

To explore factors underlying poor performance among grade nine Academic Production Unit (APU) in Ndola District.

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CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will review the background to the problem. It will discuss the context and conditions which prompted the study. It will also give the statement of the problem and the sub-problems. The chapter will clearly state the objectives of the research and the boundaries within which the research will be conducted.

This chapter is expected to highlight the expected as well as predicted limitations and weaknesses of the research. It will also portray the researcher's variables. The chapter will define key terms and clarify any special terms, and then it will give the highlights or a summary of the chapter.

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

In order to give pupils who do not get selected to grade eight but who would have obtained full certificates, a chance to have their secondary education, government introduced Academic Production Unit (APU) level. In this section pupils attend classes in the afternoons after the ordinary classes have recessed as it is the same classrooms and teachers attending to them.

My experience has been that pupils in the morning classes do better than those in APU. Very few pupils from APU progress to grade ten because most of them obtain poor results at grade nine. The performance of pupils at APU academically has been poor, yet the experience of pupils who give problems in discipline, attendance and many social issues seem to come from APU more than the morning classes. It is this background which prompted me to carry out a research on what factors contribute to this poor performance by APU pupils.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The grade nine pupils at Academic Production Unit (APU) in Zambia have consistently performed poorly.

1.3 SUB-PROBLEMS

1.3.1 Pupil Performance: How pupils perform affects the results, particularly negatively.

1.3.2 Teacher Performance: The effects that are facilitated by the way teachers work.

1.3.3 School Environment: The activities within the school, the programme, management and work culture which contribute to poor performance.

1.3.4 Home Environment: The role played by the family in the poor performance.

1.4 OBJECTIVES

The research seeks to:

- Ascertain the factors and challenges within the school which contribute to the poor results at grade 9 APU level.
- Establish the role played by homes and family in the poor performance of pupils.
- Establish whether pupils themselves contribute to their poor performance.

1.5 THE IMPORTANCE OR RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

My interest in this research is that having established the different factors that affect the poor performance of pupils at APU level, such as family factors, personal factors and the school environment. I will make recommendations that can be used to improve basic education at junior secondary school. The research is therefore necessary to determine the factors contributing to poor performance so as to propose possible solutions to the problem.

1.6 BOUNDARIES OF THE STUDY

The research will be focused at Chainda and Chakunkula Basic Schools of Lusaka, Zambia.

The scope of the project will encompass the home or family background of pupils, the personal characteristics of individual pupils and the school environment.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations include the struggle to obtain enough resources in order to prepare, type and print enough questionnaires. Finding enough time away from work to do the research was another challenge, especially that this is a research that needs to be done mostly during working hours. This is in view of obtaining analysis of results from guidance and counseling offices as well as getting pupils to answer the questionnaires, making sure on the other hand that my teaching does not suffer.

Finding the right time to do the research without disturbing the work of the guidance teachers and the learning of the pupils is also a challenge. However, it is very important to be open and patient in seeking permission and help from the responsible offices in order to succeed in getting the information required.

1.8 WEAKNESSES OF THE STUDY

Data collected is quite limited in the sense that it only focused on the two schools where the research is conducted, hence it does not give results of a wider range and it is difficult to generalize the findings. It would have been good to use more schools.

Some of the questions in the questionnaire may not bring out the exact information required. The areas covered in the questionnaire are also limited, and as such optimum results may not be obtained.

1.9 KEY TERMS

- **Academic Production Unit (APU):** The level of the junior secondary school being researched on.
- **Factors:** Activities, situations which affect the performance of pupils academically.
- **Junior Secondary Education:** Grades 8 and 9.
- **Poor Performance:** Referring to the failing of pupils, at grade 9, to progress to grade 10.
- **Home Environment:** Referring to family, parents and place where pupils live.
- **School Environment:** Referring to activities within the school.
- **Individual or Personal Factors:** the things about the individual pupil which affect his or her performance.

1.10 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 looked at the background to the research, the problem being researched and the importance of carrying out this research taking into consideration the challenges likely to be faced.

Chapter 2 will look at the literature review. It explores what has been written about causes of poor performance of pupils at secondary schools.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter discussed the problem background, the expected weaknesses and limitations of the study and defined the key terms in the study. This chapter will review the written literature related to research. It will discuss written factors affecting poor performance of secondary school pupils categorizing it under Home, School and Personal factors.

2.1 HOME

Scheiefelbaum and Simmons state that “the educational condition attributed to the family is beyond all doubt or discussion, as there is an ever-increasing awareness of the importance of the parents’ role in the progress and development of their children.” (Cited by Adell, 2002).

Certainly, pupils’ backgrounds have a great impact on how they perform. Issues such as poverty, riches, single parented homes, orphans, broken families, wholesome families and loving families all impact greatly on pupils’ performance. However, these aspects may impact negatively or positively. On the other hand, education does not depend entirely on home background. Good upbringing on its own is meaningless, it must be combined with good education system and committed teachers.

According to the *Zambian Educational System overview (2008)*, poor family setups with little or no parental supervision are another contributing factor. Some parents are not even interested in their children’s homework and performance as a whole. When a school organizes an open day, they always have excuses not to be present. There are however, children who strive and excel in their education in order to change their poor family set ups and that becomes their driving force.

Government, however, cannot put the blame entirely on parents; it must also take responsibility on its own systems, for example reviewing programmes such as APU if they do not produce the intended results. Even the whole idea of free education and human rights is sometimes wrongly understood such that government fails to discipline parents who fail to take their roles in their children’s education.

Malcom H. etal (2003); some parents put low value to education, hence they do not care whether the child goes to school or not. While this may be true, it may also be due to the fact that the parents themselves never had a chance to go to school, and how can they see value in something they have never experienced? Perhaps they do not even understand a thing about the whole education. Yet the fact that they have in the first place enrolled a child into a school means that they do care after all.

Berliner (2006) also indicated that poverty remains a global, social and economic issue. The gap in achievement between children from low income families and their more affluent peers persists, and in the majority of cases, it actually increases throughout schooling. However, although poverty brings about lack of necessary materials, it may also encourage hardworking in children whereas the children who have more than they need see no reason to work hard.

Knapp (2001) and Thomson etal. (2004); many failing schools are located in high poverty contexts. The compounds are often full of poverty and many social issues. Poor children, orphans and children affected by AIDS are particularly affected by fees and other related costs (Human Rights Watch 2004).

Of course, high poverty contexts result in lack of the necessary requirements and structures, yet examinations are set for pupils from both rich and poor setups. This gives the rich ones an advantage over the poor ones. For example, children who do not have access to televisions, newspapers and radios have to right the same examinations on subjects that contain current affairs, science, technology with children who are exposed to these things. Pupils will perform poorly simply because they are not exposed to these things.

Organizations that speak about human rights often do a great job to sponsor some of these vulnerable children. The question is: are they doing enough? Do they always reach the needy children? Or maybe the wrong people get the help sometimes?

According to Ministry of Education (2008) poor performance of pupils in secondary schools is due to the problem of drop outs which is mainly caused by early marriages and lack of resources, lack of facilities, lack of models, motivation and caring parents and teachers.

What is the ministry doing about early marriages, lack of facilities and models? What policies has it put in place to protect young girls from being married off by their parents and guardians? If government has serious laws and takes serious steps in punishing such parents, girls would be protected. Early marriages often result from social problems such as poverty and orphans.

It is government's responsibility to ensure adequate facilities in schools as well as to train eligible teachers who will not only teach effectively but also be models to the pupils. The absence of all these suggests a compromise in the quality of education.

2.2 SCHOOL

According to the Educational System Overview of Zambia (2008), allowing of community schools in the country which tend to enroll any child whether dropout, never been or failed from government schools, has also contributed to poor performance. This can also be likened to the qualifications of pupils enrolled in APU. Their grades at grade seven are far much lower than those enrolled to ordinary classes.

Community schools take in any child and their classes are usually multi-grade. Teachers are usually volunteers and often people who are not trained. The programme is meant to give a to children who are not in school, a chance to learn. It is a very good thing because it removes children from the streets, but the quality of education given is far from being close to that of government schools. If government recognizes that these children do not perform well, why then can it not upgrade them to proper schools and staff them with qualified teachers. After all there are many trained yet unemployed teachers. How can pupils in such unstructured schools be expected to write the same examinations with those in formal schools? Obviously if they do go to grade eight, they are enrolled to APU.

Kinder H. etal (1996) states that: absence from school contributes to poor performance and this absence is sometimes due to fear of being bullied by others, fear of tests, problems with teachers, lessons and social isolation. Children's social status, home problems and others lead to lack of confidence. Sometimes some people are too old for their grade and tend to bully the younger ones.

It is a challenge for schools to group pupils with their peers as this would also help their own relationships.

According to Murphy and Meyers (2008), poor teaching on the part of teachers is another contributing factor. Sometimes teachers give excuses such as “What can you do with these children?” What makes poor teaching? This refers to poor teacher quality such as poor classroom instruction, inadequate teacher knowledge and skills, limited teacher experience, teacher assigned to subjects for which they are not trained, low morale.

Sometimes teachers may be highly educated and very competent but they may lack motivation. Poor salaries do not motivate teachers, they spend energies doing other businesses in order to sustain their families. It could also be the poor facilities and lack of teaching materials. Poor leadership or management that-motivates teachers. On the other hand, some teachers did not become teachers out of interest, but simply as a way of earning their living hence they do not have the interest of pupils at heart, they have poor commitment. Government however, has an obligation to put all facilities in place and then discipline teachers who do not perform, because a teacher’s priority is the good progress of the child’s education.

The fact that APU section is not obligatory; it is a part-time job for those interested in getting the extra allowances, may sometimes mean that the competent teacher of a particular subject is not interested; someone else may be employed just to fill the gap. Government through Ministry of Education has an obligation to monitor such programs, yet one wonders whether it is just interested in the contributions given by the schools from the APU section without really following up its effectiveness. This is also seen in the low literacy levels exhibited by the pupils enrolled.

Grays (2004) also comments on the lack of capacities needed in the school to sustain effective teaching and learning. It may sometimes seem as though money paid by the pupils is more of a priority than pupils’ education. This is seen in situations where huge numbers are enrolled more than the capacity of a school. Pupils tend to be too many in a class making their sitting a problem and effective teaching difficulty. Desks may not be enough and a teacher may tend to just lecture and not follow up individual performance.

Eshiwani G. S. (1983) identifies the following factors as affecting poor performance in secondary schools: streaming effects which reduce the learning time, large class sizes, poor school facilities, lack of adequate preparation by the teacher and no homework given, inadequate time allocated to teaching and learning, lack of sound efficient leadership in the school administration. Siringi and Kigotha (2011) also identify government's inability to manage resources and programmes well.

Government and administrators are sometimes to blame for the poor running of institutions. Could it also be that government has managed to sensitize parents on the importance of education, such that the numbers of pupils are rising rapidly making it difficult for institutions to cope because they genuinely want every child to be in school?

2.3 PERSONAL

According to Kinder H. et al (1996), individual problems of pupils include their psychological problems, learning difficulties, behavioral problems and low self esteem. Some girls enter into unhealthy relationships such as with older boyfriends. Others lack confidence and self-esteem, they are embarrassed because of their appearances such as overweight, inability to speak English, mental or health problems while others are just lazy.

Some of these if not all problems faced especially by girls may have a bearing on the cultures which make them feel less than boys, hence fall prey to boys' and men's abuses. Health problems must be addressed by health institutions. Are girls really lazy? Are they not just overworked at home such that they are too tired to concentrate at school? Maybe the pupils are still affected by the same home and family factors, for it is from home where they should develop their confidence, an interest in education and a sense of self worth

2.4 SUMMARY

This chapter reviewed written literature referring to similar or same factors affecting the performance of pupils at secondary schools focusing on the home, the school and personal factors. The next chapter will look at the methods that will be used to collect data for review.

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The last chapter looked at the different literature on the factors affecting poor perform of APU pupils. This chapter will discuss the methods and strategies used in collecting data.

3.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY

In my research, I am using a blend of qualitative and quantitative research methods. Quantitative research focuses primarily on numbers and figures. It measures data by assigning things in numerical value. It is highly statistical and is characterized by table of information and graphs. I will use it to gather information of results analysis showing the performance of APU pupils in their examinations and in comparison, with pupils in ordinary classes.

Qualitative research is an approach which tries to uncover new information and provide meaning to it. One example of qualitative research is case studies which is an in-depth examination of a small group of subjects. It is possible to gain many insights by looking in detail at a few subjects. This approach will help me gather information in answering the questions of the research.

3.2 RESEARCH METHODS

SCIENTIFIC METHOD

The scientific method is a discovery method. It is a new way of solving problems. The main focus in this method is on the world and its phenomena. Leedy (1982) describes the scientific method as a way inside into an undiscovered truth; it is sought by identifying the problem, gathering data with the hope of solving the problem and also by posting a tentative hypothesis both as logical means of locating data as an aid to resolving a problem. Finally, empirically testing the hypothesis by processing and interpreting the data to see if the interpretation of such data resolves the primary question which initiated the research.

3.3 DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENTS AND TECHNIQUES

3.3.1 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

According to Page and Thomas (1977), a questionnaire is “a printed form containing structured questions with spaces to fill in response. “It can also be defined as a document containing a set of questions designed to solicit information appropriate for analysis. It can also be called a written interview.

Advantages

- This is a good way of accessing what many people think about a particular issue.
- Since each respondent writes his or her own response, the researcher does not need to worry about one person being influenced by other respondents.
- Since many people will be answering the same exact questions, the researcher can get a general overview of attitudes and experiences.
- Questionnaires are relatively cheaper, faster and efficient to use.
- Opinion can be expressed anonymously, hence increasing the level of accuracy and reliability.

Disadvantages

- Respondents need to cooperate when completing a questionnaire. This is not always forthcoming.
- Questionnaires may require respondents to give information on topics unfamiliar to them.
- Some respondents may just withhold information because they do not wish to give it for some reason known to themselves.
- Questionnaires do not probe the respondents if they give an inadequate answer which needs an elaboration.
- Face to face contact is minimal.
- Usually respondents do not have time and space to give much depth to their responses.
- Questions must be very clear and the directions easy to understand or else responses can be confusing.

3.3.2 INTERVIEWS

According to Best and Kahn (1993), an interview is “an aural questionnaire where the interviewee or respondent gives needed information orally and face to face.” It should be noted that the questionnaire and the interview technique are closely knit. The same questions on a questionnaire can be used for the interview. Both the interview and the questionnaire can be used to collect the following types of data: attitudes, views, beliefs, perceptions, opinions, knowledge even experiences.

3.3.2.1 The Individual Face To Face Interview

This is when the researcher asks questions directly to the respondent and the respondent responds verbally.

Advantages

- The researcher is able to get more in depth by asking open questions and follow up questions.
- If the respondent does not understand the question, the researcher can re-phrase.
- The researcher can gather much information from non-verbal responses.
- Face to face interviewing answers a high response rate.
- Since people cannot always simply and fluently write responses to questions about complex and emotional topics, the interview may be a more appropriate technique for probing into such topics.

Disadvantages

- There are many factors which differ from one interviewer to another such as social distance, culture, language, age, dress and so on which might negatively affect the interview process.
- The respondents may feel uneasy and adopt tactics if the questioning is too deep.
- Both the interviewer and the interviewee may hold back part of what is in their power to give or to state.

- It takes much time to conduct each interview, thus the researcher may not get to many people.
- It is also difficult to record the interview responses especially of the fast speakers.

The questionnaire and the interview used alongside will complement each other filling in the gaps of each other. Questionnaires will be used mostly on the pupils while the interview will target the guidance teachers from whose offices the results analysis will have been got, and also because usually they are acquainted with affairs and issues concerning pupils. The findings from the questionnaires and the interview will be presented by first presenting the results' analysis data offer which the data will be analyzed and linked to the research findings.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure: Through personally distributing questionnaires and conducting face to face interviews.

3.5 Data Presentation Techniques: The data will be presented in form of tables, bar graph, line graph and pie chart.

3.6 SUMMARY

The chapter identified the methodologies used in this research. Questionnaire methodology was mostly used alongside the scientific method. In gathering information the questionnaire and interviews were used. The chapter has also referred to the reasons for the choice of methods.

The following chapter will present the collected data, analyse it and interpret it.

CHAPTER 4 – PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

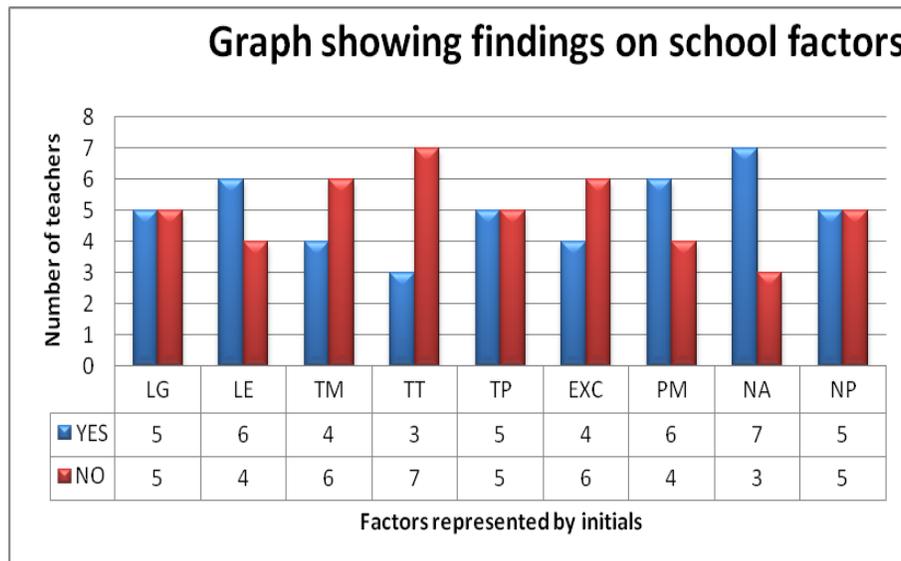
The last chapter looked at the methodology that was used in collecting primary data. Data was collected in form of questionnaires and interviews. The field work was undertaken in order to determine answers to the specific objectives of the study as follows:

- To ascertain the factors, within the school, which contribute to the poor results at grade nine APU level.
- To establish the role played by homes in the poor performance of pupils.
- To establish whether pupils themselves contribute to their poor performance.

The chapter will present researched data, analyse it and interpret it. Presentation will be in form of tables and graphs.

4.1 Findings from the interviews on effects of school factors on poor performance.

| | low grade 7 grades to grade 8 | large enrollment figures | Not enough teaching materials | Less teaching time | Poor teacher performance | No involvement in extra-curricular activities | Poor management by administration | Pupils negative attitude towards certain subjects | Nature of the programme |
|----------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------|
| INITIALS | LG | LE | TM | TT | TP | EXC | PM | NA | NP |
| YES | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| NO | 5 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 5 |
| TOTAL | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| YES% | 50 | 60 | 40 | 30 | 50 | 40 | 60 | 70 | 50 |
| NO% | 50 | 40 | 60 | 70 | 50 | 60 | 40 | 30 | 50 |



4.1.1 ANALYSIS

All the ten teachers interviewed, mostly from the guidance and counseling team, discussed a number of issues pertaining to the poor performance of grade nine APU pupils. Low grades obtained at grade seven entering grade eight was the most prevalent while negative attitude by pupils was the least.

Nine teachers referred to large enrollment figures and the nature of the APU programme as part of the problems. Eight teachers talked about lack of enough material and poor teacher performance. Seven teachers said there is less teaching time allocated to the periods and poor management of the programme by the school administration.

4.1.2 INTERPRETATION

The low grades at grade seven examinations obviously have an effect on the performance of pupils at junior secondary school. The lower qualification implies that many children get enrolled to grade eight making the numbers in classes very high.

According to Eshiwani (1983), streaming effects, reduced class time, large class sizes, poor school facilities, lack of adequate preparation by the teacher and lack of efficient leadership affect pupils' performance.

Large classes are very difficult to handle. Most classes range from 65 to 85 pupils in a class. Attending to slow learners becomes very difficult; marking of exercises and tests is in itself hard work. Reduced hours to fit in double streams, disadvantage children because their learning time is reduced. Lack of teaching and learning materials such as text books make it difficult to teach effectively. It means that the teacher depends mostly on the use of the board.

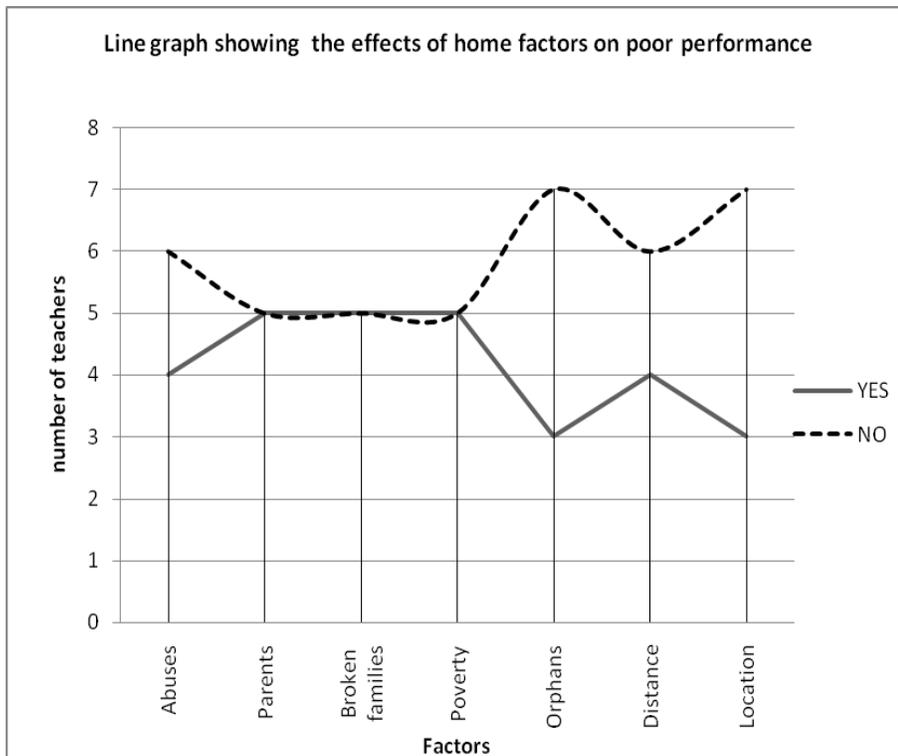
Grays (2004) condemns the lack of capacities needed in the school to sustain effective teaching and learning. With lack of materials, the teacher does not teach effectively. However, the teacher who does not prepare adequately cannot teach effectively. Some teachers simply do not care. Meyers (2008) says some teachers give excuses such as “ what can you do with these children?” such teachers are just interested in getting paid simply because they went into a class when it was their period, but whether or not they achieved their objective is out of question.

Meyers (2008) goes on to accuse ineffective leadership in the school management. Administrators fail to monitor the teachers and the programme well. Possibly because they too have a share in the allowances being paid, therefore once they receive their allowances, they relax. The nature of the programme, currently is completely run by the school. Even payments are locally administered. Teachers teaching the ordinary classes are not obliged to teach APU, it is by choice, meaning that should a subject suffer, a teacher who is not specialized in that field can offer to take it as long as he or she is paid for it. Murphy et al. (2008) condemns the practice of assigning subjects to teachers who have not trained for the subject. APU teachers would have taught fully, the morning classes before taking on the APU classes, hence they take up lessons when they are already tired. Teaching cannot be effective. The Ministry of Education has not monitored the programme to evaluate it.

4.2 Findings from interviews on effects of home factors on poor performance.

Table 4.2

| | Child abuses | Lack of parental guidance/support | Broken families | Poverty | Orphans | Distance to school | Location of home |
|--------------|--------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------|---------|---------|--------------------|------------------|
| YES | 4 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 4 | 3 |
| NO | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| TOTAL | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| YES % | 40 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 30 | 40 | 30 |
| NO% | 60 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 70 | 60 | 70 |



4.2.1 ANALYSIS

Ten teachers were interviewed mostly from the guidance and counseling committee. These are teachers who are mostly dealing with children with different problems.

- The factors with the highest were poverty, broken families, lack of parental guidance and support. All ten teachers referred to these as contributing factors.
- Nine teachers referred to child abuses, nine teachers talked about distances which children have to walk. Eight teachers also referred to the location of the home and the lowest scored was orphans. Six teachers said orphans also face a number of challenges.

4.2.2 INTERPRETATION

According to Adell (2002), parents' role in the progress and development of their children is very important. Parents can impart educational values in their children by their participation in it. Parents who do not care whether the child has all requirements for the school simply do not show care. Malcom et al. (2003) says that some parents put a low value to education hence, do not care whether the child goes to school or not. Such parents do not turn up for open days to collect test results for the term and discuss how best the child can be helped. Follow up on the child's performance is not there and cooperation with the teacher is also lacking.

Berliner (2006) indicates that poverty is a global, economic and social issue. Poor families cannot afford to pay school fees, and buy necessary requirements for the children's education. Socially, pupils from low income families do not mix freely with those from rich families. This can inhibit the child's performance.

Broken homes affect the children's emotional lives. Children whose parents are divorced or fight all the time affect children's performance because they are emotionally disturbed. They are always sad and disturbed.

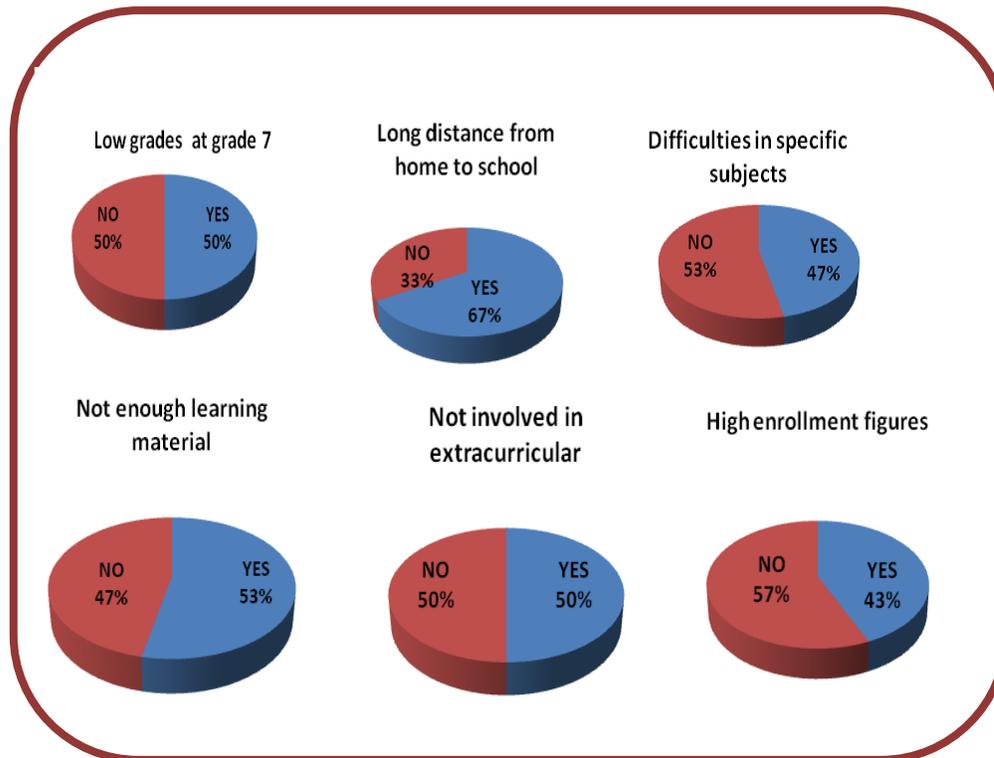
Abused children do not usually perform well. They are psychologically, emotionally and sometimes physically disturbed. Abuses include defilement, hard labor, beating and others.

A child's safety is threatened and children feel insecure, they do not feel safe and confident enough to learn well. According to Human rights Watch (2004) children affected by issues such as HIV/AIDS have difficulties with their education. Some sexual abuses result into AIDS and other diseases affecting their health. Orphans often lack proper parental love, support and financial sponsorship to pursue their studies (Human rights Watch 2004).

The location of the home also affects the children. Knapp (2001) says high poverty contexts contribute to the failure of pupils. The locality affects children in the kind of recreation it provides. If a home is surrounded by beer halls and open markets, children may engage in activities such as drinking, drugs and sex especially that they lack good models.

4.3

| | Low grades at G7 | Difficulties in specific subjects | Long distance from home to school | High enrollment figures | Not enough learning materials | Not involved in extracurricular activities |
|--------------|-------------------------|--|--|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| YES | 15 | 14 | 20 | 13 | 16 | 15 |
| NO | 15 | 16 | 10 | 17 | 14 | 15 |
| TOTAL | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 | 30 |
| YES% | 50.0 | 46.7 | 66.7 | 43.3 | 53.3 | 50 |
| NO% | 50.0 | 53.3 | 33.3 | 56.7 | 46.7 | 50 |



4.3.1 ANALYSIS

As shown in the above table and pie charts, difficulties in subjects such as maths and science is the most prevalent factor while enrollment is the least.

4.3.2 INTERPRETATION

Low grades at grade seven examinations may mean that the pupils are either slow learners or average, who may need extra help in their studies. Kinder (1996) attributes personal problems to psychological problems, learning difficulties, behavioral problems and low self esteem. Learning difficulties are shown in dimension of struggling with maths and science. These are subjects which require a high intelligence quotient.

If these pupils already have weaknesses even as they begin their secondary school level, probably clubs such as maths, science or any subject of their difficulty or sports and others can help improve performance. Their lack of involvement in extracurricular activities may also mean that their free time is probably spent on wrong activities. (Maden 2001).

According to Grays (2004), overcrowding in classes makes learners uncomfortable and it makes it difficult for the teacher to teach effectively. The high enrolment figures in APU classes reduce the amount of fresh air and it is very difficult for the teacher to give attention to slow learners.

Long distances from school entails that pupils have to walk for a long time to school and by the time they get to school they are already tired, making it difficult to concentrate in class. Therefore, performance cannot be good.

4.4 SUMMARY

This chapter presented, analyzed and interpreted the findings of the research. It identified unstable families, poverty, low grades obtained at grade seven, lack of involvement in extracurricular activities, large enrollment figures and child abuses as major factors contributing to the poor results at grade nine APU level. Other factors include long distances from homes to school, being orphaned, difficulties in maths and science and inadequate input on the part of teachers and management.

The next chapter will draw the research to a close by summarizing the highlights of the study. It will bring the main findings together, give a conclusion to the whole research and make recommendations for the improvement of better results from the programme. It will end with references and appendix.

CHAPTER 5 – SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 SUMMARY

This study aimed at reviewing factors affecting the performance of pupils at APU level. It was done by capturing information from a sample of pupils themselves by using questionnaires and interviewing teachers, particularly those in the guidance and counseling committee. The objectives were to identify the personal, home and school factors.

The literature that I have reviewed acknowledges that the poor results obtained at grade nine APU examinations are very much dependant on the three different aspects of a child. Findings from data of this study correspond with the findings of the literature review. In the analysis chapter I have identified and discussed the main themes that emerged from the data collected. The main themes highlighted are poverty, low grades obtained at grade seven, large classes, lack of parental involvement, distances from school, personal difficulties in maths and sciences, non involvement in extracurricular activities, poor management of the programme and the nature of the programme itself.

The study shows that family background of the child, his or her personal character and values as well as the whole school set up and the environment all contribute to the poor results of APU pupils.

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

5.1.1 Education is a very relevant aspect on the development of a human being as well as the society. It equips one with tools that befit them in the society both nationally and internationally. It is infact a need and a fundamental human right. In order to avail this opportunity to every citizen, government must ensure enough relevant policies and structures needed to achieve these. Government and the whole community must work together.

5.1.2 According to this research, a combination of factors in all aspects of a child's life affect his or her education process.

5.1.3 The personal characteristics of a child based on the values he or she has acquired, the and family back ground and the school environment, all have a role to play in facilitating the education of the child.

5.1.4. All aspects can contribute either positively or negatively, they can either build a child's future or destroy it. It is important therefore that all three units harmonize in facilitating this most important process of education.

5.1 RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the above conclusions, the following recommendations have been made:

- Government through the Ministry of Education to monitor the programme regularly like in ordinary classes.
- Set an acceptable cut off point as a qualification for pupils.
- To specify a normal teacher to pupil ratio.
- To increase learning time for pupils.
- To institute disciplinary actions on pupils who stay away from school without permission.
- To introduce a penalty on parents who do not report for open days.
- Encourage learners to join clubs mixed with morning classes.
- Administrators strictly monitor the teaching as well as preparation/teaching files of the teachers.
- To hold meetings and workshops with teachers on ways of improving pupils' performance.

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(b) Between grade 10 – 12 []

(c) College or University []

(d) Have never been to school. []

(e) I don't know. []

5. how many pupils are in your class?

30 []

Between 30 – 50 []

Above 50 []

6. What time do you start lessons?

At 12hours []

At 13hours []

At 14hours []

7. What time do you knock off?

At 16hours []

At 17hour []

At 18hours []

SECTION B: OTHER FACTORS OF POOR PERFORMANCE AT GRADE 9

ACADEMIC PRODUCTION UNIT (APUs)

8. Do you have any medical problem(s).

Yes [] No []

Explain

.....
.....
.....

9. How often do you miss lessons per week?

Once [] Twice [] Thrice [] Four times [] None []

10. Does the use of English during lessons in all subjects except Bemba affect your performance in these subjects?

Yes [] No []

Explain

.....
.....
.....

11. Which language(s) would you like the teachers to use when they are teaching?

Bemba [] English [] Both []

15. Do your parents attend the Open-Days organized by the school?

Yes [] No [] Explain

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.....
.....
16. Are the learning materials enough for APU classes as those learning in the morning.

Yes [] No []

17. How does attending lessons in the afternoon affect your performance?

Positively [] Negatively [] Explain;

.....
.....
.....
19. Do you think APU classes have adequate learning time as compared to the classes that learn in the morning?

Yes [] No []

Explain

.....
.....
.....
20. What do you think can be done by you, your parents, school or government in order to improve the performance of pupils in APU classes in your school?

.....
.....
.....

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME.

Appendix B: APU CO-ORDINATORS' INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. Indicate the gender of the interviewee.
2. Indicate the name of the school and date interview was conducted.
3. For how long have you been on the current position as APU co-coordinator?
4. Some grade nine (9) learners attending afternoon classes (APU) seem not to perform well in their subjects what could be the reason/s.
5. Does the use of English as the medium of instruction in all the subjects except Bemba affect pupils perform in these subjects?
6. How are the learning/teaching materials shared between APU classes and those learning in the morning?
7. Do you think APU classes have been given the same attention as those in morning classes.
8. Do you think attending lessons in the afternoon affect pupils' performance?
9. Do you think APU classes have been given adequate learning time as compare to pupils in the morning classes?
10. What do you think should be done by teachers, parents, school or government in order to curtail the poor performance of pupils in APU classes at your school?