



PERFORMANCE AMONG LEARNERS IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT :

The incense of this study was to unveil the factors that contributes to poor academic performance among learners in chitipa district of Malawi in Chisenga zone in public primary schools during the national examination (standard eight). Despite government interventions on the poor academic performance, change is not felt hence this work is designed to exculpate contributing factors contributing to such poor academic performance. Four research objectives were formulated to help on the same. To determine how school leadership styles affects academic performance of learners in public schools, to determine how incentives and promotions of teachers affects academic performance of learners, to access how working environment of teachers affects the academic performance of learners, to how teaching and learning resources affects academic performance of learners. Findings showed that all public primary schools were headed by teachers with primary teaching certificate who sometimes to handle issues professionally in schools leading to demotivation of teachers hence affecting their task performance leading to poor academic performance of learners. Long serving teachers hardly gets promoted as stipulated hence being demotivation leading to poor academic performance, limited incentives to teachers, poor working environment in terms of accommodations and in adequate teaching resources demotivates teachers on their task performance affecting learners academic performance. Needs for the government and other educational stakeholders to in assist addressing such challenges affecting education

Introduction :

Poor academic performance in education is global phenomenon which has remained a great setback affecting socio economic muscle.(Nelson 2013). Most of the developed countries have invested heavily in education right from nursery up to tertiary levels as education remains a pillar and foundation for economic development.

Studies from different scholar's shows that socio economic status of families have been a contributing factor to poor academic performance among learners across the globe l(kerb etal, 2017). Most families live in an agony of poverty making their children fail to concentrate in class leading to poor academic performance.

Poor infrastructure, like classrooms and accommodative structures gives pressure to teachers and learners more especially during rainy season. (UNCEF, 2014). This is also supported by Maslow **hierarchy of need theory (1943)**

Studies have been done in Malawi to figure out contributing factors toward poor academic performance among learners, the following are some of the factors unveiled; corporal punishments, financial status, among others(MoEST, 2000)

The government of Malawi through the Ministry of Education Science and Technology, have had a lot of innervations towards addressing the issues of poor academic performance by providing meals for learners at school, deployment of primary teachers every year, provision of orphan vulnerable materials, abolition of corporal punishments in schools but poor academic performance still remain very high among learners in public primary school hence the need to investigate factors contributing to the same.

LITERATURE REVIEW :

This is the summary of the related literatures founded by different scholars across the global on the factor contributing to poor academic performance among learners in different public primary schools.

According to **Cooper, (1998)** literature review is the systematic and comprehensive of analysing of the existing research data on a specific topic in the research project. Below are the summarised literature review on the study

Leadership style and academic performance among learners.

Leadership is defined as leading groups or organization towards a common vision or an ability to create a well-defined framework for the group in order to drive a vision successfully.

According to Oxford Dictionary, leadership is defined as an activity of leading and directing others for a common goal. Studies shows that they are three types of leadership that is authoritative, democratic and laissez-faire and these types of leadership styles complement each other when used with caution

in bringing sanity. (Kochhar 1982) however, some leadership styles like laissez-faire has brought more harm than good in encouraging of indiscipline in schools. Laissez-fair allows every individuals to do what one likes, contributing to poor academic performance among learners hence need for integration of leadership style (Okumbe,1988). Sound and matured leadership has potential to influence positive academic change in school.

Working environment and infrastructure for teachers and learners academic performance

Supportive and a tractive environment provides conducive environment for teachers as well as learners to work effectively (Sinha, 2001)

According to Stup,(2003) organization is likely to rise in productivity if employee s environment is monitored by the managements. Working environment includes the company policies or organization that guides workers which are manipulative free buildings

Higher turn out for any company is based on the keen input of the motivation of the workers hence the need to provide a good plat form for workers. A cording to Hezerbege tow factor theory F(1959)

Incentives of teachers and academic performance

Theories have been use to unfold the importance of incentives on academic performance. Two theories have been used to, expectancy theory and reinforcement theory. According to skinner,(1953) behaviour is modified by its consequences with reward , therefore an organisation is likely to boost its performance by rewarding its employee who works to the best. Sending them to training in refresher courses and other recognition.

According to Kreisman,(2002) an organisation which does not put its worker at heart suffers the growth .For example giving scholarship to hard working employees motivates the for higher performance

Promotions of long serving teachers and academic performance

Promotion means advancement of employees to higher grades, responsibilities as well as compensation. People work to best when there is an expectation (L.W.&Lawler,E.E(1968)

According to Riviki,(2016) all workers are always driven by their attainment and stability in life. This means that promoted teacher remains with the stable mind towards their works.

Availability of teaching and learning resources and academic performance

Teaching and learning resources are the great tools in delivering lessons, assessment, quantifying and grading during teaching and learning resources.(marsh ,2010). He further categorically assimilate teaching resources as follows; textbooks, technological soft wares, interactive materials, rubrics, quizzes tests

Hattie,(2009). Elaborates that , where there are no teaching and learning resources, teaching does not exist . Teaching and learning resources helps teachers to explain difficult concepts and learners develop different skills like socialisation, manipulative and analytical skills among others (kitogo, 2009) . Learners gets motivated when they work by seeing not through theoretical this is also supported by (UNECA, 2004). Teacher becomes motivated when resource are always available this boost teacher to perform higher during their work contributing to higher performance.

DATA ANALYSIS :

Factors contributing to poor academic performance among learners

1. Demographic information (percentage %)

Figure 1.1.1

Male	52 %
Female	48%
Total	100%

Teachers were asked to indicate their gender and the above results shows what transpired

This that there is gender balance between male teachers and female teachers showing almost gender sensitivity in human the resource allocation.

2. Distribution of teachers by age brackets

Figure 1.1.2

Age brackets	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25	2	10
25-35	9	45
36-40	5	25
Above 40	4	20
Total	20	100

The table shows that the great number of teachers are pf the young population which may require proper handling for higher productivity. This also reveals that they are few experienced teachers in the teaching service more particularly in chitipa district.

3. Distribution of head teacher s by age

Figure 1.1.3

Head teachers were asked to indicate their age brackets. The table below shows the results.

Age brackets	Frequency	Percentage
Below 25	0	0
26- 35	1	20
36- 40	3	60
41 and above	1	20
Total	5	100

The study shows that most head teachers are between the age of 26 to 35 with only one with 41 and above age. Meaning to say there are few experienced head teachers who can provide mentorship to learners as well as young teachers leading to chaos in education.

Distribution of teachers by academic qualifications

Teachers were asked to indicate their highest academic qualifications, it was discovered that 100% Of primary schools possess a primary teaching certificate of education. It is from the same pool where head teachers are appointed making it difficult to handle some issues do to with academic development. Below is the diagram

All teachers holds primary teaching certificates of education BV

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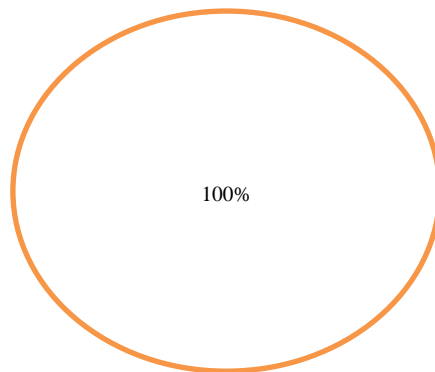


Figure 1.1.4

Distribution of the head teacher s highest academic qualifications

100% Of them holds primary teaching certificate of education.

Below is the figure on the same.

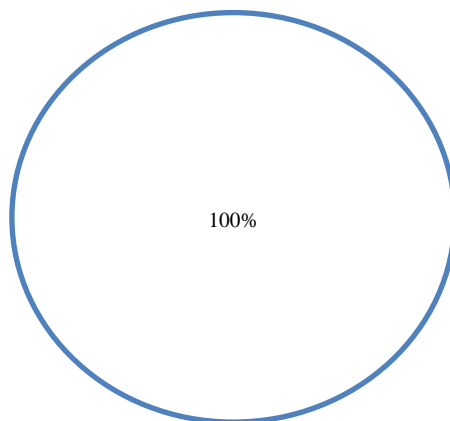


Figure 1.1.5

Distribution of teachers by experience

Figure 1.1.6

Teachers were asked to indicate their experience in the teaching service. Below was the response.

1-10 years	2
11-20 years	9
21- 30years	6
31-40years	3
Total	20

The figures above shows that experienced teachers are very few in the teaching service which may have a great implication of the smooth running of the schools especially on mentorship.

Distribution of head teachers by teaching experience

Figure 1.1.7

1-10 years	00
11-20 years	03
21-30 years	02
31 above	00
Total	05

EFFECTS OF SCHOOL LEADERSHIP STYLES ON ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS

The subsection provides research that sought to determine how leadership styles can affect academic performance of learners. Below

Figure 1.1.8

NO	Sound interactive leadership	SA	A	U	SU
1	Satisfied leadership procedures by head teacher to evaluate teachers and motivation	10	0	10	60
2	Head teacher positively interact with teachers	20	40	0	30
3	Head teacher encourages team work	10	10	10	70
4	Head teacher warm relationship enhances accomplishment of task	90	10	0	0
5					

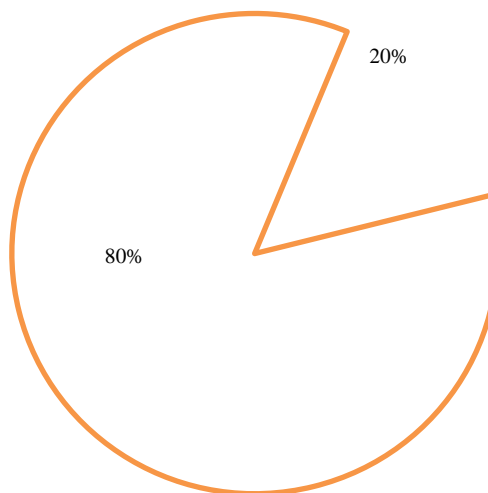
Respondents shows great expectances from the head teachers on the improvements on the operations of the schools in order to bring quality academic excellence.

POOR WORKING ENVIRONMENT AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF LEARNERS

Teachers were asked to indicate whether they were satisfied with the working conditions. The following were the responses. 16 (80%) indicated unsatisfied while 4(20%) indicated satisfied. This is a clear indication that poor working conditions demotivates teachers on their work leading to poor academic among learners.

Below is the diagram showing the same

Figure 1.1.9



INCENTIVES AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

Respondents were asked to indicate they have ever attended an incentive before either in the zone or at school.

90% of the respondents indicated that they have ever attended incentives in Chisenga educational zone of chitipa district .But 10% of them responded that they have never attended any incentive
The diagram below shows data.

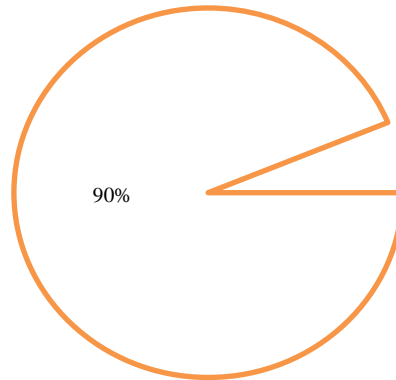


Figure 1.2. 1

Promotion of teachers and academic performance

The teachers were asked how incentives affected their job. It was discovered that 84% of the respondents were positively affected by the same .only 16 % answered no. this is to note that incentives has a greater influence on the performance of teacher which later boost the academic performance of learners. This is supported by **Burke,(1995)**

Table showing effects of incentives

Figure 1.2.2

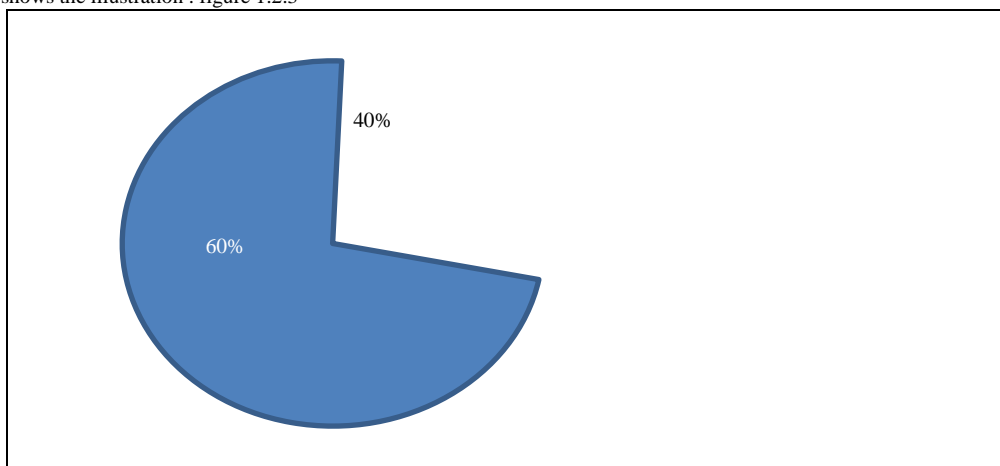
Motivated	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	15	84
No	3	16
Total	18	100

Promotion of teachers and academic performance

Respondents were asked if they have been promoted before, below are the responses which were given:

(8)40% showed that they were ever been promoted in contrast to (12) 60% which were never been promoted which is suggested to be a great demotivating to the teaching sector.

The table below shows the illustration . figure 1.2.3



The table below shows the summary of incentives and promotion suggestions of respondents

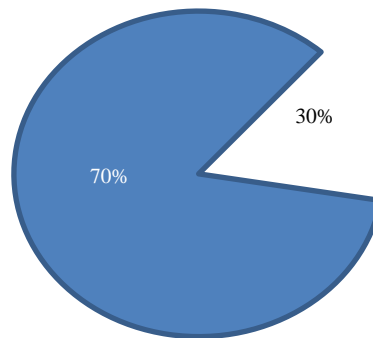
Incentives and promotion	SA%	%A	U%	SD%	D%
Hardworking teachers motivated	20	10	0	60	10
Frequent promotion of long serving teachers	0	0	0	80	20
Incentives can motivate teachers on their work	100	0	0	0	0
Promotions can motivate teachers	70	10	20	0	0

From the table above clearly shows that promotions and incentives are likely to play a very important role in promoting academic performance of learners. Hence need to be revisited by those in authorities.

Teaching and learning resources and academic performance on learners

The diagram below shows the availability of teaching and learning resources and their effects

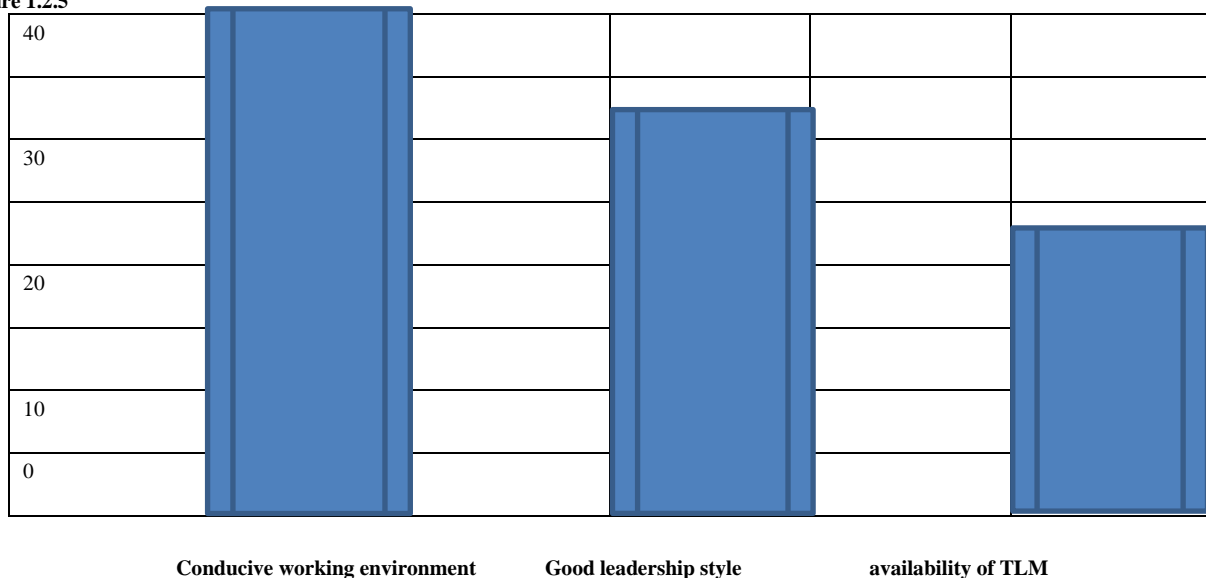
Figure 1.2.4



The diagram below shows that 30% of respondents that teaching and learning resources are adequate while 70% of respondents shows that resources in schools are inadequate which demotivate teachers on their job performance affecting learners performance in their academic journey. Little resources affects learner’s performance directly because they have no access for self –study materials.

Recommendations to enhance good academic performance of teachers to boost learner’s academic performance

Figure 1.2.5



Including promotion & incentives

The figure above shows that 40% indicated conducive environment ,accommodation, incentives and promotion as the first priority seconded by 35% who recommended good leadership style and 25% availability of learning and teaching resources. They recommended that such aspect if put in place would motivate teachers and improve learners academic performance in their academic journey

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMANDATIONS :

To enhance high academic performance in learner, they need to look at school leadership which is sound, matured and motivating to teachers that would create conducive environment for teachers. At least a head teacher with a minimum of a diploma in education to man teachers with a certificate in education.

On working conditions and infrastructure, it is suggested that the government through the ministry of education and other stake holders provide support on teacher’s house, and classrooms for good and successful education progress. Teachers gets motivated when in good environment making them perform to the best hence increase high performance.

On incentive on academic performance, the government through the ministry of education to put strategies on how to provides incentives to teachers to maximise their work. Incentives makes teachers motivated and grow in their professional hence great improvement on the learner’s academic performance.

On promotion of teacher, long serving teachers should be promoted to higher ranks which enables them attain high financial status making them stable minds. This helps the learners to perform well academically since teachers teaches from the heart with all the energy and dedicated mind bearing in mind that they are secured financially.

On teaching and learning resources, teachers struggles to prepare lessons , teaching becomes boring, this demotivate teachers thereby affecting learners academic performance. Learners themselves struggle for resources like text books, computers, pamphlets among others. This also contributes to poor academic performance. Therefore it is importance for the Malawi government through ministry of education to provide enough resources for effective teaching and learning. Other donors and stake holders including community members to strive for the provision of teaching and learning resources to enhance high academic performance

CONCLUSIONS :

The study highlights, importance of sound leadership role in motivating teachers for effective performance , critical role of environment for teachers on motivation towards work, importance of incentive and teacher promotion of teacher and lastly, significance of teaching and learning resources. Following such recommendation from the study, a change is likely to be seen to benefit

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