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Tracking Learner Achievement Gap: An Analysis of Mathematics Achievement in Manicaland, Zimbabwe

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ABSTRACT

The socio-political and economic situation for the period 2007 to 2008 characterized subdued teaching and regressed learning in Zimbabwe. The purpose of this study was to track the learning achievements levels of primary and secondary school pupils in Manicaland. Data was collected through mathematics achievement tests to pupils from Grade 4 to 6 in primary schools and Form 1 to 3 in secondary schools. A sample size of 18417 pupils in four districts in Manicaland participated in the study. The tests were administered to 10727 pupils (male: 5291, female: 5436) at primary level and 7690 (male: 3688, female: 4002) at the secondary level. In-depth interviews were conducted with ten participants (three headmasters, 6 teachers and one psychologist). The results of this study show a significant positive relation among the number of years in school and the performance lag and the results were highly significant at alpha level 0,001(1%) (Chi-square 18,071) suggesting a strong correlation between performance lag and number of years school, (r=0.99, significant at 1%). The performance gap widens with increase in the years in school. The overall average performance lag is 4 years. Approximately, 1 year longer in school increased the performance lag on average with a time span between 1 and 2 terms. The factors behind this lag in performance include the absence of and lack of commitment among teachers and lack of teaching materials in the period between 2007 and 2008. It is recommended that a programme should be set up to specifically address the performance lag.

Introduction

The study sought to investigate learner achievement gap in mathematics in Manicaland Region, one of the ten provinces in Zimbabwe, when the country faced socio-economic meltdown from 2006 to 2008.

According to the Zimbabwe Education Act of 1996, the education system follows a 7 + 4 + 2 + 4 standard model of education. That is 7 years of primary education, with children starting Grade 1 at the age of 6 and completing Grade 7 by the age of 12; 4 years of secondary education (Form 1 to 4), followed by 2 years of high school(Form 5 and 6), and 4 years of university education (The Education Act, 1996). There is automatic promotion from Grade 1 to Form 4, and children repeat a Grade/Form at parental request.

The Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (Zimsec) is a parastatal that was established by an Act of Parliament, Act No 17 of 1994 to conduct public examinations at Grade 7 (taken after 7 years primary schooling), Ordinary (taken after 4 years secondary education) and Advanced Level (taken after 2 years post secondary education). At grade 7, pupils are examined in four subject areas namely English, Shona/Ndebele, Mathematics and General Paper. The subject scores range from Grade 1 (best) to grade 9 (lowest). To pass a subject, a candidate should score 50 percent and above to be accorded grades 1 to 6.

According to Makopa (2011), the government is responsible for paying teachers' salaries and provision of per capita grants to all schools for purchasing learning and teaching materials. However, the amount of money per pupil is not adequate to cover all of the basic teaching and learning requirements, so schools have to supplement this grant through levying the parents. From these levies schools provide the rest of the required equipment, teaching and learning materials. Resources at each school vary according to each school's capacity to provide the aforementioned requirements. UNESCO (2008) points out that quality education depends on the teaching and learning process, the relevance of curriculum, as well as the availability of materials and enabling learning environments. Carron & Chau (1996) also supported this when they noted that students without the basic resources in their environments and in schools perform poorly as a result the learning difficulties they experience within their classrooms. They inadvertently get lower test scores than those learning in environments with required resources.

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Makopa (2011), notes that the performance of the Zimbabwe education system seemed stable from 1995 up to 2000. The situation began to deteriorate from 2000 onwards after the Agrarian Reform Programme was introduced. The programme focused on reallocating the former White Farmers owned commercial lands to the indigenous people. The ensuing socio-political milieu did not go down well with some western countries who later applied targeted sanctions on political figures in Zimbabwe as a measure to limit trading linkages and support with and from those developed nations. The country's inflation rose uncontrollably rendering the Zimbabwean dollar valueless. According to Makopa, the economic sanctions affected the performance of the country's economy and particularly the education system in the following areas:

1. The per capita grants allocations to schools started to dwindle as the Zimbabwe dollar could no longer buy the needed school resources. School levies paid by parents in monetary terms were rendered worthless and hence most schools could not buy the resources.
2. Some qualified teachers started leaving the profession for neighbouring countries and abroad as their earnings were losing value due to the rising inflation. The Zimbabwean education system lost some of its best teachers during that period.
3. School supervision almost became the responsibility of school Heads alone. Most school Education Officers retired and were not being replaced and the few who remained had limited experience and capacity for school supervision purposes, (Makopa, 2011).

The national performance of the candidates in the Grade 7 examinations in 2006 is indicated in Table 1, below.

Table 1. Percentage of candidates by number of subjects passed in 2006.

Number of subjects passed	0	1	2	3	4(all)	Total
Number of candidates	24030	74005	32176	37798	105174	273183
percentage	8.80	27.09	11.78	13.84	38.50	99.90

Source: Ministry of Education Statistics, (2007)

Table 1 above indicates that 8.8% of students who sat for their grade 7 examinations in 2006 passed none of the four subjects, while 38.5% passed all the four subjects. Schools performing very well were wholly urban and have better resources and more experienced teachers than schools in rural areas (Chakanyuka, et al, 2009). The education system has experienced a negligible zero percent pass rate before 2005 (Makopa, 2011).

At Ordinary school level in Zimbabwe, concern about lower academic achievement in public examinations has been cited by Nyagura (1991) and Gordon (1995) among others. For example, in 2002 and 2003 respectively, 13, 8 and 12, 8% of learners passed with five or more subjects to gain a full Ordinary level certificate (Zimsec, 2002a). The proportion of candidates passing 5 or more subjects at ordinary level dropped from 63% in 1980 to 13% in 2000 (Nyagura,1991; Zimsec 2002b). However, the decrease in performance might be explained by the following factors:

1. the rapid expansion of the education system in 1980, which overstretched the Ministry's resources and capacity to service the school system effectively and an increase in pupil/teacher ratios compounded by the increase in the number of untrained teachers especially in the rural schools.
2. The low book to pupil ratio being experienced in most rural districts affected the pupil's performance in the examinations.
3. Lastly, rural schools have the big challenge of high staff turnover which at times leave some pupils without qualified teachers for long periods (Chakanyuka et al, 2009).

The 'O' Level examination is key in Zimbabwe because it provides potential access to job market opportunities.

Table 2. National Ordinary Pass Rates in Zimbabwe 1998 to 2003.

Year	No of candidates entered	Number of candidates passing 5+ subjects.	% pass rate
1998	244083	35593	14,58
1999	242329	38036	15,69
2000	264056	36659	13,88
2001	272125	38077	13,99
2002	274772	37804	13,80
2003	275576	35606	12,80

Source: Zimsec, 2004

The above table show low pass rates at 'O' level national examinations in Zimbabwe between 1998 and 2001. An analysis of individual school results show that schools run by District Rural Councils (Schools run by local authorities in the rural areas) urban, rural day-government secondary schools are registering low pass rates below 10% while non-government day and boarding schools are registering high pass rates as high as 98% (Zimsec, 2002a). In their 1998 to 2003 analysis Zimsec (2002a) attributed the high pass rates in non-governmental schools to the availability of qualified and experienced teachers and adequate resource base for teaching and learning.

Inadequate material and human resources explain low pass rates. The low pass rates at both national and school level provides adequate evidence that there exists a problem in academic achievement in Zimbabwe that needs to be explained and addressed.

It is in this milieu of secondary inequalities that schools in Manicaland Province, Zimbabwe (totaling 859 primary and 378 secondary schools) started experiencing zero percent pass rates. In 2006, the percentage failure was negligible, taking a downturn in 2007 and reaching an all time, zero percent low in 2008 for both primary and secondary schools. In 2006, no primary schools had zero percent pass rates (Annual Report, 2007). In 2008, 45 primary schools had zero percent pass rates (Annual Report, 2009). In 2009, 57 primary schools had zero percent pass rates (Annual Report, 2010). In 2007, six secondary schools had zero percent pass rates (Annual Report, 2008), while in 2008, eighty-eight secondary schools experienced zero percent pass rates (Annual Report, 2009). In 2009, seventy-nine secondary schools had zero percent pass rates, (Annual Report, 2010). The absence of teachers and effective teaching during this era could largely be responsible for the pathetic performance. Hagreaves, (1994) argues that uncertainty in the workplace reduce teachers' commitment, effort and satisfaction which in turn affects learner performance. The different forms of educational tracking implemented in national educational systems can influence both gains in students' learning and the development of social differences in educational outcomes (Maaz, Trautwein, Lüdtke, and Baumert, 2008).

It became imperative to look at learner progress and track the performance of students in the context of this no confidence interval, to understand if the performance and qualification of students (particularly in critical subject areas as mathematics), is above or below average.

The year 2009 marked the return of some qualified teachers to schools after the introduction of a multi-currency system and stabilisation of the socio-political situation (Annual Report 2009). Teaching resumed but without redress to teaching time and regressed learning between 2006 and 2008. School children had gone for approximately two and a half years without adequate and effective teaching. The lead researcher was an Educational Psychologist in Manicaland Region who observed that classroom practitioners are focusing on current grade/form syllabi thus teaching without considering the child's last point of success. The current resurgence in private tutorship in the education sector may partly be driven by the stakeholders' realization of the achievement lag. Schools have introduced extra-lessons during weekends and school holidays after arguably realizing the learners' achievement lags across the spectrum of study subjects. However, they focused on students' current grade/form syllabi for planning and instructional purposes. Social composition is particularly likely to have additional effects in the context of extreme (negative) selection. When tracking is associated with intended or unintended institutional differentiation (e.g., curricular demands, teacher training, instructional quality), Maaz et al. (2008) alludes that there is an independent institutional effect, above and beyond the situational and composition effect.

It is against this background that this study sought to determine the magnitude of underachievement at primary and secondary school level and explore some of the factors behind this underachievement as a way of retrospective institutional quality assurance, improvement and inspection.

Statement of the Problem

Students in Zimbabwe have not had adequate and effective teaching for approximately two and half years and schools have adopted extra lessons without considering students' prior-knowledge to begin planning and instruction. Therefore, there is need to determine the performance lags with a view of suggesting instructional strategies.

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to determine the magnitude and factors behind the performance lag of students using mathematics as a subject point of reference.

Rationale for the Study

This study suggests that flexible cohort grouping; combined with appropriate curricular revision or differentiation, and stakeholder collaboration may result in substantial achievement gain both for performance lag group learners. Given the complex nature of the educational process as Mpofu (2004) alludes, and using nationally representative longitudinal data and hierarchical linear modeling, the context and the needs of the Zimbabwean children served must guide interventions. As adapted from Nhargava (2008), education can leverage significant improvements in many a country as it is key to achievement of development goals. It is imperative for countries and communities to acknowledge, identify and address the situational barriers to education and or thus the need for Zimbabwe to address the educational performance lag for the 2008-9 period.

Hypotheses

1. Are students performing at a significantly lower level than the grade/form there are in?
2. There a no significant relationship between the students' level of study and their estimated achievement lag.

Research methodology

The researchers opted for quantitative research design specifically employing a quasi-experimental design. Quasi-experimental design involves selecting groups, upon which a variable is tested, (Shuttleworth, 2008). The merits of quasi-experimental design is that it can often be integrated with individual case studies; the figures and results generated often reinforce the findings in a case study, and allow some sort of statistical analysis to take place. For instance, findings from the quasi-experiment were integrated with findings from in-depth interviews.

Sampling

Stratified random sampling was employed in this research. There are seven districts in Manicaland from which four districts were randomly selected. Schools were stratified according to location (i.e. rural, peri-urban and urban) with the exception of Mutasa district which is all rural. A total of 115 schools were randomly selected from the districts.

To ensure a representative sample, the Zimsec Grade 7 and ordinary level examinations rankings of 2009 in Manicaland were used in each district. Within the stratified locations every sixth school per district per grade was picked. Boarding and private schools (Missionary and Trust) schools were excluded from the sample.

Table 3.1. Primary Schools per Location

District	Primary	Urban	Peri-urban	Rural
Mutasa	11	-	-	11
Mutare	19	8	4	7
Chipinge	6	1	-	5
Makoni	29	4	1	24
Total	65	13	5	47

Table 3.2. Secondary Schools per Location

District	Secondary	Urban	Peri-urban	Rural
Mutasa	8	-	-	8
Mutare	17	4	5	8
Chipinge	8	1	-	7
Makoni	17	2	-	15
Total	50	7	5	38

The above tables 3.1 and 3.2 show the number of schools sampled per district for the primary and secondary levels respectively. Variations in number of schools per district are due to different number of schools per district which may correlate to district size. The tables include a sub-divisional breakdown with regard to location (urban, rural and peri -urban).

Mathematics Achievement Tests were administered to students from grades four to six at primary school level and forms one to three at secondary level. Grades one to three were exempted from the study because their performances cannot be tracked since they were not yet in formal school during the period of educational achievement concern. Grades seven and Form four students were excluded from this study in order not to distract them in crucial national Zimsec examinations.

At school level, researchers randomly selected students from all streams in grades four to six and forms one to three. A total of 18417 students participated in the study, with breakdown tabulated below:

Table 3.3 Location of Schools by Level by Gender

	Primary			**Secondary**		
District	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Mutasa	545	530	1075	342	419	761
Mutare	2289	2472	4761	1562	1529	3091
Chipinge	447	414	861	657	784	1441
Makoni	2010	2020	4030	1127	1270	2397
Total	5291	5436	10727	3688	4002	7690

Table 3.4. Level by School Location

Level	Urban	Peri-Urban	Rural
Primary	3606	1069	6167
Secondary	1921	991	4948
Total	5528	2060	11115

Three headmasters and 6 teachers were conveniently sampled from two primary schools and one secondary school. An educational psychologist was also engaged as the other resource person in the in-depth interviews.

Research Instruments

The adapted Wide Range Achievement Test Revised –Math subtest was used. The L1 and L2 (see Annex 1 and 2) were used for primary and secondary schools respectively. The test is accepted by the Zimbabwe Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture. The test can be used for group testing which was convenient for the large sample size.

The test scores were translated to grade and term equivalents using the relevant scale (see **Annex** 3). The tests were administered midway during the year and therefore the analysis was based on expected scores for mid year performance. The actual scores were analyzed and compared to the expected scores to indicate current performance level and achievement gap.

Research Procedure

The Principal researchers, Education Ministry officials (mostly teachers at each school) and Provincial Psychological Services officials and administered most of the instruments in person. At the schools, the researchers first sought for permission from the local management. Tests were administered in a class set-up. Every student was allowed a desk and the classroom would have a maximum of thirty students. Two invigilators were assigned per class and the test lasted thirty minutes. Considering the breadth the area to be covered and subsequent distance that was traveled by the researchers, respondents were asked to complete the tests while the researchers wait to collect them.

In-Depth Interviews

In order to ensure some validity the research In-depth interviews triangulated three groups of resource persons who comprised head-teachers, mathematics teachers and an educational psychologist.

Time Frame

The total period for the study was two months. Assessments started on 22 July and ended on 04 August, 2010. Marking of scripts began on 07 August and ended on 22 September, 2010.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS Version 13.5). The sample size was large enough to allow for inferential statistics. The Chi-square, regression analysis and Pearson-r was used to measure the association between variables.

The educational calendar (year) in Zimbabwe comprises of 3, three -month terms, totaling 9 months of substantive learning. Achievement lag in this study is the difference between actual scores and expected scores per Grade/ Form of students. The actual scores are determined by averaging students' performance scores at mid-term two when the tests were administered. Expected scores are WRAT-R validated achievement level scores equivalent to student's current Grade /Form level. The analysis relied on raw scores entered and results were translated to Grade/Form equivalence for purposes of interpretation (See **Annex** 3). To enable regression analysis in SPSS the scores were translated to a uniform measure of Grade/Term equivalence.

Results and discussion

In-depth interviews with teachers and head-teachers indicated subdued teaching and regressed learning as a result of teachers' strikes and later on abscondments in 2008 as a result of hyperinflation experienced in the country. There was no regular attendance at schools by teachers, head-teachers and students and parents were having difficulties in paying school fees. Research findings by Miske et al (1998) indicate that higher rates of attendance tend to give greater learner gains while irregular attendance may lead to low achievements in school. Respondents also stressed that schools were having inadequate resources in the form of instructional materials, textbooks and working conditions for teachers and students has a negative effect on learning. Carron and Chau (1996) emphasize that students without the basic resources in their environments and in schools are most likely to perform poorly as a result of learning difficulties they experience within their classrooms. However, Hanusek, (1997) in his study on assessing the effects of School Resources on student's performance, observes that close to 400 studies that had been done on student achievement had shown that there is no strong or consistent relationship between student performance and school resources. However, the researchers note several intertwined factors at play. For example, concurrent absence of human and material resources will definitely have a negative effect on learning. All respondents concurred that they are aware

of the achievement gap resulting from the subdued teaching of 2006 to 2008 period and they have introduced extra-lessons in order to cover the gap. However, the psychologist noted that the instruction focused on current/form students without considering their last point of success.

The results of this study indicate that students performed significantly lower than the Grade/ Form that there were in. A summary of the performance is shown in the table below.

Table 4.1. Percentage of Learners Performing Below or Above Their Grade/Form

	Primary		Secondary	
Test	Below Grade	At or above Grade	Below Form	At or above Form
Math	76%	24%	85%	15%

From a sample size of 10842 students at primary level, only 24% were performing at or above grade level in primary schools and from a sample of 7860 at secondary level only 15% were performing at or above form level. This means that on average 76% (8240) and 85% (6681) at primary and secondary level respectively, were performing at levels below the grade/form they are in. Further details and a breakdown per grade/form can be found on **Annex 4, Table 1 and 2**. Garnett, (1992) argues that math learning disabilities are related to visual-spatial disorders, verbal deficits, use of immature strategies, weakness in developing automaticity, as well as to a variable rate of processing information. However, as the Roeper review (2003) points out, performance grouping is not just tracking anymore. What is clear in the context of this study is that all these factors may have been exacerbated by teacher absence.

The graphs below show that at all levels the 'red' bar representing actual performance are below the expectations in blue. Figure 1 show that pupils are far below their level. The figure compares the mean scores with the expected score per grade/form. The differences were tested for significance using the t-test and they showed high significance at 1% confidence level. (See **Annex 4,** Table **3** for details.)

Figure 1. Average Expected Versus Actual Achievement Performance

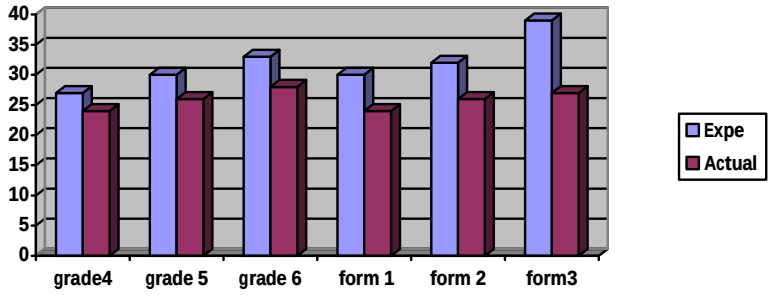

Figure 1 show expected average performance in math and per level vis- a- vis the actual average performance. The scores have been translated into terms and grades to indicate the magnitude of the backlog. The gap between actual performance and expected can easily be attributed to non-teaching and inadequate human and material resources that was prevalent in the period between 2007 up to the end of 2008. This confirms earlier research which showed that, large numbers of children in American elementary schools do poorly in mathematics as a consequence of inadequate math teaching (Dossey, Mullis, Lindquist, & Chambers, 1988). The poor math achievement of American students in general has been attributed largely to classroom factors. These include: too little time spent on arithmetic, insufficient interaction during math practice, and inadequate connecting of concepts with language, with written symbols, and with practical applications, (Garnett, 1992).

Table 4.2. Achievement Lag in School Terms

Expected achievement	Actual achievement	Achievement Lag
Grade 4	3B	1year
Grade 5	3E	1year, 1 term
Grade 6	4E	1year, 1 term
Form 1	6B	2 years, 1 term
Form 2	6E	2 years, 2 terms
Form 3	6E	3 years, 1 term

The above table shows a widening achievement gap from grade 4 up to form 3.The average achievement backlog in math is 4 years. Broken down by level, the average achievement lag at primary level is 1 year 1 term; whereas the average achievement lags at secondary is 2 years 2 terms. The modal backlog is at 1 year and 1 term.

Linking Progression in School to Lag in Achievement

The results of analysis are aimed at scrutinizing a relationship between the number of years students have been in school and their achievement backlog.

Analysis

Table 4.2 above shows an increasing gap up grades. Statistical analysis on the relationship between years in school (grade/form of pupil) and the achievement lag reinforces this conclusion. There was a significant (1 % confidence level) chi-square test result (18,071), indicating strong association between achievement lag and the number of years in school. The magnitude of this association was high, as shown by the high very significant correlation between the grade of student (years in school) and achievement lag (0, 99). This indicates that the achievement gap widens with an increase in the number of years in school.

For purpose of regression analysis the scores for math in primary/secondary tests were translated to grade equivalence. While the different scales could not be compared, the grade equivalence is a comparable scale for both levels. The variable was created showing achievement lags in terms, which formed the basis for multiple regression analysis.

Multiple OLS regression with 'achievement lag' as the dependant variable shows a significant positive relation between the number of years in school and achievement lag. Approximately 1 year longer in school increases the achievement lag on average with a time span of between 1 and 2 terms. (See **Annex** 5)

Table 5. Coefficients from Variables Determining Magnitude of Performance Lag.

Unstandardized coefficient of significant correlation. (OLS)		
Change in 1 unit in:	Primary	Secondary
Number of years in school	0,609	0,211
Location of school	-0,712	-0,281
Age	-0.073	-0,048
Sex	0,243	0,051

Coefficient is in grades: 1= 1 grade, 0,3= 1 term, 0,6= 2 terms, 0,9= 3 terms. Negative means with each extra unit a lower performance lag. Positive means with each extra unit a higher performance lag.

In-depth interviews revealed that this regressed was largely due to the poor teaching that was evident in the period between 2007 and 2008. Participants revealed that the majority of teachers were left with practically one or two teachers to take charge of the whole school whilst some had many teachers who were however not committed to duty. The situation was such that teachers would leave the school and go to the Diaspora in search for better opportunities. This lukewarm teaching had effects which were to be felt years later. This confirms Rothstein (2004) assertion that the quality of teaching whether good or poor, has not only an immediate impact, but a sustained impact for a number of years. If a learner is turned off learning by a teacher who is unable to inspire them suitably and who does not do a good job, the impact can endure in the following years. Haney (2000) found out that, if two average ability eight year olds were given different teachers, one a high performer and one a low performer, the children's academic performance would diverge by more than 50 per cent within just three years.

The general poor performance of the economy during the period under consideration had a direct bearing on learner performance irrespective of teacher performance. Participants revealed that learners in outlying areas would sometimes absent themselves from school as they would be battling to find means of surviving. Moreover, most learners who would attend were so much deprived of the basics of school such as a proper school uniform and food. This confirms Leland's (2005) assertion that economic pressures outside the classroom have an effect on the learner, these pressures directly affect students' motivation which then has an unequivocal effect on their achievement.

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs individuals have both deficiency and growth needs. Deficiency needs are basic needs for a person's physical and psychological welfare. Growth needs, on the other hand, include the need for knowing, appreciating and understanding, these needs can never fully be satisfied (Slavin, 2005). Growth needs cannot be pursued until all the basic needs of an individual are met. According to Slavin (2005) schools and government agencies need to realize that if student's basic needs are not met then learning will suffer. This was the case in the period between 2007 and 2008.

Recommendation

Research findings indicate that approximately a year longer in school increases the performance lag by between 1 and 2 years. In response to the national push to raise academic performance of all students, most states have adopted policies designed to raise academic standards, monitor progress toward those standards, and hold schools and students responsible for attaining them (Educational Evaluation And Policy Analysis, 2003). In Zimbabwe, there is need to immediately lower the performance gap and raise student achievement. Students are getting more frustrated because of failure to comprehend the material taught and might skip class or give up altogether. The government must design a well structured restitution curricula for learners disadvantaged through collaboration with higher level study institutions to allow uniformity in provision and education across different cohorts.The Ministry of Education Sport, Arts and Culture should have a policy on a performance lag address programme. Such a programme should focus on using standardized achievement tests for assessing school based achievement levels and hence classroom instruction should begin at the child's last point of success. This can be complemented by in class ability grouping for easier instruction. Students need to experience success so that they become motivated to learn. Support services should be put in place for school leavers within the affected groups. Stakeholders, especially employers must be consulted from time to time such to provide feedback on the job performance of affected group which in turn would be used for curricula modification or age specific temporary policy institution.Training of schools inspectors, school heads and teachers on supervision of the programme is a prerequisite. Schools development committees and parental involvement is necessary for the success of the programme. To improve teachers' morale and commitment there is need to improve their salaries and do away with teacher incentives which are only given in urban schools because rural schools have parents who cannot afford to pay for these services.

Further Research

Now that all the Primary and Secondary schools in Zimbabwe have been given core Text books and stationery from the donor community, (Ministry Eucation,2009) it would be very interesting to find out how the schools will perform if students are instructed in accordance to their last point of success using appropriate achievement tests. The new results will be interesting if they will show that the performance will have improved due to the improvement in the provision of the classroom teaching and learning resources. If the text books provision would then be taken as a controlled factor, teacher qualities, teacher management support and family background could be interesting to research on.

Other researchers should look in the relationship between teacher's qualifications, experiences and pupils achievements in relationship to distributed resources. The research should attempt to establish the areas where teachers would need to be staff developed in. Parents' educational backgrounds and economic status of the families may also be assessed in relationship to the pupils' achievements. The report showed that urban provinces had more resources than the rural ones. Further studies could also be done to establish the resources variations and their relationships with pupil's performances among schools by Responsible Authorities.

Conclusion

Learners in both primary and secondary schools performed significantly below their grade levels. Performance backlog was seen to be positively correlated to period spent in school, implying that the longer the student has stayed in school the larger their performance backlog. Socio political and economic pressures were seen to have had a direct and indirect effect on learner achievement. For instance the lack of commitment and absence of teachers due to economic difficulties was seen to have a direct bearing on learner performance. The standard deviations across the board are considerably high. The high standard deviations imply substantial variations in students' performances. This means that there are considerable numbers of students that perform much better and much worse that the averages reported.

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