

Challenges faced by Combined Schools in Masaiti district which hinders the provision of Quality Education

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Abstract: This paper discusses challenges faced by combined schools in Masaiti district which hinders the provision of quality education. A mixed methods concurrent triangulation model was used in the study. The study was conducted in all the 8 purposively sampled combined schools in Masaiti district on the Copperbelt province of Zambia. The study sample had 138 respondents comprising 77 females and 61 males. Teachers and pupils were randomly selected while school administrators and the Ministry of General Education officials were purposively sampled. Focus Group Discussions, semi-structured interviews & mixed questionnaires were the research instruments used during data collection. Pupils, school administrators and the Ministry of General Education officials were interviewed while teachers responded to a questionnaire. Qualitative data was thematically analysed while quantitative data was analysed with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The study revealed that all combined schools in Masaiti district faced many challenges which hindered the provision of quality education to learners. Some of these challenges were; lack of teaching and learning materials, inadequate infrastructure, sexual harassment among learners, lack of parental involvement in school activities, inadequate qualified teachers and long distances covered by learners to school among others. Due to these challenges, it was revealed that these schools were recording very poor final examination results at junior secondary school level more especially in Social Studies from the time they were upgraded in 2017. But little was being done to mitigate these challenges. Based on the research findings therefore, the study recommended that the Ministry of General Education should collaborate with parents and other relevant stakeholders in order to mitigate these challenges by providing necessary teaching/learning materials and embark on construction of school infrastructure which will improve the provision of quality education in combined schools.

Keywords: Challenges, Combined Schools, Learners, Masaiti, Quality Education, Strategies

I. INTRODUCTION

Rural schools in general face many challenges and provision of quality education in these areas is not an easy task (Kakupa, 2014). Some of the challenges faced by rural schools are inadequate qualified staff, lack of adequate teaching/learning materials, long distance to schools, inadequate infrastructure, high levels of poverty, poor

working conditions for teachers, lack of parental involvement in school activities and some cultural attitudes and beliefs which do not offer support for effective student learning because some parents' value of marriage for their children as opposed to education (Mufalo & Kabeta, 2019; Sabato, 2015; Kakupa, 2014; Ncube, 2013; McClure and Reeves, 2004; Brown, 2003).

The challenges highlighted above have adversely affected teachers' delivery and the academic performance of learners. For example, the subject analysis conducted by the Examinations Council of Zambia revealed that Mathematics had the largest failure rate (78.76%) seconded by Social Studies [74.46%] (ECZ, 2019; 2017). The poor academic performance of learners can be attributed to little time to concentrate on their school work due to these challenges they faced. Also, the poor working conditions for teachers had a negative impact on pupil performance in that it resulted in higher absenteeism, reduced levels of effort, lower effectiveness in the classroom, low morale and reduced job satisfaction (Corcoran, Walker & White, 1988) which can be summed up as 'lack of friendly teaching and learning environment' (Komba, Hizza & Jonathan, 2013 in Mhiliwa, 2015).

The demand for secondary education has increased in the recent past across the globe. This high demand for secondary education is being triggered by the need to attain Universal Primary Education (UPE) in many countries (Mhiliwa, 2015). From mid to late 1990s, Zambia had stagnation in primary education but since 2000, doors opened for more than 1.2 million learners to access primary education and schools offering primary education increased from 5,324 in 2000 to a total of 8,801 in 2013 (MoGE, 2015). Then the Zambian government came up with 'education for all' (EFA) goals in 2005 as operational framework for this education attainment. Due to this rapid increase in primary education, there has been a high demand for secondary education and an increase in school enrolments in the country which has led to many primary schools being upgraded into secondary schools known as 'combined schools'. In this regard therefore, there is need for adequate school places for pupils' vis-a-vis the

supply of teacher, teaching/learning materials and good learning environment.

According to the Seventh National Development Plan (2017 to 2021), the government has pledged to focus more on quality education for all and promotion of school effectiveness through improved school governance and management, community involvement and partnership as well as curriculum development (MoGE, 2019; MoNDP, 2017; MoGE, 2012; 2013 and 1996). In line with this, the country has witnessed a number of secondary schools being constructed and upgrading some existing primary schools into combined schools in order to meet the high demand for secondary education in the country. A combined school is an upgraded school given a new and higher status which runs from pre-school (early childhood education) to grade twelve (12). Most of these combined schools across the country had their first grade twelve (12) candidates sitting for their final examinations last year in 2020. It is against this background that this study intended to establish challenges faced by combined schools and identify strategies which can be put in place to mitigate some of the challenges faced by these rural schools in order to enhance the academic performance of pupils.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

In the year 2017, the government through the Ministry of General Education embarked on upgrading a number of primary schools into combined schools in the country. The high demand for secondary education among school going children is being necessitated by an increase in learners who qualify from junior to senior secondary schools every year. Despite such development taking place in the country, the provision of quality education in rural areas has not been easy due to some challenges faced by combined schools leading to poor academic performance of learners in most of the subjects at junior secondary school level. Literature reviewed has shown that little research has been conducted yet to find out what challenges these schools have been facing and what mitigation strategies have been instituted to remedy the situation. This study therefore, was aimed at establishing the challenges faced by combined schools in the rural district of Masaiti on the Copperbelt province of Zambia which hinders the provision of quality education.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to establish the challenges faced by combined schools in Masaiti district which hinders the provision of quality education.

1.3 Research Objectives

- i. To explore the challenges faced by combined schools in Masaiti district which hinders the provision of quality education.
- ii. To describe strategies which can be put in place to mitigate some of the challenges faced by these

schools in order to enhance the academic performance of pupils.

1.4 Significance of the Study

This research therefore, may provide information to the Ministry of General Education and other relevant authorities and appreciate challenges faced by combined schools. Also, it may enable them to put in place measures which can mitigate these challenges in order to enhance teaching/learning and academic performance of pupils in these schools. It might also add new knowledge to already existing literature related to the study and help other researchers who would like to probe further on the current phenomena.

1.5 Theoretical Framework

This study is backed by a theory of Human Motivation propounded by Maslow (1943). According to Maslow, people have an innate desire which should be self-actualised (Mawere, Mubaya, Van Reisen & Van Stam, 2016). In order to achieve these ultimate goals, people should be motivated and any motivated behaviour must be understood to be a channel through which many basic needs may be simultaneously satisfied (Green, 2000). Relating Maslow's motivational theory to education, Maslow suggests that motivation is a driving force which triggers motivational behaviour in teachers and learners which promotes an interest in learning as well as the importance of education as a whole. Therefore, when teachers are not motivated or lack teaching/learning aids, lack accommodation, not being confirmed and upgraded to their rightful salary scales, this can lead to low output which can affect pupils' performance. Similarly, when schools have few desks, no enough toilets, congested classrooms, no library and laboratory facilities and text books among others, it demotivates both teachers and learners which in turn can lead to poor academic performance.

According to Self-Determination Theory, a learner can also be self motivated to work extra hard at school if the content learnt is related to the real life situation (Deci and Ryan 1985 in Mhiliwa 2015). In this regard therefore, policy makers in the education sector and other stakeholders should ensure that the content put in the curriculum for learners should be related to their real life situations which can enable them acquire competences which can not only change their lives but also the betterment of the society at large.

Motivational theory corresponds well with the current study because it emphasises on motivation as an important aspect where teaching and academic performance is concerned. But lack of support and active participation of parents in the education of learners can also affect learner performance (Mhiliwa, 2015). Similarly, lack of teaching and learning materials, demotivated teachers, high poverty levels, long distances covered by pupils and teachers to and from school, lack of qualified teachers and lack of school infrastructure among others (school and non school related challenges) can hinder the provision of quality education.

II. STUDY METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

Mixed methods research design was used in this study where concurrent triangulation research model was employed. It involved the collection and mixing or integration of both quantitative and qualitative data in a study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) in order to provide a complete understanding of the research problem than either approach alone (Creswell, 2014; 2003). This model offset the weaknesses inherent within one method with the strengths of the other or the strength of one adds to the strength of the other (Creswell, 2009).

2.2 Research Sites

The current study was conducted in all the eight (8) purposively selected combined schools in Masaiti district on the Copperbelt province of Zambia.

2.3 Target Population, Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The study targeted administrators, teachers, pupils in combined schools and the Ministry of General Education officials. The study had 138 respondents comprising 77 females and 61 males. Teachers and pupils were randomly selected while school administrators and the Ministry of General Education officials were purposively selected. Random sampling provided each member of the population an equal opportunity of being included in the sample (Bless & Achola, 1988). Purposive sampling enabled the researcher's judgement to select best respondents to answer the research questions and meet the study objectives (Saunders, 2003).

2.4 Research Instruments, Data collection Procedure and Data analysis

Focus Group Discussions and semi-structured interviews were the instruments used to collect data from respondents because they favour interaction and dialogue with the participants (Wahyumi, 2012). Mixed questionnaires were also used due to their greater anonymity; hence respondents were free to write their own ideas on the subject matter (Kumar, 2005). Therefore, pupils, school administrators and the Ministry of General Education officials were interviewed while teachers responded to a questionnaire. The qualitative data for this study was thematically analysed while quantitative data was analysed with the help of Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS) software.

2.5 Ethical Considerations

The researcher got permission from the Ministry of General Education district official (DEBS). Consent was also sought from research sites and all the respondents were assured that the data collected was to be strictly treated with the maximum confidentiality it deserved and it was to be used only for its intended purposes.

III. STUDY FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study was guided by the following research objective 1: To explore the challenges faced by combined schools in Masaiti district which hinders the provision of quality education.

When respondents were asked using questionnaires on how challenges faced by schools affected provision of quality education, below is the summary of the responses of 40 participants:

N	Valid	40
	Missing	0
Mean	1.35	
Median	1.00	
Mode	1	
Std. Deviation	.580	
Variance	.336	
Skewness	1.460	
Std. Error of Skewness	.374	
Kurtosis	1.269	
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.733	
Range	2	
Sum	54	

The data set in table 4.1 above shows that the mode is 1 and median 1.0. It shows that these data values are clustered around the mean. This means that lack of teaching and learning materials, lack of adequate infrastructure, poor working conditions for teachers, sexual harassment among learners, and lack of parental involvement in school activities as well as inadequate qualified teachers among others affected the provision of quality education and pupils' academic performance in all combined schools. This evidence is also supported by the standard deviation (0.58) which is smaller than the mean (1.35) which is a confirmation of the views of respondents. The above evidence is further depicted in table 4.2 below:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly affects	28	70.0	70.0	70.0
	Affects	10	25.0	25.0	95.0
	Affects little	2	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	40	100.0	100.0	

Table 4.2 above indicates that 95% of the participants responded that challenges faced by combined schools affected the academic performance of learners and the provision of quality education in Masaiti district.

Furthermore, when participants were asked to state some of the challenges faced by combined school hindering the

provision of quality education, figure 1.1 below shows their responses:

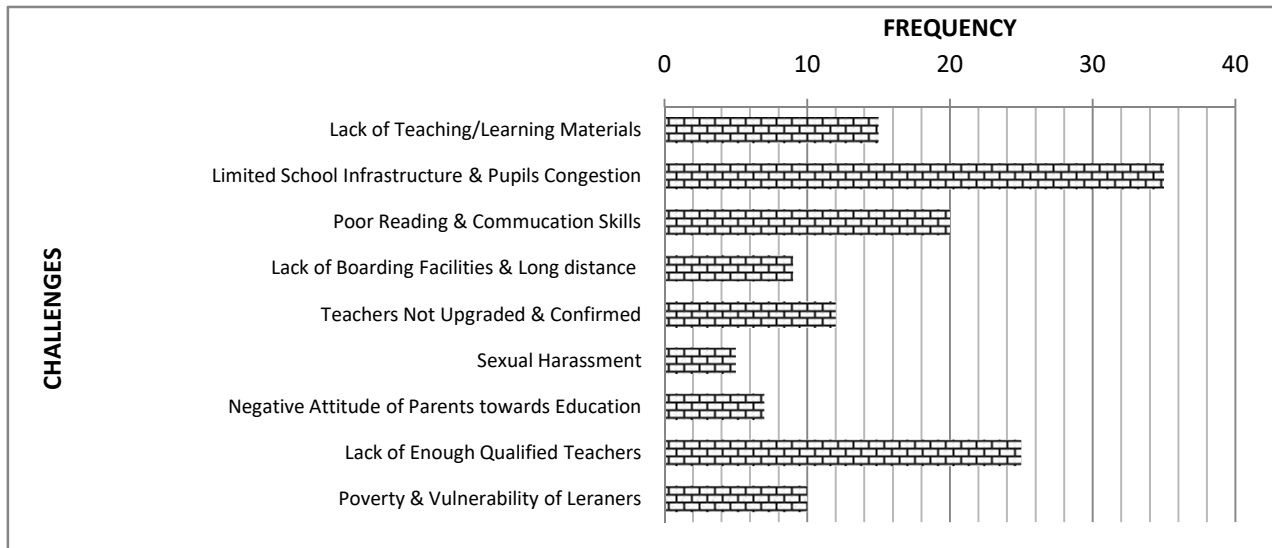


Figure 1.1: Challenges faced by combined school hindering the provision of quality education

Source: Field Data

Consequently, the current study revealed that all combined schools in Masaiti district faced a number of challenges and these challenges mostly affected all administrators, teachers and learners respectively. The tabulated challenges in figure 1.1 above which were revealed by the respondents have also been discussed in detail below:

3.1.1. Lack of Teaching and Learning Materials

The current study revealed that all combined schools had limited teaching and learning materials. It was discovered that some of the schools had few text books; others one (1) text book in each subject but others did not even have any single text book in some subjects. On the contrary, the Fifth National Development Plan’s operational tool in the Ministry of General Education is guided by the objective of providing relevant educational materials in schools (MoE, 2007). But this was not the case and this was a challenge to learners in terms of preparations and content delivery among teachers. The current revelation corresponds with that of (Mwanza and Silukuni, 2020) who found that schools had inadequate stocks of educational materials. Similarly, the resource based theory espoused by Coase (1937) adds that if resources are not available nor effectively utilized (when available), the teaching and learning could be adversely affected or jeopardized.

3.1.2. Limited School Infrastructure and Pupil Congestion

All the schools sampled had limited infrastructure such as staff offices, teachers’ houses, pupils’ toilets and classroom blocks. It was also sad to note that none of these schools had a library or a science laboratory. One interviewee had this to say:

Due to lack of enough classroom blocks, staffrooms and offices, teachers spend many hours standing under trees and on the corridors waiting for time, hence getting tired before they begin teaching (Hd. Tr., Male. 05).

Some of the Heads of Department interviewed lamented that they were being turned into ‘mobile offices’ because they carried all their teaching and learning materials in bags behind their backs because schools had no enough offices where such resources could be kept and this challenge made some teachers to be always tired. It was also discovered that despite these schools being upgraded, learners from both primary and secondary sections were using the same classroom blocks, toilets and desks which put these facilities under pressure. This situation contradicts the position of Tobin (1990) as cited by Akinyemi Olufunminiyi & Abiodun Adekunle (2019) who contended that too much pressure on the use of tools, materials and equipment, may result to over utilization leading to break down of such tools, materials and equipment. Furthermore, some administrators faced the same challenge in that there was a situation where one office was being shared by two deputy head teachers one from the secondary section and the other one from the primary section. This situation affected their privacy and administrative work. Besides, it was a challenge to teachers on who to report to due to conflicting duties.

Furthermore, it was discovered that pupils were congested at both primary and secondary school sections where 3 to 4 learners were sitting on one desk. This was so because they shared the same desks which were just meant for few primary school pupils which affected their learning and performance. The current research findings correspond with that of Mwanza

and Silukuni (2020) who found that large classes, inadequate stocks of educational materials, inadequate classrooms and desks had a negative impact on the provision of quality education which led to poor performance of the learners in schools. Also, the current study found that some primary school teachers were just seconded to teach senior secondary classes hence creating a gap in terms of staffing levels at primary section.

Besides, the study revealed that these schools had few teachers' houses a situation which forced most teachers to rent houses in villages which had no electricity and safe drinking water. Some teachers also rented houses from other districts such as Luanshya, Ndola and Kapiri Mposhi which was a challenge in terms of mobility. These poor working conditions affected service delivery.

3.1.3. The Challenge of some Learners with Poor reading & Communication Skills

According to the study finding, some teachers complained that most pupils in all combined schools did not portray levels of competence acquisition as expected. They complained that pupils behaved as if they never underwent primary education. It was discovered that a number of them were still illiterate and had poor reading and communication skills due to their poor primary school background. This research finding is consistent with Andrietti & Su (2019) who alluded to the fact that innate ability and the learning experience of a learner at an earlier stage (e.g., primary schooling) jointly determine a student's preparedness for learning at a subsequent stage (e.g., secondary schooling). Thus when education of a learner is affected at an early stage, it will have a cumulative repo effect which can also affect education at the next or later stage. But some teachers said that the status-quo was also attributed to lack of library facilities and all the schools sampled had no library facilities. Similarly, some pupils at junior and senior secondary levels complained in their focus group discussions that they had no classes to study from in order to prepare for their final examination due to limited infrastructure. They said that after knocking off, all their classes were immediately occupied by the lower primary school sections up to 17:00 hours and they could not study at night because their classes were not electrified. This assertion was also echoed by school administrators in these schools and one respondent said that:

"Because of lack of enough classroom blocks, most of the classes are occupied by pupils from the secondary school section in the morning and pupils from primary section come in the afternoon. This has led to the reduction in the contact periods for pupils at the primary school section which is not good" (Hd. Tr., Male. 01).

Additionally, it was discovered that the poor performance of some learners was as a result of unfair pupil selection process which normally happens at both grades nine and ten levels every year. It was revealed that technical schools, catholic schools, schools of excellence as well as boarding schools

were given the first priority to pick the cream of pupils (pupils who scored high marks) and left those pupils with low marks for combined schools to feast on. This was one of the contributing factors to poor pupil performance in these schools and the current finding corresponds with Mosha (2000) cited by Mosha (2018) who rightly put it that without a good and careful selection for admission, a school may obtain poor results. Similarly, failure to read and write by some learners admitted in these schools was also attributed to lack of diagnostic tests upon admission (Kilasi, 2011 in Mosha, 2018).

3.1.4. Lack of Boarding Facilities and long distances Covered by Learners

The other study finding was that none of the combined schools had boarding facilities. Most respondents narrated that pupils in these schools came from far places and walked long distances to and from school every day. The other revelation was that some learners rented houses in the nearby villages a situation which subjected pupils to home related responsibilities such as fetching water, looking for charcoal/fire wood as well as food. One participant had this to say:

Some boys and girls rent thatched houses in villages nearby and they spent most of their time looking for food and others drinking beer..... (Sc. Tr., Female. 07).

Teachers and other respondents added that this situation had contributed to pupils' late coming during learning hours and absenteeism which contribute to poor academic performance in these schools. Other respondents explained that renting rooms in the community by school girls had put them at high risk of getting sexual transmitted infections and pregnancies. This was because they were loosely exposed to men in the community and peer groups which were involved in sexual related activities and other bad vices. Therefore, this finding is in line with Bandura (1971) who demonstrated in his observational theory that behaviours are acquired by watching another (model, friend) that performs the behaviour.

3.1.5. The Challenges of Most Teachers not Upgraded & Confirmed

The study revealed that all the head teachers and their deputies as well as head of departments (HODs) in these combined schools were in acting positions for many years without confirmation. The reason why the members of staff were just on attachment and in acting positions was that all combined schools were not gazetted hence not having payroll management establishment and control (PMEC) vacancies for confirmation. Also, they had no treasury authority from the Ministry of Finance and National Planning in order for administrators and teachers to be put into their rightful salary scales. Therefore, it was found that the personnel in these schools were very frustrated which was a recipe for low teacher output because they felt being neglected by the

Ministry. In focus group 2 discussions held with the Ministry of General Education officials, it was revealed that:

One combined school by the name of is not receiving grant for the secondary school section because it is not captured in the yellow book. The school is failing to run smoothly because of lack of enough funds..... (FG. 02, MoGEO., Male. 01).

3.1.6. Sexual Harassment on School Girls

Some girls had certain challenges which they voiced out to the researcher. They complained of being enticed into sexual relationships by male villagers as they usually took advantage of their desperation in terms of food and other basic necessities. Furthermore, the current study revealed that those girls who covered longer distances to and from school were persuaded or forced into having sexual affairs because some were being escorted by boys or men in the villages to their respective domiciles.

3.1.7. Negative attitudes of Parents towards Pupils Education

Lack of support from parents towards their children's education was another challenge revealed which prevented most pupils from performing well in quest to attain their educational goals in most of the combined schools. Most of the participants explained that some parents were even failing to collect pupil report forms during open days. Sadly, it was also discovered that each time schools called for a Parent Teacher Association (PTA) meeting, the turnout was always poor which showed that many parents were not concerned with the education welfare of their children. But positive attitude in relation to academic excellence by both learners and parents can contribute to students' good academic performance (Habanyati, Simui, Kanyamuna & Muleya, 2020; Manchishi, Simui, Ndhlovu, & Thompson, 2020; Muleya, Simui, Mundende, Kakana, Mwewa & Namangala, 2019).

3.1.8. Lack of Enough & Qualified Teachers

From the data collected, it was found that all the sampled schools had shortage of qualified and specialised teachers. This study finding contradicts with Fifth and Seventh National Development Plan (2006 - 2010, 2017 - 2021) where the government set a target of hiring or recruiting 5,000 teachers annually to reduce high pupil teacher ratios particularly in rural schools of Zambia (MoNDP, 2017; MoGE, 2015). Dilshad (2010) as cited by Wiysahnyuy (2019) argued that the quality of teachers depends on the qualification of teachers and it was the key ingredient to student performance. On the contrary, it was discovered that some of the teachers teaching at the secondary section were primary school teachers who were just seconded to teach senior classes due to shortage of qualified personnel. But this finding contradicts with the Zambia's national policy on education (Educating Our Future) and Education for All (EFA) framework where the government has a bounden duty to facilitate highest standards of learning for all through teaching of excellent quality and provision of quality teachers in schools (MoGE, 2015; 1996).

It was also discovered that some of the few qualified teachers who were specialised to teach senior classes were not adequate and some were found teaching subjects which were not their specialisation. This revelation is in agreement with the study conducted by Eshun, Zuure, Brew and Bordoh (2019) where it was discovered that teachers taught subjects which they were not trained to teach. These findings also contradict with the findings of Akinyemi Olufunminiyi & Abiodun Adekunle (2019) who argued that without a well trained and skilled teacher, the arch of excellent in schools collapses because the teacher is the keystone of quality education. Also, there is a significant effect of teacher subject knowledge on student achievement. This is because teacher quality depends on the teacher's pedagogical content knowledge. This position is supported by (Kind & Chan, 2019) who contended that if the content knowledge of the teacher is good, it enable students to learn properly than when it is poor. In this regard, teachers need to have expertise in their particular subjects in order for them to yield targeted products (Moodley, 2013 in Mulenga and Kabombwe, 2019). Also, teacher expertise enhances reflective practices. This assertion is supported by Disu (2017 in Likando 2019: 46) who stated that "when teachers are engaged in reflective practice they are taken through the process of critical thinking and this would enable them to examine their teaching practice, assess the performance of students, and factor the strategies that would bring in best results". Therefore, providing quality education to learners is the foundation to creating sustainable development (Rogayan & Villanueva, 2019).

3.1.9. Poverty and Vulnerability of Learners

The research found that most of the pupils were vulnerable and parents were also wallowing in poverty which made them fail to provide basic needs for their children. It was also found that some of the learners fell pregnant because of high poverty levels in the district. The current study findings are also in line with the discoveries of Mufalo and Kabeta (2019) who revealed that poverty contributed to truancy, school dropouts, teenage pregnancy and early marriages among learners in the rural district of Masaiti on the Copperbelt province of Zambia. Therefore, poverty is referred to as "600 pound gorilla" sitting on rural secondary school pupils' performance in most developing countries (Berliner, 2004 in Ncube, 2013).

3.2. Strategies to mitigate some of the challenges faced by these schools in order to enhance the academic performance of pupils.

The study revealed that little was being done to mitigate challenges faced by combined schools in Masaiti district. Therefore, all the respondents proposed a number of interventions which should be instituted in order to mitigate the above highlighted challenges.

3.2.1. Strategies which should be put in Place by Schools & Other Stakeholders

From the data collected from most of the participants suggested that government through the Ministry of General Education should construct infrastructure such as classroom blocks, dormitories, library and laboratory facilities, staff houses in all the combined school. This suggestion came because it was discovered that all the schools in the study were still using the same infrastructure which were built specifically for primary schools only.

Also, most of the respondents said that the Ministry of General Education through the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) office should provide more human resource to these secondary schools whenever there was teacher recruitment because the number of teachers was still the same despite these schools being upgraded. One respondent had this to say:

The Ministry of General Education should come up with a deliberate policy where all teachers in combined schools who have not upgraded their qualification be put under fast track programme fully sponsored by the government so that they can be capable of handling senior secondary school classes (Hd. Tr., Male. 02).

Additionally, other respondents held the view that the government through the Ministry of General Education should come up with flexible educational policies which would allow the involvement of stakeholders (non-governmental organisations, private companies and business men and women) to be shareholders in the construction and running of such schools. It was viewed that the involvement of such entities would help not only in decision making but also in the construction of classes, laboratory, libraries, staff houses and boarding facilities.

It was also suggested that schools should be resourceful meaning that they should improvise some of the teaching and learning materials using the locally sourced materials unlike waiting for the government to provide all needed resources.

Furthermore, some respondents said that the Ministry of General Education should work on teacher grievances such as confirming and upgrading teachers who are still in wrong salary scales. Additionally, it was echoed that local chiefs, the Ministry of General Education district officials and other relevant stakeholders should collaborate in order to sensitise members of the community on the importance of education.

IV. CONCLUSION

The study revealed that all the combined schools in Masaiti district face many challenges in providing quality education but little was being done to mitigate these challenges. Some of the challenges were; lack of teaching and learning materials, lack of adequate infrastructure, sexual harassment among learners, lack of parents' involvement in school activities as well as inadequate qualified teachers among others. It was also discovered that all the schools under study were recording very poor examination results at grade nine (9)

levels for a couple of years. Therefore, the poor examination results recorded in combined schools were being attributed to a number of challenges highlighted herein. Therefore, no matter how qualified teachers any school may have, if physical facilities are not available, the objectives of teaching and learning will not be achieved at all (Nwaubani, Otoh-Offong, Usulor & Okeke, 2016).

Maslow's motivation theory corresponds well with the current study because it emphasises that motivation rejuvenates self-interest through incentives which are powerful engines to make students and teachers work extensively hard to achieve the desired goals. Therefore, "for educational investments to translate into student learning, all the people involved in the education process have to face the right incentives that make them act in ways that advance student performance" (Hanushek and Woessmann, 2007: 79).

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Basing on the findings, the study recommended that the government through the Ministry of General Education in partnership with other organisations should construct more school infrastructure such as classroom blocks, library and laboratory services and boarding facilities in all combined schools countrywide. Also the Ministry of General Education should procure and provide teaching and learning materials in these schools. The Ministry of General Education should employ more specialised and qualified teachers in various subjects in order to increase the human resource in schools. Additionally, local chiefs, the Ministry of General Education and other relevant stakeholders should collaborate in order to sensitise members of the community on the importance of education so as to enable them participate and support educational programmes. Furthermore, the Ministry of General Education should tirelessly work on teachers' grievances so that unconfirmed teacher should be confirmed and gazette these secondary schools so that administrators and teachers are put into the rightful salary scales.

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