

# Teachers' perceptions on the causes of poor academic performance of grade 12 learners in four selected schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia

By

E.L. Maemeko

*University of Namibia (emaemeko@unam.na)*

D. Nkengbeza

*University of Namibia (dnkengbeza@unam.na)*

M.L. Ntabi

*University of Namibia (mntabi@unam.na)*

## Abstract

*Grade 12 learners in most Senior Secondary Schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia continue to perform poorly in both the International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) and the Higher International General Certificate of Secondary Education (HIGCSE) final examination. The purpose of this study is to investigate the poor academic performance of the grade 12 learners in four selected Senior Secondary Schools in two circuits in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. The main research question is: What are the main causes of the low academic performance in the selected schools? Qualitative research method was used in this study. The study involves four Senior Secondary Schools with five teachers from each School including their principals and one deputy principal or head of department. Two of the four schools were from a rural area and the other two were from an urban area. The data was collected using interviews and document review. The analysis consisted of coding and then categorizing data into manageable themes, identifying and isolating what was important to note, what we learned and what we could report on in this research. Our findings are that among factors that might have caused the poor academic performance of grade 12 learners in the four selected schools are: lack of discipline in schools, learners lack motivation, English as a medium of instruction, poor learning environment, learners' admission level coupled with limited support from parents, unqualified subject teachers and lack of teaching-learning resources among others.*

**Key words:** Teachers' perceptions, academic performance, shebeens, circuits, medium of instruction

## Introduction

The introduction of Universal Primary Education (UPE) in Namibia in 2013 has led to vital educational achievements in many schools in Namibia especially in the lower grades (1 to 4) (Namupala, 2013). Enrolments in public schools where such funds have been introduced increased significantly. Of late our education system has become an examination-oriented, where passing examinations especially in the externally examined grades (grades 10 and 12) is the only benchmark for performance because there is less monitoring of learning achievements at other levels within the education cycle (Simasiku, Kasanda & Smit, 2015). It is generally agreed that the most important manifestations of quality education have to do with literacy, cognitive abilities, performance and progression to higher levels of learning (Reche, Bundi, Riungu & Mbugua, 2012). There is reliance on scores and transition rates as core measures of achievement. According to Maiyo (2009), examinations are generally acceptable as valid measures of achievement. Although our government has fully funded basic education, performance in most of our public schools shows that learners that are making transition to top schools within the country are from private schools; this creates inequality to access opportunities to national and top performing schools in the country (Ngugi, 2007). This also creates fear and assumptions that quality education can only be obtainable in private schools than in public schools.

## Background of the study

The Katima Mulilo and Sibbinda circuits where the four secondary schools were selected for this study are found in the Zambezi Region of Namibia. Zambezi (then Caprivi) Region is one of Namibia's eight educational regions situated in the far north-east of the country. The process of upgrading formerly disadvantaged schools in Namibia have been going on for the past twenty six years and yet learner performance as measured by their examination results leaves much to be desired (Nekaro, 2001).

Before Namibian independence in 1990, few children went to school. Of those who did, many did not get far with their schooling as black children were mainly prepared for domestic and vocational jobs (MoE, 1993). Education was thus meant to prepare black people for menial or low level jobs that the Germans and the South African rule required - except for a very small number of people who were to become messengers, clerks and other functionaries in the administrative system (ibid,1993). Basic literacy and numeracy were considered sufficient. However, as time went on,

few Namibians managed to secure more advanced education, often in mission schools or schools outside the country. Despite the bitter and sour history of education that Namibia suffered from, a different pattern began to emerge gradually in educational provision for the different ethnic group (Nekaro, 2001).

In order to make the colonial government of separate education more effective, the South African government divided Namibia into ten ethnic homelands (Cohen, 1994)). In 1973, during the Odendaal Commission, Caprivi (now Zambezi) was among the proclaimed self-governing homelands with Katima Mulilo as its town and administrative center (Cohen, 1994).

The independence of Namibia in 1990 brought a new vision for education in Namibia. Policy makers believed that the historically uneven and unequal distribution of educational resources among communities and schools resulted in differential achievement rates across communities and schools (MEC, 1992). This article investigates what reasons should be accounted for Grade 12 learners' low academic performance, 26 years after Namibia's independence.

### Problem statement and research questions

The low academic performance in schools has been a subject of great controversy among researchers (Simasiku, Kasanda & Smit, 2015); (Reche, Bundi, Riungu & Mbugua, 2012) and (Nekaro 2001) across Africa.

Table 1 NSSC Ordinary/Higher Level examination results (Zambezi Region) from 2013 to 2016

Year	Total number of learners	Total number passed	Total number failed	Percentage passed
2013	1192	219	973	18.3%
2014	1074	151	923	14.5%
2015	1130	343	787	30.4%
2016	1311	234	1077	17.8%

Source: Directorate of national examination and assessment, Katima Mulilo

As it can be seen from table one above, learners performance in grade 12 NSSC results only ranged from 14.5% to 30.4% from 2013 to 2016. This study therefore seeks to understand why grade 12 learners are not performing academically in four selected schools in the Zambezi Region. Common

observations in the school system show that all stakeholders within the sector points to each other as being responsible for this mediocre performance.

**Research questions:** The main research question in this study is: What are the causes for poor academic performance of grade 12 learners in the four schools? This study seeks answers to this research question.

### Literature review

The low academic performance among the grade 12 learners in Namibia has become a matter of concern in schools since independence. The government has ensured that all the educational resources including school fees are catered for (Namupala, 2013). Many learners perform poorly in their grade 12 examinations in the Zambezi Region. This is what has prompted this study to critically look at the possible factors that causes the poor academic performance in the selected schools in Zambezi Region of Namibia. Some Namibians like Simasiku, Kasanda and Smit (2015) have explained that teachers and learners were not so conversant enough to teach and learn school subjects through the English medium. Furthermore, they have attributed learners' poor performance in examinations to factors such as the continuous use of English as the medium of instructions in every subject, lacking the teaching-learning resources and lack of motivation among others (Simasiku, Kasanda & Smit, 2015).

The situation has become so stressful and frustrating to the education ministry, parents and even to learners themselves. In the Zambezi Region, the situation has become so confusing to an extent that there is a 'blame game' or 'finger pointing' to each other as being the main culprits for this poor academic performance situation. More on this issue was a study carried out by Usman and Sa'ad (2014) on the low performance of learners in Dutse Metropolis of Jigawa State Nigeria which revealed that teachers have a great role to play when it comes to the learning of learners. This study explained that some teachers do teach in their vernacular in an attempt to accommodate those learners who are unable to grasp what is being taught in English without knowing that they are damaging the intellectual growth of such learners.

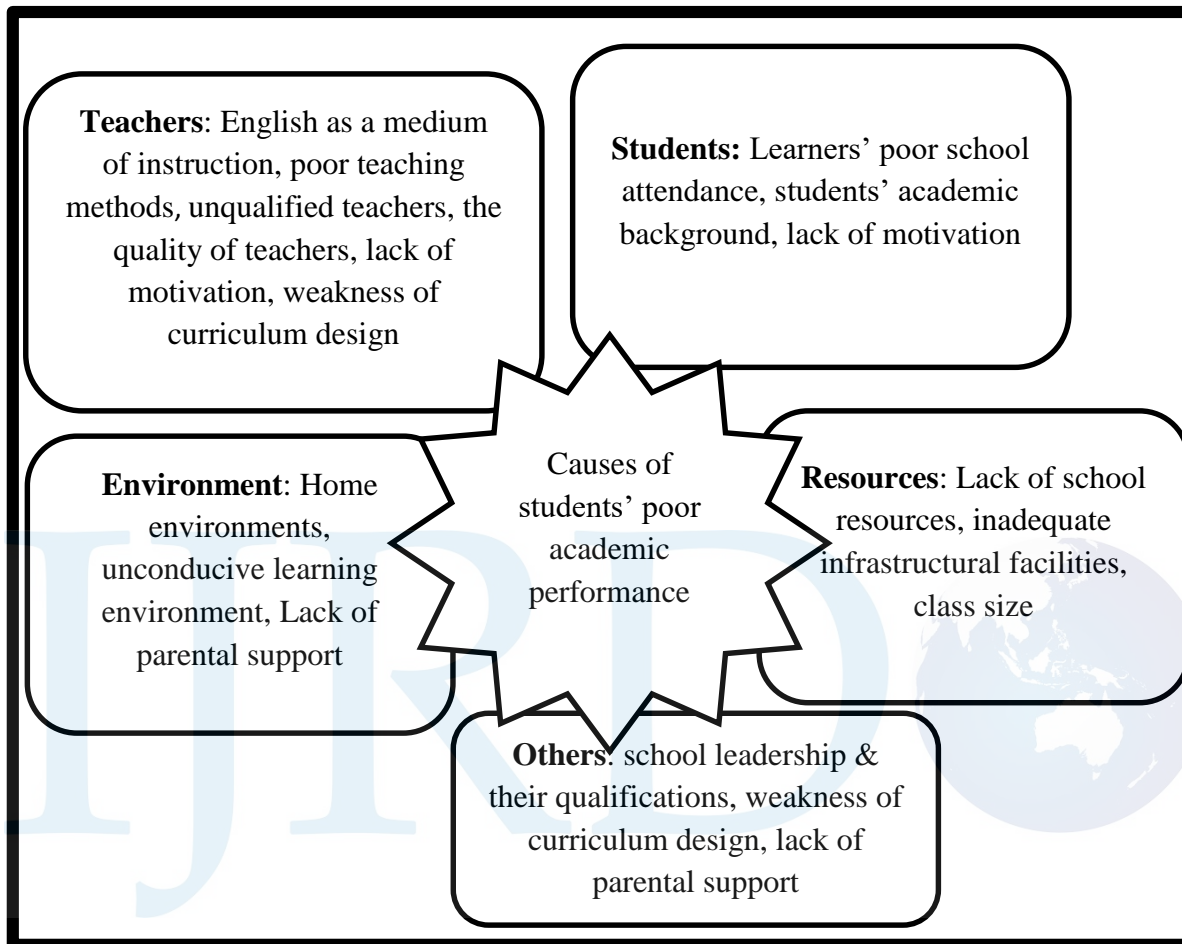
The fact that there aren't available enough qualified teachers in various subjects across the curriculum is another problem. Inadequate infrastructural facilities and Instructional Media were also found by the same study as being some of the main causes of poor academic performance in

the schools. Sa'ad (2007) was of the view that teaching and learning takes place effectively when classes are moderate, meaning they are well resourced and they are according to the acceptable number of students per class. Some reasons that may have caused the poor performance could be poor attitudes of some teachers in lacking the innovative ways of approaching lessons especially in mathematics and science as Saad (2007:1) puts it "It is obvious that successful teaching and learning takes place when right teaching methods are used by the teachers"

Abdulganiyu (2010) and Usman, (2012) contended that provision of enough instructional media/materials, qualified teachers as well as conducive classrooms will assist a lot in improving the performance of secondary schools students. Also sharing similar sentiments is Sam, Mohamad and Leong (2013) who also observed that many reasons that caused learners' poor performance include weakness of curriculum design, lack of qualified teachers in some instances and lack of learning motivation especially from learners' side. John and Ehow (2011) also agrees with Sam, Mohamad and Leong (2013) saying: problems of learning derived from many different factors from different environment such as school resources, class size and the quality of teachers and the school attendance of learners.

Souvannasy, Masashi and Yukiko (2008) identify that teaching and learning implementation still have shortages of textbooks and unqualified teachers and also unstandardized curriculum. While this is in mind, both teachers and learners are seriously encouraged to work hard by putting strategies in their learning as this can assist them as other ways of looking at learning rather than just coming to school daily but with focus on strategies that should show them the way to learn. According to Ting (2009) learners can overcome their weaknesses in some learning styles if there are suitable training and learning strategies that would influence their learning achievements. A student's performance in any examination is dependent on many variables such as: the type of school and its facilities, the qualification of teachers, the learners' academic background and the environment from which they come from, the type of leadership provided by head teachers and their qualifications, and parental support (Njagi & Amukowa, 2013).

## Conceptual framework of grade 12 learners' poor academic performance



**Figure 1 Poor academic performance of grade 12 learners – conceptual framework**

The conceptual framework for the poor academic performance of grade 12 learners is sub-divided into four main categories: the teachers, learners, environment, the lack of resources and others. Teachers are blamed for the poor performance of learners because they use English as a medium of instruction, poor teaching methods, some are unqualified, some lack quality and motivation (Simasiku, Kasanda & Smit, 2015; Usman & Sa'ad, 2014; Abdulganiyu, 2010; Usman, 2012). Learners are blamed for poor school attendance, poor academic background and lack of motivation (Abdulganiyu, 2010; Usman, 2012; John & Ehow, 2011). Other writers like Sam, Mohamad and Leong (2013) believe that learners perform poorly because the resources are not available to support them. Limited school financial resources may result to inadequate school infrastructural facilities, limited classrooms and an increase in class size, and limited text books and other



resources for both learners and teachers (John & Ehow, 2011; Njagi & Amukowa, 2013; Ting, 2009). Other factor which do contribute to poor learners performance include poor school leadership and their qualifications, weakness of curriculum design and lack of parental support (Sam, Mohamad and Leong, 2013; Njagi & Amukowa, 2013; Ting, 2009).

## Research Method

The study followed a qualitative approach. This enabled the collection of rich data that contributed to a deeper understanding of the low academic performance phenomenon in the four selected secondary schools (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001).

Schools selection: The study was carried out in four senior secondary schools in the Zambezi Region of Namibia - two rural and two urban. The selection of these schools was done in order to get the perceptions of teachers in urban and rural areas (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001; Hitchcock & Hughes, 2007).

## Data collection method

Interviews and document review were the major data collection methods. A total of five teachers including their principals and deputies or heads of department were interviewed in the four selected schools. These teachers were selected on the basis that they were all teaching grade 12 classes hence they are well vested with all what is happening in the grade 12 classrooms. A focus group discussion and an interview guide were used in the data collection.

## Data analysis

The analysis consisted of coding similar text from all the interviewees and then categorizing the data into manageable themes, identifying and isolating what was important to note, what we learned and what we could report on in this research. In this article, we have used T for teacher, P for principal and S for school. The names of participants and schools have been kept anonymous and we have only used S1, S2, S3, S4 and T1, T2 ... T5 and P1, P2, P3.

## Presentation of findings

Among the major findings are learners' lack of motivation, lack of discipline, lack of resources, English as a medium of instruction, poor learning environment, and the problematic learners' admission level, learner pregnancy policy, unqualified subject teachers and other factors.

### Lack of motivation

The lack of motivation by the learners was echoed by many interviewees. One of interviewees (T1S1) explained that according to what he has observed, learners do not know the reason they are in school.

*This is noticeable when they come for their lessons. They do not care, they just make noise continuously and the supervisors have to tell them to keep quiet. In our time, you were told once by the principal on the assembly and you take it from there (T1, S1).*

According to him, it is also demoralizing for teachers because there is no way a teacher will be promoted with learners who are not disciplined and motivated (T1 S1). It makes them fail (interrupted by T2S1). “I don’t know if our learners know the reason why they are here” (T2S2). They are in examinations but they make noise and do not study - may be they lack motivation (T2S2). Another teacher in school number three linked poor performance to student dropout in the following explanation:

*The lack of motivation seems to explain why we are encountering learners’ dropout. Once some of the learners are in grade 12, they simply dropout after registering for their examination – these learners are counted as registered but they dropout and have not prepared for the exam (T1, S3).*

I think our learners are not motivated and self-disciplined (P3, S3). Another teacher from school four explained that our learners do not love their fields of study especially those doing Social Science. He believed that learners only enroll for other fields like History because they cannot have their intended fields. Learners who fail mathematics at grade 10 level remain unmotivated and do not get much help at grade 12 and subsequently fail (T1, S4). Teacher 2 from school 4 confirms that learners have negative attitude towards school in general (T2S4). “The sizes of our classrooms are now unbearable making it difficult for the teacher to control and help every student as it is required” (T4S4).

### Lack of discipline

“Lack of discipline in our school is one of the reasons that contribute to poor academic performance - that is what I think” (T2S1). Some of the learners when they are in class, they make noise using bad words to fellow learners - even insulting teachers. They misbehave even when you caution them not to do what they are doing (coughing). For example, if a teacher goes to the class and some learners are disturbing I don’t think learners will get what they want. Indiscipline is also



a problem, our learners are not well disciplined, the Ministry of education leaves a lot of room for our learners to do whatever they want (T4, S3).

### **Lack of resources**

Lack of resources is another issue, for example in English we have one prescribed English text book which is shared by all the learners in the class (T2 S1). There are not enough textbooks in schools and we do not also have computers with internet. “May be I will blame authors for books also. You will find that this year they bring this book and next year it is another” (T2 S2). Textbooks nowadays are outdated; examiners from different parts of the country dictate the whole memorandum and it contributes to learners’ failure (T3, S2). Our schools are not so well funded but sometimes the money is being returned to treasury without being utilized for educational resources in schools (T4, S2). We don’t have resources, (textbooks) for example Silozi has only one textbook for all the learners (T3, S3). Prescribed textbooks are limited and sometimes with different answers. Our science laboratories are not well resourced so learners cannot learn much of the practical work and subsequently fail (P4, S4).

### **English as a medium of instruction**

The language policy is also contributing in a way because learners are taught in Silozi and in grade 12 they expect us to teach them in English, so there is no consistence (T3, S3). With the issue of reading, most learners don’t read at all. “When it comes to reading, they cannot. Our learners also have a shallow vocabulary on how to utilize the content they had initially read” (T3 S4). The other point is that English as a subject is done in schools without a literature component. Learners cannot express themselves in English during school hours (T3 S4). English as a medium of instruction is also a problem; learners don’t communicate in English and their reason is that “English is not their mother tongue” (T2, S1). The principal of school one suggested that mother tongue should be taught as a subject and the use of English as a medium of instruction should start from grade one (P1S1).

### **Poor learning environment**

To add on what my colleagues have said, our learners are involved in so many things inside and outside the school like alcohol so it is difficult to concentrate in their school work. “Even when you try to punish them it is like they are not punished, in fact they enjoy it” (laughing - T3, S1). As day learners are more than borders, it becomes difficult to control the day learners. The other

issue with our day learners is that they are coming from far and because they are not accommodated in the hostel, they rent in nearby villages so it becomes difficult for us to control them. Where they are renting, their landlords/ladies cannot control them because they are paying them money and that is their interest only. Some learners do not attend studies in the afternoon. Some of the learners are married, how do we control them. Some parents are not serious with their children. Some of them don't know where their children are. The children are neither at school nor at home with their parents – “So where do we find them so that we can teach them” (T3S4)? In my case (T3S4) if I am a parent I should know where my child is. I should invest my power to the landlord to take care of my child. The other point is parents don't come for meetings, the management will communicate to parents through letters or radio but they don't come. It is disappointing at this time in the year you cannot find a grade 12 learner in the weekends studying alone. The environment also is contributing. These days there are so many shebeens. A shebeen as used in this context is an informal licensed or unlicensed drinking place usually in a private house or establishment. Looking at the current situation there are bars everywhere and their targeted customers are our learners (T3S2). My first comment is on the environment, we have a sewerage and water problem. Learners in the hostel cannot wash their dishes or bath because there is no water (T3S2). The classrooms are overcrowded; we don't have a classroom for each grade (T3S3). There are also too many shebeens around the squatter compounds nowadays (T4S4). More to that I think the involvement of some stakeholders like Advisory teachers (Subject advisors) and parents is somehow lacking. Subject advisors should really assist teachers by visiting them and helping on subjects' content teaching in classrooms instead of just checking the preparation files for teachers (T4 S3).

### **Problematic learners' admission level**

Adding on what my colleagues have said, I can also add that our learners used to be serious in grade 10 but when they reach grade 11 they relax because they know it is marked by their teachers. The other thing is that “our admission level is problematic; we always take rejects from other schools in order to boost the enrolment” (P1, S1). Furthermore, we do not have Heads of departments in the languages department, who could control that department.

The principal of one school explained that the recruitment of children in grade 8 and the marks they come with from grade 7 are good but the child can't even speak English. “It is a big contributor to our academic failure. May be we may not blame teachers but the system that allows children to

be taught in their mother tongue” (P2, S2). Automatic transfer policy is one reason also, “I have one boy in my class who cannot read and write well. How do you expect such a learner to pass in grade 12?” (T3, S3). The other point is that we always receive learners to grade 11 and 12 who are rejects from other schools and you cannot refuse them admission because the authorities will command you to enroll them (T2, S4).

### **Learner pregnancy policy**

The policy on learner pregnancy is also a problem. After the learner had delivered and she comes back to school, she is no longer a learner but a parent and by that time she had lost what others had learnt. When it comes to commitment, both learners and teachers’ commitment are questionable. I do agree that teachers are committed but if nothing is coming out of the result, I will question the commitment for both teachers and learners (P1, S1).

Learner pregnancy is also a problem. They had to go for checkups and so forth, while she goes for delivery, learning goes on (T1, S3). According to a teacher in school four (T3S4),

*The pregnancy policy also affects our results because children don’t have much time studying or revising their work but will resort much time to their antenatal visits to the hospital or clinic. After delivery, she will be expected to come to school and continue meanwhile she missed all the time when teaching was going on during the year, who do you blame? (T3, S4).*

### **Lack of competition from private schools**

Lack of private schools is a daunting issue in our region. It is difficult for us to be at the same level with other regions with good private schools. “I worked at a private school, ‘God Cares’ and those learners are very good [even more] than our grade 12” (T1, S2).

### **Unqualified teachers**

We have unqualified teachers in our school. You would find someone specializing in accounting but teaching mathematics. “The system of recruitment is on sentimentalism for example because he/she is related to this one, then we can give him the job - that is the problem” (T3S3). People are on the system for money because the Education ministry pays well. Our advisory teachers (ATs) are not so helpful, looking at our education system they are promoting people who are not performing, so it is demoralizing to teachers (T3S3).

### Other factors

Some of our learners here are supposed to be in special school. When you give an activity these learners are very slow so you need to wait for them to finish and it drags the whole class backward. Favoritism is also a problem, for example a teacher who is not performing well can be promoted and the teacher who is performing is not promoted by so doing teachers becomes demoralized and learners fail (T2S3).

Appointments of teachers are late because noticeboards are used as modes of advertisement. You cannot expect someone from Oshakati to see the advertisement on the noticeboards in Katima Mulilo (P3S3). The unnecessary demands from the Regional Office are another problem but the department of education officials doesn't see it. They say a teacher must give homework every day. "When do you have time for remedial teaching?" (P3S3). The lack of vision from the leadership of the region is also to be blame. Principal 3 expressed his views in this rhetorical question "If you promote only your friends to senior positions, where is your vision? And what do you want to achieve? Automatic transfers are a serious challenge; most learners we transfer to grade 12 have less than 12 points. You will find that even learners from the Namibian College of Open Learning (NAMCOL) who have been at home for many years are being taken to formal classrooms. Lack of monitoring from school managers, I think we as principals should be relieved from teaching so that we can concentrate much on our managerial work (P3, S3).

The choices between "core" and "extended" is also a problem because learners cannot be allowed to enroll for an "extended" level because of their symbols or grades. "Extended" and "core" are Namibian grading scales for grade 12 learners where learners are allowed to enroll for any of them depending on their capabilities. "Extended" is a higher level while "core" is equated to a lower level. Core level choice in some subjects like English is only allowed to be taken by some learners whose previous symbols are higher since this is regarded by many teachers as a difficult level than "core" level. But if all learners were allowed entry in this level, they would increase on their points as learners are allowed to get an "A" grade in "extended" level than of course in "core" where the highest symbol would be a "C". Because "core" level is disadvantaging learners so much, I feel it should be taken out from our secondary schools. Teachers have too many supervisors from the top, you talk of the HOD, Principal, Advisory teachers, Inspector of education even the Director himself and at the end you really don't know as to who you really report to and you

become so stressed. Placement of the grade 11 learners should be left to schools to do and not the regional office (T2, S4). Learners don't understand the meaning of school or studies. All they are doing now is joining the music industry hoping to make a quick living. You can see that almost each and every one is now an artist (T4S1). The problem with the education directorate is that they are just pointing fingers instead of working together with teachers in schools in order to assist them (T4, S1).

### **Suggestions for the improvement of grade 12 learners' examination performance**

Advertisements for new teaching vacancies should not be pasted on noticeboards for the regional office – It should rather be put in Newspapers like The Namibian, New Era and others so as to give an opportunity for everyone willing to apply for such positions to do so. Regional examination papers must be stopped or improved on because these are just taken straight from the booklets. Learners are just memorizing the exam booklets knowing that it is where question papers are being taken from without paying attention to what teachers teach.

Parents must be encouraged to provide their kids with materials like calculators, textbooks, stationeries, and support. Every child needs these additional resources to improve performance. The hostel accommodations should be increased in capacity so that they could accommodate most of the learners. Promotion and transfers of teachers during the year usually leave learners with no teachers for months or even till the end of the year. All promotions and transfers should be done at the end of the year. This will help to keep teachers in classrooms for the benefit of the learners. “Teachers and learners should be motivated by, for example promotion, rewards and money”. It is interesting to see how rewards are separated from money.

Teachers' accommodation should be looked at. One cannot expect a teacher to complete all his/her school work demands if there is no electricity and he lives in a hut with no windows. We should come up with better ways to help pregnant learners. When learners are away during their maternity leave, they miss classes and many of them do not cover-up before examinations. The pregnancy policy clearly stipulates how the designated teacher, social worker and parents should help the pregnant learner, but there seems to be a lack of implementation (Legal-Assistance, 2008).

## Discussion

**Problems with English as the medium of instructions:** It was discovered that one of the major issues leading to poor school performances in the schools is the continuous usage of English as medium of instructions and communication by many teachers. This disadvantaged most learners as some were too shy to say anything in English in fear of being laughed at so most teachers proceeded with their lessons without realizing that some learners were not following for a long time.

**Unqualified teachers:** The findings also indicated that lack of qualified subject teachers was a major concern therefore schools relied on other teachers who specialized in other fields to assist in such subjects where assistance was much needed. Coupled with this was the issue of teaching-learning resources in the schools especially those located in rural areas. These findings have also been emphasized by other researchers like Simasiku, Kasanda and Smit (2015). Sa'ad (2007) also observed that poor attitudes of some teachers in lacking innovative ways of approaching lessons especially in mathematics and science lessons were also among the reasons found to be responsible for poor academic performance in the four schools. At some point, a teacher will be required to write a test on the chalkboard as there are no photocopying machines and other resources.

**Inadequate infrastructural facilities:** In three of the four schools visited, there were a shortage of classroom blocks and learners had to squeeze in a class or pitching tents on the school grounds. A normal classroom according to the ministry of education's directive should accommodate twenty five learners. Whenever a classroom has exceeded a normal carrying capacity of twenty five learners, participation of learners and group work discussions in such a class becomes a nightmare. More so was the fact that two of these four schools visited, are without hostels or the hostels are unable to accommodate all the learners and as a consequence the unaccommodated learners have to rent huts in nearby villages (in the case of one school in a rural area) while the other one in town, learners are just commuting from their parents' homes mainly in informal settlements. Sam, Mohamad and Leong (2013) have also observed that many reasons that cause learners' poor performance include: Inadequate infrastructural facilities and lack of learning motivation especially from learners' side.

**Home environment:** The study revealed that unfavorable home environment as well as family backgrounds, devotion of time on chores at home especially with those not in hostel, poor or no



lighting at all in some cases, bad company and absenteeism were found to be among the factors responsible for learners' poor academic performance especially in the three schools visited (Njagi & Amukowa, 2013).

It seems the student pregnancy policy is not well implemented in the selected schools. A teacher should provide counselling or the student should be directed to a social worker who will provide the counselling. According to the Legal-Assistance (2008),

*Counselling should include developing an understanding of the need for ante-natal care and of the options that are open to her once the infant is born, and also of the sort of support to which she is entitled from the father of the child or his family. Referral to a social worker should be made where this service is available (P 4).*

In one of the schools the pregnant learner leaves school and return after she has given birth. Teachers blame parents for lack of cooperation as some parents fail to attend meetings or when they are called up. Learner's pregnancy policy in Namibia is well documented; the problem seems to be that not all the stakeholders including parents and the school administration are implementing these policies as required.

## **Conclusion**

For the selected schools to improve their grade 12 academic performance, the effort of all the stakeholders is needed including learners, teachers, parents, and officials at the department of education. While it is important that the reasons for the low performance and suggestions for improvement should be reviewed, we should equally suggest that learners' performance improvement strategies in Limpopo in South Africa should be followed. In this situation schools should be clustered according to their geographical proximity and learners meet every Saturday to receive additional lectures from appointed reputable teachers (Nyathi, 2006). It is also our suggestion that some lecturers at the University of Namibia Katima Mulilo Campus should also be involved in order to improve on content presentation. It is suggested that other studies should be conducted in the whole of the Zambezi Region and even the whole Namibia to understand the factors responsible for the low performance of the grade twelve learners.

## REFERENCES

- Clegg, J. (2007). Moving towards bilingual education in Africa. In H. Coleman (Ed.), 7th International language and development conference. (pp. 1-14). Addis Ababa: British Council.
- Cohen, C. (1994). Administering Education in Namibia: the colonial period to the present. Namibia Scientific Society. Windhoek
- John, L. & Ehow, C. (2011). Factors Affecting quality of English Language Teaching and Learning. Retrieved from [http://www.ehow.com/info\\_8040040\\_factors-english-language-teaching-learning.html](http://www.ehow.com/info_8040040_factors-english-language-teaching-learning.html)
- Karue, J. & Amukowa, W. (2013). Analysis of factors that lead to poor performance in Kenya Certificate of secondary examination in Embu district in Kenya. International Journal of social sciences. Vol. 13 No. 1
- Legal-Assistance, Centre. (2008). School policy on learner pregnancy in Namibia: summary of the background information prepared for the Ministry of Education by Gender Research & Advocacy Project. Retrieved from <http://www.lac.org.na/projects/grap/Pdf/learnerpregnancysummary.pdf>
- Maiyo, J. A. & Ashioya, L. A. (2009). Poverty Alleviation: The Educational Planning Perspective. Department of Educational Planning and Management, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology.
- McMillan, J. & Schumacher, S. (2001). Research in education: A conceptual introduction. New York: Longman.
- Ministry of Education and Culture. (1992). Discipline from within-Alternative to corporal punishment: A guide for Principals, Teachers, Learners, Parents and Communities. Windhoek: Ministry of Education and Culture.
- Namibia Ministry of education (MoE), (1993). Towards Education for All. A Development Brief for Education, Culture and Training. Gamsberg Macmillan.
- Namupala, S. (2013). Factors that contribute to poor performance among grade 10 learners in

- Onamutai Circuit, Oshana Region. Retrieved from  
<https://repository.unam.edu.na/bitstream/handle/11070/939/namupala2013.pdf?>
- Nekaro, M. (2001). Factors influencing academic performance of grade 10 learners in two schools in the Rundu Region of Namibia. (Unpublished M Ed thesis). University of the Western Cape. Bellville
- Ngugi, P. (4th January, 2007). "400,000 Assured of Places ...". In the Daily Nation. Nairobi: Nation Media Group Ltd.
- Njagi, K. & Amukowa, W. (2013). Analysis of factors that lead to poor performance in Kenya Certificate of secondary Examination in Embu District in Kenya. School of Education Mount Kenya University. International Journal of Social Sciences. Vol. 13 No.1. ISSN 2305-4557
- Nyathi, T. T. (2006). Academic performance of grade 12 learners in Bushbuckridge District. Retrieved from  
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.505.2323&rep=rep1&type=pdf>
- Rany, S., Mohamad J. & Leong, L. (2013). Factors Causing Learners Low English Learning: A Case Study in the National University of Laos. International Journal of English Language Education Vol. 1, No. 1 Macrothink Institute
- Reche, G., Bundi, C. & Mbugua K. (2012). Factors contributing to poor performance in Kenya Certificate of Public day primary Schools in Mwimbi Division, Maara District, Kenya. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science. Vol.2 NO. 5
- Sa'ad, T. U. (2007). The impact of domestic responsibilities on the academic achievement of Married Women in Tertiary Institutions of Bauchi state. Unpublished Med Thesis. Bayero University, Kano.
- Sam, R., Mohamad J. & Leong, L. (2013). Factors causes learners low English language learning: A case study in the National University of Laos. International Journal of English language Education, ISSN 2325-0887. Vol 1, No.1
- Simasiku, L., Kasanda, C. & Smit, T. (2015). Teaching subjects matter through English as the

Medium of instruction in the Namibian English second language classrooms, European Scientific Journal Special edition vol.1 ISSN: 1857 – 7881 (Print) e - ISSN 1857- 7431

Souvannasy, B., Masashi, S. & Yukiko, H. (2008). Determinants and issues in student achievement in English at the Lao Secondary Education Level. The Asian EFL journal quarterly (Vol.10). Korea: Paul Robertson.

