

# URBAN SCHOOL LOCATION AND PERFORMANCE: A COMPARISON OF HIGH ACHIEVERS IN FORMER P1 AND P2 SCHOOLS IN ZIMBABWE

ELLIOTT NKOMA  
JOHN MAPFUMO

## *Abstract*

*The study sought to determine differences in achievement levels between high achievers in P1 (Former group A) and P2 (Former group B) in Mutare urban primary schools. Data was collected through achievement tests to 5<sup>th</sup> grade pupils from six schools (three from each location). A sample size of 179 (P1=89; P2=90) participated in the study. Tests were administered to 112 girls (P1=56; P2=56) and 67 boys (P1=33; P2= 34) high achieving pupils who were selected using grade 4 end of year school examinations. In-depth interviews were conducted with six teachers two from each school that participated. A t-test for independent samples was used to determine achievement differences. The result of this study showed academic achievement was dependent on school location. There was highly significant difference between high achievers in P1 and P2 schools at alpha 1%. ( $t= 11.09$  for spelling and  $t= 9.62$  for mathematics). There are significant differences by gender in both mathematics and spelling at alpha 0.05 with girls in P1 achieving higher than boys in P2 schools. ( $t= 5.86$  in mathematics;  $t= 0.31$  in spelling).*

**Key words:** Achievement; lag; performance lag addressing programme; mathematics; spelling.

## BACKGROUND

The place of location of schools and its relationship with academic performance of children within schools has been considerably investigated throughout the world. In the United States, for instance, schools have tended to be separated by location into those schools that are in the suburban and those that are in the Inner City zones. The schools in the suburban regions tend to be privileged and mostly patronised by White

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ELLIOTT NKOMA is a Lecturer at the Department of Psychology, Faculty of Social Sciences, Great Zimbabwe University, while John Mapfumo is a Lecturer at the Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Africa University, Mutare, Zimbabwe.

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students from relatively affluent backgrounds while those in the Inner City tend to be patronised by poorer, mostly Non-White learners (Lippmann, Burns & McArthur, 1996). Studies have generally found that Inner City students performed poorly (Bickel, Smith & Eagle, 2002; Jencks & Mayer, 1990; Wilson, 1987) in comparison to their suburban counterparts. Lippman, Burns & MacArthur (1996) found that children educated in large urban school districts had substantially lower academic performance than children in the nation as a whole. The poor performance of children was attributed to numerous challenges including less educated parents, low-performing schools and distressed communities outside of school. These problems directly affected students' motivation which then had an unequivocally negative effect on their academic achievement (Xu, 2009). Demoralisation and hopelessness were some of the results of collective socialisation among children from poor neighbourhoods (Haberman, 2003, 2005; Olson & Jerald, 1998). In addition to the factors that have been stated here, studies by Bell (1971); Friedman (1962); Jencks & Mayer (1990); Simmelkjaer (1979); Simons, Simons, Conger & Brody (2004); Swanson (2004) found that educational institutions in some urban environments shared common features of learning impediments such as absenteeism, drug abuse, student vandalism and apathy. Such vices as well overcrowding were deemed to account for the causes of poor academic performance in such schools as compared to schools in rural areas. Studies by Lawin (1973); Ogunlade (1973) did not concur with these findings and maintained that urban schools were better staffed and enjoyed good facilities which factors produced conditions more suitable to good academic performance as opposed to rural areas. Rural schools were, however, not included in the present study.

Young (1998) examined the differences in student performance between rural and urban schools in Western Australia and found that the location of the school had a significant effect on student achievement with students attending rural schools not performing as well as those from urban schools. There is also a similar urban-rural divide in Zimbabwe but the concern of this study was with comparing performance in schools located in high-density (Inner-City) areas with schools located in low-density (suburban) schools. Yusuf & Adigun (2010); Ayodele (2011) examined the influence of school type, sex and school location on student achievement and found that there were no significant influences on students' academic performance as dependent on location of the schools. Various differences in performance with respect to school location were, nevertheless, found by Maliki, Ngban & Ibu (2009).

A study by the Carsey Institute (2011) of the University of New Hampshire, found that rural and urban third graders had a lower average reading achievement levels in their suburban peers. Third grade reading achievement gaps had been associated with differences in socioeconomic background. As stated above conditions in urban schools for teachers — low pay, overcrowded classes, increased responsibilities, outdated and

meagre resources made best teachers to move on to schools that offered them better working conditions and pay i.e. the schools in the suburban districts. There is a similar trend in Zimbabwe where better qualified, more successful teachers move to the more affluent schools that give better conditions in the form of incentives and other favourable conditions as opposed to schools in poorer, less rewarding environments (rural areas and Inner-City or high-density). Privately-owned schools are a particular attraction for most teachers who leave their posts in the high-density (Inner City) and rural areas to take up the clearly more lucrative positions in those schools. Remuneration becomes a major issue when considering the quality and worthiness of teachers in urban and suburban schools. Kozol (1991) reports of the United States that a teacher in the suburban districts was paid twenty percent annually more than a similar teacher in the Inner City districts. It remains unclear in Zimbabwe if the higher remuneration and benefits for teachers in some schools lead directly to better student performance.

The differences in the education systems that were captured in the studies above were in many respects comparable to the situation in Zimbabwe before and at Independence in 1980. According to Kanyongo (2005), when Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980, it inherited an education system that favoured white Zimbabwean students and prior to 1980 the few blacks who had access to education were in schools that were poorly funded, with very few educational resources. These schools compared well with the inner-city schools of the United States of America. The schools for Blacks were located in rural areas and high-density (inner-city schools in this study) parts of urban areas.

The question of location and school access has been the subject of much government policy in Zimbabwe both before and after Independence. Education Policy in Rhodesia (pre-Independence Zimbabwe) was along racial lines with Native Education for Blacks given in their own areas and meant for people whose ultimate role in life was to be a servant group of people trained to serve the Whites and Indians who received a superior academic education (Atkinson, 1872; Zvobgo, 1986, 1999).

The 1979 Education Act (under a make-shift multi racial government) was meant to promote racial integration in government schools but that never came about as that law established a three-tier educational system that split schools into group A, B and C (Atkinson, 1982; Dorsey, 1989) and access to schools by pupils was strictly based on residence. Group A (P1 in this study) schools were located in former European affluent suburbs and were formerly attended by Whites, Indians and Coloured students only and the schools were superior in terms of resources and trained teachers. Group B (P2) schools were located in urban African residential areas (high-density/inner-city areas) and the school fees were low while group C schools (almost exclusively patronised by Black children) were located in rural areas and were ostensibly non-fee-paying. The

group B and C were inferior in terms of resources and trained teachers. This study was concerned only with former Group A (P1) and former Group B (P2) primary schools. The 1979 Act restricted entry into each category of schools based on the zoning system (Dorsey, 1989). This system meant that no Black child could access a school outside their residential zone except for students who were bright and proficient in English (Atkinson, 1982). The children who were likely to be proficient in English would be children of fairly affluent well-educated Black parents. According to Zindi (1996) Group A schools had better facilities and higher standards of education than group B and C schools and enrolment in Group A schools continued to be based on skin colour or socioeconomic status. Only those African pupils with high socioeconomic status parents and lived in former white suburbs could enrol in group A schools (Atkinson, 1982; Zindi, 1996). The pupils in all three groups followed the same syllabus and took the same exit Grade 7 examinations.

A study by Nyagura (1991) found significant differences in the quality of primary education offered by the different school types in Zimbabwe. Three levels of quality education were identified, namely high quality education offered by high fee paying schools and government former group A schools, average quality education offered by low fee paying schools and government former group B schools, and low quality education offered by rural community schools. Quality learning can take place in relatively modern and well-equipped buildings that have the necessary teaching and learning provisions. However, the quality of school facilities seems to have an indirect effect on learning, (Fuller & Dellagnelo, 1999). This point is reinforced by Carron & Chau, (1996) when they observed that students without the basic resources in their environments and in schools are most likely to perform poorly as a result of the learning difficulties they experience within their classrooms. They are likely to get lower test scores than those learning in environments with the required resources. With the school buildings and other related environmental school quality issues, the lack of adequate instructional materials and textbooks, working conditions for pupils and teachers may definitely affect the achievement of quality learning. In contrast, Yusuf and Adigun (2010) examined the influence of school type, sex and location on students' academic achievements in Ekiti secondary schools in Nigeria and found no significant influence on students' academic performance. In the same vein, Hanusek (1997) in his study on assessing the effects of School Resources on students' performance observes that close to 400 studies that had been done on student's achievement had shown that there is no strong or consistent relationship between student's performance and school resources. In addition, the landmark, if controversial finding by Coleman (1966) seemed to suggest that the most potent factor affecting educational outcome was not resources or teacher performance, but the socio-economic status of the learner. This importance of the home and socio-economic status has also been underlined by Lee & Groninger (1994) without, however,

asserting that socio-economic status overrides issues of resources and teacher incentivisation.

Post Independence, the location of schools in high-density and low-density areas remained unchanged with more new schools being built in new high-density settlements that developed in the urban centres. To a large extent the dichotomy in the type of school (located in poorer high-density environments and more resourced low-density environments) that had existed before Independence was continued after Independence. What clearly changed was that there were many more Black children in the P2 schools with more Black families moving into the suburbs that were abandoned by Whites who were emigrating or by affluent Blacks putting up residential structures in the more affluent suburbs. Admittedly some conditions of service between the previous White Teaching Service and the Black Teaching Service were equated particularly in terms of the same salaries for the same qualifications and experience as well as other basics of employment. In terms of the teaching content the schools of different status followed the same syllabuses and were expected to perform comparably (Zimbabwe Education Act, Title 25: 04. PART XI).

From Independence, and particularly in the decade 2000 to 2009 the economy of Zimbabwe declined seriously with an all-time low in 2008 when the inflation rate was estimated in the millions percent and unemployment was over 90 percent (Bracking & Sachikonye, 2008; Gukurume, 2010; Mlambo & Raftopoulos, 2010).

With a fast-declining currency, rewards in the formal employment sector declined equally fast and there was great dissatisfaction among the teaching fraternity, much more among teachers in P2 schools than in P1 schools. The reason for the different levels of satisfaction was largely that communities that were catchment to P1 schools were of high socio-economic status and were able to cushion staffs in their schools through the payment of incentives in the form of cash and/or kind while the communities that were catchment to P2 schools were of low socio-economic status and were unable to pay similar incentives and even at times finding it difficult to pay basic fees for their children (Dorsey, 1989; Kanyongo, 2005; Nyagura, 1991). While communities in low-density areas (catchment area for P2 schools) were also able to acquire infrastructure and equipment for their schools from their considerable collective resources, this was not the case in the high-density areas (catchment areas for P2 schools) where schools became relatively more needy and depressed. In most high-density schools the failure to provide infrastructure especially in the form of classroom space and equipment for the large numbers of students led the government to recommend and encourage hot-seating which was double session with sections of the school attending at different times of the day (Dorsey, 1989; Nyagura, 1991). The double sessions and the lack of resources in these schools could be expected to lead to demotivation among the staff and underperformance and possible behaviour problems among the overcrowded and possibly equally dissatisfied students.

This study was conducted at a time when the economy of Zimbabwe had improved considerably from the rock-bottom levels of 2008 and it was guessed that schools would be better resourced and staff would be more motivated than during the time of economic melt-down.

The present study did not claim that it could identify and pin down the specific contribution of resources to performance but it hoped to show whether there was a difference that could possibly relate to location (subsuming resources, socio-economic status of the families in the specific locations and educational background of parents). The studies cited in this section of the study reveal contradictory findings with respect to the relationship of location and students performance. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to determine if there were differences in achievement levels between P1 and P2 primary schools (located in different areas) in Mutare Urban.

### **Statement of the problem**

Studies in Zimbabwe have focused on academic achievement of mixed ability students on such factors as school resources, school type, educator quality, family background and school environment (Dambudzo, 1998; Nyagura, 1991; Nyagura and Reece, 1991; Nyagura & Riddell, 1991). This study aims at finding if there are significant differences between P1 (former Group A) and P2 (former group B) high achievers at 5<sup>th</sup> grade level. This study was spurred by the realisation that many children from high-density areas now went to school in the low-density areas if their parents could afford the relatively higher fees charged in the low-density, better resourced schools. It could be expected that location of the school would have considerable influence on the quality of education that the child would receive. It was felt by the present researchers that it would be worthwhile to find out the comparative performance of the high-achievers on the same test challenges to find whether there was any relationship between location and student performance.

This study aimed at comparing performance of high-achieving students in former Group A (P1) and former Group B (P2) schools in Mutare Urban.

The objectives of this study were to:

- (1) Assess whether achievement is dependent on school type
- (2) Compare achievement levels of high-performing P1 (former Group A) and P2 (former Group B) in Spelling
- (3) Compare achievement levels of P1 (former Group A) and P2 (former Group B) in Mathematics.
- (4) determine if there are gender differences in achievement between P1 and P2 schools in mathematics and spelling.

Decisions on the objectives in this study were made on the basis of the testing of the following hypotheses.

- (1) There are no significant differences in spelling achievement between P1 and P2 schools.
- (2) There are no significant differences in mathematical achievement between P1 and P2 schools.
- (3) There are no significant differences in mathematical achievement between boys' in P1 and P2 schools.
- (4) There are no significant differences in mathematical achievement between girls in P1 and P2 schools.
- (5) There are no significant differences in spelling achievement between boys in P1 and P2 schools.
- (6) There are no significant differences in spelling achievement between girls in P1 and P2 schools.
- (7) There are no significant gender differences in mathematical achievement between P1 and P2 schools.
- (8) There are no gender differences in spelling achievement between P1 and P2 schools.

## METHODOLOGY

To determine the current achievement levels of best Grade 5 pupils in each of Mutare Urban primary schools, the researchers opted for a quantitative research methodology which was followed up by a qualitative research design.

Quantitative research methods record variation in social life in terms of categories that vary in amount. They deal with data that are either in numbers or attributes that can be ordered in terms of magnitude. Quantitative methods work on the assumption that reality can be measured and a value attached to it.

The quantitative approach was adopted here because it is the approach of choice in defining and describing the phenomena in the present study. This was so because it is exploratory in identifying causes and effects and how one variable (performance) would change/vary in response to variation in the other variable (school type).

The quantitative approach was ideal for this study where numerical scores were obtained from assessing the performance of students on the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT-RL1). The average scores for each school were computed for each subtest. This approach is capable of measuring differences and similarities and attaching a numerical value to the differences and similarities in phenomena. For instance, such is the case where comparisons are performed using the chi-square and other statistical procedures (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989; Green, 2008). The present study used the t-test for independent samples.

In-depth interviews were done with twelve 5<sup>th</sup> grade teachers (two teachers from each school) to understand variations in pupils' performances.

The design used here was Mixed to take advantage of the strengths of the two contrasting approaches. The quantitative methods can be used to carry out specific measurements and cater for large samples the data from which can be used to draw generalisations. Qualitative approaches are best with small samples (such as the small number of teachers to be interviewed in this study) and are strong in bringing out insights and stories behind the figures that are handled through the quantitative approach.

The population of this study was made up of all the Grade 5 pupils in Mutare Urban and other urban areas throughout Zimbabwe.

All P1 (former Group A) schools were purposively selected for this study since there were only three of them. The other three schools from P2 (former Group B) were selected by lot from 6 possible choices. P1 (Former Group A) schools were those that were previously for Whites, Indians and Coloureds and were therefore better resourced and staffed than P2 (former Group B schools). The former Group A (P1) schools were located in low density areas of Mutare where the more affluent part of the population lived. Former group B (P2) were located in high density areas where the less affluent part of the population lived.

Thirty best students were selected in each school based on end of year (Grade 4) rankings. This was done to minimise any performance variation in the comparison groups from each of the schools.

The figure of thirty was suggested from the researchers' experience that even the best schools hardly reach that figure with four points (the highest possible performance from Grade 1 in all the subjects: Maths, English, Shona and General Paper) in Grade 7 Examinations (terminal examination for Primary School). Results are better the fewer the points scored by each pupil.

The initial number of participants in this study was 180 reduced to 179 by one dropout. The 179 participants were represented by 89 participants from P1 (former Group A) and 90 from P2 (former Group B) schools. A total of 67 boys (P1= 33boys; P2= 34boys) and 112 girls (P1= 56 girls; P2= 56 girls) participated.

The adapted Wide Range Achievement Test-Revised (WRAT-R L1) for Primary Schools was used and is accepted by the Ministry of Education, Sport and Culture. Two subtests were used- Spelling and Mathematics. It consisted of a set of calculations and spelling through dictation.

The WRAT-R is a group test which examines competencies from preschool to second year in high school. The WRAT-R requires thirty minutes for each subtest to administer. See annex 1.

In-depth interviews were necessary to obtain some detailed information on the dynamics of the stories that underlay the differential performance of students in one



school-type as compared to another school type. Teachers were expected to give/share their lived experiences as they interacted with the students and environments in the schools from where the research participants were selected. The interviews were largely unstructured. Teachers were invited to share their views on factors that affected student performance in their schools. They were also invited to make any comparisons between their schools and those of a different school type.

This study was first cleared by the Ministry of Education, Sports, Arts and Culture. Schools were visited by the lead researcher to discuss with Heads of schools about the intended study. The Heads of schools were requested to avail the lead researcher the top 30 students at the end of 4th Grade. The Heads of schools were then requested to make arrangements for the visit of the research team on an appointed day.

In each school, research participants were assembled in one venue and seated in such a way that they would not be able to share their work. Each group of thirty was supervised by two research assistants who had been well trained for the purpose. These research assistants were assistant psychologists (who were serving their internship to be able to register as Educational Psychologists).

A t-test for independent samples was used to compare differences in achievement levels between P1 and P2 primary schools. The main issues raised by the teachers in interview conversation with them were summarised and presented as closely as possible to what the teachers had said.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### *Summary of Results from Interviews with Selected Teachers.*

In-depth interviews with teachers indicated variations in resources with P1 better resourced than P2 schools. P2 schools practice double sessions which compromise on learning time. Nearly every interviewee underlined the importance of resources for learning and support services. Supportive services were named as taking out students on educational trips, inviting experts to teach specific learning skills in Mathematics and English and prizes for the best students that set up competition for the maximum possible achievement. Much was also said about incentives in cash and kind which teachers in schools in the low-density area enjoyed compared to teachers in schools in the high-density areas.

One point that gave conflicting responses was the support of the communities for the various school types. The interviewees in the high-density (P2) schools lamented in general that their communities were themselves poor and depressed and were not able to provide the resources that were provided by communities where P1 schools were located. These more affluent communities were able also to support the educational efforts of the teachers because the people in the low-density areas were themselves

reasonably well-educated. Because of being better educated the parents of children in P1 schools were willing and able to support fund-raising activities as well as to attend meetings where important decisions on the schools were made. The interviews in schools regretted that in general parents did not come to meetings in large numbers and that some people selected to serve on School Governing Bodies did not themselves have a high level of education and hence were not as productive as was necessary in supporting the work of school administrations.

The teachers also acknowledged that incentives given to them are not related to pupils' performance and these vary from school to school because the Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture allow teachers to get 10% of the fees paid by students at their stations, which implies that high fee paying schools have higher incentives than low paying ones.

**Table 1:** Differences in Spelling Achievement between P1 and P2 Schools

School Type	Sample (n)	Mean	Sample Variance	t-value	d.f.
P1	89	49.08	29.19	11.09	177
P2	90	42.51	19.87		

The results were highly significant at alpha 0.01 indicating that pupils in former group A (P1) schools were better at spelling than former group B (P2) schools. The above table indicates that pupils in P1 schools were achieving at upper sixth grade level while P2 schools were at fourth grade. The achievement gap between P1 and P2 schools was two grades (approximately 2 years).

The **second** hypothesis states that there are no significant differences in mathematical achievement between P1 and P2 schools.

**Table 2:** Differences in Mathematical Achievement Levels between P1 and P2 Schools.

School Type	Sample Size	Mean	Sample Variance	t-value	d.f.
P1	89	36.24	7.21	9.67	177
P2	90	32.18	7.95		

Results were highly significant at alpha 0.01 indicating that pupils in former group A (P1) schools were better in Mathematics than those in former group B (P2) schools. In general P1 schools were achieving at lower seventh grade level while P2 schools are at upper fifth grade level (grade equivalent) indicating an achievement gap of one grade. The third hypothesis states that there are no significant differences in Mathematical achievement between boys in P1 and P2 schools.

**Table 3:** Differences in Mathematical Achievement between Boys in P1 and P2 Schools.

School Type	Sample Size (n)	Mean	Variance	t-value	d.f.
P1	33	36.76	10.25	5.47	65
P2	34	32.82	7.00		

The result was significant at alpha 0.05 indicating that boys in P1 schools were better than those in P2 schools in Mathematics. Boys in P1 schools were achieving at lower seventh grade level while those in P2 schools were achieving at lower sixth grade indicating an achievement gap of one grade. Pupils in P2 schools were achieving at one year behind those in P1 schools.

The fourth hypothesis states that there are no significant in mathematical achievement between girls in P1 and P2 schools.

**Table 4:** Differences in Mathematical Achievement between Differences Girls P1 and P2 Schools

School type	Sample size (n)	Mean	Variance	t-value	d.f.
P1	56	35.93	5.30	7.36	111
P2	56	31.81	8.12		

The results were significant at alpha 0.05 indicating that girls in P1 schools were better than those in P2 schools. Girls in P1 schools were achieving at lower seventh grade level while those in P2 schools were at upper fifth grade level showing an achievement gap of approximately one grade i.e. the girls in P2 schools were performing at one year behind their counterparts in P1 schools.

The fifth hypothesis states that there are no significant differences in spelling achievement between boys in P1 and P2 schools.

**Table 5:** Differences in spelling achievement between boys in P1 and P2 schools.

School Type	Sample Mean (n)	Mean	Variance	t-value	d.f.
P1	33	50.24	28.19	5.05	35
P2	34	41.91	20.93		

The results were significant at alpha 0.05 indicating that boys at P1 schools were better in spelling than those at P2 schools. Boys in P1 schools were performing at upper sixth grade level while those in P2 schools were at lower fifth grade level. The achievement gap was two grades. Boys in P2 schools are two years behind boys in P1 schools in Mathematics.

The sixth hypothesis states that there are no significant differences in spelling achievement between girls in P1 and P2 schools.

**Table 6:** Differences in Spelling Achievement between Girls' in P1 and P2 Schools.

School type	Sample size (n)	Mean	Variance	t-value	d.f.
P1	56	48.75	21.94	3.87	111
P2	56	45.88	19.24		

Results were significant at alpha 0.05 indicating that girls at P1 schools were better off in spelling. Girls in P1 schools were achieving at upper sixth grade level while those in P2 schools were at lower fourth grade level, that is a grade below current grade level. The achievement gap was approximately three grades. Girls in P2 schools are therefore three grades behind their counterparts in P1 in spelling.

The **seventh** hypothesis states that there are no significant gender differences in mathematical achievement between P1 and P2 schools.

**Table 7:** Gender differences in Mathematics Achievement between P1 and P2 Schools.

School Type	Sample Size (n)	Mean	Variance	t-value	d.f.
P1 (Girls)	56	35.93	5.30	5.86	88
P2 (Boys)	34	32.82	7.00		

The results were significant at alpha 0.05 indicating that girls in P1 schools were achieving better than boys in P2 schools in Mathematics. Girls in P1 schools were achieving at lower seventh grade level while boys in P2 schools were achieving at lower sixth grade level. The achievement gap was one grade which means that girls in P2 schools were one year behind in Mathematics compared to boys in P1 schools.

The eighth hypothesis states that there are no gender differences in spelling achievement between P1 and P2 schools.

**Table 8:** Gender differences in Spelling Achievement between P1 and P2 Schools.

School Type	Sample Size	Mean	Variance	t-value	d.f.
P1 (Girls)	56	48.75	21.94	0.31	88
P2 (Boys)	34	41.91	20.93		

The results were significant at alpha 0.05 indicating that girls in P1 schools were better off than boys in P2 schools in spelling. Girls in P1 schools were performing at upper sixth grade level (a grade above current grade level) while boys spelling ability in P2 schools was at upper fourth grade level. The achievement gap was, therefore, approximately two grades showing that boys in P2 schools were performing two years behind the girls in P1 schools.

respect to resources concurs with findings by Fuller & Dellagnelo (1999); Ross & Posthewaite (1992) who found that schools with high achievements are well equipped, with ample classroom space to sit and write for every pupil in the classroom, text-books for every pupil and plenty of reading library books, and supportive learning materials for all the pupils.

That schools that are better resourced produce better academic results seems to make a great deal of intuitive sense. But as noted by Fuller & Bellagnelo (1999) quality of school facilities has an indirect influence on learning. Hanusek (1997) concluded that out of the 400-odd studies carried out before his own work none had established a consistently significant relationship between student performance and level of resources in schools. Yusuf & Adigun (2010) did not find any significant differences in academic performance in their study of school type, sex and location of schools, nor did Alimi, Ehinola & Alabi (2012) in a study in high schools in that same country.

The specific place of resources in influencing performance, therefore, remains controversial. Carron & Chau (1996), though, found students were likely to perform poorly when they experience learning difficulty from lack of basic learning resources.

That students in P1 schools achieve higher than the pupils in P2 schools was clear across the sexes and in both Spelling and Mathematics. These results, in general, concur with Nyagura (1991); Carron & Chau, (1996) when they observed that students without the basic resources in their environments and in schools are most likely to perform poorly as a result of the learning difficulties they experience within their classrooms. However, as observed above, the relationship between resources and students performance is much more complicated than it has been made to seem by some authors (Coleman, 1966; Hanusek, 1997; Yusuf & Adigun, 2010). Coleman (1966) argued that the factor that was most potent in making a difference to the achievement of a student was the socio-economic status and not resources in the school or even teacher competence. The importance of the home in educational outcomes of students has also been put forward and tested by Lee & Groninger (1994) with the argument that school-based resources and teacher competence were not the only factors to be considered in explaining the factors of students' educational achievement.

P1 school teachers receive higher incentives than P2 teachers. These incentives might not account for higher performances in P1 schools because they are not performance related but to augment salaries. Ahn & Vigdor (2011) found that incentives for teachers under certain circumstances make it possible for teachers to be more creative and to positively impact on students performance. But Mawere (2012) found that the paying of differential incentives in different schools was actually counterproductive as teachers who received less incentive had low morale and motivation and this would make them less committed and less effective. If Mawere's finding is correct then the performance difference in P1 and P2 schools will persist with the paying of different rates of incentive.

Results from six schools out of thousands of schools in Zimbabwe must by any standards be incapable of being generalised to the whole population of primary schools. Within the primary schools studied only Grade 5 students participated (on the strength of end-of-year Grade 4 results) so that results cannot be generalised in the very primary schools where they were obtained particularly bearing in mind that only Mathematics and Spelling were tested. There is also no longitudinal dimension to the results here.

### **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

There are significant differences in achievement between P1 and P2 schools in both mathematics and spelling. Girls and boys in P1 schools have better achievement levels than those in P2 schools. Variations in achievement levels might be due to several factors including school resources. Incentives might not account for high performances as these are not given on merit but to augment salaries. The point remains that there is need to pin down the actual causes of the performance gap between P1 and P2 pupils.

The Ministry of Education, Sport, Arts and Culture should do away with double sessions in P2 schools which reduces pupils learning time by encouraging classroom construction and equipping libraries in the schools. Encouragement and recognition should be given to high performing pupils by introducing accelerated learning and booster programmes not available in schools in Zimbabwe today. The reasons for low achievement levels in spelling should be studied and staff should be developed on improving pupils reading/spelling ability focusing on Bloom's Taxonomy. More focused research is needed to establish exactly what factors account for the difference in achievement between P1 and P2 schools and on the basis of that the Ministry should find corrective measures. In the meantime the Ministry-driven Performance Lag Address Programme (PLAP) which is a strategy to remedy performance lags should be strengthened and operated across schools rather than just within schools. Ministry of Higher and Tertiary Education needs to train teachers or in-service serving teachers to equip them with skills that enable them to conceive and implement PLAP strategies. It is important for Ministry and Heads of schools to encourage and prime communities in high-density areas to take a more positive and supportive attitude towards the schools where their children go in their localities. Ministry and Heads of schools should remind communities that poor communities that work together achieve more for their own welfare (Kozol, 1991). Teachers in poor communities should move away from the pedagogy of poverty where poor pupils are exposed to less challenging educational tasks and experiences (Cooper, 2004; Haberman, 1991, 2003, 2005; Rodriguez & Bellanca, 1996).

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GIRDAU

1984 REVISED EDITION  
**WRAT-R<sup>1</sup>**  
 WIDE RANGE ACHIEVEMENT TEST

by Sarah Jastak  
 with Gary S. Wilkinson

**SPELLING LEVEL 1**

**1984** **1985** **1986** **1987** **1988** **1989** **1990** **1991** **1992** **1993** **1994** **1995** **1996** **1997** **1998** **1999** **2000** **2001** **2002** **2003** **2004** **2005** **2006** **2007** **2008** **2009** **2010** **2011** **2012** **2013** **2014** **2015** **2016** **2017** **2018** **2019** **2020** **2021** **2022** **2023** **2024**

**DICTATION LIST Pronunciation Guide in Manual**

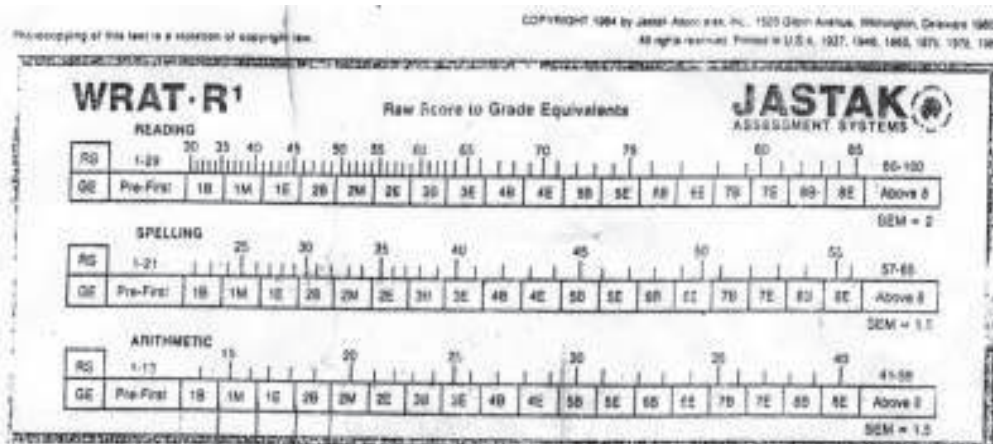
1. go ..... Children go to school	25. result ..... The result of your work is good
2. cat ..... The cat has fur	26. advice ..... My advice was forgotten
3. in ..... We are in the room	27. purchase ..... We did not purchase the car
4. boy ..... The boy plays ball	28. brief ..... I received a brief note
5. and ..... Bill and Bob play together	29. success ..... Success makes people happy
6. will ..... They will wait for you	30. reasonable ..... His request was reasonable and just
7. make ..... She can make a dress	31. imaginary ..... He told us an imaginary story
8. him ..... They saw him in town	32. occupy ..... We occupy a small apartment
9. say ..... Say it slowly	33. character ..... Her fine character was praised
10. cut ..... Mother will cut the cake	34. society ..... Every society has rules
11. cook ..... We cook our own dinner	35. official ..... An official invitation came today
12. light ..... The light is bright	36. recognize ..... He did not recognize me
13. must ..... We must do our work	37. familiar ..... We are familiar with the news
14. dress ..... The dress fits well	38. commission ..... The commission reported to the mayor
15. reach ..... He couldn't reach the ball	39. beneficial ..... Good food is beneficial to health
16. order ..... The captain's order was obeyed	40. appropriation ..... Congress made an appropriation for schools
17. watch ..... My watch is fast	41. enthusiasm ..... People showed enthusiasm for the hero
18. enter ..... Enter this way	42. criticize or criticize ..... It is easy to criticize others
19. grown ..... Potatoes are grown in the field	43. prejudice ..... Prejudice is harmful to people
20. nature ..... The study of nature is interesting	44. belligerent ..... The soldier was belligerent and brave
21. explain ..... Explain how it happened	45. occurrence ..... War is a tragic occurrence
22. edge ..... He sat on the edge of the chair	
23. kitchen ..... Our kitchen is small	
24. surprise ..... He may surprise you	

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**JASTAK**  
 ASSESSMENT SYSTEMS

Learning Achievement Tracking Manicaland Region




MoESAC, 2010





**WIDE RANGE ACHIEVEMENT TEST - REVISED LEVEL 1**

Arithmetic, Oral Part

Page 2   

10   41   9   5   6   5 fingers,   8 fingers,   9 or 97   40 or 207

8 pennies, spend 17   3 + 4 apples 7   5 marbles, lose 27

---

Arithmetic, Written Part

$1 + 1 = \underline{\quad}$     $6 + 5 = \underline{\quad}$     $33 + 4 = \underline{\quad}$     $4 \times 2 = \underline{\quad}$     $23 + 3 = \underline{\quad}$     $39 - 10 = \underline{\quad}$   
 $4 - 1 = \underline{\quad}$     $6 + 2 = \underline{\quad}$     $5 - 3 = \underline{\quad}$     $4 + 0 = \underline{\quad}$     $6 - 2 = \underline{\quad}$

---

$\begin{array}{r} 78 \\ + 8 \\ \hline \end{array}$     $\begin{array}{r} 452 \\ 137 \\ + 245 \\ \hline \end{array}$     $\begin{array}{r} 401 \\ - 74 \\ \hline \end{array}$     $\begin{array}{r} 553.04 \\ - 5.30 \\ \hline \end{array}$     $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. =  $\underline{\quad}$  min  
 $\frac{1}{2} + \frac{1}{8} = \underline{\quad}$

---

$0.050$     $\frac{15}{5} = \underline{\quad}$     $\frac{1}{2}$  m =  $\underline{\quad}$  cm    $\begin{array}{r} 823 \\ \times 90 \\ \hline \end{array}$     $\begin{array}{r} 43 \\ 37 \\ + 21 \\ \hline \end{array}$

---

$\frac{1}{2}$  of 30 =  $\underline{\quad}$    27.00    $\frac{1}{2} = \frac{\quad}{10}$     $\frac{5}{10} = \underline{\quad}$     $\frac{1}{2}$  yr. =  $\underline{\quad}$  mos.  
 $2 \frac{1}{2}$  mos. =  $\underline{\quad}$

---

Multiply:  $\begin{array}{r} 7.88 \\ \times 0.8 \\ \hline \end{array}$    Which is more?  $\frac{1}{4}$  or  $\frac{1}{10}$    Find the average of 24, 18, 21, 28, 17  
 Ans.  $\underline{\quad}$    Ans.  $\underline{\quad}$    Ans.  $\underline{\quad}$

*Go to Next Page*