

EFFECTS OF SOCIOECONOMIC FACTORS ON THE LEARNING AND TEACHING PROCESS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A CASE OF THREE SELECTED PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN LUSAKA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to assess the effects of socioeconomic factors on the teaching and learning process in selected primary schools in Lusaka District, Zambia. It focused on identifying key socioeconomic factors influencing academic performance, evaluating their impact on teaching strategies, and suggesting interventions to address these challenges. Using a mixed-methods approach, data were collected from 176 participants, including learners and teachers. The findings revealed that access to educational resources, parental income, and parental education significantly affected learners' performance. Teachers adapted their strategies to mitigate these challenges, and interventions such as academic tutoring and provision of learning materials were recommended. The study recommends that the Ministry of Education increase funding for resources in underserved schools, while school administrators should implement resource-sharing programs and collaborate with NGOs for additional support. Teachers are encouraged to engage in professional development to better address socioeconomic challenges, and parents should actively participate in school and community initiatives. Additionally, primary schools should strengthen support systems, including counseling and tutoring, for students from low-income backgrounds.

Key words: *Academic performance, Educational resources, Effect, Interventions, Parental income, Socioeconomic Factors, Teaching Strategies*

1. INTRODUCTION

Primary education is a critical phase in a child's development, laying the groundwork for future academic success. However, studies indicate that socioeconomic factors significantly affect educational outcomes. Key elements like family income, parental education levels, and access to

resources play a vital role in shaping the learning experience. Research, including that of Sirin (2015) and Bradley & Corwyn (2012), has shown a strong association between low socioeconomic status (SES) and poor academic performance. For example, Sirin (2015) found that children from lower-income families typically performed worse on standardized tests compared to their more affluent peers.

Socioeconomic disparities in education are not limited to the United States but are evident worldwide, including Zambia. Graetz (2015) and Ellis (2018a) observed that children from lower SES backgrounds tend to underperform academically due to factors such as inadequate nutrition and lack of educational resources. These disadvantages are compounded by environmental factors, such as poor hygiene and limited access to extracurricular activities, which can hinder a child's physical and mental development, affecting their academic achievement (Adams, 2016; Ellis, 2018b). Despite this, some researchers, such as Marzano (2013), argue that other factors beyond SES, such as individual and contextual variables, should also be considered in understanding academic performance.

In Zambia, socioeconomic factors have a pronounced impact on educational opportunities, particularly in rural and low-income urban areas. The country's education policies, such as the Education Act of 2011, acknowledge the need for equitable access to education. However, despite policy efforts, challenges remain in addressing these disparities, with limited educational infrastructure, teacher shortages, and inadequate resources affecting marginalized communities (UNESCO, 2018). Initiatives like the Education Sector Support Program (ESSP) have been implemented to mitigate these challenges, but gaps in implementation continue to hinder progress (Zambia Ministry of Education, 2015).

This study focuses on the effects of socioeconomic factors on primary education in Lusaka District, Zambia. The district presents a unique context due to its socioeconomic diversity, which affects access to educational resources. By examining the relationship between SES and educational outcomes, the study aims to develop practical interventions to improve primary education quality in Zambia. Addressing the complex interplay of socioeconomic factors is essential to ensure that all children, regardless of their background, have access to quality education.

1.1 Statement of the problem

In Lusaka District, Zambia, socioeconomic factors such as family income, parental education levels, and access to educational resources create significant barriers to effective primary education. According to the Ministry of Education (MoE, 2020), around 35% of primary school children in Lusaka come from low-income households, which restricts their access to essential resources like textbooks, school supplies, and technology, negatively impacting their academic performance. Additionally, MoE (2018) reported that only 42% of parents in low-income areas can assist their children with homework, compared to 68% in wealthier areas. Socioeconomically

disadvantaged households also lack an enabling home learning environment, about 50% of children from low-income families unable to participate in various activities due to factors such as insufficient funds, lack of transportation, and inadequate parental support (MoE, 2018). These disparities lead to an unequal educational landscape, with limited resources and opportunities. Despite the seriousness of these issues, there was a notable lack of comprehensive studies focusing on how these socioeconomic factors specifically affected the teaching and learning process in Lusaka District, highlighting the need for further research.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to assess the effects of socioeconomic factors on the learning and teaching process in selected primary schools within Lusaka District, Zambia.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

This study was guided by the following specific objectives;

- i. To identify the major socioeconomic factors that have the most significant impact on learners' academic performance in selected primary schools in Lusaka District.
- ii. To assess how socioeconomic factors influence teaching strategies used by primary school teachers in Lusaka District.
- iii. To suggest practical and effective interventions to address the influence of socioeconomic factors on the teaching and learning process in selected primary schools in Lusaka District.

1.4 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrated that socioeconomic factors could exert a significant influence on the teaching and learning process. For example, higher family socioeconomic status (SES) was associated with greater access to resources, which, in turn, positively affected a learner's engagement in classroom activities, academic performance, and overall learning experience. Conversely, lower SES was linked to fewer resources and potential challenges that could impact the teaching and learning process. The conceptual framework guided the study by providing a structured understanding of how these factors interrelated and influenced primary education in Lusaka District, Zambia. Through data collection and analysis, the researcher investigated these relationships to gain insights into how socioeconomic factors affected the teaching and learning process in the selected primary schools.

1.5. Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in its potential to address critical educational challenges in Lusaka District, Zambia, and beyond. By examining the impact of socioeconomic factors on the teaching and learning process, the study could inform educational policy at various levels, helping policymakers allocate resources more equitably and reduce educational inequalities. Additionally,

the study's focus on how socioeconomic factors influence teaching strategies could guide teacher professional development, ensuring educators are equipped to meet the diverse needs of their students. Furthermore, the study's exploration of the effects of socioeconomic disparities on extracurricular activities and support services could lead to interventions promoting holistic student development. Ultimately, the study's findings could offer practical solutions to improve learner outcomes, reduce dropout rates, and enhance the overall quality of education in Lusaka District, with potential applications in other regions facing similar challenges.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Major Socioeconomic Factors Affecting Learners' Academic Performance in Lusaka District

Globally, research consistently shows that socioeconomic factors are significant determinants of educational outcomes. Socioeconomic status (SES), encompassing factors such as income, parental education, and occupation, has been linked to differences in academic performance. According to Sirin (2015), students from lower-income families are more likely to face challenges such as limited access to educational resources, inadequate home learning environments, and emotional stressors, which hinder their academic success. The influence of these factors is particularly evident in developing countries, where inequality in access to quality education remains a critical challenge.

In sub-Saharan Africa, socioeconomic disparities contribute significantly to educational achievement gaps. Studies in countries like Kenya and Tanzania have demonstrated that learners from disadvantaged backgrounds face numerous barriers, including insufficient schooling resources, overcrowded classrooms, and limited parental involvement (Mutisya & Ngware, 2016). These regional challenges echo the findings of Mwaba (2015) in Zambia, who noted that even in urban areas like Lusaka, learners from lower-income families face considerable challenges that impede their academic performance. The urban-rural divide in access to quality education exacerbates these disparities, particularly affecting learners in economically deprived neighborhoods.

In Lusaka District, Zambia, socioeconomic factors such as poverty, parental education levels, and unemployment rates are particularly influential in determining learners' academic outcomes. According to Mwaba (2015), the urban poor in Lusaka face significant barriers to accessing quality education, including the high cost of educational materials, inadequate learning environments, and overcrowded classrooms. These challenges are compounded by the inability of some families to provide necessary academic support at home due to financial constraints. Furthermore, learners from low-income households are more likely to experience health and nutrition-related challenges, which directly impact their academic performance (Chanda & Tembo, 2018).

2.2. Influence of Socioeconomic Factors on Teaching Strategies in Lusaka District

On a global scale, socioeconomic factors greatly influence the teaching strategies employed by educators. Teachers working in low-income areas often face challenges such as large class sizes, lack of resources, and students with diverse needs, which require adaptive and innovative teaching methods (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Socioeconomic disparities may compel teachers to adjust their strategies, opting for more student-centered approaches, but these adjustments are often constrained by limited resources and inadequate training. Studies in the United States, for instance, suggest that teachers in disadvantaged schools are less likely to have access to ongoing professional development, further exacerbating the challenges in addressing socioeconomic disparities in the classroom (Ingersoll, 2001).

In sub-Saharan Africa, the influence of socioeconomic factors on teaching practices is also evident. Teachers working in rural and low-income urban areas often report difficulties in implementing effective teaching strategies due to the lack of resources and inadequate teacher preparation (Akyeampong et al., 2007). In Zambia, research by Sakala (2019) highlights how teachers in lower socioeconomic contexts are forced to rely on more traditional, teacher-centered approaches due to the scarcity of educational resources. This reliance on outdated strategies limits opportunities for learner engagement and critical thinking, which are crucial for improving academic outcomes.

In Zambian schools, teachers often report the challenge of adapting their teaching strategies to meet the needs of learners from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. According to research by Mwale (2017), teachers in urban areas like Lusaka face significant pressure to address the educational needs of learners who are affected by poverty, unstable home environments, and health challenges. As a result, teachers often resort to rote learning and other conventional methods that may not effectively engage students or promote critical thinking. However, some teachers have creatively incorporated community-based strategies, such as group learning and peer tutoring, to address the diverse needs of their students (Chanda & Tembo, 2018).

2.3. Interventions to Address the Influence of Socioeconomic Factors on Teaching and Learning in Lusaka District

Globally, various interventions have been proposed to mitigate the impact of socioeconomic factors on teaching and learning. Programs such as after-school tutoring, breakfast clubs, and mentorship initiatives have been shown to improve academic outcomes for disadvantaged learners (Jeynes, 2015). Moreover, scholars emphasize the importance of policy interventions, such as increasing school funding and improving teacher training, to bridge the gap caused by socioeconomic disparities (Borman & Dowling, 2010). In developed countries, comprehensive

welfare systems and social services that support families have also been identified as effective interventions to address the broader societal factors influencing education.

In Africa, several countries have introduced initiatives to improve educational access and quality for learners from disadvantaged backgrounds. In Kenya, for example, the government has implemented free primary education, which has significantly increased enrollment rates, though challenges remain in ensuring quality education for all (UNESCO, 2015). In Zambia, programs such as the School Health and Nutrition Program (SHN) have been pivotal in addressing the needs of learners from low-income families, offering support in areas such as nutrition, healthcare, and psychosocial support, which positively affect academic performance (Chanda & Tembo, 2018).

In Lusaka District, there are ongoing efforts to address the negative impact of socioeconomic factors on education. According to Mulenga (2020), the introduction of digital inclusion programs in urban schools has shown promise in bridging the educational gap, especially in low-income neighborhoods. Furthermore, the Zambia Ministry of Education's emphasis on teacher professional development has been instrumental in equipping teachers with the skills necessary to adapt their teaching strategies to meet the diverse needs of learners (Sakala, 2019). However, further investment in infrastructure, educational resources, and community engagement is needed to ensure that all learners, regardless of their socioeconomic background, have equal opportunities to succeed in education.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research design

The research design for this study, based on the definitions by Kombo and Tromp (2014) and Salkind (2017), is a structured framework that guides the research process. It adopted a descriptive survey design combined with a mixed methods approach, allowing for both quantitative data collection on academic performance and resource access, and qualitative insights into the experiences of teachers, learners, and parents. This design facilitated a comprehensive understanding of how socioeconomic factors influence the teaching and learning process, enhancing the validity of the findings through data triangulation.

3.2 Research site

The study was conducted in Lusaka District, Zambia, the country's capital and largest city, which provides a diverse and representative context for examining the impact of socioeconomic factors on primary education. Lusaka's urban and peri-urban areas were selected to reflect a variety of socioeconomic conditions and educational environments. This location allowed for a comprehensive exploration of the challenges and opportunities faced by primary schools, offering valuable insights into the research objectives within a dynamic urban setting.

3.3 Population, Sample and Sampling procedure

The target population for this study consisted of approximately 600 individuals, including learners from grades 5, 6, and 7, teachers (Heads, Deputy Heads, and class teachers), and parents within Lusaka District, Zambia. The sample size included 176 participants: 135 learners, 21 teachers, and 20 parents. The sample was strategically distributed across three schools to capture diverse perspectives on how socioeconomic factors impact the teaching and learning process. Simple random sampling was used to select learners, purposive sampling for teachers, and stratified random sampling for parents to ensure a balanced representation across different socioeconomic backgrounds. This sampling procedure aimed to provide a comprehensive view of the effects of socioeconomic factors on education within Lusaka District.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis for this study involved both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data was analyzed using SPSS version 26, which included data cleaning and visualization through charts, graphs, and tables to identify patterns and insights. For the qualitative data, thematic analysis was applied to interview transcripts, allowing for the identification of key themes and sub-themes. This mixed-methods approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the impact of socioeconomic factors on the teaching and learning process in Lusaka District, Zambia.

3.5 Ethical Issues

Ethical issues were central to this study, ensuring the protection of participants' rights, privacy, and well-being. Ethical approval was sought from the Rockview University Research Ethics Committee, and permissions were obtained from the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) and the Head teachers of the three selected schools, ensuring the study adhered to ethical guidelines. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, including teachers, learners, and parents, with clear explanations of the study's purpose, procedures, and risks. Parental consent was secured for learners below the legal age of consent. Data was anonymized and stored securely to maintain confidentiality, and participants were assured of their voluntary involvement, with the option to withdraw at any time.

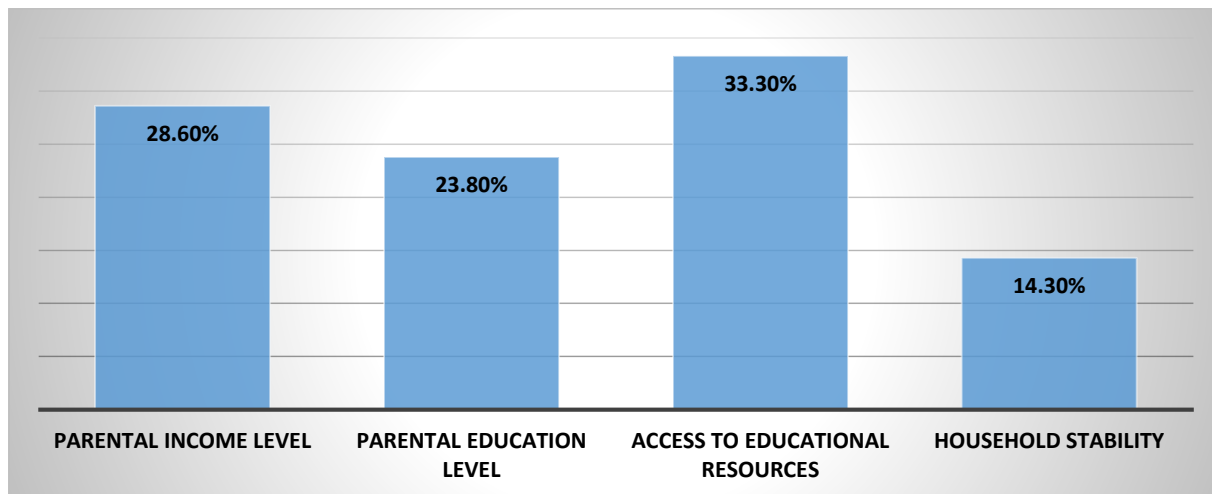
4. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1. Major socioeconomic factors that have the most significant impact on learners' academic performance in selected primary schools in Lusaka District

Findings from teacher responses indicated that access to educational resources is the most significant socioeconomic factor affecting learners' academic performance, as reported by 7 out of 21 teachers (33.3%). Teachers highlighted that inadequate learning materials, such as textbooks and writing supplies, limit students' ability to engage effectively with lesson content. Parental income level was the second most frequently cited factor, with 6 teachers (28.6%) noting that financial constraints hinder parents from providing necessary school supplies, meals, and

transport, which in turn affects learners' concentration and attendance. Additionally, 5 teachers (23.8%) identified parental education level as a critical factor, stating that children from households where parents have limited formal education often struggle with academic support at home. Finally, household stability was highlighted by 3 teachers (14.3%) as influencing school performance, as family conflicts or frequent relocations disrupt learners' consistency in schooling." (See figure 1).

Figure 1: Major Socioeconomic Factors Affecting Learners' Academic Performance



Source: Researcher, 2024

Access to educational resources, parental income, and parental education significantly influenced academic performance. These findings align with previous research by Brownell and Roos (2015), who emphasized the role of resources, and Sirin (2015), who highlighted the impact of parental income. Additionally, parental education was found to play a key role, as supported by Georgewill (2017) and Driessen and Dekker (2020). Finally, household stability, while less frequently mentioned, was recognized as a factor affecting learners' emotional well-being and academic success, consistent with Ellis (2018a).

During interviews, teachers were of the view that **poverty** was a major socioeconomic factor affecting learners' academic performance. For example, some participants had the following to say:

Teacher 1: *"Many of our students come from very poor families, and this lack of resources directly impacts their ability to perform well academically. They often struggle to afford basic school supplies and textbooks."*

Teacher 2: *"Poverty is a significant barrier. Learners from low-income families frequently miss school due to lack of transport or because they need to help their families at home."*

Parents were also of the view that **poverty** was a major socioeconomic factor affecting learners' academic performance. For example, some participants had the following to say:

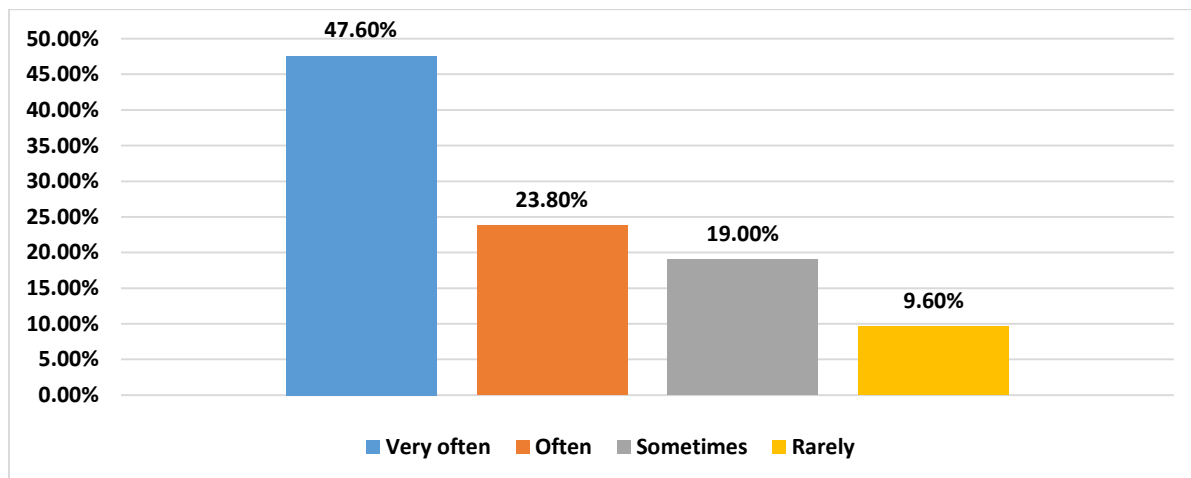
Parent 1: *“Our financial struggles mean we can’t always buy books or provide other educational materials for our children. This lack of resources affects their learning.”*

Parent 2: *“When there isn’t enough money, it impacts our ability to support our children with their schoolwork or to afford extra classes they might need.”*

4.2. Frequency of Basic Needs Affecting Academic Performance

With regard to frequency of basic needs affecting academic performance, the majority of teachers, 10 (47.6%), observed that the lack of basic needs very often affects learners' academic performance. 5 (23.8%) indicated that this occurs often, 4 (19.0%) sometimes, and 2 (9.6%) rarely (See figure 2).

Figure 2: Frequency of Basic Needs Affecting Academic Performance in the selected schools



Source: Researcher, 2024

Nearly half of the teachers (47.6%) observed the lack of basic needs frequently affecting learners' academic performance, a finding consistent with Majoribanks (2016), who emphasized the importance of fulfilling basic needs for academic success. Basic necessities such as food, clothing, and school supplies significantly hinder learning, as highlighted by Ezzat and El Sayed (2020). Additionally, 23.8% of teachers noted that the lack of basic needs affects performance often, aligning with Secker (2014), who found that basic needs are crucial for student engagement and academic achievement.

4.3. Learners' Parental Education Level

The findings on parental education levels revealed that 15 (11.1%) had no formal education, 35 (25.9%) had primary school education, 55 (40.7%) had secondary school education, and 30 (22.3%) had tertiary education (See table 1).

Table 1: Learners' Parental Education Level

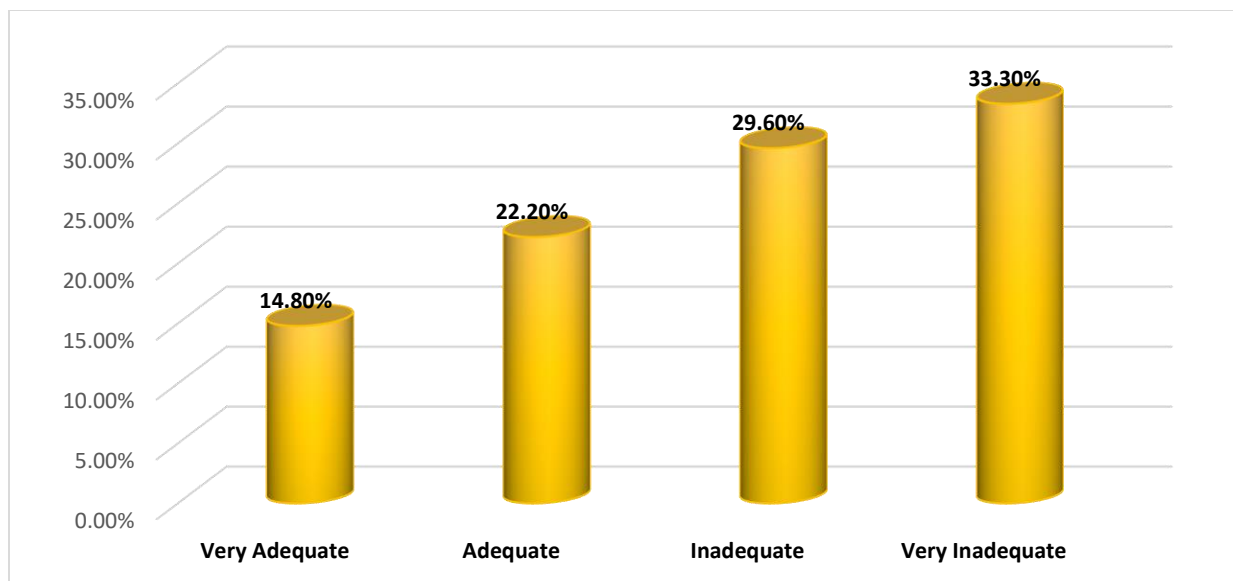
Parental Education Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No formal education	15	11.1%
Primary school education	35	25.9%
Secondary school education	55	40.7%
Tertiary education	30	22.3%
Total	135	100%

Source: Researcher, 2024

The findings in the table above clearly indicate that 40.7% of parents had completed secondary school, which aligns with Adams (2016), who found that higher parental education levels improve children's academic outcomes by providing better support. Similarly, Kinyanjui and Ngaruiya (2017) emphasized the impact of parental education on the resources available to students. However, 11.1% of parents had no formal education, and 25.9% only completed primary school, limiting academic support for their children. These findings are consistent with Chanda and Tembo (2018), who highlighted the challenges faced by students from families with lower educational attainment.

4.4. Learners' Access to Educational Resources

The findings revealed that access to educational resources was a significant issue for many learners. A majority of learners, 85 (62.9%), reported having either inadequate or very inadequate access to resources, with 40 (29.6%) indicating inadequate access and 45 (33.3%) stating very inadequate access. In contrast, only a smaller portion of learners, 30 (22.2%), reported having adequate access, and 20 (14.8%) indicated very adequate access. These results underscore the persistent challenges learners face in obtaining necessary educational materials, despite the Free Education Policy, which covers tuition and examination fees. (See figure 4.6).

Figure 3: Learners' Access to Educational Resources

Source: Researcher, 2024

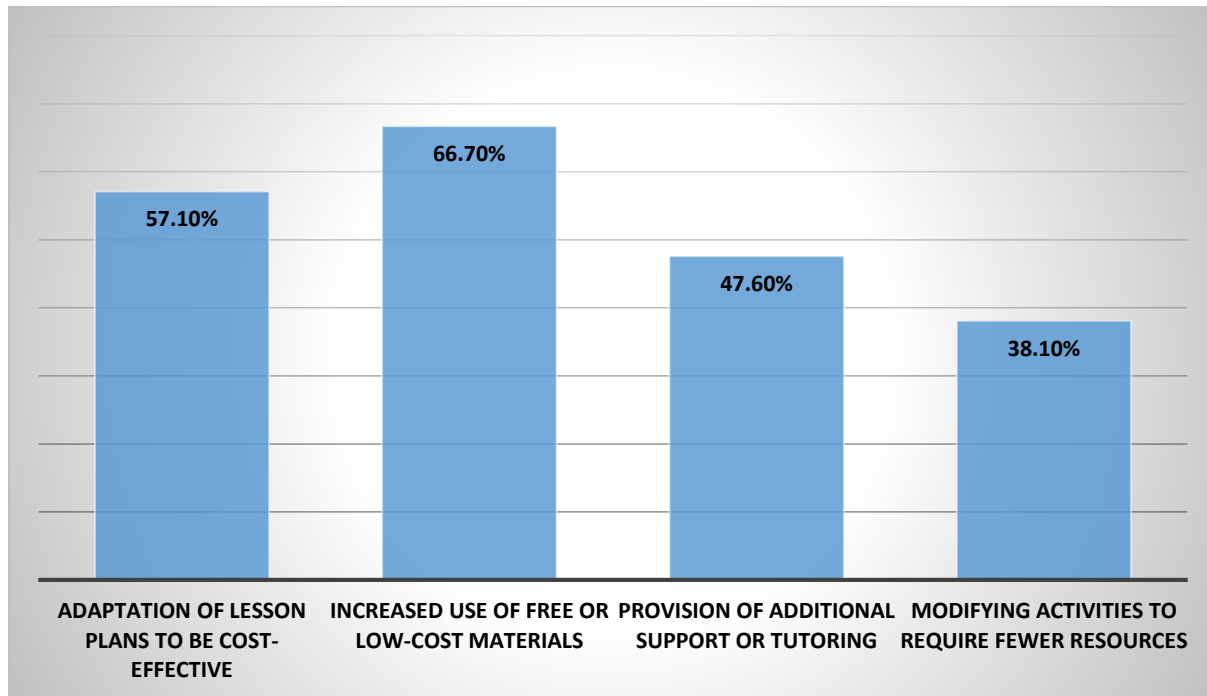
The study found significant inequalities in learners' access to educational resources, with 33.3% of students reporting very inadequate access. This highlights the persistent gap in resource availability, despite the Free Education Policy in Zambia. While the policy has addressed tuition and exam fees, it does not cover the purchase of essential learning materials, leaving many students, especially those from low-income families, unable to access the tools necessary for academic success (Chinsinga, 2012; Mulenga, 2015). The findings underscore the need to expand the policy to include subsidized or free learning materials to ensure more equitable access to education and improve academic outcomes (UNESCO, 2017).

4.5. How socioeconomic factors influence teaching strategies used by primary school teachers in Lusaka District

The findings indicated that socioeconomic factors influenced teaching strategies in several practical ways. A majority of teachers, 14 (66.7%), responded by increasing their use of free or low-cost materials, recognizing that limited resources at home prevented many learners from acquiring additional materials. 12 teachers (57.1%) adapted their lesson plans to be more cost-effective, adjusting activities to fit within the available resources. 10 teachers (47.6%) provided additional support or tutoring to learners who were struggling due to financial constraints at home, while 8 teachers (38.1%) modified classroom activities to require fewer resources overall, ensuring that all learners could participate without the need for extra materials. These adaptations were direct responses to the financial challenges faced by learners, highlighting the link between

socioeconomic factors and the teaching strategies employed by teachers to ensure inclusivity and maintain educational quality within resource-limited environments (See figure 4.9).

Figure 4: Specific Ways Socioeconomic Factors Influence Teaching Strategies

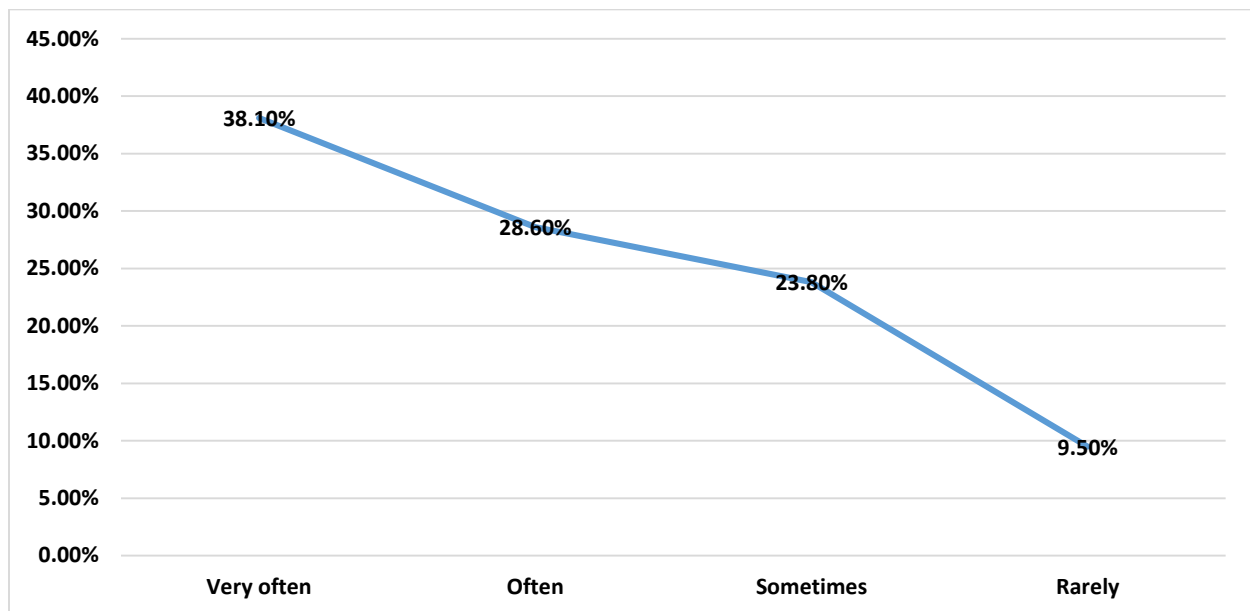


Source: Researcher, 2024

This study established that in Lusaka District adapt their teaching strategies in response to socioeconomic challenges. Teachers commonly use low-cost materials, modify lesson plans, provide additional tutoring, and adjust activities to require fewer resources. These strategies align with findings from Ajayi (2018), who emphasized the importance of cost-effective teaching methods in resource-poor settings, and Kinyanjui and Ngaruiya (2017), who highlighted the role of additional support to address learning gaps caused by financial constraints. These adaptations demonstrate how socioeconomic factors directly influence teaching approaches to ensure educational continuity.

4.6. Frequency of Modifying Teaching Strategies Based on Socioeconomic Background

The responses indicated that 8 (38.1%) teachers modified their teaching strategies very often based on learners' socioeconomic backgrounds, 6 (28.6%) did so often, 5 (23.8%) sometimes, and 2 (9.5%) rarely (See figure 4.7).

Figure 5: Frequency of Modifying Teaching Strategies Based on Socioeconomic Background

Source: Researcher, 2024

A significant number of teachers in Lusaka District frequently adjust their teaching strategies to accommodate the socioeconomic backgrounds of their learners. This finding aligns with Darling-Hammond (2017), who emphasized that teachers often adapt their methods to meet the diverse needs of students from varying socioeconomic conditions. Additionally, the research supports the work of Graham and Weiner (2016), who highlighted the importance of responsive teaching in promoting effective learning. However, the variation in responses also suggests that not all teachers consistently consider socioeconomic factors, which may be influenced by their level of preparedness, as noted by Smith and Brown (2019).

4.7. Analysis of Grade 5, 6, and 7 end-of-term test results

The analysis of Grade 5, 6, and 7 end-of-term test results revealed a clear academic performance gap between learners from poor homes and those from other backgrounds. These findings underscore the influence of socioeconomic status on academic achievement and highlight the need for targeted interventions to address educational disparities.

The Grade 5 end-of-term test results, with a total possible score of 500 marks, showed that 18 out of 45 learners from poor homes scored below 250 marks, representing 40% of the sample. In contrast, 27 learners from other backgrounds, accounting for 60% of the sample, achieved scores of 250 marks and above. This disparity indicates a significant gap in academic performance based on socioeconomic status. The lower performance of learners from poorer backgrounds aligns with previous research that links socioeconomic disadvantage to lower academic achievement. For

instance, Adams (2016) highlighted that basic needs unmet due to financial constraints negatively impact educational outcomes. This finding is also supported by Chanda and Tembo (2018), who observed that socioeconomic factors, including poverty, significantly affect academic performance.

In the Grade 6 end-of-term tests, where the maximum possible score was 600 marks, 20 learners from poor homes scored below 300 marks, representing 44.44% of the cohort. Conversely, 25 learners from other backgrounds scored 300 marks and above, making up 55.56% of the sample. The continued disparity in academic performance between the two groups further underscores the impact of socioeconomic factors. This is consistent with findings from Sirin (2015), who noted that socioeconomic status influences academic achievement significantly, with students from disadvantaged backgrounds consistently performing worse than their more affluent peers. The results also align with the work of Bradley and Corwyn (2012), who emphasized the role of socioeconomic status in shaping educational outcomes.

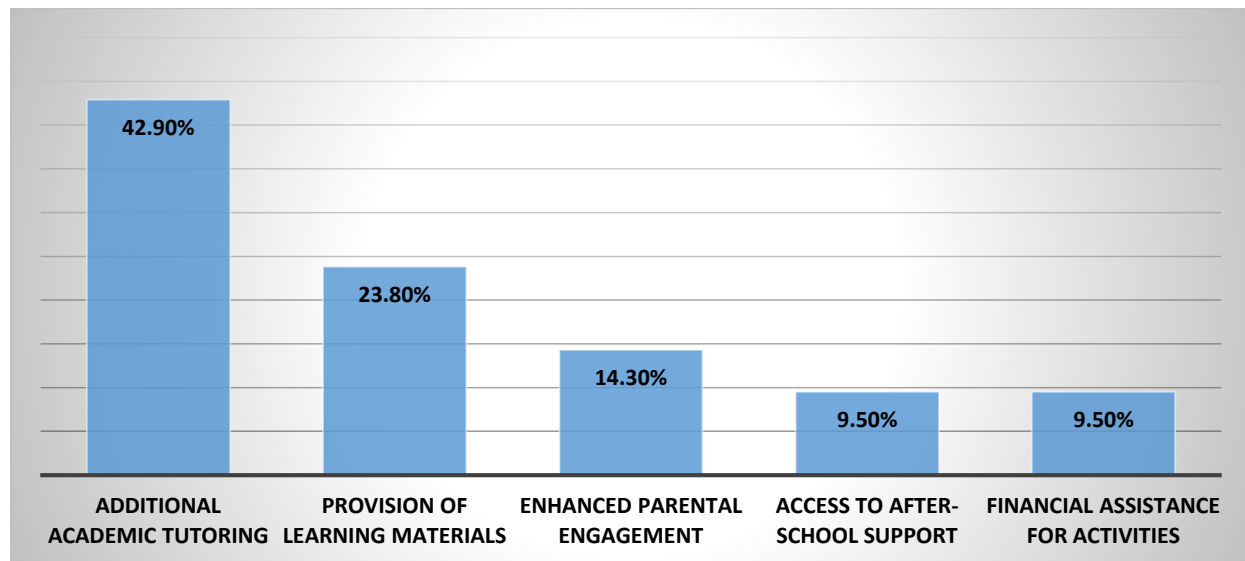
The analysis of Grade 7 test results, with a total possible score of 700 marks, revealed that 22 learners from poor homes scored below 350 marks, which is 48.89% of the total sample. In contrast, 23 learners from other backgrounds achieved 350 marks and above, accounting for 51.11% of the sample. The persistent performance gap between learners from poor homes and those from more affluent backgrounds illustrates the ongoing influence of socioeconomic factors on academic success. This finding is supported by Buckingham and Wheldall (2013), who found that family background significantly impacts literacy outcomes in primary education. Additionally, the results reflect the concerns raised by Reay (2016), who argued that social class disparities lead to varying educational achievements among students.

The results from the Grade 5, 6, and 7 end-of-term tests collectively highlight a significant academic performance gap related to socioeconomic status. Learners from poorer homes consistently scored lower compared to their peers from more affluent backgrounds, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to address these educational inequities. This analysis aligns with existing literature on the impact of socioeconomic factors on academic achievement, underscoring the importance of addressing these disparities to improve educational outcomes for all students.

4.8. Practical and effective interventions to address the influence of socioeconomic factors on the teaching and learning process in selected primary schools in Lusaka District

The findings indicate that 42.9% of teachers believe additional academic tutoring is the most effective intervention for improving academic performance among learners from low socioeconomic backgrounds. 23.8% recommended providing learning materials and resources. Enhanced parental engagement was suggested by 14.3% of teachers, while 9.5% each favored access to after-school support and financial assistance for activities (See figure 4.13).

Figure 6: Effective Interventions to address the influence of socioeconomic factors on the teaching and learning process



Source: Researcher, 2024

teachers in Lusaka District emphasized additional academic tutoring as a key intervention for improving academic performance among learners from low socioeconomic backgrounds. This finding aligned with Brownell and Roos (2015), who noted that tutoring helped bridge learning gaps caused by economic challenges. The provision of learning materials was also identified as crucial for academic success, as supported by Chanda and Tembo (2018), who emphasized the importance of resources in overcoming socioeconomic disparities. Teachers also highlighted the role of enhanced parental engagement, which was consistent with Kinyanjui and Ngaruiya (2017), who found it positively impacted student achievement. Furthermore, after-school support and financial assistance were seen as valuable interventions, in line with Mwansa (2017), who identified these as key in supporting disadvantaged students.

5. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study highlighted the significant role that various socioeconomic factors play in shaping learners' academic performance in Lusaka District's primary schools. Key factors such as access to educational resources, parental income, parental education, and household stability were found to directly impact learners' ability to succeed academically. Teachers adapted their teaching strategies to these challenges by using more cost-effective materials and providing additional support to struggling students. Practical interventions, including academic tutoring, improved parental engagement, and enhanced resource provision, were proposed as essential solutions to mitigate these challenges. If these strategies are effectively implemented, they could foster a more inclusive and supportive educational environment, ultimately improving academic outcomes for students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds in Lusaka District.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results obtained from this study, the following recommendations have been put forward;

1. The government through the Ministry of Education should increase funding for educational resources and support services in underserved schools to ensure equitable access for all students.
2. School Administrators should implement resource-sharing programs and seek partnerships with NGOs to provide additional materials and financial support for extracurricular activities.
3. Teachers should actively engage in professional development focused on managing socioeconomic challenges and adapting teaching strategies to meet the needs of disadvantaged students.
4. Parents/guardians should foster greater involvement in school activities and support programs by participating in community-sponsored initiatives and workshops aimed at improving educational outcomes.
5. Primary schools should enhance school-based support systems, including counseling and tutoring services, to offer additional academic and emotional support to students from low-income backgrounds.

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