THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ENTRY QUALIFICATIONS AND STUDENTS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ILALA MUNICIPAL COUNCIL, DAR ES SALAAM REGION

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A DISSERTATION TO BE SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR MASTER DEGREE IN EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION, PLANNING AND POLICY STUDIES (MED-APPs) OF THE OPEN UNIVERSITY OF TANZANIA

2022

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that he has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania a dissertation Titled *"Relationship between Entry Qualifications and Students' Academic Performance in Ilala Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam Region"*, in partial fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master in Education Administration, Planning and Policy Studies of The Open University of Tanzania.

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Date

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DECLARATION

I, Edward Simon Haule, do hereby declare that, the work presented in this dissertation is original, it has never been presented to any other University or Institution, where other people's works have been used, and references have been provided. It is in this regard that I declare this work as originally mine. It is hereby presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies.

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Signature

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Date

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my lovely parents and my own family.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

The focus of the study was to assess the relationship between entry qualifications to students' academic performance in Ilala Municipal Council, Dar es Salaam region. The study was guided by four research objectives namely: investigate the entry qualifications of ordinary level students in Ilala Municipal Council; assess the relationship between entry qualifications on the academic performance of ordinary level secondary school students in Ilala Municipal Council; Explore challenges related to entry qualifications on the performance of ordinary level secondary students in Ilala Municipal Council and investigate ways to improve the teaching and learning in Ilala municipal council ordinary level secondary schools. The study applied a mixed method approach i.e., quantitative and qualitative; the study was conducted in five purposively selected community secondary schools in Ilala Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam region. Whereby, twenty (20) students were purposively and randomly selected from each school forming a total of one hundred (100) students across five schools. Five (5) students were randomly selected from each class i.e. form one to form four totalling 20 students per each school. Similarly, five teachers including two (2) school leaders such as head of school and an academic master; and three teachers preferably teaching in forms 1, 2 and 4 were purposively and randomly selected forming twenty five (25) teachers in total. Thus, the total sample was 125 participants across five selected community secondary schools in Ilala Municipal Council. Based on the study, the findings presented numerous issues which relate to the entry qualifications and secondary school students' academic performance. The main themes raised include: Language of instruction, unfriendly educational policy, home distance from schools and thus school location factor as well as minimum entry

qualifications which affected the quality of teaching and learning. The study recommended that the government should put in place a policy or regulations which will specify precisely the entry qualifications to ordinary level secondary schools just as for advanced secondary schools; there should be a language policy which states clearly language teaching and language qualifications for one to be admitted for ordinary level secondary school studies; schools should strive to implement effectively the competence and outcome based curriculum in order to provide opportunities for students to effectively participate in the instructional processes i.e. taking charge of their own learning, further studies to be conducted around the topic in order to widen the coverage as well as improve the current study. More importantly, other studies can be refined to students of advanced level secondary schools or higher learning institutions while taking focus on other theoretical orientations other than the theories used herein.

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CHAPTER ONE: BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces the problem on the influence of entry qualifications to ordinary level secondary schools' students' academic performance in Ilala Municipal Council. The chapter begins with an introduction followed by background and statement of the research problem. The chapter presents also the general and specific objectives and their related questions. The chapter then presents the study significance, operational research terms as well as delimitations and limitations of the study.

1.2 Background of the study

Secondary education according to Tilya (2003) refers to post-primary formal education offered to persons who have successfully completed seven years of primary education and have met the requisite entry requirements. Furthermore, Mtitu (2014) clarifies secondary education as the level of basic education at which learners are expected to acquire proficiency in both academic and some applied subjects. The students are expected to take the first recognized national examination that will usher them to higher education at various fields of training or direct entry into the world of work. United Republic of Tanzania (URT) (2010) explains that Secondary education occupies a pivotal role in the functioning of the economy and the education system itself. Experience shows that the majority of the people in both the private and public sectors are expected to be secondary education leavers. The whole primary education system relies on teachers who are a product of the secondary education system.

Candidates of higher and tertiary education and training are products of the secondary education system. This is the essence of being pivotal.

1.3 Statement of the problem

The current secondary school curriculum in Tanzania is examination oriented with great emphasis on passing examination at the expense of acquisition of skills, values and attitudes. This is despite major curriculum changes occurred in 2005 with the aim to shift from teacher-centred to learner-centred i.e, competency based. The argument is that there is a problem in the way young people are socialized by their parents on one hand and how they are taught and examined at school on the other hand.

1.4 Categories of secondary schools

Secondary schools in Tanzania are classified into: Government schools that consist of two categories-the traditional national schools and community-built schools. URT (2009) defines Community/ Ward secondary schools as those schools which are built by the efforts of local communities with both cash and in-kind contributions but operate and are managed by the government and considered as government schools.

The second category is that of private Secondary schools. These private (non-government) schools are owned and operated by communities, NGOs or individuals. Seminaries are included in this second group of non-government schools. Religious institutions own these schools and provide both general secondary education and specific religion vocation instructions. Tilya (2003) clarifies that, private secondary schools are part of the education system in which parents have to pay for everything involved in education. The students in these schools come from two sources. One source are those who finished primary schools but could not secure places in

government schools and whose parents are willing to pay for their education. The second group comprises of students who secured admission in government schools but whose parents are not satisfied with the services and the expected final performance in government schools. The second group is not large but private secondary schools generally outperform government secondary schools in their final examinations. A few private secondary schools are relatively well-endowed schools, but the majorities are quite poor and are even often in worse shapes than public schools.

1.5 General objective

The general objective of the study is to assess the way entry qualifications to ordinary level secondary school students influence students' academic performance in Ilala Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam region.

1.5.1 Specific objectives

The study sought to respond to the following specific objectives:

a) Assess the entry qualifications of ordinary level students in Ilala Municipal Council,

b) Investigate the influence of teaching and learning on the academic performance of ordinary level secondary school students in Ilala Municipal Council,

c) Assess the challenges related to entry qualifications on the performance of ordinary level secondary students in Ilala Municipal Council and

d) Investigate ways to improve the teaching and learning in Ilala Municipal Council ordinary level secondary schools.

1.6 Research questions

a) What are the entry qualifications of ordinary level students in Ilala Municipal Council?

b) How is teaching and learning influence the academic performance of ordinary level secondary school students in Ilala Municipal Council?

c) What are the challenges related to entry qualifications on the performance of ordinary level secondary students in Ilala Municipal Council and

d) What are the best ways of improving teaching and learning in Ilala Municipal Council ordinary level secondary schools?

1.7 Study significance

The study presents some possible merits around educational officers, curriculum specialists, and policy professionals as well as current and future researchers. Based on the study findings, it could be agreed that the study is significant since it shade right and increase knowledge in area of management of entry qualifications to secondary schools as well as effective teaching and learning for better understanding and application of acquired knowledge in solving socio-economic and political as well as cultural related matters. This study might also be important to teachers and curriculum developers especially if the author will organise research findings dissemination workshop to share about the findings. Policy makers may also find the study useful if they will take advantage of attending the relevant workshop and also being accessible to the copies of respective proposal. More important is that the study will mark the completion of the scholarly journey of master's candidature at the Open University of Tanzania. It is expected that future researchers will find this study useful as the baseline for their studies.

1.8 Study delimitation

This study is confined to Ilala Municipal Council particularly to ordinarily level secondary schools. The variables of research interests are entry qualifications vis-à-vis academic performance in secondary schools, other factors for academic performance in secondary schools, challenges teachers and students encountered in the teaching and learning process in Ilala Municipal Council and alternative ways for improving academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools especially in Ilala Municipal Council. The study is delimited to students, teachers, heads of schools and other education officers at district level.

1.9 Study limitations

As discussed in this Dissertation, one of the main limitations of this study is the complexity in the linkage between entry qualifications and secondary school academic performance. This complexity might emerge due to lack of enough justification on how entry qualifications affect students' academic progress. Some scholars such as O-Saki (2002) present different perceptions regarding students' academic performance vis-à-vis entry qualifications. Furthermore, the outbreak of COVID pandemic was an obstacle during data collection from respondents in secondary schools. This obstacle though, did not affect the findings of this study. Data from teachers and parents were gathered on time by observing all necessary health conditions such as; sitting by keeping distance, washing hands and wearing face masks. Other limitation was financial constraints.

1.10 Definition of research terms

(a) Entry qualification: - academic criteria i.e., pass marks obtained in the primary school national examinations used to determine selection of pupils to ordinary level secondary schools

(b) Primary school education: - Education level in Tanzania which starts at the age between 6 and 8 and ends at the age between 13 and 15 years with two years of pre-primary school and seven years of basic education which according to Nyerere (1967) needs to be complete by itself i.e. prepares children for their complete life

(c) Assessment: - Making informed judgment about student's learning attainment before, during and after classroom processes. it includes both traditional and modern assessment methods and techniques

(d) Academic performance: - May mean low, average and/or high achievement resulting from teaching and learning as well as general student's attributes demonstrated before, during and after instruction

(e) Effective teaching and learning: - Types or kind of teaching and learning of which the teacher adheres to all principles for high quality teaching and the learner uses appropriate instructional resources including the teacher consequently leading to better academic performance

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Since independence, the government has appreciated the critical role of education in achieving the overall development goal of improving the quality of life of Tanzanians through economic growth and poverty eradication. Several policies and structural reforms have been initiated by the Government geared to improve the quality of education at all levels. These include: Education for Self-Reliance, 1967; Musoma Resolution, 1974; Universal Primary Education (UPE), 1977; Education and Training Policy (ETP), 1995; National Science and Technology Policy, 1995; Technical Education and Training Policy, 1996; Education Sector Development Programme, 1996 and National Higher Education Policy, 1999. The ESDP of 1996 represented for the first time a Sector-Wide Approach to education development to redress the problem of fragmented interventions.

It called for pooling together of resources such as human, financial and materials resources through the involvement of all key stakeholders in education planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (MoEC, 2005b). The Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) provided the institutional framework. However, Challenges include the considerable shortage of classrooms, a shortage of well qualified and expert teachers competent to lead their learners through the new competency based curriculum and learning styles, and the absence of an assessment and examination regime able to reinforce the new approaches and reward students for their ability to demonstrate what they know understand and can do. This has equally affected secondary school education where there is a need to expand facilities

necessary as a result of increased transition rates. This chapter presents a review of literature from a number of sources information. They include journal articles, book chapters, educational and research reports. The reviewed literature about the influence of entry qualifications on secondary school students' academic achievements come mainly from the empirical studies which focused on similar topic with negligible variations in terms of methodology and research approach orientation, institutional differences as well as participants.

High academic achievements have always been the aim of all secondary school leavers and university graduates. Many factors have been noted to contribute to this high academic achievement such as cognitive ability, language ability, teaching and learning environment and high school achievement. Different studies have been done on predicting academic performance base on entry qualification. Although predicting future performance from previous achievement is not an easy task, many researchers have concluded that entry qualification do predict university success. According to Ogbonnaya, N.P. *et al.* (2014) in the study involving 390 students from two basic nursing schools in Nigeria concluded that entry qualification do have a positive correlation to academic performance.

Similarly, Adebayo, A. S. *et al* (2014), looked at entry criteria as predictor to academic performance of students from the faculty of Business at Solusi University. He found that CGPA at the end of pre-university examination predict the academic success of the pre-university entrants with a positive beta value of 0.677. Results from Alias, M. *et al* (2006) study on the undergraduate entry qualification and graduate CPA were also consistent with above findings with higher undergraduate academic

achievements predicting better graduate CPA. Lizzio, Wilson and Simons (2002) conducted a study to determine the influence of Tertiary. Entrance (TE) scores in the students' years 11 and 12 of their secondary education on academic achievements at the University of Griffith, Australia. A sample of 64 students was drawn from the Faculty of Business Studies.

Findings showed that TE score was positively but weakly ($\rho = .39$) associated with a high-Grade Point Average (GPA) score measured on a scale of 1 (low) to 7 (high). The low relationship may be an indication that past performance is not a determinant of present performance; probably due to cognitive development which is associated with maturity. In contrast, Adedeji (2001) found a strong positive correlation ($\rho = .85$) between students' admission scores and their undergraduate performance at the Faculty of Technology, University of Ibadan.

A study by Aderson, Benjamin and Fuss (1994) also found out that student who received better scores (between 777-999) in high school tended to have a Grade Point Average score of above 3.0/4.0 at the university. While previous studies looked at similar level of entry qualification but vary in terms of awarding bodies such as higher learning institutions and their level of achievement within subject specific, this study investigated mainly the effect or rather influence of primary schools' pupils' entry qualifications to secondary school academic achievements with particular focus in Ilala Municipal Council, in Dar Es Salaam region.

2.2 Change Theory as theoretical framework

It is without doubt that any educational investment would expect equivalent change or improvement or performance outcomes which reflect the investment made. Similarly,

investigating how entrance qualifications to ordinary level secondary school affected students' academic performance demanded application of relevant theoretical framework in this case, the change theory. The theory states clearly that in order to maintain or even improve the academic performance of students between the previous, the current and the future, the school, teachers and all direct education stakeholders would need to make the school a better place for learning.

This according to UNESCO (2014), involves providing adequate teaching and learning resources, having in place adequate number of qualified teaching staff and using outcome based teaching and learning strategies to empower learners with multiple learning and life skills such as critical and creative thinking, problem solving, communication, teaming up, analytical, debating and adaptability skills. It is all about putting in place proper strategies to be adopted in improving education system, in our case teaching and learning or changing existing education system for better results. Michael Fullan introduced the theory in 2006 as can be traced back to education reform in Ontario, a Canadian province that is the best reform in the world (Fullan, 2006).

The theory is powerful in informing education stakeholders regarding proper reform strategies to enhance quality teaching and learning. This theory is based on three argument namely standards-based reform initiatives, professional learning communities and qualifications frameworks that focus on the development and retention of quality teaching and learning consequently resulting in to well-educated learners. The theory is relevant in this study since it indicates how similarity or

differences in education provision environments can have similar educational or academic performance outcome to students.

2.3 Home Environment and students' academic performance

Environments do influence the quality of teaching and learning in one way or another. There are school environments and home environments each affecting the quality of teaching and learning on its own way and magnitude. Different scholars and researchers have discussed differently about the concept of environments and its effect on teaching and learning. While others have looked at home environment such as parents or guardians attitude to school or education, students' engagement in different activities at home, chances for students' to undertake private studies and the family ability to support their school pupils and students academically others concentrate on school environmental factors.

Those looking at the school environment consider aspects such as availability of teaching and learning resources, the quality of sciences laboratories, the quality, motivation and adequacy of teachers, the impact of school leadership and/or management, school timetabling and the quality of students' support services. According to Mtitu (2008) and (2014), he does not see the difference between the two perspectives about their impact on teaching and learning and thus academic performance. Mtitu in his two publications, define school environment and home environment equally the same as those factors presented by two different groups. According to Mtitu, a learner is surrounded by the two major kinds of environments which are home and school. Environment according to Mtitu's understanding

encompass all conditions which may either influence positively or negatively the quality of teaching and learning and thus students' academic performance.

Mtitu (2008) outlines home environments to include healthy housing and parents' positive or facilitative practices to students' learning. They also include learning facilities students get from their parents and or guardians as well as food and clothing. Mtitu goes further to explain home environments when he includes the types of activities students are engaged while at home. In the same way, Mtitu (2014) discusses schools environments just like home environments when he provides the list including: adequacy and quality of library and laboratories, teacher-student ratio, teacher qualification and commitment, quality of students' assessments, types of instructional activities students are involved in and the level of English speaking and writing skills achieved by students and above all the role of school management on academic supervision.

Implied is that Mtitu's reflection on the environments in relation to teaching and learning as well as students' academic performance, one could logically not see any tangible differences as the two scholars suggest above. The only difference is that one discussed one type of environment leaving the other while Mtitu discusses both i.e. home environments and school environments. One argument to make is that all the three thinkers relate environments and the teaching and learning as well as students' academic performance. Considering the topic of this study and the numerous literature reviewed, it could be argued that students' academic performance is more a function of multiple factors than a single factor which is entry qualification to ordinary level secondary school. It appears that there are some other factors besides entry

qualifications which seem to have high level of influence on teaching and learning and thus students' academic performance.

2.4 Teaching and learning for academic performance

This section discusses the influence of teaching and learning on students' academic performance. Nihuka (2014) argues that students' academic performance is an outcome of the quality of teaching and learning. Nihuka notes that teaching and learning in the age of rapid development and use of science and technology should be achieved through different modus of operant. According to Nihuka, in order for effective and efficient teaching and learning to take place, students need to be exposed to different learning avenues including ICTs and the social media such as facebook, twitter, whasaps, blogs and the like. Nihuka sees that when students interact with social media they are motivated to learn.

Different from Nihuka's perceptions of how students should effectively be facilitated for high academic performance, Shulman (1987) presents different features which trigger students' active learning. According to Shulman, students' academic performance is a function of what to teach, who to teach and how to teach. He believes that the quality of subject content, the pedagogy and more importantly the quality of a teacher in terms of competency in both academic content and pedagogy. In his teacher's pedagogical reasoning and action model, Shulman (1987) among other aspects presents teacher characteristics suitable for effective teaching and learning. Shulman outlines these features to include the following:

a) Teacher's competency in both academic and pedagogic subject contents
b) Teachers' knowledge of students' learning needs and their academic potentials

c) Teacher's appreciation of students' varied socio-economic backgrounds

d) Teacher's ability to engage students in the learning process using locally available resources

e) Teacher's ability and creativity to plan and implement classroom lessons

f) Teacher's knowledge of child development psychology

g) Teacher's self-awareness and flexibility

h) Teacher's knowledge and experience of transforming subject matter content into teachable segments

i) Teacher's knowledge and experience of the different students' learning styles

j) Teacher's ability to use varied students' assessment methods

k) Teacher's knowledge and ability to understand and translate the subject syllabus and relevant syllabus materials

l) Teacher's understanding of the national ideology

m) Teacher's knowledge and experience of the Tanzania education systems, vision and mission as well as relevant policies

n) Teacher's knowledge of the educational provision context i.e. Tanzania and that of the globe (Shulman, 1987).

Despite Shulman's presentation of teacher's qualities for effective teaching and learning; contemporary scholars have challenged about their applicability in today's teaching and learning environment. They question about Shulman lack of inclusion of the role of digitization in the classroom process where in 1980s little was advanced in the use of information and technology in teaching and learning. This is why Nihuka (2014; 2015) emphasizes the need to integrate ICTs in the teaching and learning process. Nihuka's observation is also supported by Starkey's (2010) presentation on

the role of beginning teachers to use digital facilities to promote students' involvement in the lesson.

According to Starkey, implementation of student-centered teaching and learning will only be achieved when teachers and students make effective and efficient use of ICTs in the instructional practices. This means that ICTs has the great potential to influence learners' participation in the lesson and more importantly promoting learner's creativity and critical thinking as well as independent learning. According to Mtitu (2014) learner-centred teaching has to do with increasing opportunities for learners to actively participate in the creation of knowledge and promoting learner's autonomy. Mtitu characterize effective teaching as that which places the learner at the centre of all classroom processes.

Among the main characteristics of learner-centred teaching which according to Mtitu (2014) enhances students' academic performance include:

a) Existence of fluid relationship between the teacher and the student whereas at one point the teacher becomes a learner and a learner becomes the teacher

b) The learner actively taking part in the learning process through involvement in different learning activities

c) The teacher creatively probes the learner with different questions and the learner take times to reflect the probes

d) The learner is made an autonomous in the sense that is one who struggles for his/her own learning under the teacher's facilitation

e) The teacher uses different instructional activities to activate students' creative and critical thinking, problem solving ability and cultivation of divergent thinking

f) Teaching and learning is always contextualized to students' day to day life i.e. they are taught what they live and thus apply immediately

g) Students' prior knowledge becomes the basics for new knowledge construction and thus new learning experience

h) Emphasis is on the use of alternative assessments methods and techniques such as students learning activities including portfolios, drawings, pictures, students prepared teaching and learning resources and above all

i) Promoting students' use of ICTs in their learning under proper and ethical guidance (Mtitu, 2014).

Making an analysis of different literatures about factors influencing teaching and learning and thus academic performance, one can conclude that there are multiple factors whereas each has its significant merit to the teaching and learning. Therefore one would need some more research evidence to argument on one factor such as entry qualifications as a standalone factor which impact the teaching and learning consequently students' academic performance. Nevertheless, Ilala district council in Dar Es Salaam region seem to bring special attention due to it being not performing well in the national form four examinations of 2019. Different people have been presenting their feelings without justification. Thus, this study sought to gain an understanding of whether or not entry qualifications have some influence on the teaching and learning and thus academic performance of ordinary level secondary schools especially in Ilala District council. It was also assumed that the primary school

learning environment could have similar impact on students' academic performance as that of ordinary level secondary schools.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used to collect findings from the field. The chapter starts with a presentation of study area, followed by the research design. Thereafter, the chapter presents the quantitative and qualitative study approaches. Sample and sampling techniques as well as data collection methods are subsequently discussed. Other methodological aspects presented in this chapter include: Data processing, analysis and presentation, as well as ethical considerations; and limitations to be encountered during the conduct of research are equally discussed for the proper conduct of the study.

3.2 Study area

The study was conducted in five selected secondary schools in Ilala Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam region. The area was selected due to having convincing factors relevant to the study topic. First, the composition of the schools, especially government schools with similar enrolment and teaching and learning characteristics. Ilala Municipal Council is preferred due to having equitably distribution of teachers with similar academic and teaching experiences. More importantly, just like other underperforming districts across the country, Ilala Municipal Council is most affected by the problem especially the peripheral schools. It is seen to perform poorly in comparison with other districts in the region (National Examination Council of Tanzania (NECTA), 2019).

3.3 Research approach

According to Kothari (2004) a research design is the arrangement of condition for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine reliance to the research purpose with economy in procedure. This study used mixed method approach which allowed both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell and Clark, 2018). Researcher used mixed method approach to overcome the weaknesses of using one approach. The rationale for combining qualitative and quantitative approaches is to enhance the validity and reliability of data collection process while improving the quality of the study in general.

3.4 Research design

The study employed convergent design under mixed research approach which is pragmatism paradigm. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018) convergent is a form of mixed methods design in which the researcher converges or merges quantitative and qualitative data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. In this design, the researcher typically collects both forms of data at roughly the same time and then integrates the information in the interpretation of the overall results. Researcher used Convergent design to confirm, cross-validate quantitative and qualitative findings in this study. Also, the design helps to overcome the weakness in one method with the strengths of the other.

3.5 Study sample and sampling procedures

The study was conducted in five purposively selected community secondary schools in Ilala Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam region. Where, as twenty (20) students were randomly selected from each school forming a total of one hundred (100) students from five schools. Five (5) students were randomly selected from each class

i.e. form one to form four totalling 20 students per each school. Stratified sampling technique was used to select 5 students from each form, making a total of 20 participants selected from each secondary school. The names of the students were written on pieces of papers and kept in the boxes, form one students, form two students, form three students and form four students. Then names written on pieces of paper were shuffled thoroughly and one piece of paper was picked in each box with replacement until 100 students were selected. Students were selected to participate in this study because are the one who affected with entry qualification and academic performance. Similarly, five teachers including two (2) school administrators such as head of school and an academic master; and three teachers preferably teaching in forms 1, 2 and 4 were purposively selected forming twenty five (25) teachers in total. Head of schools and academic masters involved in the study because are main supervisors of school activities including students' academic performance. Teachers involved due to are main implementer of teaching and learning activities in secondary schools. Thus, the total study sample is125 participants across five selected community secondary schools in Ilala Municipal Council. The table 3.1 hereunder summarises the sample composition. Table 3. 1

Sample Composition

Research site	Students		Teachers		Sub-total		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	
One	10	10	3	2	13	12	25
Two	10	10	2	3	12	13	25
Three	10	10	3	2	13	12	25
Four	10	10	2	3	12	13	25
Five	10	10	3	2	13	12	25
GRANT TOTAL	**50**	**50**	**13**	**12**	**63**	**62**	**125**

Source: Field Data, 2019

3.6 Data collection methods

3.6.1 Interview method

Kothari (2004) assert that interview method collect data mainly by presentation of oral- verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral – verbal responses. Therefore, this study applied semi – structured interview to gather information from respondents based on their experiences on entry qualification and academic performance in Ilala municipal council.

3.6.2 Questionnaires method

According to Kothari (2004) a questionnaire consists of a number of questions printed or typed in a definite order a form or set of forms. This study formulated questionnaires then was administered to teachers and students. This helped the researcher to concentrate on study objectives from which the sample was drawn.

3.6.3 Classroom observation method

Kothari (2004) claim that observation method focuses on seeking information by way of investigators own direct observation without asking from the respondents. Researcher observed classroom facilities, teachers facilitate classroom instructional processes.

Classroom observation also served to assess students' cognitive involvement in the knowledge construction process. Each classroom observation was followed by a mini interview session meant to reflect what will have transpired during classroom processes. Classroom observation serve as a technique that can be used when data collected through other means can be of limited value or is difficult to validate (Hancock, 2002) and/or are not enough to justify the respective educational aspect (s).

An observation checklist was prepared to guide the researcher to collect information about lesson presentation at different stages.

3.6.4 Documentary review method

In order to ensure the researcher collected enough information about the influence of entry qualifications on students' academic performance, the researcher scrutinised different but relevant resources such as records of internal examinations results for students, national examinations results, TSM 9 forms which indicate academic progress of students during their primary schooling; subject specific academic results as well as review of relevant literature. Findings from documentary review were then triangulated with those from interviews, questionnaires and classroom observations.

3.7 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument accurately measures the concept in question (Creswell & Clark, 2018). Validity is an important aspect in research as it makes the research findings and conclusions credible. Therefore, the researcher ensured validity and reliability of all the research instruments before data collection.

3.7.1 Validity of questionnaires

Face and content validity of the questionnaires was established in this study. Questionnaires are assumed to have face validity if people think it does (Leary, 2001) while content validity is addressed by virtual of experts' approval. The researcher therefore presented the questionnaires, research questions to supervisors and two other experts of research at Open University of Tanzania and explained to them the purpose of the study. Each expert was requested to judge the relevance of the items in the questionnaires in relation to the research questions and Objectives. The experts were

also asked to check if the questionnaires were adequately addressing the issues raised in the research questions and Objectives. Finally, Open University of Tanzania Experts was able to give their comments and accommodated in the study.

3.7.2 **Validity of interview guides**

Researcher ensured Validation of interview guides by Member checking, after data collection researcher transcribed the information then visited interviewees to verify if what is written is what was given by participants then their comments were included in coding and theme formulation.

3.7.3 Reliability of questionnaires

The researcher administered questionnaires once during pilot test of research instruments. A reliability test was carried out to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaires and for this study. The rating items or scales in both the instruments were used to compute the internal consistency of the instruments using Cronbach's alpha reliability test with the aid of SPSS computer program. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the questionnaire for students was found to be 0.750, questionnaire for teachers was 0.855. The reliability results were compared to the established reliability coefficient scale and found that reliability coefficient of 0.750 – 0.85 is considered excellent. According to Kerlinger & Lee (2000) state that 0.70 – 0.89 very good and 0.50 – 0.69 acceptable.

3.7.4 Reliability of Interview Guides

Reliability or trustworthiness as a matter of comparison between what is found in the field and what has been recorded by the interviewer (Creswell & Clark, 2018). In this study therefore, the aspect of trustworthiness was ensured by increasing transparency

with regard to observance of data collection procedures and ethics. During data collection, all interviews were tape recorded and before the actual data analysis was done, raw data and transcripts were given to the research experts for confirmation.

3.8 Data processing, analysis and presentation

3.8.1 Data processing

Collected data were processed and prepared for analysis. This process involved editing of questionnaires, coding data entry and editing/cleaning and verifying of the collected data before analysing them. Findings from classroom observations, interviews and documentary reviews were also transcribed and synthesised into themes and sub-themes ready for discussion and conclusions in chapters four and five respectively.

3.8.2 Data analysis

Although the study involved both quantitative and qualitative data, but it was mainly dominated by quantitative study approach. Qualitative study approach was used to compliment weaknesses of the quantitative approach. Therefore, quantitative data were analysed by running multiple response, comparing means and correlation to capture relationship of variables while on the other hand, qualitative data were collected using semi-structured interviews and documentary review were analysed through thematic content analysis or inductive analysis method. In this type of data analysis, the analysis approaches (Stake, 1995; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Patton (1990) describes inductive data analysis as:

"Inductive analysis means that the patterns, themes, and categories of analysis come from the data; they emerge out of the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis" (p. 306).

Analysed data are presented in various forms such as thick description, words and direct quotes (qualitative) and percentages, tables and graphs (quantitative) and the discussion is basically performed on the basis of the presented results in the prescribed forms.

3.9 Research ethics and detailed field work

The research involved human participants, and therefore it was conducted in a manner that respects the dignity, safety and rights of research participants and that recognizes the responsibilities of researchers. Ethical consideration is thus a key to any research undertaking. Omari (2011) explains that formal codes of ethics are established to guide researchers in the social sciences. Thus, awareness of ethical concerns in research is very important to all researchers. It is this reason that the researcher adhered to the following ethical issues:

Research Clearance Letters: The permission to conduct this study sought from relevant authorities, including the Open University of Tanzania, Ilala Municipal Council.

Assurance of Confidentiality: The researcher ensured confidentiality by maintaining anonymity of the respondents. In this regard, the respondents' names as well as school names are not mentioned anywhere in the report. Instead, letters were used to represent the schools and participants**.** Furthermore, the researcher clarified to the

respondents that the information to be collected was only for research purpose; thus no respondents would be victimised for providing information for the respective study.

Informed Consent: The researcher explained clearly the purpose of the study to the participants. The researcher clarified on the research problem, the purpose of the study, the short-term and long-term benefits and loss due to their participation in this study. The researcher consequently asked for the participants' consent whenever he/she wanted to record their voices on tape during interviews. Again, the researcher informed the participants that their participation was voluntary, and as such they were at liberty to withdraw at any time with no repercussions if they would so wish.

Considerable time was devoted to the reflection of the researcher's description of the participants' experiences. The divergent participant perspectives were analyzed by varying the different frames of reference. Then a description of what the participants experienced, and how the phenomenon was experienced were constructed. It is in this manner that the researcher was able to construct a description of the meaning of the participants' experiences as they describe their experience on the relational function between entry qualification and academic performance in ordinary level secondary schools.

3.10 Study Limitations

Marshall and Rossman (1999) suggest that there is no research activity which is without limitations. Patton (1990) also presents, "There are no perfect research designs. There are always trade-offs" (p. 162). According to these scholars, it shows

that, there is no research without study limitations also this will depend on the study designs used. Therefore, in conducting this research, various limitations may be encountered. These include: -

Research sample limitation - The study used purposive and random sampling techniques where the lottery method was employed to obtain both teachers and student's information, by tossing pieces of papers and drawn them at random whereby each member was given equal chance of being selected. The observed problem here is that when the number of respondents varies from male to female, so the probability of selecting the little one becomes low. This also has effect even on the representative side. In order to minimize this limitation, the researcher decided to select the sample independently of male and female.

Resource limitation – conducting research of any kind needs various resources in terms of financial, human, physical resources and time. Economist says that always resources are scarcity. So it is very difficult to conduct research alone we need for instance skilled laborers who are able to help collect data, money to perform different research activities including accommodation and transport for researcher and his/her enumerators, as well as having research instrument like computer machine. So resources limitation may result the researcher using more time in data collection.

English proficiency: from the preparation stage of the research proposal, the researcher anticipated the language to intervene the communication between participating teachers and students who were involved in the study. This is because English, as the second official language in Tanzania, is neither spoken by teachers, key informants nor students. Teachers mostly use English during classroom

instruction. However, in order to ensure effective communication between the researcher and the participants, the researcher also used Swahili as the national language and is spoken by the majority of Tanzanians including teachers and students. As stated herein, data collection instruments were written in both Swahili and English to facilitate both teachers' and students' understanding of what the research is about. During interview sessions, the researcher and participants code switched from Swahili to English and vice visa in order to enhance participants' involvement and understanding of what is discussed regarding the influence of entry qualifications on students' academic performance in Ilala Municipal Council, Dar Es Salaam region.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter four presents the collected findings from various instruments, it makes meaning of the findings i.e. analysis, and consequently critically discuss the findings on the basis of research objectives, literature reviewed and theoretical lens used. Therefore, the findings presentation, analysis and discussion have been completed in based on specific objectives to provide logical flow of ideas. Therefore, the chapter is composed of the following sub sections: Ordinary level secondary school students' entry qualifications; the relationship between entry qualifications and students academic performance; challenges of entry qualifications on the academic performance of ordinary level secondary school students and ways to improve teaching and learning in Ilala municipal council ordinary level secondary schools.

4.2 Ordinary level secondary school students' entry qualifications

One of the research aspects sought by this study was about entry qualifications considered for ordinary level secondary school students specifically in Ilala municipal council. The researcher wanted to relate students' entry qualifications and their continuous academic performance in secondary school. Based on the findings, it was revealed that primary school leavers were selected to join ordinary level secondary school with different pass marks. Many of those who passed above two hundred marks out of two hundred fifty were selected to join the so called *centralized government schools* depending on the availability of chances which are within and outside Ilala municipal Council as well as outside Dar Es Salaam region. From the findings, very few students were selected to join these centralized government owned

schools since they were very competitive as compared to the community secondary schools i.e. schools which are built by the community but staffed and own by the government. Many of the primary school leavers were selected to join the community secondary schools which were closer to the students within Dar Es Salaam though they lacked many important instructional facilities. When asked about the pass marks for ordinary level schooling, one of the respondents from a group of teachers presented the following:

> Many students who go to the community secondary schools are those whose pass marks ranges from 100 to 250. You yourself may see that in the past fifteen or twenty years, those pupils who scored less than 90 were not selected to join ordinary level secondary schools. They were labeled as 'failures'. What I know is that, those days there were very few schools which consequently limited chances for students to join ordinary level secondary school. With the implementation of Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) and Secondary Education Development Plan (SEDP) we have experienced a massive increase in enrollment in both primary and secondary schools. Worse enough, enrolment in primary schools has not been such effective and efficient leading to enrollment of children who do not know how to read, write, speak and even count. As a result, the same generation has been seen joining ordinary level secondary school. I personally, I see that we are killing education slowly whose impact cannot be seen now. I do not know.

Another teacher shared her experience about selected students to join secondary schools stating that:

> Nowadays with the so-called fee free basic education, things are even worser than it was before. It is no wonder to see the whole standard seven classes which set for PSLE goes to secondary schools for

secondary education. A big number of children joining secondary schools today do not have the requisite knowledge and skills to support their learning in secondary school. They even do not know how to write, read and count. This entire burden goes to us as teachers.

These participants' experiences relate very closely with the entry qualifications of students to ordinary level secondary schools. It appears that poor performance of ordinary level secondary school students in Ilala municipal were highly contributed by the minimal students' entry qualifications. The findings of the study concur with by Gabriel (2011) about implementation of learner-centered teaching in Kigoma region community secondary schools found that learners were struggling to catch up with their studies due to limited cognitive ability which was reflected in their entry qualifications to ordinary level secondary schooling. Gabriel study among others recommended for the need to upgrading the entry qualifications to ordinary level secondary school if implementation of learner centred teaching should be successful.

Similar to the above observations about entry qualifications to ordinary level secondary school particularly in Ilala municipal , 100 participants equals to 80% of the total 125 participants felt that the lowering in academic performance of ordinary level secondary school students in Ilala municipal to be attributed by lower entry qualifications whereas 10 participants equals to 08% had the view that the poor academic performance could have been contributed mainly by the quality of teaching and learning including limited instructional resources than the entry qualifications 15 participants' equals to 12% of the total 125 participants were concerned with the school environment as presented in Table and Figure 4.1. The findings of the study Concur with Asikhia (2021) in his study on entry qualifications and academic

performance of teacher trainees in Lagos State Colleges of Education in Nigeria. Found out that in Nigeria there is significant difference between the entry qualification and academic performance of students. Generally, findings revealed poor academic performance in secondary schools is associated with entry qualification.

Chart 4. 1: Information about entry qualifications to ordinary level secondary school in Ilala municipal council

(a). Statement for the Teacher on whether primary school leaving examination as entry qualifications was a challenge for students to perform well in their secondary education.

(b). Statement for the students on whether primary school leaving examination as entry qualifications was a challenge for them to perform well in their secondary education.

Responses	Teachers	Students	Total	Per. (%)	
Strongly agree	7	15	22	17.6	
Agree	12	46	58	46.4	
Neither agree nor disagree	2	9	11	8.8	
Strongly disagree	4	30	34	27.2	
Total	**25**	**100**	**125**	**100**	

According to this group of participants teaching and learning environment in many community schools are not conducive enough to attract or promote effective teaching

and learning hence affecting adversely the academic performance of the students. From this discussion it can be logically concluded that entry qualifications to the ordinary level secondary school students is a significant factor when planning for school academic improvement. This conclusion is equally important as one participant provided an advice that: "meaningful learning occurs in the mature mind and a health body". It appears that metacognition tend to effectively work in the mature mind and not otherwise. For effective and efficient teaching and learning which is geared to improve students' academic progress, apart from considering other instructional factors, entry qualifications should be rationalized accordingly.

Table 4. 1: Comparison between primary school leaving examination result as entry qualification and students' performance in their secondary schools in Ilala municipal council l: A case of School A. Ilala S.S)

S/N	Name of Students	PSLE Entry Score (TSM9) – 2017		Form II Score – 2019		Continuous Assessment - 2020	
		Overall Score	Grade	NECTA Score	Grade	Overall average Score	Grade
1	Student.1	152	B	14	F	22	F
2	Student.2	145	C	68	B	62	C
3	Student.3	140	C	57	C	55	C
4	Student.4	138	C	50	C	43	D
5	Student.5	138	C	37	D	33	D
6	Student.6	125	C	40	D	40	D
7	Student.7	125	C	31	D	39	D
8	Student.8	123	C	13	F	19	F
9	Student.9	123	C	11	F	16	F
10	Student.10	115	C	41	D	37	D
11	Student.11	110	C	6	F	10	F

12	Student.12	109	C	9	F	13	F
13	Student.13	108	C	31	D	29	F
14	Student.14	108	C	10	F	12	F
15	Student.15	107	C	50	C	41	D
16	Student.16	105	C	53	C	55	C
17	Student.17	105	C	10	F	12	F
18	Student.18	102	C	16	F	16	F
19	Student.19	101	C	3	F	7	F
20	Student.20	100	C	9	F	7	F

Table 4. 2: Comparison between primary school leaving examination results as entry qualifications and students' academic performance in their secondary schools in Ilala municipal Council 1: A case of School B. (Ilala S.S)

GRADE	PSLE – 2017	Form II Exams 2019	Continuous Assessment – 2020
A	130	70	80
B	225	80	115
C	30	165	150
D	0	45	33
F	0	25	12
Total	385	385	385

Figure 4. 3: Comparison of Form II and Form IV examinations performance between D and E Secondary Schools in 2018 and 2020 respectively

School	Academic Year	Examination Center	Registered	Div I	Div II	Div III	Div IV	Div IV
Name	2018							
D	Form II	X	480	8	36	32	53	272
E	Form II	Y	364	13	145	66	49	80

				Div I	Div II	Div III	Div IV	Div IV
2020	CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATIONS							
D	Form IV	X	368	13	29	25	183	116
E	Form IV	Y	362	65	79	76	123	18

Figure 4. 4: Comparison of Form II and Form IV examinations performance between Juhudi and Ilala Secondary Schools in 2017 and 2019 respectively

School Name	Academic Year	Examination Center	Registered	Div I	Div II	Div III	Div IV	Div IV
Ilala	Form II	S. 2537	278	9	33	25	42	144
Juhudi	Form II	s.1241	445	7	75	76	98	163
2019	CERTIFICATE OF SECONDARY EDUCATION EXAMINATIONS							
Ilala	Form IV	S.2537	502	14	29	47	62	306
Juhudi	Form IV	S. 1241	673	3	112	110	190	251

4.3 The influence of teaching and learning on students' academic performance

Findings about the role of teaching and learning on students' academic performance revealed many issues. Many aspects rose from the findings which need to be discussed. Such instructional aspects range from culture, language, resources, infrastructures, motivation, sports and games, subject clubs and debates and teachers' qualifications. These aspects are not connected to the entry qualifications but rather they are relational factors affecting either positively or negatively students' academic achievements.

It is without doubt that if student's enrolments surpass the available classrooms and teaching and learning resources, students were overpopulated to the extent of limiting teacher's effective preparation and facilitation of classroom activities. It is important

also that the entry qualifications support students learning and not limiting learning. Despite implementation of fee free education, the quality of education provided should not be jeopardized by the political need to expand enrolment.

For example, about 92% of participants viewed that students' academic performance is mainly a function of a number of relating factors and not a single factor such as the entry qualifications. These participants outlined similar factors adversely affecting academic performance of students in Ilala municipal secondary schools. They outlined such factors to include; teacher-students' ratio; students-books ratio; limited teaching and learning resources and poor teacher-student relationships. Other factors were; teacher qualifications, minimal teacher motivation and lack or poor library and laboratory services. The findings of the study concur with Jenije (2022) who agreed that in Nigeria student's academic performance especially in mathematics depend on their attitude, self-confidence, mathematics teacher and relationship between teachers and students. Also the findings of the study aligned with Mahende (2021) who showed school and personal variables had significant effects on students' performance in Ilala and Moshi Districts, Tanzania. When insisting about these factors, one participant noted:

> Many of the community schools were built and are still run under political influence. Politicians would most like to see things quantitatively and not qualitatively. As such, these schools are under facilitated in many ways. They do not have reliable electricity, water, health services, no food provided during lunch hours. We even do not have enough teaching and learning resources, teachers are very few and do not have enough qualifications, laboratories are not well equipped and actually teachers are desperate i.e, they are not motivated at all.

Another participant shared that

> with drastic increase in enrolment which has resulted in to overpopulation in classrooms due to limited buildings, inadequate availability of laboratories and libraries for students' practical engagement, teachers could have been provide with regular in-service training. In-service training for teachers would have helped them gain an understanding of new pedagogical approaches to be applied in the changing teaching and learning contexts. Nevertheless, nobody cares and thus resulting in to provision of low-quality education.

Based on qualitative and quantitative findings, one may conclude that entry qualifications alone do not stand as the only justification for poor academic performance of ordinary level secondary schools. There is a need to address all these factors from multi-sectoral approach if students should perform well to the expectations of stakeholders. Regarding poor facilitation of these schools, one educational officer had this to share; *'one of the major omission of many Tanzanians in the long built that provision of quality education rest solely to the government while the fact remain it is the responsibility of all stakeholders'.* Educational officer's observation could mean that the provision of quality education is a function of many factors including stakeholders' participation in planning, curriculum development, and financing of education, policy analysis, implementation of educational programs as well as monitoring and evaluation. This understanding of education provision can be argued that it is a joint activity where every stakeholder needs to fully participate in its provision (Mtitu, 2008). According to Mtitu, effective and efficient teaching and learning in ordinary secondary schools not only need people's involvement in

different educational activities, but also may address the challenge of entry qualifications hence improving students' academic performance.

From the findings, it was clear that the relational practice between teachers and students limited effective teaching and learning. The findings reveled that despite implementation of competence-based curriculum, still teachers dominated instructional practices at the expense of the learners and the learners continued to feel inferior and silent to the teachers. By such doing, teachers sustained the so called the Banking model of education which sees learners as tabula rasa and teachers possess knowledge to pour to an empty slates of the learners. This cultural practice has been adversely affecting students' academic performance. This means that entry qualifications are one instructional aspect impacting ordinary level secondary school students in Ilala municipal, Dar Es Salaam region..

4.4 Challenges relating to entry qualifications on the performance of ordinary level secondary school students in Ilala municipal Council

The study also investigated the associated challenges with entry qualifications vis-à-vis ordinary level secondary school students' performance in Ilala municipal. It was thought that the entry qualifications as they might not have any negative impact on the teaching and learning and thus students' academic performance. Based on the findings, several challenges were observed: they included the following; Political influence, Language barrier, prematurity in mental cognition, shortage of qualified teachers, poor school infrastructures such as laboratories, libraries and water as well as poor health services. Other challenges were students' socio-economic background and teachers and students' mindset.

4.4.1 Political influence

Political influence was seen to be one of the factors which led to the massive students' enrollment with minimal entry qualifications to the ordinary level secondary school. 60 participants' equals to 48% viewed that those in politics have great impact on the provision of education in the country. They presented their understanding of how massive enrollment was achieved through the establishment and implementation of both PEDP and SEDP since 2001 onwards. Insisting on this understanding one respondent noted:

> You know every political leader especially the president when he/she comes into power would wish to initiate new programs regardless of the ability in terms of funding and human resources. The aim being, to inspire people that that president has achieved something different from the previous leaders. Many of these rashly and unplanned projects end up without significant output and/or benefits. Tanzania is experiencing many of such projects whose beginning was promising but with negative ending resulting in failure to realize the underling projects objectives".

Another participant shared his concern with the implementation of fee free education stating that:

> The national examinations results for ordinary level students are debatable. We see how difficult students are experiencing during classroom practices. We also receive these students since they are first enrolled as form one where many of them are difficult learners with very minimal entry qualifications. At school we just take care of them to ensure no conflict between schools and politicians. I believe there is something done by NECTA to promote students' academic pass marks in favors of the government.

This participant's feelings and experience justify the existing challenges facing community secondary schools especially those of Ilala municipal where the study was conducted. It can be logically agreed that existence of many students with minimal entry qualifications was fueled by politics without considerations of the many other factors which might be impacting the quality of teaching and learning and thus students' academic performance.

4.4.2 Language barrier

It is without doubt that the medium of instruction in this case English language is an important element which may influence students' academic performance either positively or negatively. Based on research findings, it appears that many of the selected students to join ordinary level secondary schools included those who did not know how to speak and write in English. The study aligned with Ideh and Tibategeza (2022) found out that more than 85% of the respondents use English either always or often in the classrooms. Also, the study revealed Swahili is the preferred language for majority in different contexts and the only language by which many people interact with a wide range of people from different ethnic groups. As such, teachers struggled on how to engage these learners in the instructional processes. The study findings suggest the need to reconsider students' acquisition of competencies in English language which is the medium of instruction through which their studies are based. Language barrier is also discussed by Mtitu (2014); Gabriel (2011) and Nzilano (2015). According to these scholars, language of instruction plays a double role. One, language is used as a thinking mechanism which stimulates the speaker to make sense of the subject matter taught. The second role of language is that of assisting the

student to deliver the message orally or in writing. Thus, language is a powerful agent in the knowledge construction process.

4.4.3 Culture and teaching and learning

For a longtime now, teachers have built in their mindset that they posses knowledge which students do not have and thus in order for learning to take place, a teacher on the stage will have to deliver this knowledge to the silent student who has nothing. Apart from implementing the outcome-based curriculum which requires a change in mindsets and mode of operant, yet, teachers perpetuate the traditional way of teaching. They enter classes with notes, books, and sometimes with teaching aids and they dominate classes throughout the lessons while students remaining quite listening what the teacher is telling them. From the findings; it was quite clear that the continued relational function between the teacher and the learner limited much on the teachers' and students' flexibility resulting in the perpetuation of the long-lived teacher-centred teaching approaches at the expense of the learner. According to the constructivism teaching and learning theories, individuals are actively engaged in the knowledge construction process when their minds are set free as well as teachers being in a state of flexibility (Mtitu, 2014). Referring to the philosophy of Paulo Freire in different books and writings such as those of the pedagogies of the oppressed, Mtitu recommends the need for the teacher to build a fluid relationship between the teacher and the student such that at one point a student becomes a teacher and the teacher becomes a student reciprocally (Mtitu, 2014). It implies the need for the cultural transformation in order to enhance teachers and students flexibility for improved students' learning.

4.4.4 Distance from the school

According to the study findings, some participants were much concerned with the school location from where students come from. They shared that ward or community schools are located very far from students home. This makes students to use much time shuttling to and from school. They arrive to school very tired and the same at home. Lamenting about this challenge one teacher noted:

> Many students enrolled in the community secondary schools come from an average of seven (7) kilometers away from schools. They walk up early in the morning prepare themselves and struggle for town transport. They mainly arrive at school late while the lessons had began. They go back home late in the evening while hungry. Look here, apart from walking all this distance or hassle in town buses, they do not eat during afternoon until when they are back home. I am just wondering how these students can study effectively under such circumstances. It's my opinion to the government and whoever educational stakeholder to think of provision of porridge and lunch at school so that these students do not starve and thus concentrate with their studies. My feeling is that the poor academic performances of our students are mainly contributed by the school and home environments including distance from the school and not the entry qualifications as per research topic and focus.

The teacher's concern poses critical study implications on the need to consider some other associated challenges affecting students' academic performance besides looking at a single factor such as the entry qualifications. This is also supported by the study conducted to investigate factors influencing students' dropout from school in Kibaha district whereas, several challenges emerged including distance from where the school is (Matekenya, 2016). Also, Mutisya et al. (2022) correspond that Distance to and from school, cultural factors inhibiting education transition among learners in the area

of study in Machakos Kenya. Similarly, Matekenya, there is a need to build dormitories and/or hostels around the schools so that students do not walk all such distances, struggle for town buses and additionally they are assured with food as an important factor for the student's ability to create or construct knowledge. As per research findings, one can thus conclude that the quality of teaching and learning and thus students' academic performance is a function of numerous but related factors including distance from school and lack of food especially lunch.

4.4.5 Children living without close care takers (parents)

Based on the findings, it was found that many school children live by themselves without their parents or guardians. The findings indicated that many students in Ilala district have no close parents taking care of them. Findings aligned with Bashir (2022) found out that student's parental community didn't attend school activities in Pakistani. Similarly, Jonas and Mkulu (2022) found out that lack of parents' involvement in students learning process in Community Secondary Schools at Tabora Municipality- Tanzania. They either live themselves or with guardians who do not consider the importance of education to children. As such they do not make any follow up about students learning. As such, children live themselves at home looking for food and managing themselves in all their life including school attendance.

This situation resultS inmany children not attending to school and nobody has been making follow up about academic progress of the children. As a result, such students do not perform well in class since they do not attend well the school due to lack of parent care and sometimes food to eat. It is imperative that parents care of school children has positive relation with their academic progress whereas according to the

findings, the alternative to that is building hostels and or dormitories whereby children would stay to school instead.

4.5 Ways to improve the teaching and learning in Ilala municipal ordinary level secondary Schools

From the study findings, participants suggested various ways to improve teaching and learning and thus students' academic performance in Ilala municipal, Dar Es Salaam region. Among other approaches to improve students' academic performance included: improving the entry qualifications pass marks, introducing English language club in line with other subject clubs, transforming pure day schools into hostel based, seeing the importance of introducing school breakfast and lunch and transforming teachers and students' cultural mindsets. Other improvement ways include; insisting effective implementation of learner-centred teaching and learning approaches; supply of enough teaching and learning resources; improving school infrastructures and increasing the number of qualified teachers to teach in the community *secondary schools just to discuss a few.*

4.5.1 Entry qualifications

Besides presentation of varied factors influencing students' academic performance in Ilala municipal ordinary level secondary schools, the quality of entry qualifications among primary school leavers seemed to permeate across participants. Research participants especially teachers recommended the need to reconsider among other qualifications; pass marks at the level from 150 out of 250 and not below. Other associated considerations as entry qualifications were the age of primary school leavers to be between 14 and 16 years. They viewed that enrolling little children before they mentally manure posed health and psychological limitations to the

respective students. Constructivists believe that an individual mind ability to construct new knowledge would mainly depend on the maturity of the mind and learner's readiness to learn (Vygosky, 1965). According to Vygosky, it is the only mature mind which can theorize and break the phenomenon into understandable pieces of learning. Equally the same, learning effectively takes place when individual minds socially works or cooperate with others to learn from one another. When asked how entry qualifications affect teaching and learning as well as students' academic performance, one educational officer stated that:

> It is good that the government and the private sector have increased the enrollment and of course the teachers as well as teaching and learning facilities. The same government has reduced the pass marks to join ordinary level students up to 100 marks minimum. While the efforts are recommendable, the researcher would suggest the need for the government to address other burning challenges as outlined herein. The burning educational aspects may include enrolling students to secondary school with right age, mature enough to undertake the study and building hostel to protect our children from child buses.

This participant's experience regarding entry qualifications may mean that if the ordinary level students were selected considering the right age and mature enough to learn as well as schools being facilitated with all important teaching and learning facilities, children may effectively learn besides having very minimal entry qualifications.

4.5.2 Improving English language use among students

Again English language seemed to be problematic and challenging to many students as well as teachers. This happened when the teacher tried to engage students in the

instructional process but students were struggling a lot in making sense of what they were asked to share in the class. One student would take up to five minutes without saying anything thinking about the concept and the language to define or conceptualise the respective concept. Language challenge is well discussed in Mtitu's dissertation (2014) where the researcher presents his field experience when observing classes of a group of geography teachers who were implementing the so-called learner-centred teaching and learning approaches in Iringa municipality, Iringa region. In his study, Mtitu observed a serious language challenge which hindered effective classroom processes. He presents that *'when a student was given an opportunity to share about what she/he knew about a particular concept, a student struggled to think about and express himself or herself. As a result, the teacher had to dominate the class in order to save time' (Mtitu, 2014).*

English language challenge seemed to really affect the teaching and learning consequently resulted in poor students' academic performance. For example, 78 out of 125 participants' equals to 62.4% felt that poor academic performance among students was mainly attributed by the limited English language competency among students. The findings of the study concur with Mpobela (2022) that Implementing Competence-Based Curriculum in English Language in Secondary Schools in Tanzania need more exposure in English language for both students and teachers in Mbeya City.

Chart 4. 2: Observation on English language as the factor contributing to poor performance among Secondary Students in Ilala municipal
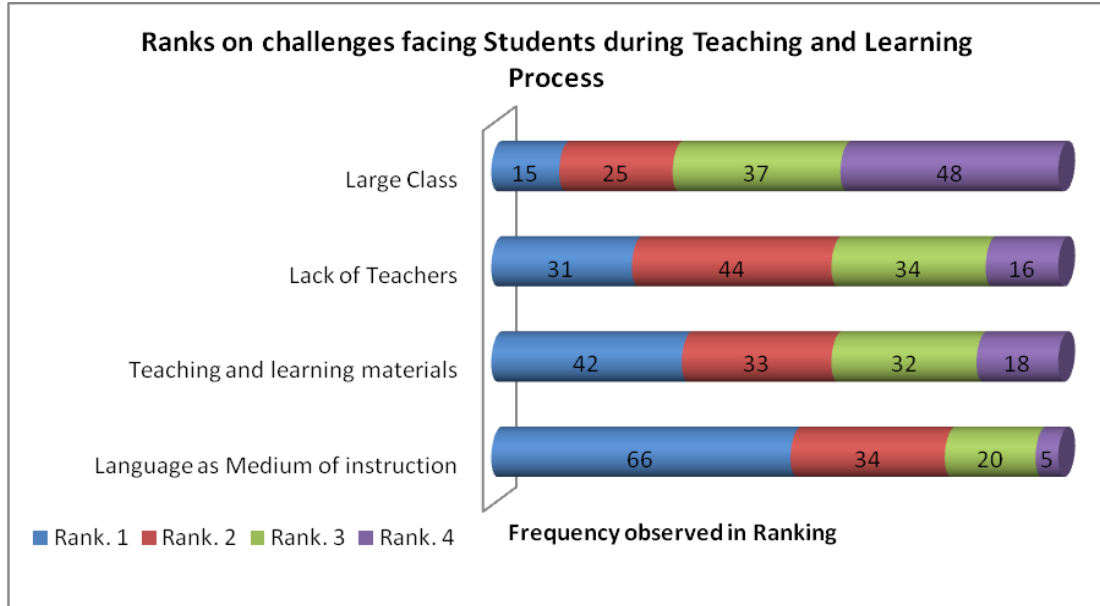
They however agreed that entry qualifications especially lower marks adversely affected students learning and thus their academic performance. They therefore proposed to introduce English speaking clubs and debates in order to promote students to use English in their most school activities. Enactment of school bylaws was one of the suggestions stating that if students were enforced to speak English language they will eventually improve the language which is used as the medium of instruction.

4.5.3 Supporting schools with enough infrastructures and relevant instructional resources

Research participants recommended for stakeholders and the government to facilitate the schools with high quality classroom buildings, laboratories and libraries as well as supplying enough instructional resources including reference and text books, ICT facilities and equipping teachers with technical knowhow in the improvisation of

teaching and learning resources from the surrounding environment. One of the research participants reiterated.

> I wonder why the government keeps on expanding schools yearly while the quality of the present schools is compromised. We have so many schools as buildings but they are not well built and not facilitated with learning equipment at all. I am of the opinion that instead of increasing the number of schools, and instead of keeping on blaming about the entry qualifications, the government, community and other stakeholders to invest heavily on training of teachers, supplying of teaching and learning materials, rehabilitating old schools, buying books and furniture as well as building high quality toilets and water system to enhance students learning in conducive school environment. I am sure by doing so, we shall forget about entry qualifications while seeing high students' academic performance.

This teacher's observation could mean that effective teaching and learning and thus students' academic performance is being affected by a number of factors not only one factor as per this study's assumptions. Stakeholders should invest heavily in education by supporting schools with all the required infrastructure, facilities and qualified human resources in order to influence effective and efficient teaching and learning subsequently resulting in high quality student performance especially in Ilala municipal schools. Mgaya and Onyango (2022) prefer mobilizing resources was funds from income generation activities followed by involvement of the community in construction of school buildings, purchase of desks and repair of broken furniture in Kilolo District Tanzania. This means that majority of secondary schools need community support for school development.

4.5.4 Building hostels and supply of breakfast and lunch

Following the difficulties many students faced due to staying far away from schools and living by themselves without close supervision by guardians or parents. It was proposed schools to construct hostels and plan to provide breakfast and lunch in order to ensure they live healthy and comfortably thus being able to concentrate in their studies. As discussed in detail in this chapter, it was experienced that parents and guardians do not effectively supervise their children; they are always busy with their daily activities in petty business so that they can gain something for their living. They also come back home late in the evening while tired. School children take care themselves. As a result, they end up roaming around the streets, not cooking, not studying and rarely attending school which consequently resulting in poor academic performance. Therefore, in order to improve school attendance and concentration in studies, it was suggested that the government and stakeholders should consider building up hostels in every day school and with the involvement of parents and guardians, schools should plan to provide breakfast and lunch for the students. In his Education for Self Reliance (ESR) manuscript Nyerere (1967) emphasize the need to ensure school children get a balanced diet and whenever necessary students are provided with enough food to make them healthy and mentally fit ready to effectively participate in the knowledge construction activity. Based on the findings, 85 participants out of 125 equals to 68% supported positively the idea of the community day schools to have both hostels and be provided with breakfast and lunch. According to these participants, students will minimize unnecessary movements and thus improve school attendance consequently resulting in high academic performance.

CHAPTER FIVE: STUDY SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents study summary, conclusions and recommendations for policy, practice and further studies.

5.2 Study summary

From the very beginning, the study concentrated on the assessment of the relationship between entry qualifications on students' academic performance in Ilala municipal council, in Dar Es Salaam region. The study was motivated by the unsatisfactory performance in the form four national examinations of 2018 and 2019 where Ilala municipal was one of the municipal councils in Dar Es salaam which did not perform well regionally and nationally. The researcher sought to address four major research objectives which included seeking an understanding of the entry qualifications to form one classes and if they have any impact to students academic performance; seek understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in secondary schools in Ilala municipal; assess the challenges associated with entry qualifications vis-à-vis academic performance and lastly investigate different ways to improve teaching and learning and thus improving academic performance in Ilala municipal , Dar Es Salaam region. The findings indicated that besides the fact that entry qualifications matter a lot in the students' academic characteristics, they were not the only factors but rather a combination of factors including availability of qualified teachers, teachers' motivation, school management, availability of teaching and learning resources, students cultural background as well as language proficiency, home environment and general school infrastructure in general.

5.3 Study conclusions

Based on the study findings, it can be concluded that;

i)   Students' academic performance is underpinned by a number of factors and not just a single factor like entry qualification to secondary schools;

ii) Factors such as entry qualifications, teacher qualifications, availability of instructional resources, ICTs facilities, school infrastructures, language and others account for the students' academic performance;

iii) Socio-economic and cultural background of students also influence student learning and thus academic performance

iv) There is a need to build autonomous learners i.e. independent learners where students take charge of their own learning under the teacher's facilitation

v)   The need to conduct other related studies taking into account other theoretical orientation and methodological approaches as well as level of schooling;

vi) The need to develop a common model for entry qualifications in order to effectively address challenges associated with entry qualifications to ordinary level secondary schools.

5.4 Study recommendations

From the study findings, the following are recommended:

5.4.1 Recommendations for policy

i) It is recommended that the government should put in place a policy or regulations which will specify precisely the entry qualifications to ordinary level secondary schools just as for advanced secondary schools.

ii) There should be a language policy which states clearly language qualifications for one to be admitted for ordinary level secondary school studies

5.4.2 Recommendations for action

i) For quality control and assurance purpose, the entry qualifications should be raised up to 150 minimum pass marks. This will enhance students' easy adaptation and coping to ordinary level secondary school studies

ii) Schools should strive to implement effectively the competence and outcome based curriculum in order to provide opportunities for students to effectively participate in the instructional processes i.e. taking charge of their own learning

5.4.3 Recommendations for further studies

i) As stated herein, it is recommended that further studies to be conducted around the topic in order to widen the coverage as well as improve the current study.

Other studies can be refined to students of advanced level secondary schools or higher learning institutions while taking focus on other theoretical orientations other than the theories used herein.

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Appendices

Appendix1.   Semi Structured Interview questions for Students

A.   Participants' Personal Information

Please tick (v) in one of the boxes among the alternatives provided

a) Sex (i) Male   ( )

(ii)Female   ( )

b) Class (i) Form I ( )

(ii) Form II ( )

(iii) Form III ( )

(iv) Form IV ( )

B.   Kindly respond to the following semi-structured interview questions

1. How did you score in your Primary School Leaving Examinations?

2. What general pass mark grade and/or score did you get?

3. How does your current academic performance related to your overall score in your National Primary Leaving Examinations?

4. How supportive are the school environment between primary school and secondary school?

5. How similar are the methodologies used by your teachers in primary schools and ordinary level secondary schools?

6. What learning activities do you engage at school?

7. Is there any relationship between your Primary School Leaving Examinations entry qualifications and your current learning achievements or academic performance?

8. What are the challenges limiting your learning at school?

9. How can we improve teaching and learning environment for improved

   students' performance?

10.

Appendix 2. Classroom Observation Checklist

j) Name of School: .... Teachers Name: ....

k) Subject: .... Class: .... Year:

....

Leson Stage	Time	Teachers Activities	Students Activities	Remarks
Introduction				
Presentation				
Reinforcement				
Aplication				

Evaluation				

Reflections of classroom teaching and learning Process

Appendix III: Semi Structured Interview Guideline for Teachers

C. Personal Information

Please tick (√) on one of response among the alternatives given

1. Sex (i) Male ( ) (ii) Female ( )

2. Subject: ....

3. Class (i) Form I ( ) (ii) Form II ( ) (iii) Form III ( ) (iv) Form IV ( )

D. Questions

1. What is the students average scores in their examinations during their first year?

   (i) Internal Examination (a). Below 50% ( ) (b). 50% and Above ( )

   (ii) External Examination (a). Below 50% ( ) (b). 50% and Above ( )

2. What is the student's individual pass marks correlation between their NPSLE results/score and their current academic performance in secondary school?

   (i) Internal Examination (a). Below 50% ( ) (b). 50% and Above ( )

   (ii) External ExaminationS (a). Below 50% ( ) (b). 50% and Above ( )

3. How does teaching and learning process influence the academic performance of your students ?

4. What are the relationship between your Students' Primary School Leaving Examination entry qualifications and current ability of mastering the subjects?

5. What are the challenges facing students academic performance in your subject.

6. What should be done to improve teaching and learning for improved students' academic performance.

Appendix III: Questionnaires Secondary School Students

PART A: Researcher introduction

Dear respondent,

My name is Mr. Haule, the bonafide student of the Open University of Tanzania at Master's level. I am now undertaking research entitled "the influence of entry qualifications on ordinary level secondary school students' academic performance in Ilala Municipal council, Dar Es Salaam region"

I am pleased to request you to participate in my study by responding my questionnaires herein. The information obtained will be treated with high confidentiality and is there only for the purpose of this research.

PART B: Questions

Please tick (√) on one of response among the alternatives provided

1.   Gender of the respondents

    (i).   Male   ( )

    (ii).   Female( )

2.   Class Level of the respondents

    (i).   Form I ( )   (iii).   Form III   ( )

    (ii).   Form II   ( )   (iv).   Form IV   ( )

3.   Did your Primary School Leaving Examination results encourage you to join

Secondary Education?

(i).   Yes ( )   (ii).   No ( )(iii).   Somehow ( )

4.   Does your Secondary School environment influence learning processes?

(i).   Yes ( )   (ii).   No ( )(iii).   Somehow ( )

5.   Do you think your current academic performance is the reflection of your

Primary School Leaving Examination score?

(i).   Yes ( )   (ii).   No ( )(iii).   Somehow ( )

6.   **Rank between 1 to 4** on "What problems do you face during teaching and

learning process when is conducted in the classroom"?

(i).   Language as medium of instruction (   )

(ii).   Teaching and learning Materials   (   )

(iii).   Lack of teachers   (   )

(iv).   Large Class   (   )

6.   Your primary School Leaving Examinations entry qualifications pose

challenges for your academic performance in secondary school subjects?

(i).   Strongly agree   (   )

(ii).   Agree   (   )

(iii). Neither agree nor disagree   ( )

(iv). Strongly disagree   ( )

7. List down four (4) ways to be used to improve your academic performance

Appendix IV: Questionnaires Secondary School Teachers'

PART A: Introduction

Dear respondent,

My name is Mr. Haule, the bonafide student of the Open University of Tanzania at Master's level. I am now undertaking research entitled "the influence of entry qualifications on ordinary level secondary school students' academic performance in Ilala Municipal council, Dar Es Salaam region"

I am pleased to request you to participate in my study by responding my questionnaires herein. The information obtained will be treated with maximum confidentiality and is there only for the purpose of this research.

PART B: QUESTIONS

Please tick (√) on one of agreeable response among the alternative responses

1.   Gender of the respondents

      (i).   Male   ( )

      (ii).   Female( )

2.   Education Level of the respondents

      (i).   Masters Degree Holder   ( )   (iii).   Diploma Holder

      ( )   (ii).   Bachelor Degree Holder   ( )   (iv).   Certificate

Holder ( )

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3.   Administrative Position Level

     (i).   Head of School   (   )   (iii).   Academic Teacher

     (   )   (ii).   Secondmaster/mistress   (   )   (iv).   Subject

Teacher   (   )

4.   Working Experience (Years)

     (i).   0 – 5   (   )

     (ii).   6 - 10   (   )

     (iii).   11 and above (   )

5.   Please tick (√) one of your teaching class

     (i).   Form I (   )   (iii).   Form III   (   )

     (ii).   Form II   (   )   (iv).   Form IV   (   )

6.   Does the Primary School Leaving Examination qualifications of your students

     imprises you to teach the students in Secondary School?

     (i).   Yes (   )   (ii).   No (   )(iii).   Somehow (   )

7.   Does your Secondary School environment influence learning processes?

     (i).   Yes (   )   (ii).   No (   )(iii).   Somehow (   )

8.   Do you think your students' current academic performance is the reflection of

     their Primary School Leaving Examination score?

(i).   Yes ( )   (ii).   No ( ) (iii).   Somehow ( )

9.   **Rank between 1 to 4** on "Which problems do your students face during

teaching and learning process when is conducted in the classroom"?

(i).   Language as medium of instruction ( )

(ii).   Teaching and learning Materials   ( )

(iii).   Lack of teachers   ( )

(iv).   Large Class   ( )

10.   Your primary School Leaving Examintions entry qualifications pose

challenges in academic performance in secondary school subjects

(i).   Strongly agree   ( )

(ii).   Agree   ( )

(iii).   neither agree nor disagree   ( )

(iv).   strongly disagree   ( )

11.   How could your academic performance be improved? Share at least four points

12.   How does the students' cultural back ground influence performance in

Secondary Education?

....

....

....

13.   How does students' language fluency influence their academic performance?

....

....

....

14.   What limitations are there in teaching and learning processes?

....

....

....