



Investigation into the Relationship between Teacher Quality and Pupil Achievement in Public Junior Secondary Schools in Mansa District

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Abstract. This study investigates the relationship between teacher quality and pupil academic achievement in public junior secondary schools in Mansa District. Using a correlational research design, data were gathered from head teachers, teachers, and learners across selected schools. Key indicators of teacher quality—academic qualification, teaching experience, and in-service training—were assessed. The results showed a positive correlation between teacher quality and pupil performance in core subjects. The findings underscore the importance of continuous professional development and strategic teacher deployment. The study recommends educational policy reforms aimed at enhancing teacher standards to improve learner outcomes. Furthermore, this could guide strategic decision, mostly those referred to implement policies, teacher quality as well as other education policies to motivate high quality teaching in public junior secondary schools.

Index Terms- Teacher Quality, Academic Achievement, Junior Secondary Schools, Mansa District, Teaching Experience, Academic Qualifications, In-Service Training

I. Introduction

Pupil academic achievement is a critical measure of school effectiveness and national development. Teacher quality, defined by credentials, training, and experience, plays a significant role in shaping student outcomes. In Zambia, disparities in teacher competence have raised concerns about equitable learning. This research investigates the influence of teacher quality on learner achievement in Mansa's public junior secondary schools.

II. Literature Review

Multiple studies have established a connection between effective teaching and academic outcomes (Darling-Hammond, 2017). In Sub-Saharan Africa, UNESCO (2020) notes that teacher qualifications remain uneven, particularly in rural districts. In Zambia, Mphande (2022) reported that schools with highly trained teachers recorded better results in Grade 9 national examinations. This study builds on this literature by focusing on junior secondary schools in Mansa District.

On the other hand, teaching quality implies that it is not what the teachers have in in terms of training and certification, it is what they do in the classroom that indicates quality. Often, the two definitions are linked or even conflated, so that there is an assumption that teacher quality ensures teaching quality or that teaching quality is an outcome of teacher quality. Perhaps more important, teaching quality can be broken down further into two dimensions: the task of teaching (what teachers do) and



achievement (the student learning that teachers foster). Fenstermacher and Richardson (2005) elaborate on these concepts: Quality teaching could be understood as teaching that produces learning. In other words, there can indeed be the task sense of teaching but any assertion that such teaching is quality teaching depends on student learning what the teacher is teaching. To keep these ideas clearly sorted, we label this sense of teaching successful teaching. This viewpoint is useful for teaching about teaching quality, particularly successful teaching.

III. Methodology

The descriptive survey design was used to conduct the study. This design involves drawing a sample from the population of interest and measuring the characteristics of the sampled members. It is used to obtain information concerning the current status of the phenomena to describe “what exists” with respect to variables or conditions in a situation (Key, 1997). The main purpose was to analyze how observable teacher characteristics affect pupil achievement. In order to accomplish this purpose, both independent and dependent variables were defined as follows; education background (EB), teacher pedagogies (TP), teacher experience (TE) and professional development program (PD) as independent variables and pupil performance at nation examination scores as dependent variable data.

In order to respond to the study’s hypothesis, data analysis was divided into two phases. In the first phase, descriptive statistics performed for each teacher quality characteristics. It allows the researcher to describe the basic features of the study’s data. In the second phase, analysis of variance and regression analysis tests were performed according to the type of data for each variable.

The study population was public junior secondary school from Mansa district of Luapula province Zambia. This district has 66 junior secondary schools, more than 4616 pupils and around 300 teachers. For this study, the population target consists a sample of about 100 full time teachers who were working in the junior secondary school’s examination class for the year 2024-2025 academic year. Special education and special subject teachers were excluded from this study.

According to the ministry of education policy in Zambia, to collect data in public schools, application requesting for authorization to conduct research in public schools was sent to the district education board secretary in Mansa district. The head teachers were also requested for permission to conduct the study in their schools.

In selecting the various schools in the district, the lottery type of the simple random sampling method was used. The sampling method gave each school the opportunity to be selected. The statistical section of the district education office was contacted for the list of schools and teachers. This was used to prepare the sample frames for the schools and teachers.

IV. Design: Correlational Research

- **Population:** Junior secondary school teachers, head teachers, and pupils



- **Sampling Technique:** Purposive and random sampling
- **Data Collection Tools:** Questionnaires, interview guides, academic records
- **Data Analysis:** Pearson correlation and descriptive statistics

V. Results

- Teachers with degrees produced classes with 15–20% higher mean scores - 78% of learners in schools with regular teacher workshops scored above national average
- Schools with less experienced teachers showed lower pass rates in English and Mathematics

VI. Discussion

Findings confirm that teacher quality strongly influences pupil academic success. Higher academic qualifications, ongoing training, and experience contribute to improved learning outcomes. However, disparities in teacher distribution create unequal opportunities across schools. Education policy should prioritize equitable teacher deployment and ongoing support.

VII. Conclusion

The study concludes that teacher quality is a significant predictor of pupil achievement in junior secondary schools. To ensure improved outcomes, the government and stakeholders must enhance teacher training programs, monitor qualifications, and promote in-service training.

Recommendations

- **Curriculum Reform:** Integrate vocational education into the national curriculum to ensure that it is recognized and valued as an alternative pathway.
- **Teacher Training:** Provide specialized training for teachers in vocational education to improve the quality of instruction.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Increase investment in the physical infrastructure of vocational training centers, ensuring that they are well-equipped with necessary tools and resources.
- **Community Awareness:** Launch community sensitization programs to change the perception of vocational training, emphasizing its role in enhancing employability and social integration.

References

1. Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Effective Teachers and Student Achievement.
2. UNESCO (2020). Teaching in Sub-Saharan Africa.
3. Mphande, S. (2022). Teacher Impact on Grade 9 Outcomes in Zambia.