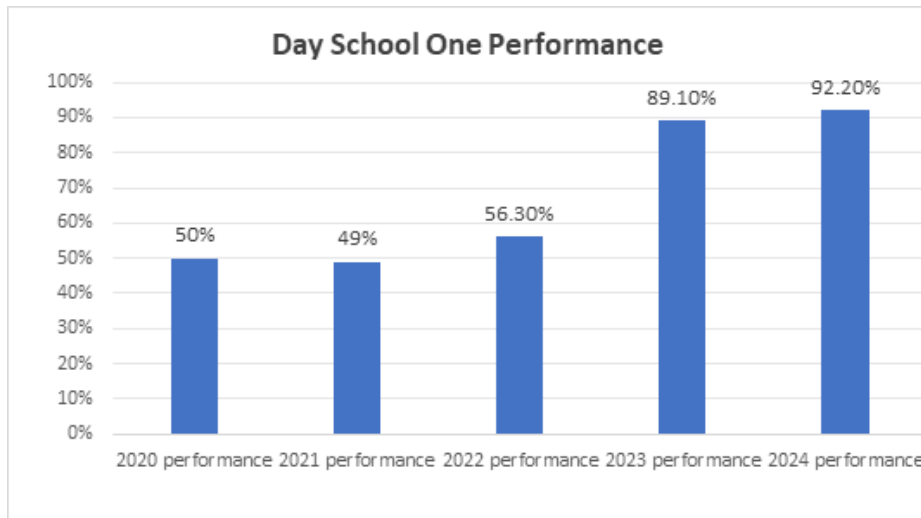


Figure 4.1: Day School One Performance

Source: Field Data 2025

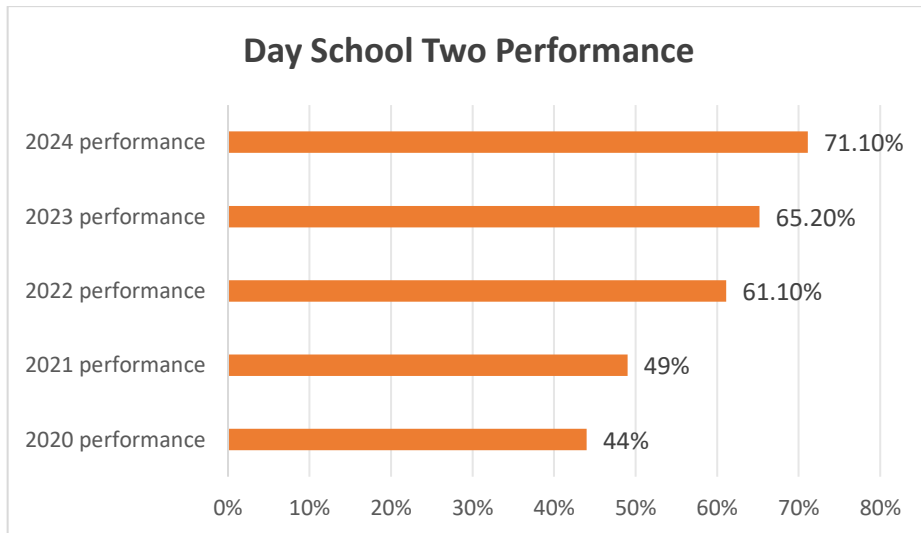


Figure 4.2: Day Secondary Two Performance

Source: Field Data 2025

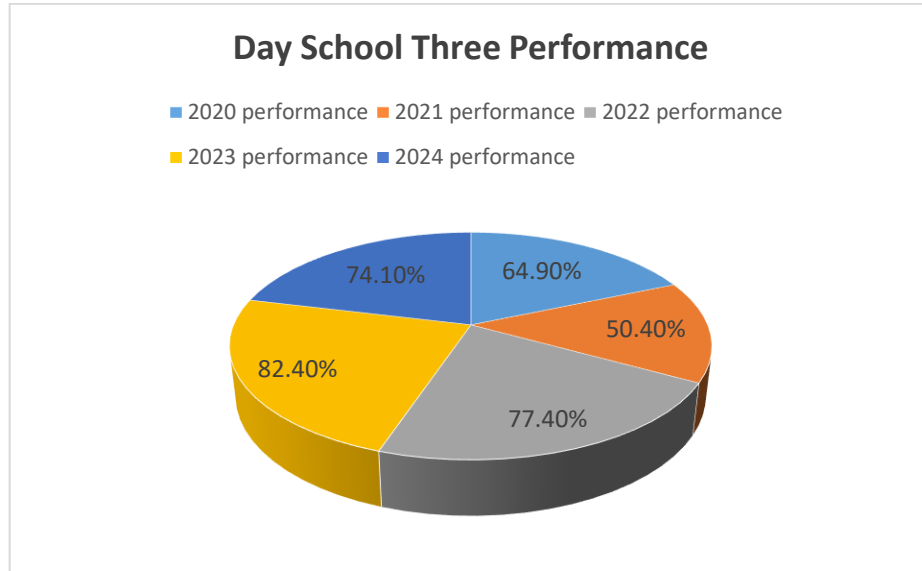


Figure 4.3: Day Secondary School Performance

Source: Field Data 2025

The above picture about school performance in the three selected schools clearly demonstrates that schools have the capacity to perform well by making learners score very good results at school certificate level. Studies have confirmed that schools led by principals who adopt participative and transformational management styles often report higher student achievement (Leithwood et al., 2020).

On the other hand, the performance of learners is seen to have not been to the expected standard. This is because during the same years, practices used in management to help learners perform excellently were not performed to the expectation. Hallinger (2011), commented that overly rigid or unsupportive management styles can lead to low morale among teachers, disengaged students, and lower academic performance.

Supporting inputs

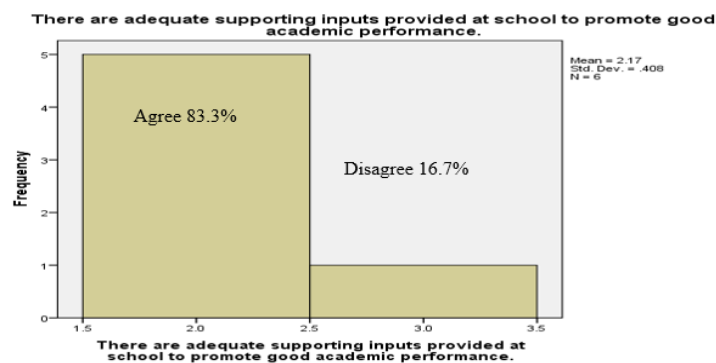


Figure 4.4: Supporting inputs

Source: Field Data (2025)

In the case of HODs, the responses concerning supporting inputs indicated that schools did their best to provide adequate supporting inputs enabling attainment of good academic performance of the learners. Those respondents represented by a score of 83.3% agreed with the condition while a score of 16.7% represents those that disagreed.

Stakeholder engagement

The fact that the percentages on stakeholder engagement by HODs and subject teachers, indicate only good and fair conditions showed that there was need of serious engagement of stakeholders to help in meeting institutional goals and objectives. According to UNESCO (2017), partnerships between schools, communities, and governments help address inequalities, improve infrastructure, and ensure access to quality education, leading to better academic outcomes for learners.

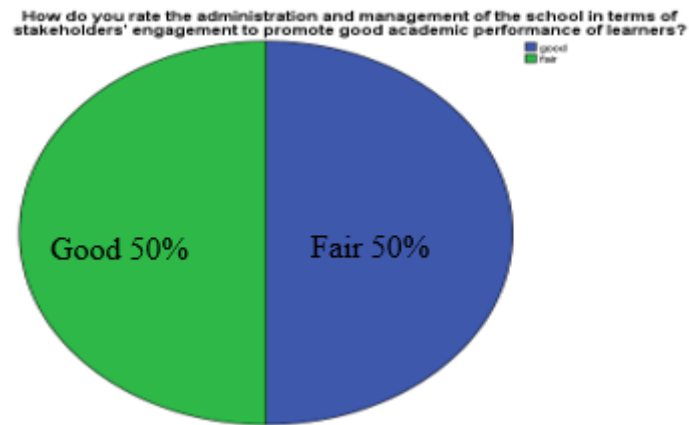


Figure 4.5: Stakeholder engagement

Source: Field Data (2025)

Responses from the learners about the importance of stakeholder engagement indicated that it was good enough to help the school in attaining good academic performance through more than 80% agreeing.

Table 4.1: Stakeholder engagement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	27	54.0	54.0	54.0
	Agree	16	32.0	32.0	86.0
	Disagree	4	8.0	8.0	94.0
	Not sure	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2025)



Teaching and learning materials

The provision and availability of teaching and learning materials from the three schools was indicated by a score of 72%. However, the 28% is such a significant number that can influence the attainment of results in the performance of learners academically. Therefore, there is still great need by the management to meet the demand. According to UNESCO (2015), the availability and proper utilization of instructional materials improve teaching effectiveness and learner achievement.

Table 4.2: *Teaching and learning materials*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly agree	21	42.0	42.0	42.0
Agree	15	30.0	30.0	72.0
Disagree	11	22.0	22.0	94.0
Strongly disagree	1	2.0	2.0	96.0
Not sure	2	4.0	4.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2025)

Enabling conditions

Under the provision of enabling conditions in all the three schools, the HODs indicated that the schools did their best to make the environment so supportive and enabling to facilitate attainment of good academic performance of learners.

Table 4.3: *Enabling conditions (HODs)*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid strongly agree	1	16.7	16.7	16.7
agree	4	66.7	66.7	83.3
disagree	1	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data (2025).

On the same matter of enabling conditions to be provided by the school management, subject teachers agreeing with the HODs, indicated that the schools tried their best to make available enabling conditions to learners' attaining good academic performance as indicated in the table below.

Table 4.4: *Enabling conditions (subject teachers)*

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid agree	13	92.9	92.9	92.9
disagree	1	7.1	7.1	100.0
Total	14	100.0	100.0	



Source: Field Data (2025)

Institutional leadership

On the matter of institutional leadership determining the academic performance of learners at school certificate level, the HODs had a score of 66.7% representing those that agreed while those who disagreed were represented by the score of 33.3%. It was thus confirmed by the majority that indeed academic performance of learners at school certificate level is greatly determined by the leadership of an institution.

Table 4.5: Institutional leadership and learner performance (HODs)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	agree	4	66.7	66.7	66.7
	disagree	1	16.7	16.7	83.3
	strongly disagree	1	16.7	16.7	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field data (2025)

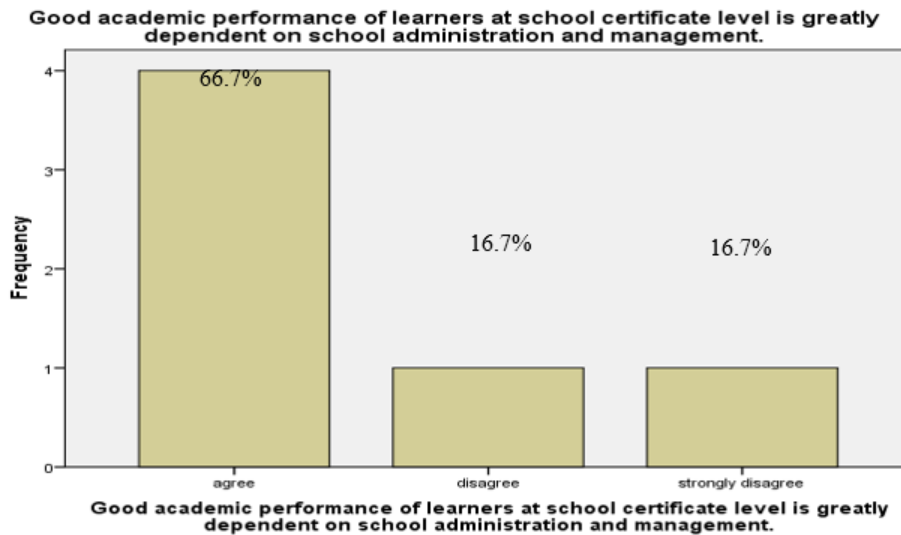


Figure 4.6: School administration and performance of learners (HODs)

Source: Field Data (2025)

The figure and the table below indicate the scores of the subject teachers on the condition that good academic performance was greatly dependent on the administration and management of the school. A score of 92.9% represented those who agreed while those that disagreed were represented by a score of 7.1%.

Table 4.6: Institutional leadership (Subject teachers)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	agree	13	92.9	92.9	92.9



disagree	1	7.1	7.1	100.0
Total	14	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2025)

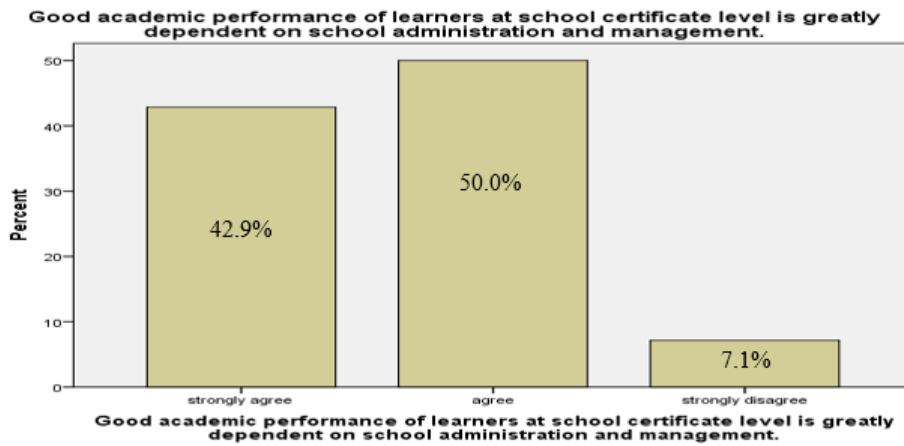


Figure 4.7: Institutional leadership (Subject teachers)

Source: Field Data (2025)

Lastly, learners' responses on the matter of institutional leadership in supporting attainment of good academic performance at school certificate level was scored by 66% agreeing, while a significant score of 34% representing those that were not sure or disagreeing was not good, hence suggesting that there was need of school leadership to put its best to facilitate good academic performance of learners. . According to Bush (2020), efficient management practices create stability within schools, which is essential for sustained academic improvement.

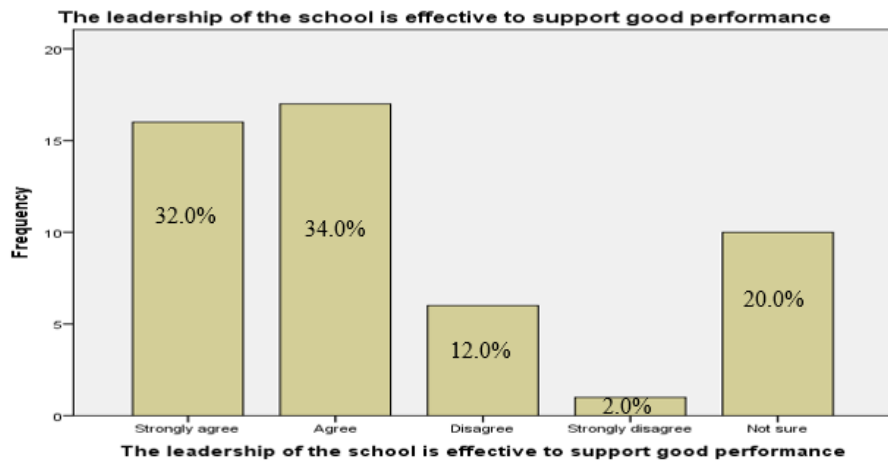


Figure 4.8: Institutional leadership

Source: Field Data (2025)

Teaching staff

In the figure below is presented the condition dealing with the presence of a team of teachers capable of doing their best to produce good academic performance of learners. The scores indicated that 80% of learner respondents agreed that there were teachers to support good performance while the 20% disagreed or were not sure. A significant score of 20% is so significant to deserve attention by the school management as it can cause serious negative impact on learner performance. Hattie (2009) emphasizes that teacher effectiveness has a powerful influence on student learning, with teaching practices such as clear learning intentions, constructive feedback, and active engagement producing substantial gains in academic performance.

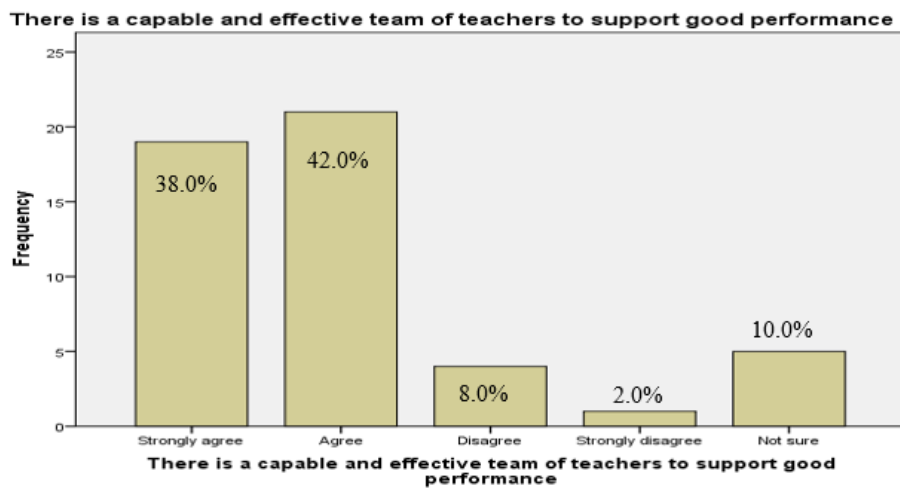


Figure 4.9: Teaching staff

Source: Field Data (2025)

Qualifications and experience

The responses of the subject teachers also confirmed that there was indeed a team of teachers in the schools to equip learners with necessary knowledge and skills so as to enable them perform well academically at school certificate level. However, they also added a comment on the important aspect of qualifications and experience of teachers, that it increases their effectiveness and efficiency in work delivery as indicated in the scores of the table below.

Table 4.7: Qualifications and experience (subject teachers)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	3	21.4	21.4	21.4
	agree	11	78.6	78.6	100.0
	Total	14	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2025)

The heads of departments (HODs) also gave their views about the teaching staff. They responded that a team of teachers was available and effective but also they added that

professional qualifications and experience were key in determining performance of learners academically. The responses given indicated that even HODs attested to the fact that professional qualifications and experience greatly influenced how teachers and administrators performed their professional duties. Teachers with higher academic qualifications are more likely to employ evidence-based teaching strategies, foster critical thinking, and adapt lessons to diverse learning needs (Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Table 4.8: Qualifications and experience (HODs)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	1	16.7	16.7	16.7
	agree	5	83.3	83.3	100.0
	Total	6	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2025)

Effective communication

The table below indicates responses from learners, that there was effective communication through frequent reminder of learners' performance that the school expected. Those who agreed with the condition scored 84%, while those who disagreed or not sure were represented by a score of 16%. Effective communication is so significant in all the structures of an institution if it is to be effective in its operations. Bandura (1997) explains that self-efficacy, which is influenced by effective communication, plays a key role in academic success.

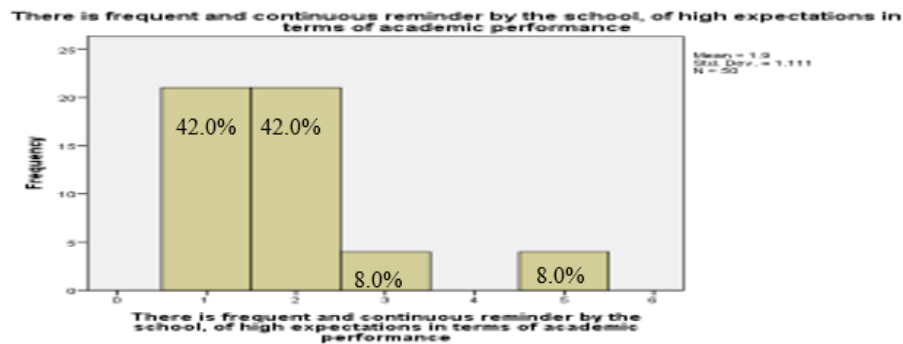


Figure 4.10: Effective communication

Source: Field Data (2025)

Order and discipline

The importance of order and discipline to the academic performance of learners was equally pointed out by learners through the responses they gave, and are indicated in the figure below. It was clearly indicated that order and discipline are a very pivotal element to academic success. As Bear (2010) notes, discipline that is fair and consistent helps students develop character and social skills that are essential for long-term academic and personal success.

There is a school culture of order and discipline clearly outlined to support good academic performance

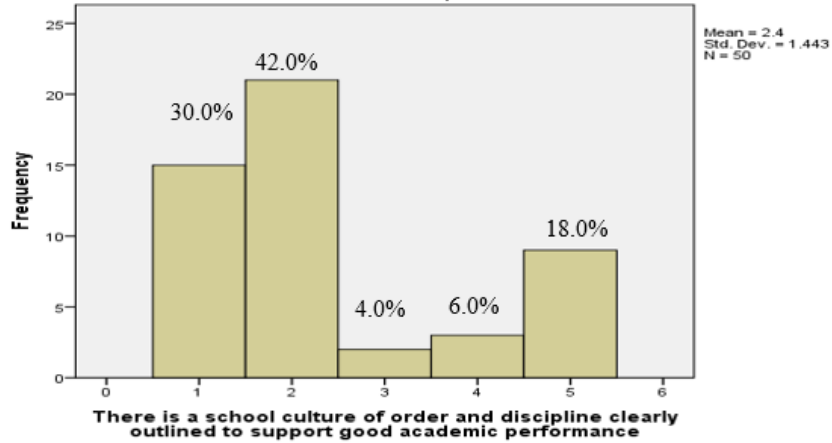


Figure 4.11: Order and discipline

Source: Field Data (2025)

Organized curriculum content

The organization of the curriculum in the presentation of the lessons was in such a way that it was able to support good academic performance. This sense of direction fosters positive attitudes toward learning, which research has shown to be strongly linked to improved academic performance (Biggs, 1996). A score of 84% represented those that agreed while the other percentage represented those who disagreed or were not sure.

There is organised curriculum content (lessons) presented to support good academic performance

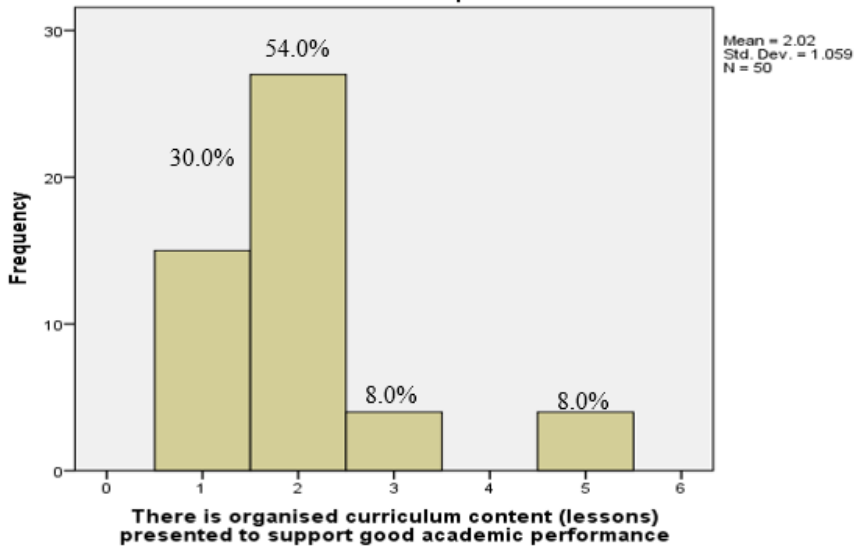


Figure 4.12: Organised curriculum content

Source: Field Data (2025)

Rewards and incentives

The condition dealing with rewards and incentives had scores which represented only an average agreeing, making a score of 57.2% while a very significant score of 42.8% indicated ignorance about having the condition being fulfilled in their schools.

The condition of rewards and incentives is not only a motivation to the learners but also to the teaching and other staffs to play their role in the school effectively to support the attainment of school goals and objectives. The small, achievable rewards can help build a sense of competence and self-efficacy, which is a crucial factor in academic achievement (Bandura, 1997).

Noted from the responses of learners it is clear that the element of rewards and incentives was not well attended to by the school management as it deserved. This was signal enough that even members of staff's efforts were not always recognized as they were supposed to. On the same matter, Hidi & Renninger (2006) commented that when students with their educators feel that their hard work is acknowledged, they are more likely to feel valued and respected, which can enhance their emotional well-being and engagement in school so as improve in performance.

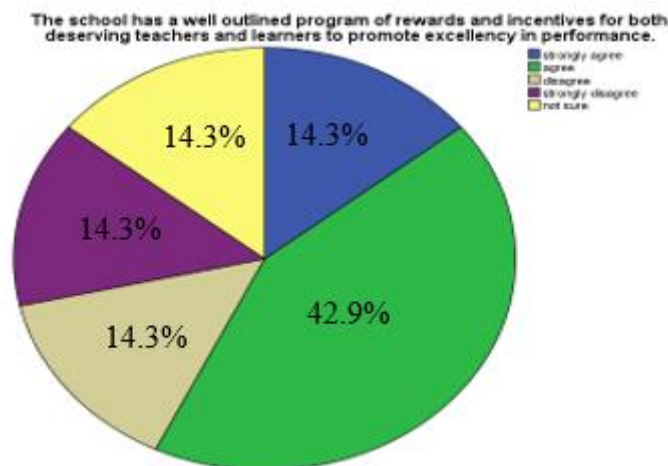


Figure 4.13: Rewards and incentives (learners)

Source: Field Data (2025)

Subject teachers responding on the condition of rewards and incentives only had a slight difference from that of learners. Those that agreed with implementation of the rewards and incentives policy in the schools were represented by a score of 57.1% while the 42.9% score represented those who disagreed or not sure.

Therefore, as said above there is need of school management to pay good attention to the implementation of rewards and incentives policy which is a very effective motivation to producing good results in schools.

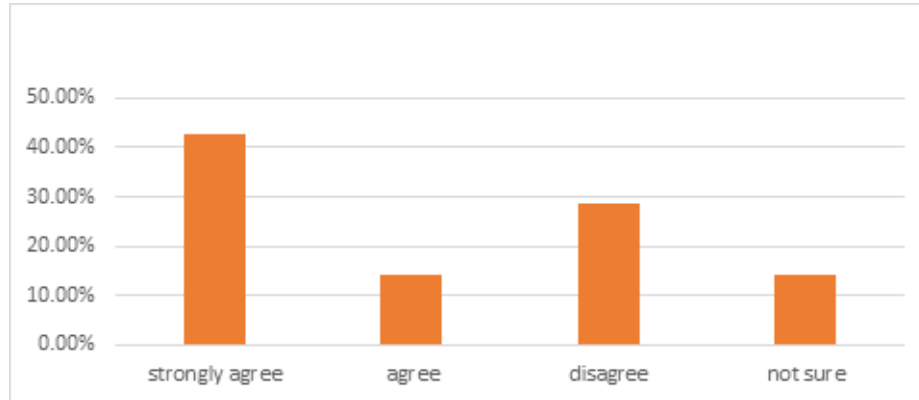


Figure 4.14: Rewards and incentives (subject teachers)

Source: Field Data (2025)

Teaching and learning process

The teaching and learning process of the three schools was reported as being effective by learners through the scores indicated in the figure below. The bigger score indicated that most of the teachers were able to do their honest part in seeing to it that learners were given the best content to enable them excel even during the school certificate examinations. Quality of outcomes at a school is a result of lengthy of time learners spent on learning while the learning time in the classroom is also used efficiently, Hawes & Stephens (1990).

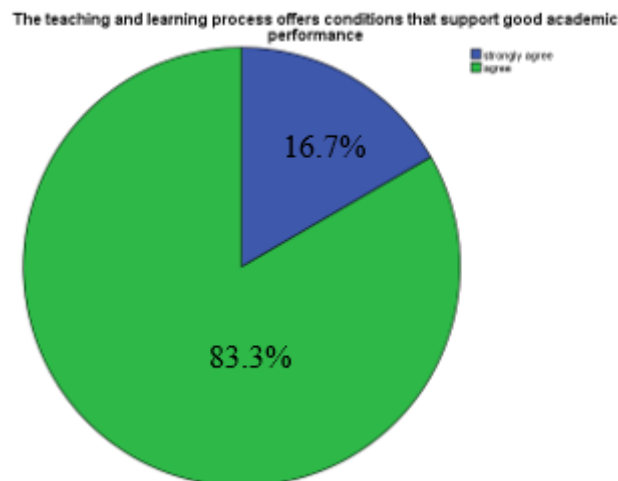


Figure 4.15: Teaching and learning process (learners)

Source: Field Data (2025)



The subject teachers' responses about the matter was equally the same as the one from learners as indicated in the table below, a clear indication that in the three schools, there was serious teaching and learning.

Table 4.9: Teaching and learning process (teachers)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	strongly agree	3	21.4	21.4	21.4
	agree	11	78.6	78.6	100.0
	Total	14	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2025)

School time

The indication of the scores represent the fact that learners spent good long time in the schools. The score of 84% represented those who agreed. The other score of 16% accounted for those who disagreed and those who were not sure. School time is only beneficial if it used appropriately and efficiently to promote academic programs. Research has consistently shown that increased instructional time, when used effectively, leads to better academic outcomes (Carroll, 1963).

Table 4.10: School time

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	28	56.0	56.0	56.0
	Agree	14	28.0	28.0	84.0
	Disagree	4	8.0	8.0	92.0
	Strongly disagree	3	6.0	6.0	98.0
	Not sure	1	2.0	2.0	100.0
	Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2025)

Teaching strategies

In the teaching process, learners reported to have teachers that used a number of strategies to deliver their content as indicated in the scores in percentages given in the table below. The indication of the larger score denotes the fact that a number of teachers were able to use a variety of teaching strategies in presenting their lessons. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to adapt content, process, and assessment methods to meet individual student needs (Tomlinson, 2014).

Table 4.11: Teaching strategies

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly agree	21	42.0	42.0	42.0
	Agree	16	32.0	32.0	74.0
	Disagree	6	12.0	12.0	86.0
	Strongly disagree	1	2.0	2.0	88.0
	Not sure	6	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Tota	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2025)



Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment (CCA)

Assessment is an important integral part of learning which determines the extent to which learning achieves its objectives. In the table below, the condition of assessment was represented by 78% score for those who agreed with it, representing the majority. However, a score of 22% is a significant score to attract attention of school management as it can affect school performance greatly. According to Nitko and Brookhart (2014), effective assessment practices guide instruction and contribute significantly to improved student achievement.

Table 4.12: Continuous and Comprehensive Assessment (CCA)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	16	32.0	32.0	32.0
Agree	23	46.0	46.0	78.0
Disagree	7	14.0	14.0	92.0
Strongly disagree	1	2.0	2.0	94.0
Not sure	3	6.0	6.0	100.0
Total	50	100.0	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2025)

Head teachers' comments

The interviewed head teachers reviewed a number of issues pertinent to making possible the attainment of good academic performance of learners at school certificated level. Some of the cited important matters included the following:

Management style was stated to incorporate a lot of things which were to guarantee good academic performance of learners if they were well attended to. The identified factors included the paying attention to the input of teachers through observation and monitoring and also checking on what learners were doing in all the academic programs of the school.

It was admitted that matters of motivation to both teachers and learners be given attention because of the role that it plays to the productivity of an institution. Hidi & Renninger (2006) commented that when students with their educators feel that their hard work is acknowledged, are more likely to feel valued and respected, which can enhance their emotional well-being and engagement in school so as to improve in performance.

There should be obvious need and attention to providing necessary materials to maintain consistent and standard assessment policy which help in monitoring progress of the learners. In the same vein it was clearly stated that management should encourage an open interactive mechanism between learners and teachers in which learners share the type of support they expect from teachers while teachers also express their expectations from the learners.

Management should play an active role in supporting teachers' professional growth in all possible ways, so that there should be professional growth and experience that



eventually benefits the learners. Management should play a significant part in seeing to it that there should be order and discipline among learners and teachers for the system of education at school to run smoothly, and eventually contribute to the good performance of learners in school.

The head teachers had so many things mentioned but lastly, they admitted that indeed the academic performance of learners at school certificate level greatly depended on the administration and management of a school. They also stated other minor factors equally important to support the good academic performance of learners, and some of them are reflected in the recommendations section of the last chapter.

Conclusion

The presentations of the chapter came from the findings collected from the respondents in the three selected schools. They include responses of the learners, subject teachers, heads of departments (HODs) and head teachers.

The matters presented had to do with independent variables grouped into supporting inputs, enabling conditions, school climate and teaching and learning process. The dependent variable was learner performance at school certificate level or Grade Twelve national examinations. The performance of learners at school certificate level for four years from the three secondary schools is given to show the actual inconsistency in performance that should be addressed.

The other part dealt with findings of independent variables as given by the learners, subject teachers, and heads of departments. It was observed that if the variables were satisfactorily met by the management and administration of schools, including its other key stakeholders involved in making education delivery service viable in the country would not only answer to the inconsistent good performance at school certificate level but would also empower management with good practices of management, hence guaranteeing attainment of institutional goals and objectives.

Lastly, head teachers had their views to add to the findings about what it takes to produce good academic results at school certificate level. In their submission it was clearly admitted that good academic performance at school certificate level greatly depended on the administration and management of an institution. Other factors were also pointed out as leading to good performance but not entirely in the responsibility of the management and administration of a school.

Therefore, the reality about the responses from the respondents clearly indicated that in some cases the conditions were successfully met by the school administration and management. However, the fact that all the conditions were not fully met simply means that administration and management of various schools still had a lot to put in place if good academic performance of learners was to be attained and sustained



V. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

Overview

In this last chapter, are presented the findings of the research, the conclusions drawn from the study and the recommendations for improvement based on the submissions of the different stakeholders of the research study. The study had selected three day secondary schools of Petauke District, Eastern Zambia, namely Petauke, Nseko and Kaulu. The selected schools had been established for a long time, hence they had good long experience of successes and failures. The respondents of the study included learners of Grade Twelve classes, subject teachers, heads of departments (HODs) and head teachers. The study used case study research design whereby qualitative collected data was analyzed and presented as such.

Summary of the study

The study findings brought out facts that practices of management and administration of a day secondary school were the most important things to determine the performance of the learners at school certificate level national examinations. The four groups of independent variables were only fulfilled but partially. However, even with their partial fulfillment done in the process of provision of education they could still achieve great things.

There were many management practices covered under the four main independent variables so important to bring about good academic performance of learners at school certificate level. However, there were some four inevitable practices identified to be done by management and administration to produce desirable results at the identified level. They included monitoring and evaluation of teachers' and learners' performance, teacher-learner relationship, parental and community engagement and leadership style of the school management.

It was also indicated from the study that at the centre of all independent variables provided, there was to be a part of professional qualifications and accumulated experience. These were understood as the practical tools with which institutions were to be run. It was therefore only with them being part of management and teaching staff that good results would be guaranteed at school certificate level because they are to serve as tried and tested experiences for desired outcome generation.

The study went to further to suggest that at the basis of all management practices were key important activities as highlighted in the management studies of Henri Fayol, the father of modern management studies. Only when such activities take place would management practices yield positive results in any institution.

The study unveiled the fact that good management practices were greatly responsible for producing good academic performance at school certificate level as confirmed by the majority of all the respondents involved in the study. Therefore, the right people should be allowed to serve in management positions if good academic performance of learners was to be attained and maintained.



Implications of the study

The study simply indicated that good academic performance of learners at school certificate level especially for day secondary schools does not come by chance but by intentional efforts by the administration and management of the schools. Thus, there are practices of management that have to be applied by those privileged to be holding management positions in day secondary schools.

The findings of the study give insight to the situation of day secondary schools in the entire Petauke District and the country at large about what it takes to produce good academic performance of learners at school certificate level. Additionally, the findings of the study equally suggest to the Ministry of Education authorities to play their role honestly as they allocate human resource in management positions so as to prevent underperformance that may end up compromising the learners' outcomes of education.

Recommendations

The researcher collected the following recommendations from some respondents that are reflected below.

Recommendations for school administration and management

School administration and management as discussed earlier on is greatly responsible for the performance of learners at school certificate and just performance generally. Therefore, it would be wise for leadership of the schools to facilitate an effective flow of information in the organization structure to prevent information gaps. There is need to take issues of motivation of learners and teachers as matter of importance demanding deliberate action in form of a policy so as to make work environment very conducive, while fostering good stakeholder engagement to help combat indiscipline levels in the schools. The school leadership should also consider involvement of teachers in planning and running the affairs of the school so as to equip them with management skills and support teachers in participating in continuous professional and development meetings for professional growth and experience.

Recommendations for teachers

In the effort to improve results in school, teachers have to equally play a very significant role. This would be through fulfilling the assessment policy systems of the institutions and performing academic tasks as instituted by the school with minimum supervision. There is need to have frequent education and sensitization sessions through the guidance and counselling department and teachers in general, of learners that remind them of their need to be goal-oriented in their education hence reduce cases of indiscipline which greatly affect academic performance and general conduct.

Recommendations for parents and community

The parents and the community at large, are the owners of the learners and the infrastructure in schools, so that they should help in safeguarding them. They should help the schools in instilling order and discipline in the learners without interference, though within the confines of the law. They should also help to lobby for funding from the government and its partners for improved infrastructure and other necessary school requirements like boarding facilities through CDF programs while also encouraging their children to take education seriously.



Recommendations for the Ministry of Education

The government through the ministry of education should carry out procurement of computers, tablets and other electronic devices that make teaching and learning easy in the current digital era. The ministry should also take it so serious to consider qualifications and experience in management for those to be appointed in leadership positions, while work towards reducing pupil-teacher ratio in mathematics and sciences subjects which contribute greatly to the failure of learners in schools. The ministry should also reconsider use of phones and tablets by teachers in classrooms to help reduce paper work, thereby improving timely effectiveness and efficiency. The government through the ministry should clearly indicate its position to help schools on punitive measures to be carried out in efforts to instill order and discipline in learners.

Contribution to knowledge

The research makes a contribution of making certain the reality that to have good performance in schools is greatly with the effort and responsibility of its leadership. Thus, it will enable the ministry of education to work towards considering people of appropriate management skills and experience to take up management positions.

Recommendation for further research

The research conducted used a case study research design which only gathered data for short period of time, hence leading to generalizations that may have included some gaps. Therefore, a recommendation for further research that shall take a longitudinal research is ideal to be conducted so that certain considerations dealing with management and its results produced at school certificate level are compared with management and results of the learners of the same level at other times. This would clearly ascertain the matter of significance of school leadership on academic performance of learners at school certificate level.

Conclusion

The research study that was conducted under the title, effects of school administration and management on Grade Twelve (12) school certificate performance of day secondary schools: A case study of Three schools in Petauke District, Eastern Province of Zambia, in nutshell indicated that indeed management of the schools was so key to influencing performance of learners at the identified level. The findings from the three day secondary schools of Petauke District gave a general picture of the need to have effective leadership in institutions of learning to have desired outcomes from learners.

The findings gave further indication of the important role that education stakeholders play in fostering education administration to be of impact to the country. It was found out that it is to be initiated and facilitated by institutional leadership through provision of necessary requirement considered under independent variables. Additionally, it was made clear of the need for management to embrace the inevitable management practices as suggested by Henri Fayol while considering the fact that management was to be effective if it embraced teamwork by all member partners found in learning institutions, if desired results were to be attained and maintained.

All in all, the study gave clear indication that any institution to be called functional it's dependent upon its being productive and this productivity does not come by chance but



by the deliberate efforts of the management of an institution. Therefore, performance of learners in schools is greatly a product of the input of the management, thus requiring an effective and efficient institutional leadership to be instituted in schools. Effective and efficient leadership can only be attained with education, hence appropriate qualifications and experience need to be acquired, so as to empower teachers and administrators with necessary leadership knowledge and skills. It is then after such things are realized that the education of the country shall regain its pride and meaning.

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