

Factors influencing absenteeism in Lower Primary schools of Chibombo District in Central Province of Zambia

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Abstract: Absenteeism is the practice of regularly staying away from work or school without good reasons while school absenteeism is learners' habit of staying away from school without providing genuine reasons for not attending classes and has negative effects on learners' academic performance. Therefore, the aim of this study was to assess factors influencing absenteeism in Zambian schools. Four Head teachers, 16 teachers and 80 learners from the four lower primary schools in Chibombo district were sampled for the study. Data was collected using questionnaires and in-depth interviews to allow the researcher a platform to ask open-response questions and to explore the respondents' perspectives about the factors influencing absenteeism in schools. The data was analyzed by use of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) computer package. The study revealed factors such as; attitude, poor infrastructure, contact time, peer pressure, inferiority complex, underage, health, poor teaching methods, dual language, labeling, poverty have a negative or detrimental effect on learners' academic performance. The study recommended that the Government through the Ministry of Education should come up with national wide education campaign programmes in school through school related activities to educate parents on the value of education for pupils.

Key words: Absenteeism, Academic performance, effects, factors, learners' habit.

I. INTRODUCTION

Regular attendance at school is essential for the learners' academic achievements as well as for language and social developments and the basic assumption of the education system is that learners regularly attend school (Balfauz and Byrnes, 2018).

Absenteeism refers to missed instructional days that may be excused, unexcused or as a result of disciplinary removal from school (Jordan and Miller, 2017). Absenteeism has however, been linked to multiple negative academic and social outcomes (Claessens et al., 2015). In addition, learner absenteeism impacts significantly on a variety of learner outcomes such as reading achievement, drop-out rate and discipline (Balvin and Ehrhch, 2018). As a result, learners with school attendance problems report lower academic efficacy, poor academic performance, more anxiety, more symptoms of depression and less self-esteem (Fan and Walters, 2014).

Absenteeism prevalence rates are by age, education level, gender and other factors while absent rates increase as learners progress through school (Chang et al., 2018). However, studies show that absenteeism is similar across genders and in both urban and rural areas though it seems to be more on female learners than male learners and also more rampant in rural than urban schools (Humm et al., 2018). Moreover, the economic status of the community or family is related to rates of absenteeism and the majority of learners who live in poverty are more likely to experience high levels of absenteeism (Gottfreed, 2017).

Absenteeism is associated with lower academic achievement at individual and classroom levels and though absenteeism is damaging to learners' achievement, there is no empirical evidence at school and classroom levels as teachers do not have evidence or statistics of learners who miss class for a number of days in a week, month or term (Jordan and Miller, 2017). Further, there is no evidence of reasons for learners' absenteeism due to learner's well being such as being diagnosed with a disability, lack of school requisites and school climate among others as learners' well being are associated with academic performance, educational attainment and risk of dropping out of school (Claessens, et al, 2015).

There is no evidence from classroom teachers on groups of learners who miss class, whether there are changes in absenteeism rates, how absenteeism matters for learners' performance, how absenteeism boosts negative influence on education progress (Balfauz and Byrnes, 2018). Therefore, lack of evidence reduces school administrators and policy makers' ability to design local and national interventions to improve learner performance (Humm et al., 2018)

1.1 Statement of the problem

The basic assumption of the education system is that learners regularly attend school while learner absenteeism impacts significantly on a variety of learner outcomes such as reading achievement, drop-out rate and discipline (Balvin and Ehrhch, 2018) and to improve learner performance, policy makers need empirical evidence on absenteeism such as changes in absenteeism and absenteeism rates.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to assess factors influencing absenteeism in lower primary schools in the four selected primary schools of Chibombo district.

1.3 Objectives

1. To investigate the causes of school absenteeism in lower primary schools of Chibombo district.
2. To determine the effects of absenteeism on learners' achievement in lower primary schools of Chibombo district.
3. To establish measures that can be put in place to reduce on absenteeism in lower primary schools of Chibombo district.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by H.C.M Carroll's theory (1995) on the effects of pupil absenteeism which he says absence from school is driven by a number of factors such as lack of interest in a subject or subjects, negative self-image or self-esteem and has a significant effect on primary school attainments. Some pupils' conditions for refusal to go to school may be due to reluctance, emotional upset, antisocial tendencies and parental negligence (Berg and Nursten 1996)

1.5 Significance of the study

It is hoped that the findings of the study would contribute to the knowledge gap amongst all the stake holders interested in education in Zambia on the effects of pupil absenteeism on learner educational achievement as well as on the long term consequences on the future of a child and help modify the educational absenteeism policy to make it more relevant and responsive to national needs.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Importance of education

Education is a crucial component of the right to freedom of expression, and necessary for the protection of all other human rights. It equips people with skills to relate to and interact meaningfully with other individuals in the society. Consequently, it is fundamental to the attainment of a democratic society and to the inherent dignity and development of every human being. Moreover, education is a prerequisite for wealth creation. It is through education that people come to know available resources and the means to utilize them to create wealth, control exploitation, and make informed decisions. Education empowers individuals to seek out opportunities to raise their income levels and also foster self-understanding and self-reliance.

Once teachers and pupils' mind become that of income generation, then educational programs do not take off well and cause the mentioned absenteeism. The aspect of attitude does not only concern itself with the teachers but with the pupils also. If the pupils have a negative attitude towards a subject or an individual teacher, chances of yielding good

performances are slim if at all they do exist (Buchel 2016). It will be very difficult for a pupil to put more efforts towards a subject because hatred has covered up the child which will in return cause him/her to produce bad results in that field.

2.2 Absenteeism in Zambia

Attending school regularly is a vital factor in school success for both students and teachers. Unfortunately, some learners, yet for one reason or another miss a day of school. The general tendency to engage in such unwillingness to attend school is referred to as absenteeism and pupil absenteeism is a period of time when a pupil does not attend school (Shooba, 2013).

Pupil absenteeism results in loss of quality teaching and learning time for teachers and pupils respectively, leading to untaught or unlearned academic skills and objectives, and subsequent reduction in pupil performance. Absenteeism by pupils may result in unlearned subject material because of fewer hours of instruction, and lead to disruption of class instruction for teachers who have to administer remediation for the absent pupil when he returns to school. Additionally, absenteeism by pupils may result in poor academic achievement because students will not be able to receive instruction on a consecutive basis. This problem also causes low scores because absent pupils are not present to learn key concepts and skills that are assessed on standardized tests and examinations. Absenteeism can also have serious repercussions on the learner. It can lead to an increasing disinterest in school and academics in general. It further increases the chances of a learner eventually dropping out of school, which can lead to long term consequences for them such as lower average incomes, higher incidences of unemployment, and a higher likelihood of incarceration, early marriages and unwanted pregnancies. Moreover, pupils who drop out of school face a higher risk of poverty because of their inability to secure quality paying employment due to their lack of education and resources. And dropouts who lack education and resources are more likely to commit criminal activity leading to incarceration.

2.3 Disability and absenteeism

A disability is any condition or impairment of the body or mind that makes it difficult for a person with such a condition or impairment to do certain activities i.e having limitations in activities as well as interact with the world around him or her and the impairment has a substantial and long term adverse effect on one's ability to carry out normal day to day activities (UNCRPD 2011). Data from a detailed 2016 report by the U.S. Department of Education showed that students with disabilities were more likely to be chronically absent than students without disabilities; Native American and Pacific Islander students were more likely to be chronically absent than students of other races and ethnicities; and non-ELL students were more likely to be chronically absent than ELL students. It also showed that students in high school were more likely to miss school than students in other grades, and

that about 500 school districts reported that 30 percent or more of their students missed at least three weeks of school in 2013–2014 (Foley, Gallipoli and Green, 2014). In addition, lack of facilities for disabled learners also lead to absenteeism.

According to (Haberli and Güvenç 2012) “not being able to read can be a handicap in mind”. They, in addition, suggest that a pupil who is handicapped does not have any fear and worries about being able to speak in another person’s level. He has a relaxed attitude towards his or her abilities and disabilities, where he or she is comfortable in a class of special education than being laughed at in a normal able-bodied class of pupils. Hence, being laughed at by colleagues who are able to read fluently may force a learner who is unable to read absentee himself or herself from school and may subsequently lead to school drop-out.

2.4 Other causes of absenteeism

2.4.1 Poverty

(Fan and Wolters 2014) notes that inappropriate policies have caused the personal poverty in which most Zambians life reflects the poor state of the country’s economy which has never experienced steady growth since 1970s. He brings out the aspect of paying of boarding fees, PTA funds, examination fees, other school fees and buying of school uniforms as well as money for food and drinks while at school has made many children to absent themselves from schools. Kelly further points out that those truant children tend to be excluded from school in this process and also, because of a cultural bias in favour of investment in a boy child, the girl was likely to suffer. Also, in some instances, absenteeism is linked to pregnancy, poverty and unemployment but this may be a thing of the past as the United Party for National Development (UPND) has come up with a policy of free education from Primary to Secondary school level which is relief on poverty stricken households.

2.4.2 Peer pressure

Peer pressure or influence is when a person or in this case a learner does something because he or she wants to feel accepted as well as valued by one’s friends and peer pressure can either be positive or negative and the causes of peer pressure may be low self-esteem, fear of rejection, need to fit in a group and also the need to feel safety and security from peers (Bay 2019). Over this challenge (Graeff-Martins et al 2006) emphasizes that adolescents as already highlighted under phobic adolescent tent to develop power in groups and influence each other. In this way even the learners that are doing fine can easily be misled by the friends and start dodging classes in which they were doing better simply because they want to be identified by the group of friends. Children at this level can dodge a subject without any reason at all. Sometimes both parents and teachers may not even know better the behavior of their son or daughter.

2.4.3 Inferiority complex

Inferiority complex is a term that dates back to 1907 when it was coined by the influential psychologist, Alfred Adler and inferiority complex is a basic feeling of inadequacy and insecurity deriving from actual or imagined physical or psychological deficiency (Alberts 2020). (Sikuvwaza 2013) also adds by bringing out a common challenge where learners in the same classroom feel ill-treated or unfairly treated as they are forced to learn a local Zambian language while other pupils learn Literature in English, pure sciences, accounts or any other prestigious subject. These learners are usually teased by their friends that they are very dull and can only manage to learn Zambian Language which are considered as being inferior. Sometimes this comes as a result of bad tribal sentiments that are made by their friends while at times, the parents themselves tell their children that learning a Zambian language would take them nowhere in life.

2.4.4 Lack of interest

According to this challenge (Abadzi 2006) states that students could not have interest in the content and may have resorted to staying away simply because they couldn’t understand the content or they may just have perceived it to be too much difficult. This pushes them out of school. Teenagers learn what they want and, in most cases, it is when they want it. This means that they only choose what to like if they are nicely and wisely guided or counseled. This is because there are times when a child thinks and see things as if the elders, parents, and guardians does not see anything. It is at this level that if a child is left without direction, they can easily slip away and loose track.

2.4.5 Phobic adolescents

It is quite evident that some learners have phobia and it should be understood from the outset that phobia is a persistent, excessive, unrealistic fear of an object, person, animal, activity or situation and phobia is a type of anxiety disorder. Therefore, a person or learner with phobia tries by all means to avoid the thing or person that triggers fear or he or she endures it with great anxiety and distress. (Bhandari 2021). In addition, (Sikuvwaza 2013), echoes that during this stage of growth, the learners are growing into teenagers, there is a lot of fear that developed as a result of physical changes that takes place in the body. For example; pimples, turbulent emotions and so forth actually do scares pupils from coming to school to an extent that they would rather not attend lessons or if parents are strict and pushes them to go to school, they would rather hide on the way instead of going to school.

2.4.6 School infrastructural facilities

School infrastructure include classrooms, dormitories, science laboratories, , sanitation facilities, halls, equipment for games and open fields for games, electricity, libraries, just to mention a few and school infrastructure is key for teaching and learning in schools (Akash 2018) while (Ferrell et al 2013:78) suggested that “infrastructure of the school with

inadequate and improper classroom furniture, water and transport had some bearing to the teaching and learning process in school”, hence caused absenteeism. These were the likely things that stake holder see to it that teachers and the pupils lack do not lack anything such as; good and adequate infrastructure for they motivate learners and their teachers to work hard. The condition of infrastructure dictates the attitude users developed towards the institution. This also includes lack of libraries and sporting facilities are a hindrance to attendance of school among pupils. The lack of recommendable of language laboratories would make the teaching of language a huddle let alone Zambian language.

2.4.7 Action and Attitude

Teachers attitudes and action to both teaching and the learners in some instances needs much to be desired as some are negative or have an “I don’t care attitude” towards work. It is therefore important to note that job satisfaction and organizational commitment are the two key attitudes that are the most relevant and important outcomes and teachers should possess positive attitude, adaptability as well as be self-motivated in order to discharge their duties diligently (Loretto 2019) On the same, (Gömleksiz and Özdaş, 2013) look at attitudes toward those labeled learners as typically more negative than actions taken. In other words, some learners manifest disheartening responses to attitude and acceptability while non-labeled learners may behave more responsibly when action is required of them. Certainly, this is not a new idea. Social psychologists have long wondered at the apparent disconnect sometimes observed between attitudes and behavior. (Cohen 1977) illustrates this phenomenon in her dissertation involving teachers’ stereotypes of three groups: teaching disabled students, individuals whose reading requires remediation and their normal peers.

2.4.8 Poor teacher approach

Teaching and learning approaches are theoretical concepts that describe how learning should be facilitated, teaching methods refer to the general principles, pedagogy and management strategies used in classroom instruction while activities are the different ways of implementing the methods (Allain 2015). Teaching methods however, help learners to master the content of the course as well as learning how to apply the content in particular contexts On the teaching approach, the Ministry of Education document; Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (2013:13) says that “everything that the teacher does must be focused on what learners want to know, understand and be able to do successfully”. It further states that “when teachers plan and teach, they should focus on helping learners acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions that will enable them achieve the desired outcomes”. Some methodologies and teachers’ approach may not be understood by the students and this can easily make them start missing classes. This is because there are times when teachers go to class so that they can be marked present without doing anything constructive as far as teaching is concerned. At lower Primary level for example, a teacher is

expected to teacher all the subjects in the curriculum in a particular class and it is normal that some teachers are forced to teach a subject they don’t like at all and may therefore, teach without any means of motivation to the learners while others may not even care if learners understand what they teach or not.

2.4.9 Contact time

This is the time that is spent between teachers and pupils during learning and teaching. The Ministry of Education document on literacy, the National Literacy Framework (2013 :7) says that “one of the challenges and threats to literacy instruction is that contact time between teachers and learners is not sufficient”. This includes time on task plus the amount of time teachers and learners are engaged in learning which is reduced due to poor lesson planning and absenteeism. It is therefore that much time especially in early grades be allocated or dedicated to literacy instruction. This would make learners busy, committed and less playful.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Study Design

The study adopted a mixed methods approach while exploratory and descriptive designs were as well considered appropriate as they also allowed for more flexible strategies of data collection in order to answer the research questions, (Healy 2011). The research design was a descriptive survey, as (Khan 2006) pointed out that a descriptive study may often result in the formation of important principles of knowledge and solutions to significant problems. The study incorporated both qualitative and quantitative aspects of research. It was aimed at collecting information from respondents on the effects of illiteracy on people’s lives as well as consequences of illiteracy on peoples’ lives. Structured open-ended interviews were conducted, observation schedules and questionnaires were used to respondents. The internet also supplemented data for the study.

3.2 Research sites

The study was carried out in the four Primary schools of Chibombo district (Mukalashi, Chibombo, Kabangwe and Kalebuka Primary schools) in Central Province.

3.3 Population, Sample and Sampling procedure

The population for the study was drawn from the four primary schools in Chibombo district. Purposive sampling procedure was used to select Head teachers (4) while the simple random sampling procedure was used to select the teachers (16) and learners (80), Clark, (2011). The sample size comprised of 100 respondents. Head teachers (4 from each school) and learners (20 from each school).

3.4 Data Analysis

In this research, data was analysed qualitatively as the semi structured interviews and observation schedules were used as data collection instruments. Thematic approach was used,

where data analysis started with the categorization of themes from the semi structured interviews and observation schedules (Smith, 2013). Charts and graphs were used to analyse data. The data gathered was analysed according to the themes of the study, the order of the research objectives. Data generated from the interview guide was analysed manually and also, a combination of software MS Access, SPSS and MS Excel was used to analyse data. Analysis was mainly descriptive, that is, mean, median, mode, range, and standard deviation. Related statistics were applied where possible. Statistical testing took the form of Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), correlation and regression both simple and multiple.

3.5 Ethical Issues

The researcher avoided pressuring respondents to take part in the research. Alternatively, permission consents, assents were obtained from respondents involved in the research and the research topic was strategically selected to ensure that there was no harm whatsoever to the research respondents. In this research, the researcher was fully conscious of the need to abide by the ethical rule of respecting the privacy of individuals taking part in the research. In the same way, all the respondents of the research were to remain unidentified to the public as all their valuable views, opinions and perceptions were only known by the researcher for use only in the research and participant's identities will forever remain hidden.

The Researcher got permission from the District Education Board Secretary to interview Headteachers and from the Head teacher to interview teachers and learners. The names of respondents would remain anonymous for the sake of confidentiality. However, the identity of respondents was concealed in the thesis but for identification in the thesis, eighty learners were allocated numbers 1 to 80, while the sixteen teachers were allocated numbers of the alphabet A to P. The four Head teachers were allocated colours Blue, Green Yellow and Red.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

The following findings were presented according to set research objectives:

4.1 Factors leading to pupil absenteeism

From that data collected from the respondents within the schools, it indicates that there are numerous factors influencing absenteeism in Chibombo schools such as poverty, peer pressure, underage, labeling, inferiority complex, action and attitude, poor infrastructure, handicaps, health, contact time, dual language, social media, gender sensitivity, lack of mastery of teaching and learning materials, lack of qualified teaching staff, inadequate staff in schools, lack of teaching and learning materials, poor sanitary facilities, poor teaching approaches and so on some of which are as illustrated in Figure 1 below:

The study reviewed that attending school regularly is a vital factor in school success for both students and teachers.

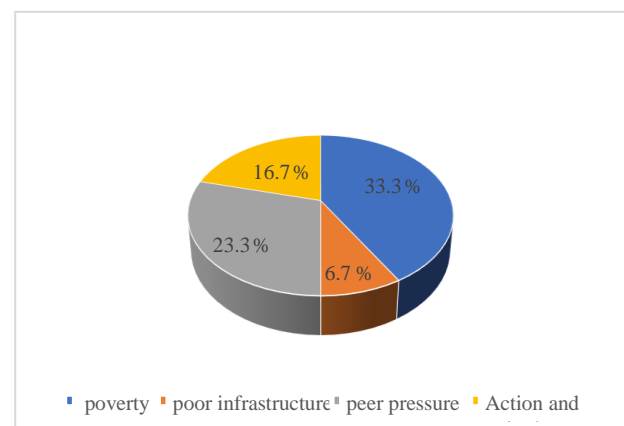
Unfortunately, some learners miss school for a day or days due to diverse reasons and being absent from school is referred to as absenteeism (Gage et al 2013) Pupil absenteeism results in loss of quality teaching and learning time for teachers and pupils respectively, leading to untaught or unlearned academic skills and objectives, and subsequent reduction in pupil performance.

Absenteeism by pupils may result in unlearned subject material because of fewer hours of instruction, and lead to disruption of class instruction for teachers who have to administer remediation for the absent pupil when he returns to school. Additionally, absenteeism by pupils may result in poor academic achievement because learners will not be able to receive instruction on a consecutive basis (Foley, Gallipoli and Green 2014). This problem also causes low scores because absent pupils are not present to learn key concepts and skills that are assessed on standardized tests and examinations. Absenteeism can also have serious repercussions on the learner. It can lead to an increasing disinterest in school and academics in general. It further increases the chances of a learner eventually dropping out of school, which can lead to long term consequences for them such as lower average incomes, higher incidences of unemployment, and a higher likelihood of incarceration, early marriages and unwanted pregnancies (Fan and Wolters 2014).

4.2 Factors affecting absenteeism

The study reviewed that, the major cause of absenteeism was poverty at 43.3%, followed by peer pressure at 33.3%. The other factor causing absenteeism was action and attitude at 16.7% while the least was poor infrastructure at 6.7% as illustrated in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: Factors affecting absenteeism



Source: field data 2020

The study reviewed that poverty is linked to absenteeism as failure to pay boarding fees, PTA funds, examination fees, other school fees and buying of school uniforms as well as money for food and drinks while at school has made many children to absent themselves from schools. Chant (2010) states poverty has negative effects of poverty to academic

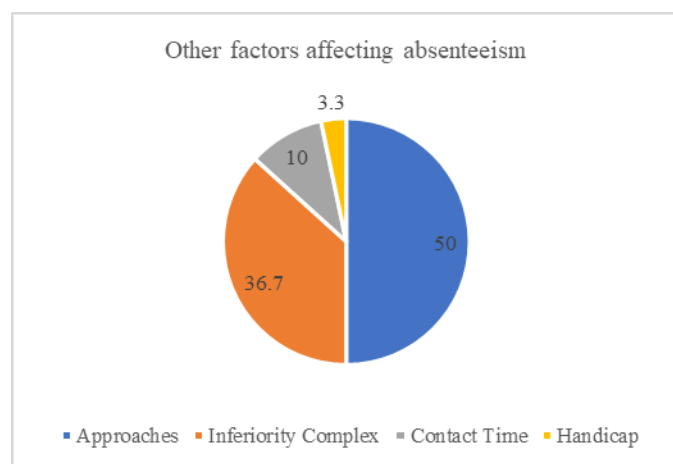
success of a learner as school children growing up in impoverished homes with lack of basic necessities face more difficulties socially and academically than those from well to do families. Basically, such children have emotional and social problems which makes their academic journey slow. On the other hand, some children develop power in groups and influence each other and in this way even the learners that are doing fine can easily be misled by the friends and start dodging classes in which they were doing better simply because they want to be identified by the group of friends. Children at this level can dodge a subject without any reason at all.

In addition, the study reviewed that some learners manifest disheartening responses to attitude and acceptability while non-labeled learners may behave more responsibly when action is required of them. Attitude of both teachers and learners towards teaching and learning have adverse effects on teaching and learning and in most cases learners' academic performance is negatively affected. It goes without saying that good and adequate infrastructure motivate learners and their teachers to work hard. The condition of infrastructure dictates the attitude users developed towards the institution. Also, lack of libraries and sporting facilities are a hindrance to attendance of school among pupils.

4.3 Other factors affecting absenteeism

The study reviewed that the other factors affecting absenteeism in Chibombo schools was poor teacher approaches at 50%, followed by inferiority complex at 36.7%, then contact time at 10% while the least was handicap at 3.3% as illustrated in Figure 2 below:

Figure 2: other factors affecting absenteeism



Source: field data 2020

The study reviewed that teaching methods help learners to master the content of the course as well as learning how to apply the content in particular contexts and when teachers plan and teach, they should focus on helping learners acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions that will enable them achieve the desired outcomes. Some

methodologies and teachers' approach may not be understood by the students and this can easily make them start missing classes. One of the challenges and threats to teaching in the lower primary is that contact time between teachers and learners is not sufficient". This includes time on task plus the amount of time teachers and learners are engaged in learning which is reduced due to poor lesson planning and absenteeism. It is therefore that much time especially in early grades be allocated or dedicated to literacy instruction. This would make learners busy, committed and less playful.

Also, the study showed that learners with disabilities were more likely to be chronically absent than learners without disabilities. It also showed that students in high school were more likely to miss school than students in other grades due to lack of facilities for disabled learners which also lead to absenteeism. Inferiority complex which is a basic feeling of inadequacy and insecurity deriving from actual or imagined physical or psychological deficiency also adds by bringing out a common challenge where learners miss class.

4.4 Measures to reduce absenteeism

From the study, the responses on measures to reduce on absenteeism at lower primary school were introduction of school feeding programmes at 33.6%, sponsoring vulnerable learners at 20.4%, implementation of active and interactive class sessions at 19.9%, introduction of absenteeism school policy at 15% while monitoring of teachers use of methods in class was at 11.1%

The study reviewed that there are several measures that can be put in place to help reduce on pupil absenteeism in lower primary school. The first measures or solutions to absenteeism in schools which should be put in place in order to curb the vice is that of coming up with feeding programmes in schools as children from poor families will be fed at school and this will encourage them to attend school on a regular basis other than being at home where there is hunger. Another measure to be put in place by the Government through the Ministry of Education is learner sponsorship more especially the vulnerable children and the poor rural children as regards payment of school other fees. Non-payment of school fees is quite challenging and as a result, children resort to not coming to school for fear of being embarrassed by the teachers or other learners.

Headteachers in schools should come up with local policies of implementing active and interactive class sessions so as to rule out boredom and disinterest in learners thereby reducing absenteeism. Other local policies would be the absenteeism or attendance policy where good attendance would be rewarded as well as sanctioning absences. On the part of teachers, schools should create teachers' attendance policy, enforce the policy consistently and keep track of teacher absence and reward good attendance. Monitoring and evaluation is another strategy or measure which can help to enhance teaching and learning in schools among lower primary school learners as monitoring and evaluation improve teaching practices.

V. CONCLUSION

Absenteeism is a truant behavior that negatively affects the performance among learners. It is a common behavior of pupils in primary schools which has in some way not only lead to poor performance in class, during tests and examinations but also contributes to poor performance at district and provincial levels. On the other hand, regular attendance of school is essential for the learners' academic achievements as well as for language and social developments. Learners who attend school regularly are successful in their future professional lives through achieving work-related skills such as persistence, problem solving and the ability to work with others to accomplish goals. However, factors such as poverty negatively affects the learners' emotional and social behaviour. Learners experienced psychological disturbances, health issues and lack of self-confidence which included a withdrawal syndrome. The learners had a general negative attitude towards school and sometimes school authorities. The learners who had phobia, those who lacked interest in school were reported to be generally aggressive and suffered inferiority complex and a low self-esteem. Eventually, some of them drop out of school or repeat a Grade.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

In line with the research findings of the study, the research came up with the following recommendations:

1. Schools should come up with extracurricular activities such as sporting activities, festivals to help break the monotony of class thus reducing on absenteeism.
2. School Headteachers should come up with local policies of implementing active and interactive class sessions so as to rule out boredom and disinterest in learners thereby reducing absenteeism.
3. As one of the factors leading to absenteeism, the environment has to be conducive so as to allow learners to have a free mind even as they will be in class.
4. School administration should enhance monitoring and evaluation in order to help to improve teaching and learning in schools among lower primary school learners as monitoring and evaluation improve teaching practices.
4. Headteachers should ensure that teachers in the lower primary grades use teaching methods that help learners to master the content of the course as well as learning how to apply the content in particular contexts and teachers' lesson plans should focus on helping learners acquire the necessary knowledge, skills and dispositions that will enable them achieve the desired learning outcomes.
5. Government through the Ministry of Education should enhance the provision of free education material to all pupils at school such as pencils or pens, books and other school requisites to learners whose parents

cannot afford to procure such requisites for their children.

6. School administrators should ensure that learners in lower primary grades have adequate contact time between teachers and learners which includes time on task plus the amount of time teachers and learners are engaged in learning

7. Government through the Ministry of Education should improve on the condition of infrastructure to also enable learners with disabilities access school easily as infrastructure dictates the attitude users developed towards the institution. Long distances between schools especially those in rural areas cause absenteeism therefore, the government should build more schools which will be near to the community to allow children attend lessons without difficulties.

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