
Head Teacher's Motivational Strategies for Teachers and Their Effect on Learners' Academic Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Ndola District, Zambia

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Abstract. The academic performance of the learners in public secondary schools in Ndola district has been a major source of concern for the past four years (2016-2019), a few schools in the district have performed well while majority have performed poorly culminating into low academic performance in the district. One of the roles of the head teacher is to promote academic achievement of the learners and one of the ways the head teacher can do this is by motivating the teachers. Motivated teachers are essential for creating a conducive learning environment and facilitating improved learner outcomes. This study sought to examine the influence of head teachers' motivational strategies for teachers on the academic performance of learners on learners' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ndola district. The study employed a descriptive survey research design which combined both qualitative and quantitative research methods. Closed and open ended questionnaires, focus group and interview guides were used to collect data from the respondents. The instruments were piloted in one secondary school in Ndola district.

The findings of the study revealed that the motivational strategies used by the head teachers influence academic learner performance positively. The results of a correlation test carried out indicated that there was a positive relationship between the head teachers' motivational strategies for teachers and the academic performance of the learners. Based on the findings, this study concluded that motivational strategies by head teachers influenced or impacted positively on learners' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ndola District. The study recommends that head teachers should use a variety of motivation strategies for teachers as these will enhance effective teacher performance which in turn will positively influence the academic performance of learners to a great extent as revealed by this study. This study recommends that further research could be done in other districts of Zambia to ascertain whether the same trend for learners' academic performance exists.

Key words: Motivation, Strategies, Head teacher, Teaching, Learning, Academic Performance

Introduction

Background

Education plays a crucial role as a catalyst in the development of any nation. The development of human potential primarily through the education system contributes largely to the formation of creative persons of good morals able to deal with problems of national development. Schools have therefore been placed to be the most active, suitable and central places where formal education can be accessed and sustained. According to Usman (2015), in order to achieve high standards of education in a country, the utmost aim of schools therefore should be to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Performance is key and ranks high on the National agenda with educators and policy makers focusing on testing, accountability, curriculum reform, teacher quality and head teacher's management roles. Teacher motivation is a subject that has received significant attention in mainstream educational debate in recent decades. It has become an important aspect of teacher efficacy and professionalism given the

teachers' responsibility of imparting knowledge and skills to learners. On one level teacher motivation is related to a long list of variables including whether or not an enabling environment exists and whether or not teachers are equipped to conduct their responsibilities effectively. Davidson (2004) noted that however at the basic level teacher motivation is linked to how teachers feel they are being treated and to the way they perceive their own working and living conditions.

Motivation comes from the word motive. Gupta (2009) explained that a motive is anything that initiates or sustains activity. It is an inner state that energizes, activates or moves and that directs or channels behaviour towards certain goals. Gupta (2009) further argued that motivation is the process by which the efforts of an individual or group are energized and sustained toward attaining a goal. It involves a chain reaction starting with felt needs, resulting in motives, which raise tension (unfulfilled desires) which causes action towards goals. A motivation is force that deals with the reasons underlying behaviour.

It is said that a motivated teacher is a productive teacher, any kind of grievance relating to the school or personal to a greater extent has influence on the teaching job. Frase (1992) agreed that a motivated teacher is one who not only feels satisfied with his or her job but is empowered to strive for excellence and growth in instructional practice. If teachers are not motivated in their course of delivery, they do not take long in classroom activities that benefit learners instead take other jobs alongside teaching as a fulfilment of their frustration. Armstrong (2006) postulates that the head teacher, as a chief executive officer, needs to appreciate and recognize that good results are obtained through the people.

Demotivated teachers also tend to show signs of absenteeism, low productivity, committing mistakes and in most cases find excuses of not being at their workstation. Maicibi (2005) strongly submitted that effective management in these institutions is a necessary tool in improving an enabling working environment in which all workers work together as a team and as individuals towards the accomplishment of the organization's set goals. Pamela (2005) mentioned that highly motivated teachers are the key factors of a successful educational system. Any successful educational system depends on qualified and motivated teachers because motivated teachers have positive impacts of learners' learning, are able to create an appropriate classroom atmosphere, have reasonable control of their work activities, are willing to accept responsibility and are personally accountable for outcomes. Motivation involves energy and drive to learn, work effectively and achieve potential.

Anderson and Kaprianou (1994) pointed out three ways in which motivated teachers may make schools more effective. They noted that motivated teachers will always find better ways to do their job, are seriously concerned about quality and they do their best to ensure that the teaching and learning process takes place effectively in the school. It has been said that effective running of a school is dependent on the Head teacher as a leader. -Schools become what the heads of schools make them. Motivation is fundamental to teaching and learning because it assists to sustain behaviours that focus on improvement. Northouse (2016) states that when school head teachers exercise their leadership roles by motivating teachers, non-teachers, and students to realize their set goals, teachers feel motivated to teach and students feel motivated and encouraged to learn. Further when the school head maintains an enabling environment for learning, develops and shares the vision of the school with teachers and students, encourages team spirit, shows appreciation towards good performance by followers, demonstrates confidence in the capacity of followers to perform and initiates organizational change, this practice by the head teacher has the ability to bring about improved student academic achievement.

Statement of the Problem

Ndola district, located in the Copperbelt Province of Zambia, is home to a significant number of public secondary schools. Education in Zambia is a critical component of human capital development and the government is making substantial efforts to improve access and the quality of education. Despite these efforts, public secondary schools in Ndola district continue to face challenges in terms of learners' academic performance.

The academic performance of the learners in public secondary schools in Ndola district has been a major source of concern for the past four years (2016-2019), a few schools in the district have performed well while majority have had average performance culminating into just above average academic performance in the district as shown in Figure 1. Academic achievement, as reflected in the table below often falls below the desired standards. The Provincial Education Office on the Copperbelt has set a score of 75% and above as a standard score.

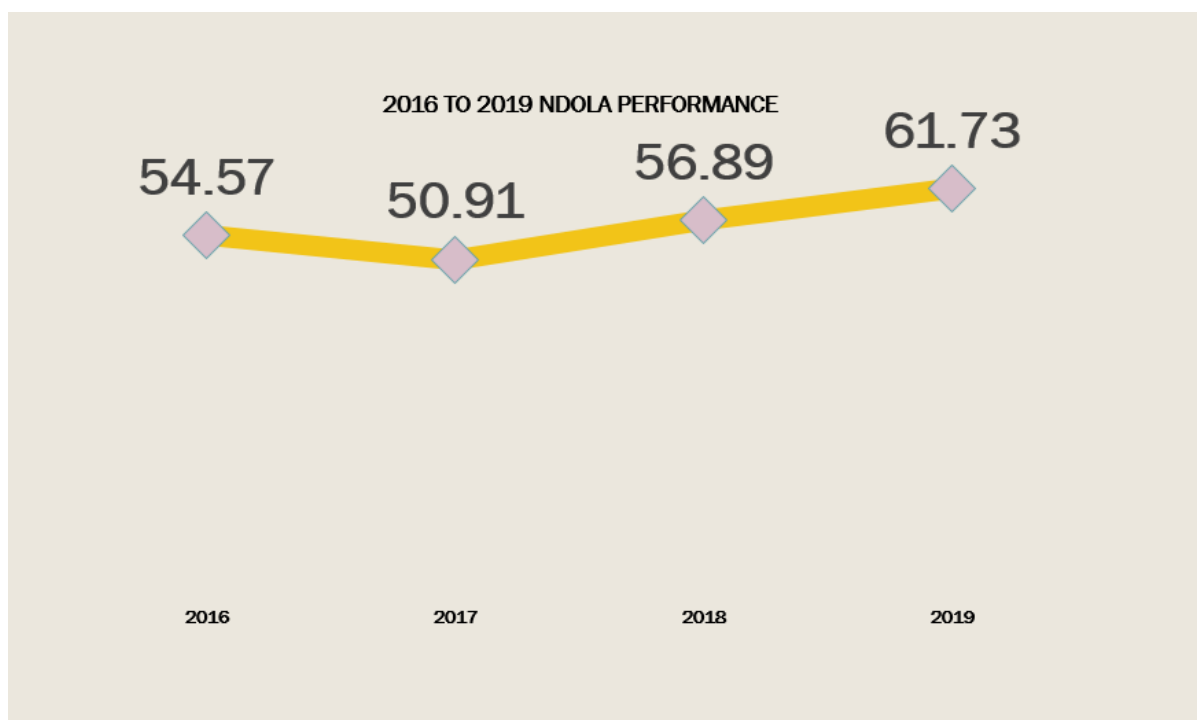


Figure 1: Source: Provincial education offices Copperbelt province-Zambia (2020)

The issue of poor or average academic performance in examinations signifies a critical impediment in any country since education is a major contributor to economic growth. Head teachers play a crucial role in the academic achievement in a school due to the various critical tasks and roles they perform. According to Musungu et al. (2008) the tactful fulfilment of the roles and consistent motivation of teachers determines the level of teacher input and student academic achievement. Mawala (2019) carried out a study on head teachers' motivational strategies on the Copperbelt, however, her study focused on the influence on teacher performance. This study therefore, set out to identify the influence of the head teachers' motivational strategies for teachers on the academic performance of learners in public secondary schools in Ndola district.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the influence of the head teachers' motivational strategies for teachers on the academic performance by learners in Ndola District in the Copperbelt province of Zambia.

Objective of the Study

To examine the influence of the head teachers' motivational strategies for teachers on the academic performance by learners in Public Secondary Schools in Ndola District.

Research Question

How does the head teachers' motivational strategies for teachers influence the academic performance for learner in public secondary schools in Ndola District?

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in the potential to understand the relationship between the motivational strategies the head teacher uses for teachers and academic performance by learners because this is crucial for the improvement and enhancement of the quality of education in Ndola district and in Zambia in general. The findings can inform strategies to improve the teaching and learning processes and therefore leading to better student outcomes. The findings of this study can also contribute to evidence-based educational policy formulation at the district and national levels. Policy makers can use the insights to develop guidelines and interventions that support effective instructional supervision in schools.

Review of Literature**School Leadership & Motivation**

School leadership is cardinal to learners' academic achievement. Besides the many tasks and challenges that school leaders are faced with such as; staff issues, budgetary matters, structural changes and parental concerns. In addition, the school leader is tasked with improving the academic achievement of all students (Hildebrand, 2012; Hughes & Jones, 2010). Tschannen-Moran (2011) state that even though the school leader is not directly involved in the delivery of instruction, his supportive, collegial, and not over restrictive behaviours can have a positive effect on students' academic achievements.

Hallinger (2010) supports this when he stated that school heads through their behaviours that build collaborative learning structures and the development of staff and community leadership capacities have indirect or mediated positive effects on students' academic achievement. Motivational school leaders behave in ways that motivate and inspire those around them by providing meaning to teachers and students' work. Motivation is fundamental because it assists to sustain behaviours that focus on improvement. The term motivation describes why a person does something. It is the driving force behind human actions. Motivation is the process that initiates, guides, and maintains goal-oriented behaviours.

Teacher's motivation is critical for learners' learning outcomes. According to Mendez (2011), teacher attitude is the dominant factor explaining teacher and school performance in their evaluation of a basic education project in Guatemala. While in East Africa, Anderson (2001) says that, teacher's motivation is key factor in enhancing teacher's commitment which in turn is an important determinant of specific learning outcomes. It is in this perspective that higher teacher motivation leads to positive educational learning outcomes. Northouse (2016) states that when school head teachers exercises their leadership roles by motivating teachers, non- teachers, and students to realize their set goals, teachers feel motivated to teach and students feel motivated and encouraged to learn. Further when the school head maintains an enabling environment for learning, develops and shares the vision of the school with teachers and students, encourages team spirit, shows appreciation towards good performance by followers, demonstrates confidence in the capacity of followers to perform and initiates organizational change, this practice by the head teacher has the ability to bring about improved student academic achievement.

Academic achievement connotes performance outcomes that show the extent to which a student has accomplished goals that were the focus of activities in instructional environments, specifically in a school environment, college and university (Steinmayr et al., 2015). In motivating teachers, one of the most important and appreciated motivation factor for teachers is providing training and development which can lead to many possible benefits for both individuals and organizations. According to Cole (2002) training can boost the employees' morale and enhance their confidence and motivation, and enhance employee's loyalty and subsequently increasing turn over.

Theoretical Framework

This study is guided by the Self-Determination Theory (SDT) and the Expectancy Value Theory. The SDT posits that individuals are intrinsically motivated when their psychological needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness are satisfied. In the context of this study, the head teacher's motivational strategies should be aligned with these needs in order to promote teacher motivation and, by extension, enhance learner academic performance. The Expectancy-Value Theory on the other hand suggests that motivation is influenced by the expectation of success and the value placed on the expected outcome. Head teachers' motivational strategies should aim to increase teachers' expectancy for success and emphasize the value of their role in improving students' academic performance.

Conceptual Framework

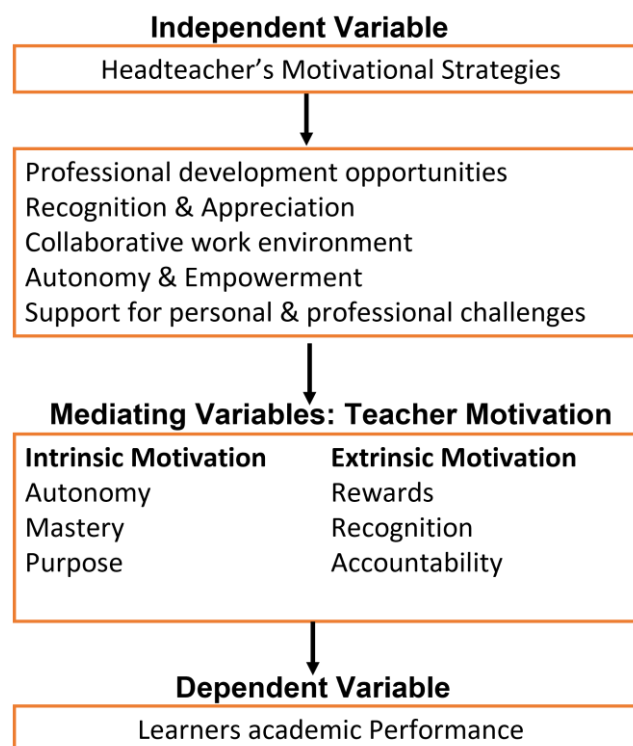


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework showing head teachers' motivational strategies for teachers and their effect on Learner academic performance

Source: Authors, 2023

This conceptual framework illustrates how head teachers' motivational strategies may influence teacher motivation, which in turn affects learners' academic performance.

Methodology

The study employed a descriptive survey research design which combined both qualitative and quantitative research methods to examine the influence of Head teachers' motivational strategies for teachers and their effect on academic performance of learners in public secondary schools in Ndola District. The sample included; head teachers, teachers, learners, and district education standards officer for Ndola district. Fourteen secondary schools were selected and the researcher used 289 respondents in the study. The researcher used random, stratified and purposive sampling to arrive at the fourteen Secondary schools in Ndola district which translated into 93% sample representation. The samples were stratified into two categories of teachers and learners and were randomly selected.

All the head teachers from the fourteen public Secondary Schools took part in the study and were purposively selected. The sample constituted 79 teachers, 189 grade 10 and 11 learners. The total number of the respondents was 279. In selecting the teachers, the researcher considered teachers who had stayed in the particular school more than three years. The grade 12 and 9 were excluded from the study as they were busy preparing for the examinations at the end of the year while the grade 8s were new in school. The grade 10 and 11 were selected due to the fact that they had stayed in school longer and had much exposure to learning in school. Focus group discussions guide, document analysis guide, in-depth semi-structured questionnaires and interview guides were used to obtain qualitative information.

Data analysis procedures employed in this study involved both qualitative and quantitative procedures. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages. In the same vein, quantitative data analysis required the use of a computer spread sheet, and for this reason the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used. Descriptive data such as frequencies, percentages were generated and presented into pie charts, frequency tables and bar graphs. The inferential statistics were computed in the study using correlation method. The correlations provided the strength and direction of relationship between head teachers' motivational strategies for teachers as independent variables and learner academic performance as the dependent variable. The qualitative data was analysed using content analysis by grouping the responses into themes according to the objective of the study.

Pilot Study

To ensure reliability and validity of instruments, the researcher pre-tested the questionnaires, focus group discussion and interview guides in one public secondary school in Ndola District which is among the 16 complete single secondary schools and was not included in final sample.

Findings of the Study

Teachers Motivation and its Effect on Learner Academic Performance

The objective of the study was to determine how strategies used by head teachers to motivate teachers affect learners' academic performance in public secondary schools in Ndola District. In this regard, the head teachers were requested to indicate the strategies they use to motivate teachers. The results are therefore, presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Strategies used to motivate teachers

Teachers motivation	Yes		No	
	F	%	F	%
Tours and visits	2	14.2	12	85.7
Recommendations for teacher promotion	14	100	0	0

Award teachers whose subjects have shown excellent performance in national examinations	14	100	0	0
Teachers tea break	10	71.4	2	12.5

All the head teachers indicated that the common ways of motivating teachers by head teachers was recommendation for teachers' promotion and awarding of teachers whose subjects have performed well. In the same manner, most of the head teachers provided the ten hours tea break. The rare method of motivating teachers was tours and visits.

To vary these findings, teachers were requested to answer a similar set of questions indicating how the head teachers motivated them. The results of the findings are indicated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Strategies used to motivate teachers

Teachers motivation	Yes		No	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Tours and visits	3	3.8	76	96.2
Recommendations for teachers promotion	79	100	0	0
Awards teachers whose subject have shown excellent performance in national examinations	68	86	11	13.9
Ten (10) hours tea break	55	69.6	24	30,3

Correspondingly, majority of the teachers indicated that recommendations for promotion and awarding of teachers for learner outstanding performance in national examination were the common ways of motivating teachers. Furthermore, on the aspect of motivation, teachers were also required to indicate whether the head teacher involves them in critical decision making in school academic matters.

The teachers involvement in critical decision making results are shown in Figure 2 below.

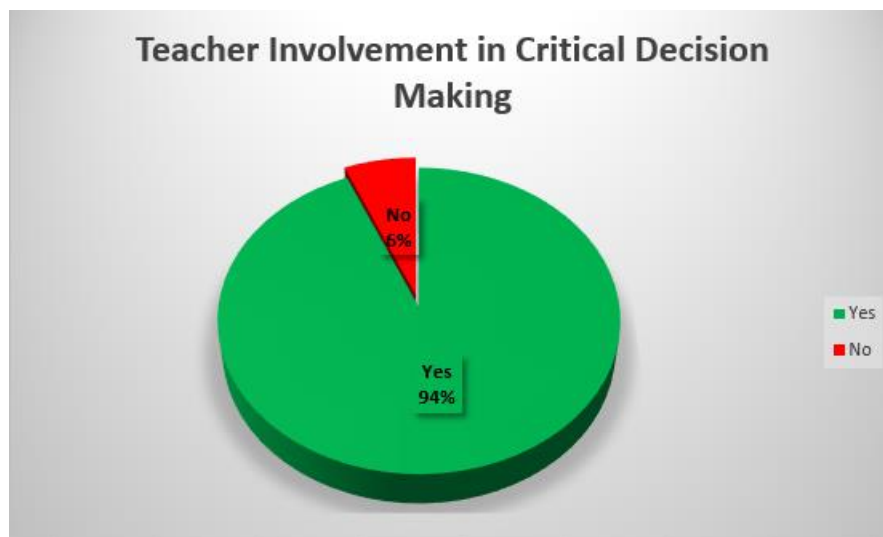


Figure 2: Teachers involvement in critical decision making

From the above figure, the findings revealed that majority of the teachers were involved in decision making in the school academic matters. However, 6 % indicated that they were not involved in critical decision making with regard to the impact of motivation of teachers. Both teachers and head teachers were requested to indicate what they felt was the effect of teachers'

motivation on learners' academic performance. The results are summarized as follows in the Table 3 below.

Table 3: Effects of the teachers' motivation on academic performance

RESPONDENTS	EFFECTS OF TEACHERS MOTIVATION	%
Head teacher	- Motivated teachers are able to deliver subject matter better.	97
	- Teachers compete amongst their subject by improving performance.	96
	- Enhance teacher's moral to teach.	98
	- Learners benefit from improved teacher-learner contact.	96
Teachers	- Teachers feel appreciated	100
	- Teachers benefit directly from incentives such as lunch, tea break and promotions and able to work well.	100

Impact of Teachers Motivation on Learner's Academic Performance

Teachers were requested to indicate the extent to which teachers' motivation impacted on learners' academic performance. In this regard a five Likert scale question was used. The results were as shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Impact of teachers' motivation on learners' academic performance

Item	Very great extent	Great extent	Neutral	Little extent	Very little extent
Teachers motivation	80%	10%	0	10%	0

The findings revealed that teachers' motivation had a positive influence or impact on the learners' academic performance to a very great extent according to the 80% score by the teachers. Further, 10% indicated that teachers' motivation impacted on learners' academic performance to a great extent, however, 10% indicated that teachers' motivation had impact on the academic performance of the learners to a little extent. This may be supported by the fact that 6% in Figure 2 of the teachers indicated that they were not involved in critical decision making as a form of motivation. The findings also are indicated and supported by the improved performance in Ndola District in 2019 when the district had attained 61.73 % as shown by the statistics from the Examinations Council of Zambia.

To further establish the impact or influence of teachers' motivation by head teachers, a Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed. Table 5 presents the results of Pearson's motivation and academic performance of learners and the results were presented below.

Correlation of Teachers' Motivation by Head Teachers and Learners' Academic Performance

Table 5: Results of correlation between teacher motivation and learner' academic performance

Year	Motivation Rate	Percentage Passing Rate	$X_1 - \bar{X}$	$Y_1 - \bar{Y}$	$(X_1 - \bar{X})(Y_1 - \bar{Y})$
2016	60	54.73	-5.75	-1.455	8.36625
2017	64	50.91	-1.75	-5.115	8.95125
2018	68	56.89	2.25	0.865	1.94625
2019	71	61.73	5.25	5.705	29.95125

$$\bar{X}=65.75 \quad \bar{Y} = 56.025$$

$$\sum(X_i - \bar{X})(Y_i - \bar{Y}) = 49.215$$

$$COV(X,Y) = \frac{\sum(X_i - \bar{X})(Y_i - \bar{Y})}{N - 1} = \frac{49.215}{4 - 1}$$

$$COV(X,Y) = 16.405$$

$$r = \frac{COV(X,Y)}{S_X S_Y} \quad \text{where } S_X \text{ \& } S_Y \text{ are the simple standard deviation of X \& Y respectively}$$

$$S_X = 4.7871 \quad S_Y = 4.5305$$

$$r = \frac{16.405}{4.7871 \times 4.5305}$$

$$r = 0.76$$

Findings from Qualitative Data

Qualitative data was obtained through face to face interview with head teachers, teachers, learners and parent representatives. Focus group discussion were also conducted with learners and teachers. The responses from the interviews were written down and categorized and presented according to themes.

Findings from the Head Teachers

The head teacher has a duty to motivate the teachers. In a group discussion with the teachers, most head teachers do motivate teachers in one way or another. One group from one participating school had to say this, *"We are highly motivated by the head teacher as we are provided with breakfast....you do not need to eat breakfast from home."* Another one in the same group said, *"in addition to that, we are rewarded if your teaching subject produces good results in any form such as money and other things and not only that we are accommodated within the school you do not need to worry about rentals."* However, the other groups from other participating schools said that; *"Yes, head teachers do motivate us in a small way."*

The head teachers almost in all the participating schools responded that they do motivate the teachers. One head teacher came out and said;

"Though it is hard to motivate teachers but I do try to motivate them within our means as a school because resources are scares, but I do try anyway."

On the other hand another teacher said;

"I do try to motivate the teachers by way of recommending them for promotion though it takes centuries to be confirmed by TSC which works against our effort to motivate teachers..... I feel government should do something."

Teachers' Views

"We are highly motivated by the head teacher as we are provided with breakfast....you do not need to eat breakfast from home." Another one in the same group said, *"in addition to that, we are rewarded if your teaching subject produces good results in any form such as money and other things and not only that we are accommodated within the school you do not need to worry about rentals."* However, the other groups from other participating schools said that; *"Yes head teachers do motivate us in a small way."*

Findings from the DESO

On the aspect of teacher motivation DESO indicated that all head teachers are now encouraged to motivate teachers, *"We do encourage head teachers to motivate teachers in whichever way."*

Discussion of the Findings

With regard to the objective of the study, the findings revealed that teachers' motivation has a direct positive bearing on learners' academic performance through improved subject matter delivery, health composition among teachers based on the subject they teach. Teachers' motivation also enhances teachers' moral and increase teacher – learner contact subsequently on learners' academic performance. Further, teachers also feel appreciated and benefit directly from incentives and are able to work well hence influencing positively on the learners' academic performance.

In an interview with DESO on teachers' motivation, DESO indicated that head teachers are encouraged to motivate teachers through recommending well deserving and performing teachers for promotions, taking tours and involving them in critical decision of school academic matters. While head teachers have been motivating teachers through recommendations for promotions, tours involvement of teachers in critical decision-making matters have not been fully attained. This has been due to delayed confirmation by the teaching service commission and sometimes internal frictions. The findings of the study are supported by the reviewed literature stating that, head teachers' motivation strategies include awarding teachers whose subjects' pupils performed well. The findings further revealed that one other way of motivating teachers was by recommending them for promotion and providing teachers with incentives. This finding is fully supported by Guajardo (2011), who observed that teachers' motivation factors include provision of monetary or non-monetary awards to well performing teachers. This may include housing, food, sometimes stipends and commendation for exemplary performance.

Further the study found that 88% of teachers stated that they are involved in critical decision making as means of empowering and motivating them. These findings correspond with Guajardo (2011) that involving of teachers in critical decision making in day to day management of the school is also part of teachers' motivation. The study also found out that teachers' motivation has a positive influence on learners' academic performance through improved content delivery, health competition among teachers based on the subjects they teach. Maseka (2019) supports this by stating that provision of direct assistance to teachers, group development, professional development, curriculum development and action research activities are essential to the realization of pedagogical effectiveness. The finding is also supported by Anderson (2001) who indicated that teachers' motivation is key factor in enhancing teachers' commitment which in turn is an important determinant of learning outcomes. To further establish the impact or influence of teachers' motivation by head teachers, a Pearson's correlation coefficient was computed, the results of Table 5 indicate that teachers' motivation had an effect on learners' academic performance in Ndola District. The correlation coefficient variables was 0.76 which is close to 1 showing a strong relationship between teachers' motivation and learners' academic performance. It therefore follows that teacher's motivation by the head teachers is key as far as learners' academic performance is concerned. Hallinger (2010) supports this when he stated that school heads through their behaviours that build collaborative learning structures and the development of staff and community leadership capacities have indirect or mediated positive effects on students' academic achievement.

Conclusion

On the practice of teacher motivation by the head teacher; the study found that, head teachers do motivate teachers in one way or another. In some instances head teachers do motivate teachers by recommending them for promotion though it takes long to be confirmed. The other head teachers motivate teachers by awarding them incentives such as tea break, monetary awards for producing good results in the teaching subject. Furthermore, the study found that there is a strong relationship between teachers' motivation and learners' academic

performance as shown by the coefficient correlation of 0.76. Therefore, it is concluded that, teacher motivation has a positive impact on the learners' academic performance through the motivation of teachers by head teachers. Motivated teachers provided better delivery of content to the learners.

Recommendations

The study recommends that head teachers should use more strategies to motivate teachers because this will enhance the performance of teachers and thereby affecting the teaching and learning positively.

Recommendation for Future Research

This study recommends that further research could be done in other districts of Zambia to ascertain whether the same trend of learners' academic performance exist.

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