To establish the factors contributing to poor performance in Ordinary Level Mathematics: a case study of an identified High School in Victoria Falls

BY
Abigail M. Zimbizi
SUPERVISOR: MR J.C. CHAGWIZA

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS IN THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE HONOURS DEGREE MATHEMATICS

YEAR 2015
ABSTRACT

The research study was motivated by a number of factors. Performance in Mathematics by students has persistently been poor. The researcher noticed that the students had a challenge in coming up with proper subject combinations at A’ Level because they do not have mathematics at O’ Level. The main objective is to investigate on the factors that are contributing to poor performance in O’ Level Mathematics at an identified high school in Victoria Falls.

This study sought to investigate pupils attributions on high failure rate in mathematics at O’Level examinations and to establish the strategies that can be adopted to improve performance in Mathematics by students at the school. The Literature review examined the school based factors, socio cultural and personal factors that cause poor performance in mathematics. The review is aimed at developing an understanding of how the factors relates to poor performance. An insight into the research methodology adopted by the study was discussed. The research approach of the study was descriptive and the data was collected using quantitative methods. The methodology chosen was meant to provide the most reliable information. A research sample of students at the identified high school was used with the study relying on the collection of information and utilizing primary and secondary data. Data was collected using questionnaires as the research instrument. The self-administered questionnaires comprised both closed and open ended questions. Microsoft Excel 2010 was used to analyse the data. It was presented and analysed using tables, histograms, bar graphs and pie charts. The overall findings revealed an 85% questionnaire response rate on questionnaires. A pilot study was conducted before the final distribution of the questionnaire was conducted. The research findings that were gathered from respondents during the research study were used.

Finally, the summaries and conclusions were made pertaining to the empirical findings that were obtained in the research study. Recommendations were put forward to the school to improve mathematics O’ Level results. The researcher therefore managed to identify areas of further study.