

**INFLUENCE OF SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON PUPILS'
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN DODOMA
CITY COUNCIL**

REHEMA MUSTAFA

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE
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2025

CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that have read and hereby recommend for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania a dissertation entitled; ***“Influence of School Management Practices on Pupils’ Academic Performance in Primary Schools in Dodoma City Council”*** in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies (MED-APPS) of the Open University of Tanzania.

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DECLARATION

I, **Rehema Mustafa**, 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, references have been provided. It is in this regard that I declare this work is originally mine. It is hereby presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Masters of Education in Administration, Planning, and Policy Studies (MED-APPS) of the Open University of Tanzania.

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Signature

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Date

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my lovely family. I express my gratitude to them for their prayers and support which enable the completion of my dissertation.

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First and foremost, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the Almighty God for blessing me with life, good health and the courage to successfully complete my studies and the writing of this dissertation.

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ABSTRACT

The general objective of the study reported in this dissertation was to examine the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council, Tanzania. The study employed mixed-research approach where structured questionnaires, interview guides, observation guides and document review guides were used to collect data from a sample of 129 respondents (63 teachers, 51 pupils, 5 head teachers, 5 ward education officers and 5 district education officers) from 5 different primary schools. Findings from data analysis have revealed that there is generally strong influence of the school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council, Tanzania. Specifically, the following 5 management practices were key in influencing pupils' academic performance; setting clear expectations and goals for academic performance, effective communication, provision of adequate resources for effective teaching, regularly observing classroom teaching and provision of feedback and involvement of teachers in decision-making processes. Also, findings have revealed that pupils are of the perception that school management practices significantly influence their academic performance. Based on the findings of the study, appropriate recommendations for policy, action and future research are suggested.

Keywords: *School Management Practices, Academic Performance, Primary Education, Leadership*

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEO	District Education Officer
MoEST	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology
MoH	Ministry of Health
PTA	Parent-Teacher Association
PTR	Pupil-Teacher Ratio
QASO	Quality Assurance and Standards Officer
SBM	School-Based Management
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

1.1 Introduction

The academic performance of pupils in primary schools is significantly influenced by school management practices. Effective leadership, proper planning, and support for teachers enhance learning outcomes, while weak management can reduce motivation, limit engagement, and hinder achievement. School management shapes the learning environment, affecting pupils' concentration, attendance, and overall academic success. Poor coordination, lack of accountability, and inadequate resource allocation can negatively impact pupils' performance, whereas responsive and collaborative management promotes continuous improvement. In Dodoma City Council, understanding how school management practices influence pupils' academic achievement is crucial for informing policies, improving school effectiveness, and ensuring quality education. This chapter presents the background to the problem, the statement of the problem, research objectives, and research questions, significance of the study, scope of the study, and operational definitions.

1.2 Background to the problem

Pupils' academic achievement in primary schools is influenced not only by their effort but also by the effectiveness of school management. Strong leadership, careful planning, and consistent support for teachers enhance learning outcomes, whereas poor management may reduce motivation, limit engagement, and hinder performance. Academic success reflects not only grades but also the development of critical thinking, social, and problem-solving skills essential for lifelong learning.

The mere presence of management structures is insufficient; the ways in which decisions are made, resources are allocated, and teachers are guided critically shape pupils' learning. The interaction between management practices, teacher performance, and student needs determines whether educational goals are achieved. Ineffective coordination and lack of accountability can undermine learning, while responsive and collaborative management fosters continuous improvement. The Tanzanian government has implemented policies, training, and resource provision to support schools, yet challenges in implementation indicate that school-level management remains key to improving pupils' achievement.

Global policies and conventions regarding school management practices and their influence on pupils' academic performance in primary schools are crucial for fostering educational excellence worldwide (Darling-Hammond *et al*, 2017). Initiatives such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations emphasize the importance of quality education for all, including effective school management (Ferrer-Estevez & Chalmeta, 2021). Additionally, conventions like the Convention on the Rights of the Child recognize education as a fundamental right and advocate for optimal learning environments facilitated by competent management practices (Collins, 2017). Examining various countries provides insights into diverse approaches, challenges, and successes in school management. In the UK, for instance, the Department for Education implements policies aimed at enhancing school leadership and governance to improve academic outcomes (Day *et al*, 2016). Similarly, in the USA, initiatives such as the No Child Left Behind Act and

Every Student Succeeds Act emphasize accountability and performance measurement in schools (Cunningham & Osworth, 2023).

In Germany, decentralized education systems grant significant autonomy to schools, allowing for diverse management approaches tailored to local needs (Busemeyer & Schlicht-Schmälzle, 2019). Conversely, China's centralized education system focuses on standardization and rigorous oversight, influencing school management practices accordingly (Yuan & Guo, 2019). In Malaysia, efforts to improve school management include initiatives like the Malaysia Education Blueprint, which emphasizes leadership development and community engagement (Da Wan, 2020). India, with its vast and diverse education landscape, faces challenges related to infrastructure, teacher quality, and governance, prompting initiatives such as the National Education Policy to address these issues (Swargiary, 2024).

Australia emphasizes evidence-based practices and professional development for school leaders through initiatives like the Australian Professional Standard for Principals (Simon *et al*, 2021). These efforts aim to enhance school management effectiveness and ultimately improve academic outcomes. Despite these efforts, challenges persist globally, including resource constraints, inadequate training for school leaders, and socio-economic disparities impacting educational achievement. By sharing experiences and best practices, countries can collaboratively address these challenges and work towards ensuring quality education for all children, regardless of geographical location or socio-economic status.

In Sub-Saharan Africa studies underscore school management as a pivotal factor impacting student achievement, emphasizing the necessity for school management

teams to understand their roles as instructional leaders (Adeniyi *et al*, 2024). Day, GU, and Sammons (2016) argue in their study that school principals must employ diverse mechanisms to ensure enhanced student achievement. In the context of Sub-Saharan Africa, such as Tanzania, Jengo's (2016) research finds that students' academic achievement is linked to school heads conducting internal quality assurance, dedicating time to academic issues, enforcing school rules, delegating responsibilities, and fostering collegiality among teachers. Effective school management is identified as positively influencing students' academic achievement, emphasizing the direct correlation between effective management and improved academic outcomes (Senguo & Ilomo, 2020).

However, education systems across Sub-Saharan Africa face numerous challenges, including inadequate resources, overcrowded classrooms, and a lack of qualified teachers. These challenges often intersect with ineffective school management practices, as highlighted by a report from the World Bank (2019) which emphasizes the importance of strong leadership and governance in educational institutions. Additionally, research by the Brookings Institution (2020) indicates that poor management practices can exacerbate disparities in academic achievement among students in the region. Therefore, understanding the impact of school management practices on pupils' academic performance is crucial for addressing educational inequalities and improving learning outcomes in Sub-Saharan Africa.

In Tanzania, policies related to school management practices aim to enhance pupils' academic performance in primary schools while ensuring equitable access to quality education. The Education and Training Policy of 2014 emphasizes the importance of

effective school management in improving learning outcomes. It highlights the need for transparent and accountable governance structures at school levels to ensure efficient utilization of resources and effective delivery of education services (URT, 2014). Furthermore, the National Strategy for Growth and Reduction of Poverty II (NSGRP II) underscores the significance of education as a tool for poverty reduction and sustainable development. It calls for the strengthening of school management practices to promote inclusive and quality education, particularly in underserved areas (URT, 2015). Additionally, the National Education and Training Policy for the 21st Century prioritizes the enhancement of school leadership and management capabilities. It emphasizes the importance of continuous professional development for school leaders to improve their capacity in instructional leadership, resource management, and stakeholder engagement (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2016).

These policies collectively reflect Tanzania's commitment to improving school management practices to positively impact pupils' academic performance in primary schools. By fostering effective leadership, promoting accountability, and ensuring resource efficiency, Tanzania aims to create conducive learning environments that facilitate the holistic development of pupils across the country. The significance of school leaders' actions in Tanzania is emphasized, as they play a pivotal role in determining the capacity of schools in the region, potentially affecting student achievement positively or negatively. The leadership traits of school administrators, particularly in the context of school management techniques, are identified as critical

in the evolving education paradigm, requiring principals to foster collaborative school cultures and strengthen linkages between personnel (Harris, 2020).

Therefore, the current study's examination of school management practices and their impact on academic achievement, from a global perspective to the Tanzanian context, reveals gaps in the literature. These gaps include the need for a more nuanced understanding of specific management practices contributing to positive outcomes globally, exploration of the intersection between socio-economic factors and management practices in Sub-Saharan Africa, and a deeper analysis of the long-term effects of pandemic-induced changes on school management in Tanzania. Addressing these gaps will contribute to a more comprehensive and context-specific understanding of the intricate relationship between school management practices and pupils' academic achievement.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The ideal condition regarding school management practices and pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Tanzania involves effective leadership, efficient resource allocation, and a conducive learning environment. Schools are expected to be led by competent administrators who prioritize instructional leadership, fosters positive school culture and ensures equitable distribution of resources.

Strategic school management is important in enhancing effective teaching practices and students' learning resulting in improved student engagement, motivation, and academic achievement (UNESCO, 2014). School leaders' actions have an impact on the capacity of the schools in their area, and this can be a positive or negative factor for student academic performance (Day, 2016).

Highly effective leaders are known for cultivating strong, relationships with their staff, students and school communities. (Masters, 2018). The performance and leadership traits of school administrators in school management techniques would be critical in the new education paradigm, and school principals would be required to promote collaborative school cultures and foster linkages between personnel (Harris, 2020).

However, the current condition in primary schools in Tanzania is that school managements deviate from this ideal scenario. Challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited access to educational resources, teacher shortages, and insufficient training for school leaders may hinder effective school management practices (World Bank, 2019). As a result, there is disparities in pupils' academic performance as observed across different regions and socio-economic backgrounds (UNICEF, 2018).

In some cases, schools struggle to provide a stimulating learning environment, leading to low student morale and disengagement from academic activities (Mkumbo & Maliti, 2017). Furthermore, administrative inefficiencies and lack of accountability contribute to the mismanagement of resources, further exacerbating the situation (Mwamwenda & Kakuru, 2015).

What is missing then is a comprehensive approach to address the underlying issues affecting school management practices and pupils' academic performance. This includes targeted interventions to improve infrastructure, recruit and retain qualified teachers, and enhance the capacity of school leaders through training and

professional development programs (Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, 2016).

In the context of Dodoma City Council, the academic performance of primary school pupils holds paramount importance in shaping the educational landscape. Despite its significance, there remains a gap in understanding the specific influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools. The current state of knowledge lacks a comprehensive analysis of the relationship between school management practices and academic performance in the context of Dodoma City Council.

Therefore, this study aims to fill this gap by examining the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council, Tanzania.

1.4 Objective of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

The following are specific objectives of the study:

- i. To determine the kinds of management practices that influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council.
- ii. To assess pupils' perceptions about the influence of school management practices on their academic performance.

- iii. To examine the level of pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council.

1.5 Research Questions

1.5.1 Main Research Question

The main research question of this study is what school management practices influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools within Dodoma City Council?

1.5.2 Sub-Research Questions

The following are sub-research questions of the study:

- i. What school management practices influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council?
- ii. What are pupils' perceptions about the influence of school management practices on their academic performance?
- iii. What is the level of pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is significant in terms of practical, policy, stakeholder and academic perspectives. The study provides practical insights that can directly impact the day-to-day operations of primary schools in Dodoma City Council. By identifying effective management practices, school administrators can implement strategies that directly improve academic performance. Teachers can gain insights into management practices that foster a conducive learning environment, thereby improving their

teaching methods and student engagement. Ultimately, pupils benefited from improved academic performance as a result of better school management practices.

Regarding policy, the findings of this study can guide policymakers in formulating or reviewing existing educational policies for effective school management practices. The evidence-based recommendations can help in the efficient allocation of resources to areas that directly impact academic performance. Furthermore, the study can contribute to setting and maintaining high educational standards through the implementation of effective management practices.

To the various stakeholders, findings from this study offers significant benefits to school administrators who can gain deeper understanding of management practices that are effective, allowing them to make informed decisions to improve school performance. Teachers gained insights into how management practices impact their teaching environment and pupil outcomes. Parents was understanding how school management practices influence their children's education and can advocate for effective management in schools. Most importantly, students benefited from a better learning environment and improved academic outcomes due to enhanced management practices.

Academically, findings of this study fill a gap in the existing literature by providing empirical evidence on the influence of school management practices on academic performance in Dodoma City Council. This contribution to academic research can serve as a foundation for further studies on school management practices and their impact on academic performance in other regions. Additionally, by addressing this specific context, the study provides a nuanced understanding of how management

practices can be tailored to local needs and conditions, thereby offering a comprehensive perspective on effective school management.

1.7 Scope of the Study

The scope of this study focuses on examining the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council. The study specifically investigated the types of management practices implemented, assesses pupils' academic performance, and explores pupils' perceptions regarding the impact of these management practices on their academic achievements. The research is confined to public primary schools in Dodoma City Council, providing a detailed analysis within this geographical and educational context.

1.8 Operational Definitions

School Management Practices: Refers to the policies, procedures, and strategies implemented by school administrators and staff to organize, lead, and govern the educational institution. This includes aspects such as leadership styles, decision-making processes, resource allocation, and curriculum planning (Smith & Andrews, 2019).

Academic Performance: Academic performance refers to the rate at which educational objectives are being achieved by those within the school system (Owan, 2012). Therefore, students' academic performance may be seen as the extent to which students are achieving educational goals and objectives. According to Erum and Zahoor (2011), students' academic performance and graduation rates have been the area of interest, and investigation of factors related to the academic performance

of secondary students has been a topic of much interest to scholars. This may be because the school were established for the students, and their performance can be used to judge the entire school system effectiveness.

Resources: Encompasses the tangible and intangible assets utilized by school management to support academic activities, including but not limited to facilities, instructional materials, human resources (teachers and staff), financial resources, and community partnerships (Brown & Smith, 2018).

Primary Schools: Refers to educational institutions that cater to students in the early stages of formal education, typically covering grades or classes from kindergarten or first grade to sixth or seventh grade, depending on the educational system in the respective country or region (UNESCO, 2015).

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a literature review regarding the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council. The review provides both theoretical and empirical insights related to the study objectives. Specifically, the chapter is organized into four main sections: theoretical literature review, empirical literature review, research gap, and the conceptual framework.

2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

2.2.1 Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory was first introduced by James MacGregor Burns in his 1978 book, "Leadership." Burns described transformational leadership as a process where "leaders and followers help each other to advance to a higher level of morale and motivation" (Burns, 1978). According to Burns (1978), transformational leaders are those who engage with their followers in a way that raises both the leader and the follower to higher levels of motivation and morality. The concept was further developed by Bernard M. Bass in the 1980s. Bass expanded the theory to include a model of transformational leadership that emphasized the leader's ability to inspire and intellectually stimulate their followers, as well as to provide individualized consideration (Bass, 1985). Bass (1995) identified four key components of transformational leadership: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Bass and his

colleagues conducted extensive empirical research to validate these components, establishing transformational leadership as a well-regarded and influential theory in leadership studies.

2.2.2 Assumptions of the Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory is based on several key assumptions. It assumes that effective leaders have capacity to transform their followers by raising their awareness and commitment to the organization's vision and goals (Effelsberg, 2014). This transformation is achieved through the leader's ability to communicate a compelling vision that motivates followers to transcend their self-interests for the sake of the organization. Also, the theory assumes that transformational leaders can intrinsically motivate followers by aligning their personal values and goals with those of the organization (Chua, & Ayoko, 2021). This intrinsic motivation is seen as more powerful and enduring than extrinsic rewards. Furthermore, transformational leaders provide personalized support and encouragement to their followers. This assumption posits that recognizing and valuing individual contributions leads to higher levels of follower engagement and satisfaction. The theory assumes that transformational leaders challenge the status quo and encourage creativity and innovation among followers. Leaders foster an environment where followers feel safe to express new ideas and take risks without fear of punishment.

2.2.2.1 Relevance of Transformational Leadership Theory to the Study

The relevance of Transformational Leadership Theory to this study lies in its focus on how effective leadership practices can influence educational outcomes. In the context of primary schools in Dodoma City Council, transformational leadership

practices by school administrators can lead to improved academic performance. By inspiring and motivating teachers and students to achieve higher standards, transformational leaders can create a positive and conducive learning environment. Additionally, transformational leaders encourage innovative teaching methods and curricula, which can enhance the quality of education. Providing individualized support to both teachers and students ensures that their specific needs are addressed, promoting overall academic success. Furthermore, transformational leaders foster a collaborative school culture that values academic excellence and continuous improvement, which is crucial for sustaining high performance levels.

2.2.2.2 Strengths of the Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory has several strengths. The theory addresses various aspects of leadership, including vision, motivation, and personal development, providing a comprehensive framework for effective leadership (Tarker, 2021). This holistic approach ensures that all facets of leadership are considered, leading to more balanced and effective leadership practices. Transformational leadership is backed by extensive research and empirical evidence demonstrating its effectiveness in various organizational settings. This empirical support lends credibility to the theory and its application. The theory can be applied across different contexts and industries, including education, making it versatile and widely applicable. This adaptability ensures that the principles of transformational leadership can be used to address a variety of leadership challenges. Numerous studies have shown that transformational leadership is associated with higher levels of employee satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance. These

positive outcomes underscore the practical benefits of implementing transformational leadership practices.

2.2.2.3 Critics of the Theory

Despite its strengths, Transformational Leadership Theory has faced criticism. Critics argue that the theory places too much emphasis on the leader's charisma, which may not always be necessary or effective in all contexts (Ladkin & Patrick, 2022). This overemphasis can lead to unrealistic expectations of leaders. Some scholars believe that transformational leadership is too broad and lacks clear, actionable guidelines for implementation. This lack of specificity can make it difficult for leaders to know exactly how to apply the theory in practice. The intense focus on leader-follower relationships might lead to potential manipulation or exploitation of followers. Critics caution that leaders may use transformational techniques to achieve their own ends rather than genuinely benefiting their followers. The theory has been criticized for being more applicable to Western contexts, with less consideration for cultural differences in leadership styles and practices. This cultural bias suggests that the theory may not be universally applicable without adaptation to different cultural settings.

2.3 Empirical Studies

2.3.1 Management Practices

Masci, De Witte and Agasisti (2018) conducted a study titled "The influence of school size, principal characteristics and school management practices on educational performance, an efficiency analysis of Italian students attending middle schools." The study aimed to identify factors related to student body composition,

school size, management practices, and principals' characteristics that impact the performance of Italian grade 8 students. The study used a student-level efficiency model, including several school-level variables. Their findings indicated that among other things, management practices adopted by school principals partly affected mathematics performance. The study concluded that student characteristics play a more critical role in achievement scores than school or schooling variables, suggesting a need for focused interventions at the student level. While the study highlighted the significance of management practices and student composition on academic performance, it focused on middle school students in Italy, rather than primary school pupils in Tanzania, leaving a gap in understanding the specific practices influencing primary education in Dodoma City Council.

Mutungwa and Orodho. (2015) explored “Resource management challenges and learners' academic performance in national examinations: what are the coping strategies in public primary schools in Makindu District, Makueni County, Kenya.” Using a descriptive survey design, the researchers gathered data from 250 respondents, including head teachers, teachers, and PTA chairpersons, using interviews and questionnaires. They found significant challenges such as inadequate funding, overstretched facilities, and inefficient resource utilization, which correlated positively with academic performance. The study recommended involving teachers and learners in decision-making processes to enhance academic outcomes, highlighting the importance of effective resource management strategies.

Although this study provides insights into resource management challenges in Kenyan primary schools, there is a need for a similar analysis within the specific

context of Dodoma City Council to understand local resource management practices and their impact on academic performance.

Moshi, (2016) examined “The influence of public primary school teachers working environment on student academic performance in Rural Areas: A Case of Kilimanjaro Region.” The study aimed to assess the challenges of teachers’ working environments, their causes, and their impact on pupils’ performance. Employing a descriptive research design with both quantitative and qualitative methods, data from 133 respondents revealed issues like poor infrastructure, lack of resources, and low salaries. These challenges led to teachers engaging in other jobs during working hours and high turnover rates, negatively affecting student performance. Recommendations included providing teaching aids, improving salaries, and offering regular training programs. The research highlighted the influence of teachers’ working environments on student performance in rural areas of Kilimanjaro, but it did not address similar dynamics within Dodoma City Council, necessitating further investigation into local teacher working conditions and their impact on academic outcomes.

Nwune, Okwuduba and Anidi. (2021) researched “Parenting styles as a correlate of academic achievement of primary school pupils in Awka South, Nigeria.” Using a survey design, they examined 200 primary five pupils, employing the Scale of Parenting Style (SPS) questionnaire and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The study found a significant relationship between parenting styles and pupils' academic achievement in Mathematics. It recommended educating parents on effective parenting styles that support cognitive, emotional, social, and academic

competencies, emphasizing the role of parenting in academic success. While this study emphasizes the role of parenting styles in academic achievement in Nigeria, it does not explore how school management practices within Dodoma City Council specifically influence pupils' academic performance, leaving a contextual gap that this study aims to fill.

Gitau (2016) investigated "Influence of headteachers' instructional supervision practices on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools in Thika West Sub- County, Kenya." The study employed a descriptive survey design, targeting 27 public primary schools. Data from headteachers and teachers through questionnaires revealed that supervision practices like lesson plan evaluation and teacher conferences positively influenced academic performance. The study recommended increasing budget allocations and providing adequate resources for effective supervision, highlighting the importance of head of schools' active involvement in instructional practices. The study provided valuable insights into the influence of instructional supervision on academic performance in Kenyan schools, but similar research is needed to understand the impact of head of schools' supervision practices in the specific context of primary schools in Dodoma City Council.

Ojera (2016) focused on "Impact of financial management in Migori county public primary schools on pupils' academic achievement in Kenya Certificate of Primary Education." The study used a descriptive survey and inferential statistics design to analyse the correlation between financial management and academic achievement. Data from 251 head teachers and 16 QASO officers revealed inadequate training for financial managers and irregular government funding as major issues.

Recommendations included increasing government disbursements and training for financial management, suggesting that effective financial practices are crucial for improving academic outcomes. While this research highlights the importance of financial management in Kenyan primary schools, it does not address the specific financial management practices and their influence on academic performance within Dodoma City Council, necessitating further investigation.

2.3.2 Pupils' Perceptions of the Influence of School Management Practices

Offem, Arrop, and Owan (2019) investigated "Students' perception towards management of discipline and their academic performance in Cross River State." Using a correlational research design and data from 180 students, the study found significant relationships between perceptions of discipline management and academic performance. Recommendations included encouraging positive student attitudes and ensuring fair disciplinary practices, highlighting the impact of discipline management on academic outcomes. The study provided insights into students' perceptions of discipline management in Nigerian schools, but there is a need for similar research within Dodoma City Council to understand how pupils perceive school management practices and their impact on academic performance in this specific context.

Mukorera and Nyatanga (2017) explored "Students' perceptions of teaching and learning practices: A principal component approach." The study used principal component analysis to understand how students perceive various teaching practices. Data from first and second-year students showed that personalized interactions with instructors were valued by first-year students, while second-year students preferred

group learning. Recommendations included tailoring teaching methods to different student needs, emphasizing the importance of understanding student perceptions for effective teaching. Although this research examines students' perceptions of teaching practices, it focuses on higher education students rather than primary school pupils, indicating the need for localized research to understand how primary pupils in Dodoma City Council perceive school management practices and their impact on academic performance.

Edgerton and McKechnie (2023) examined "The relationship between student's perceptions of their school environment and academic achievement." Using regression analysis on data from 441 students, they found significant correlations between students' perceptions of their environment, attendance, socioeconomic status, and academic achievement. The study highlighted the mediating role of in-school behaviors, recommending improvements to the physical learning environment to enhance academic outcomes. While this study explores the relationship between school environment perceptions and academic achievement, it does not address primary school pupils in Dodoma City Council, highlighting the need for localized research to assess pupils' perceptions of school management practices and their impact on academic performance.

Almutawa and Suwaidan (2020) studied "Students' perceptions regarding classroom attendance and its impact on their academic performance." Using a survey of accounting students, the study found that attendance significantly impacted understanding and academic performance, with gender also playing a role. Recommendations included addressing reasons for absenteeism and emphasizing

attendance to improve academic outcomes, underscoring the importance of attendance for educational success. Although the study highlighted the impact of attendance on academic performance, it focused on higher education students rather than primary school pupils, necessitating further investigation into how primary pupils in Dodoma City Council perceive attendance and its influence on their academic outcomes.

2.3.3 Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools

Waita et al (2016) studied “Pupil-teacher ratio and its impact on academic performance in public primary schools in Central Division, Machakos County, Kenya.” Using a descriptive survey design, they analysed data from 24 sampled schools to assess the impact of PTR on national examination performance. The study found a negative correlation between PTR and performance, indicating that higher PTRs lead to lower academic performance. Recommendations included hiring more teachers to lower PTR and revising the Education Act to manage enrolments effectively, emphasizing the need to address PTR to improve academic outcomes. Although the study explored the impact of PTR on academic performance in Kenyan schools, it did not specifically address the context of Dodoma City Council, highlighting the need for localized research to understand the influence of PTR on pupils' academic performance in this area.

Simba, Agak and Kabuka (2016) explored the “Impact of discipline on academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Muhoroni Sub-County, Kenya.” The study aimed to investigate how discipline issues, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, affected academic performance. Using descriptive and correlational

research designs, they found that social exclusion and dropping out due to discipline issues were significant problems. Recommendations included engaging parents and stakeholders to improve discipline management, emphasizing the importance of a supportive school environment for academic success. While the study highlighted the impact of discipline on academic performance in Kenyan primary schools, there is a need for similar research in Dodoma City Council to understand the local challenges related to discipline and their influence on academic outcomes.

Charles and Mkulu (2020) investigated “Management challenges facing school administrators and pupils’ academic performance in public primary schools in Sengerema District Mwanza, Tanzania.” The study identified challenges such as insufficient budgets, poor stakeholder cooperation, over-enrolments, and inadequate infrastructure. Using questionnaires and interviews, they found that these challenges negatively affected academic performance. Recommendations included increasing funding, hiring more teachers, and enhancing stakeholder cooperation, highlighting the need for comprehensive management strategies to improve academic outcomes. Although the study provided insights into management challenges in Tanzanian primary schools, it did not specifically address the unique context and challenges within Dodoma City Council, underscoring the need for localized research to explore management practices and their impact on academic performance.

Uzosike, Okeafor and Mezie-Okoye (2020) examined “Dietary Diversity, Nutritional status and Academic performance of pupils in public primary schools in Port Harcourt Metropolis.” The study assessed the relationship between dietary diversity, nutritional status, and academic performance. Data from 847 pupils revealed

significant associations between dietary diversity and academic performance, with malnutrition negatively impacting outcomes. Recommendations included promoting dietary diversity to enhance academic performance, emphasizing the critical role of nutrition in educational success. While the study highlighted the importance of dietary diversity and nutrition for academic performance, it did not address the factors within the context of Dodoma City Council, indicating the need for specific research on nutritional influences on pupils' academic performance in this area.

2.4 Research Gap

Despite the extensive research conducted on various management practices and their impact on academic performance, several critical gaps remain, particularly concerning primary schools in Dodoma City Council, Tanzania. Existing studies primarily focus on different regions such as Italy, Kenya, and Nigeria, with no direct exploration of primary school management practices within Dodoma City Council. This limits the applicability of findings to the specific cultural, socio-economic, and educational contexts of Dodoma. There is a significant need for a study that considers the unique environment and challenges of primary schools in Dodoma.

Masci, De Witte and Agasisti (2018) address middle school students rather than primary school pupils, focusing on Italian middle schools. Given the developmental differences and unique educational needs of primary school children, there is a crucial need for studies targeting this younger demographic within Dodoma. Understanding the specific management practices that influence primary school pupils' academic performance is essential for developing age-appropriate and effective educational strategies. Furthermore, Mutungwa and Orodho (2015)

explored resource management challenges in Kenyan primary schools but did not provide a holistic analysis combining multiple management practices and their collective impact on academic performance. Similarly, Moshi (2016) examined teachers' working conditions in Kilimanjaro. A comprehensive approach that examines the interplay of various management factors, such as financial management, instructional supervision, and resource allocation, is necessary to understand the full scope of influences on academic performance in Dodoma City Council.

Research by Offem, Arop and Owan (2019) on students' perceptions of discipline management and its impact on academic performance was conducted in Nigeria and focused on older pupils. There is a significant gap in understanding how primary school pupils in Dodoma perceive school management practices and how these perceptions influence their academic performance. Studies tailored to capturing the voices and experiences of younger pupils in Dodoma would provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of current management practices from the pupils' perspective.

Also, Charles and Mkulu (2020) identified management challenges in Sengerema District, Mwanza, but not in Dodoma. Localized research that identifies specific challenges faced by primary schools in Dodoma City Council and assesses the effectiveness of tailored interventions is needed. Understanding the local context and its unique challenges was help formulate precise strategies to improve academic outcomes. Uzosike, Okeafor and Mezie-Okoye (2020) studied dietary diversity in Port Harcourt, Nigeria, and its relationship with academic performance. This

underscores the importance of nutrition but lacks direct application to the Dodoma context. Investigating the role of nutrition and health in academic performance within Dodoma can provide critical insights for holistic educational improvements. Moreover, studies like those by Waita *et al* (2016) on pupil-teacher ratios in Kenyan primary schools, Simba, Agak and Kabuka (2016) on the impact of discipline in Kenyan primary schools, and Gitau (2016) on instructional supervision in Thika West Sub- County, Kenya, provide valuable insights but are not specific to Dodoma. Localized studies are necessary to understand the unique influences of these factors on academic performance in Dodoma City Council.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates the various variables related to effective school management practices as related to pupils' academic performance in primary schools. Additionally, Teacher Qualifications and Training, Socio-Economic Status, and Parental Involvement act as potential mediating variables. These variables can influence the strength and direction of the relationship between School Management Practices and Academic Performance. Effective school management practices have the potential to enhance teacher quality, address socio-economic barriers and foster parental involvement, ultimately leading to improved pupils' academic performance.

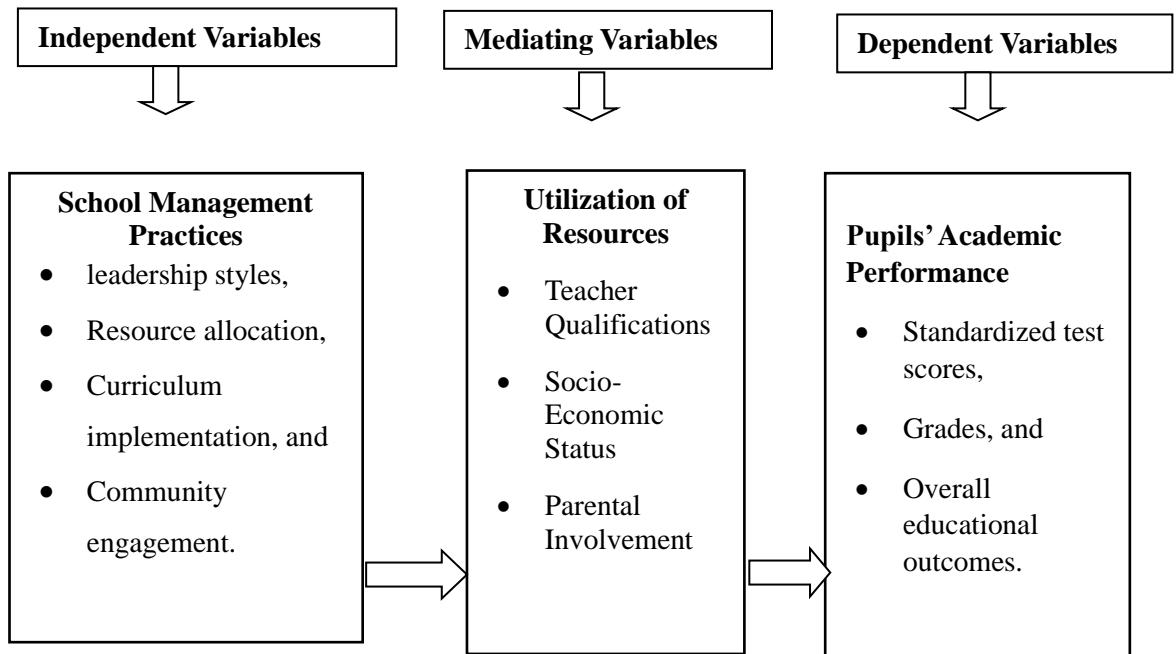


Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Research own construction 2024.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presented the research methodology that was used to examine the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council. It described the research paradigm, research approach, research design, study area, study population, sample size and sampling techniques, data collection methods, data analysis plan, validity and reliability of research instruments, and ethical considerations.

3.2 Research Paradigm

The study reported in this dissertation was guided by pragmatic research paradigm. Pragmatic research paradigm emphasizes practical application of research methods to address real-world problems, allowing for the integration of both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019).

Pragmatic research paradigm believe that the research questions should drive the choice of methodology and that both objective and subjective knowledge are valuable (Kelly, & Cordeiro, 2020). The pragmatic research paradigm facilitates the triangulation of data, enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings (Yardley & Bishop, 2017). It also allows the use of the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods to address different aspects of the research problem, ensuring a holistic analysis (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019).

Pragmatic research paradigm is particularly beneficial in educational research, where understanding the multifaceted nature of school management and its impact on

academic performance requires both statistical analysis and in-depth exploration of experiences and perceptions.

3.3 Research Approach

This study employed a mixed research approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of how school management practices influence pupils' academic performance. The approach was chosen because it allows the study to measure patterns and relationships through quantitative data while also exploring the experiences and perceptions of pupils, teachers, and school administrators through qualitative data. Quantitative data were collected using structured questionnaires and standardized tests to assess variables such as management practices and academic performance, enabling objective analysis and identification of trends. Qualitative data were gathered through interviews, focus groups, and observations to gain in-depth insights into the contextual factors affecting academic achievement. Combining both methods enhances the reliability, validity, and richness of the findings, ensuring that statistical evidence and human experiences are fully captured.

3.4 Research Design

This study utilized a convergent parallel mixed methods design which ensured that quantitative and qualitative data are collected concurrently but analysed separately. The results are then compared and merged to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Demir & Pismek, 2018). The quantitative component of the research involved the use of structured instruments, such as questionnaires and standardized tests, to gather numerical data from a large sample of participants. This

data was used to identify patterns, relationships, and trends related to the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance.

The qualitative component involved collecting non-numerical data through methods such as interviews, focus groups, and observations. This approach enabled the researcher to gain deeper insights into the perceptions and experiences of pupils, teachers, and school administrators regarding the impact of school management practices (Hennink, 2020). The qualitative data provided the context and depth to the quantitative findings, revealing underlying factors that may not be captured through numerical data alone (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

By using convergent parallel mixed methods design, the study leveraged the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Guetterman & Fetter, 2018). It also allowed for a comprehensive analysis that combined statistical rigor with rich and contextual understanding (Harrison, 2020). The integration of quantitative and qualitative data was enhancing the validity and reliability of the findings (Rose & Johnson, 2020).

3.5 Area of the Study

This study was conducted in Dodoma City Council, which comprises 122 primary schools, including 93 public and 29 private schools. The area was selected due to its representation of various challenges in school management that affect pupils' academic performance. According to the National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) 2024 results, the average pass rate for Standard Four assessments in Dodoma City Council was below the national average of 85%, highlighting areas that require improvement. Similarly, reports from the District Education Office (DEO,

2024) indicate persistent issues such as limited teaching resources, overcrowded classrooms, inadequate teacher qualifications and training, substandard infrastructure, and low community and parental involvement. Socio-economic factors, including household poverty and limited access to educational materials, further affect pupils' concentration, attendance, and performance. These conditions make Dodoma City Council an appropriate setting for examining the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic achievement. Findings from this study are expected to provide evidence that can inform policies and interventions aimed at improving school management and enhancing learning outcomes in similar urban and semi-urban contexts in Tanzania.

3.6 Target Population

The target population for this study comprised of pupils, teachers, headteachers, ward education officers and one district officer within Dodoma City Council, Tanzania and public primary schools within Dodoma City Council. Dodoma's diverse educational landscape, including public primary schools, provided a comprehensive population for examining the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance. With its status as the capital city of Tanzania, Dodoma serves as a focal point for educational policies and reforms, making insights gained from this study relevant at a national level.

The inclusion of pupils ensured a direct assessment of the influence of management practices on pupils' academic performance, while teachers and administrators offered valuable perspectives on the implementation and effectiveness.

The study aimed to gather insights from a wide range of stakeholders in order to provide a holistic understanding of the research problem. By targeting Dodoma's primary school community, this study sought to address pressing educational challenges and contribute to the improvement of academic performance in the Dodoma City Council.

3.7 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

3.7.1 Sample Size

A total of 129 respondents participated in the study, comprising of 63 teachers, 51 pupils, 5 head of schools, 5 ward education officers and 5 district education officers.

Table 3.1: Respondents for the Study

Category of Respondents	Sample Size
Teachers	63
Pupils	51
Head of schools	5
Ward Education Officers	5
District Education Officers	5
Total	129

The sample size was drawn from five primary schools in Dodoma City Council (School A, B, C, D and E). The key participants were including 5 head of schools, five ward education officers from the five wards and 1 district officer, enhancing the study's comprehensiveness. Sampling teachers and students from 5 public schools involved selecting a representative subset based on specific percentages. Specifically, 50% of teachers and 1% of students from each school was sampled. This approach ensured an adequate and manageable sample size for the study.

Teachers:

Total number of teachers: 126 Sampling 50% of teachers:

Sample Size teachers=126×0.50=63
 $\text{Sample Size} = 126 \times 0.50 = 63$

Students:

Total number of students: 5115 Sampling 1% of pupils:

Sample Size students=5115×0.01=51.15≈51
 $\text{Sample Size} = 5115 \times 0.01 = 51.15 \approx 51$

Using the proportional allocation approach, the sample sizes for each school are calculated as follows:

Teachers:

School A:

Number of teachers: 14

Sample size: 14×0.50=714 $\times 0.50 = 7$

School B:

Number of teachers: 11

Sample size: 11×0.50=5.5≈611 $\times 0.50 = 5.5 \approx 6$

School C:

Number of teachers: 33

Sample size: 33×0.50=16.5≈1733 $\times 0.50 = 16.5 \approx 17$

School D:

Number of teachers: 42

Sample size: 42×0.50=2142 $\times 0.50 = 2142 \times 0.50 = 21$

School E:

Number of teachers: 26

Sample size: 26×0.50=1326 $\times 0.50 = 1326 \times 0.50 = 13$

Pupils:***School A:***

Number of pupils: 676

Sample size: $676 \times 0.01 = 6.76 \approx 7$ (times 0.01 = 6.76 \approx 7)

School B:

Number of pupils: 554

Sample size: $554 \times 0.01 = 5.54 \approx 6$ (times 0.01 = 5.54 \approx 6)

School C:

Number of pupils: 1324

Sample size: $1324 \times 0.01 = 13.24 \approx 13$ (times 0.01 = 13.24 \approx 13)

School D:

Number of pupils: 1517

Sample size: $1517 \times 0.01 = 15.17 \approx 15$ (times 0.01 = 15.17 \approx 15)

School E:

Number of pupils: 1044

Sample size: $1044 \times 0.01 = 10.44 \approx 10$ (times 0.01 = 10.44 \approx 10)

This proportional allocation ensured that the sample is representative of each school's size. The study used random sampling within each school to select the specific teachers and students to participate in the study. This method guaranteed a balanced representation of teachers and students from all selected schools, reflecting the variations and ensuring comprehensive data collection.

3.7.2 Sampling Technique and Procedures

3.7.2.1 Stratified Sampling

The study employed stratified sampling to ensure representation from different geographical areas within Dodoma City Council. Primary schools were categorized into strata based on their location or ward within the council. Each stratum was treated as a separate sampling unit, allowing for an adequate representation of schools from various areas. This approach aimed to account for potential variations in school management practices and academic performance across different regions of Dodoma.

3.7.2.2 Random Sampling

Within each geographical stratum, random sampling techniques was used to select specific schools to participate in the study. Methods such as simple random sampling or lottery method was employed to ensure that every primary school within Dodoma City Council has an equal chance of being selected. Random sampling was also be utilized to select teachers and pupils from the chosen schools, ensuring a representative sample and minimizing selection bias.

3.7.2.3 Purposive Sampling

Purposive sampling was applied to select key participants, including head teachers, ward education officers from the five wards, and one district officer within Dodoma City Council. Head teachers are key stakeholders who possess valuable insights into school management practices and policies. Similarly, ward education officers and the district officer play crucial roles in the educational administration of the council. By purposively selecting these participants, the study aims to ensure that relevant

expertise and perspectives are represented, contributing to the comprehensiveness and validity of the research findings.

3.8 Data Collection and Instruments

The study employed multiple data collection methods to obtain comprehensive insights into the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council. The tools used were structured questionnaires, interview guides, observation, and document review. The procedures for administering each tool in the field are described below:

3.8.1 Questionnaires

To collect data through structured questionnaires, the researcher visited each selected school and distributed the questionnaires personally to teachers and pupils. Before distribution, the purpose of the study was explained, and clear instructions were given on how to fill in the questions. Respondents were given adequate time to complete the questionnaires in a quiet setting, after which the researcher collected them immediately to avoid loss or influence from other parties. This procedure ensured that responses reflected the respondents' own views and reduced the chances of missing data.

3.8.2 Interviews

For interviews, the researcher scheduled appointments with head teachers, ward education officers, and the district education officer in advance. Each interview was conducted face-to-face in a convenient location, usually in the participants' offices or quiet spaces within schools. The researcher introduced the purpose of the discussion,

assured confidentiality, and obtained consent before starting. An interview guide was followed to ensure consistency, but flexibility was allowed for participants to elaborate on their experiences. Responses were recorded using a voice recorder (with permission) and supported by note-taking to capture all important points.

3.8.3 Observation

During observation, the researcher visited classrooms and school compounds using an observation checklist. The procedure involved systematically observing classroom teaching, pupil participation, infrastructure condition, and the general learning environment. The researcher remained non-intrusive to avoid influencing normal activities. Field notes were taken immediately, and in some cases, photographs of facilities were captured with permission to provide supporting evidence. This approach ensured the collection of authentic, first-hand data on the implementation of school management practices.

3.8.4 Document Review

For document review, the researcher requested access to official school records and reports from head teachers and education officers. Relevant documents such as academic performance records, examination results, school reports, and strategic plans were examined on-site. Notes were taken systematically, focusing on information related to management practices and pupils' academic performance. Where possible, copies of non-confidential documents were obtained with permission. This procedure provided secondary evidence to triangulate and verify findings obtained through questionnaires, interviews, and observations.

3.9 Data Processing and Analysis

The collected data were then analysed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis techniques to examine the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council.

3.8.1 Quantitative Data Analysis Technique

Quantitative data collected through structured questionnaire was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences Software (SPSS). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, means, and standard deviations, was computed to summarize the responses to survey questions regarding management practices and academic performance. Inferential statistics, such as correlation analysis and regression analysis, was conducted to examine relationships between variables and identify significant predictors of academic performance. This quantitative data analysis technique provide numerical insights into the different management practices and pupils' academic performance.

3.8.2 Qualitative Data Analysis Technique

Qualitative data from interview guides, observation guides, and document review guides were analysed using Data Reduction Technique (DRT) (Miles & Huberman, 1994) which involved the use of NVIVO qualitative data analysis software.

The technique involves transcription of recorded interviews and field notes from observations and coding to identify themes and patterns against specific quotations or utterances using grounded theory approach as related to school management practices and their impact on academic performance. Through constant comparison and iterative analysis, emergent themes were refined, and relationships between

themes was explored to develop a comprehensive understanding of the qualitative findings.

3.10 Validity and Reliability of the Study

3.10.1 Validity

The validity of this study was ensured through various measures to accurately measure the intended constructs and minimize potential biases. Firstly, the use of multiple data collection methods, including surveys, interviews, observations, and document review guides, was enhance construct validity by triangulating data from different sources and perspectives (Turner, 207). Secondly, the survey and interview instruments pilot-tested with a small sample of participants aimed to assess clarity, relevance, and comprehensiveness, ensuring that the questions accurately capture the intended constructs (Pattinson, 2023).

Additionally, efforts were made to establish rapport with participants and ensure their trustworthiness to encourage candid responses and reduce social desirability bias. Lastly, thorough documentation of the research process, including detailed descriptions of sampling procedures, data collection methods, and analytical techniques, was maintained to enhance transparency and enable replication of the study.

3.10.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency and stability of research findings over time and across different conditions (Cohen, 2017). To enhance the reliability of this study, rigorous methodological procedures were followed at each stage of the research process.

Standardized protocols were established for data collection, coding and analysis to ensure consistency and minimize subjective biases. Inter-coder reliability checks were conducted for qualitative data analysis to assess the consistency of coding decisions among independent coders (O'Connor & Joffe 2020) Moreover, the use of established measurement scales and validated instruments for data collection was contribute to the reliability of the quantitative findings. The study's reflexivity was also considered, with efforts made to acknowledge and minimize potential biases that may influence data interpretation and analysis.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations were paramount in conducting this study, which involved human participants in primary schools. The research adhered to established ethical guidelines to safeguard the rights, dignity, and welfare of all participants.

3.11.1 Informed Consent

Prior to data collection, participants were provided with clear and detailed information regarding the purpose of the study, data collection procedures, potential risks, and expected benefits. Teachers, pupils, head teachers, and education officers were informed of their rights, including voluntary participation and the right to withdraw from the study at any point without facing any consequences. Written informed consent was obtained from adult participants, while assent was sought from pupils alongside consent from their parents or guardians.

3.11.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

All data collected were handled with strict confidentiality. Participants' names were not recorded in the data sets; instead, codes and pseudonyms were used to ensure anonymity. Data were stored in password-protected digital files and securely locked physical storage. Only the researcher and academic supervisors had access to the raw data. Findings were presented in aggregate form to prevent identification of individual participants.

3.11.3 Respect for Participants

Throughout the research process, participants were treated with dignity, respect, and cultural sensitivity. The researcher created a supportive environment where respondents felt comfortable expressing their views freely. Any sensitive issues that arose during data collection were handled with empathy and care, and participants were not pressured to answer questions they were uncomfortable with.

3.11.4 Minimization of Harm

The study took deliberate steps to minimize harm or discomfort. Questionnaires and interviews were conducted in familiar school environments to reduce anxiety. The researcher ensured that no participant experienced undue stress, coercion, or exploitation. Pupils were not exposed to any sensitive or inappropriate questions. The procedures were designed to avoid disruption of school activities and to protect participants from any form of physical, psychological, or social harm.

3.11.5 Compliance with Ethical Guidelines

This study complied with institutional and national ethical requirements. Ethical clearance was formally obtained from the Open University of Tanzania (OUT) Directorate of Postgraduate Studies, Research, Publications and Consultancy, which reviewed and approved the study before data collection began. In addition, official research permits were sought and granted by the Dodoma City Council through the District Executive Director's office, in consultation with Ward Education Officers and head teachers of the selected schools. These approvals ensured that the study was conducted in line with both academic and government regulations.

The researcher continuously monitored ethical compliance throughout the fieldwork and promptly addressed any concerns raised by participants or authorities. By following these procedures, the study upheld academic integrity, protected the rights and welfare of participants, and ensured that the findings contribute meaningfully to knowledge and policy without compromising ethical standards.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study that examined the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council. Each section presents the findings and discusses the implications of the findings by drawing connection to existing literature for understanding the impact of effective school management on pupils' academic performance.

4.2 Management Practices Influencing Pupils' Academic Performance

4.2.1 Management practices in schools

The first part of the first specific research objective aimed to identify the specific school management practices that influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools within Dodoma City Council from teachers' perspective. Table 4.1 summarizes the responses from teachers regarding various aspects of school management practices.

Table 4.1: Teachers Responses on School Management Practices

Question Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
The school management regularly observes classroom teaching and provides feedback	23	29	2	3	1	58
There are effective communication channels between teachers and school management	21	33	2	1	1	58
The school management involves teachers in decision-making processes	17	29	7	3	2	58
Professional development opportunities are regularly provided by the school management	16	27	10	3	2	58
The school management sets clear expectations and goals for academic performance	17	35	2	2	2	58
The school management recognizes and rewards teachers' achievements	20	25	7	5	1	58
The school management provides adequate resources for effective teaching	17	32	3	5	1	58

4.2.1.1 Classroom Observation and Feedback

Findings of the study revealed that a significant 23 teachers (39.7%) strongly agreed, and 29 (50.0%) agreed that school management regularly observes classroom teaching and provides feedback. Only 2 (3.4%) remained neutral, while 4 teachers expressed disagreement. This response indicates a robust practice of monitoring and support within the school environment. The findings align with Smith & Roberts (2020), who emphasized that consistent feedback from management enhances teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. The positive responses suggest that the school's management recognizes the importance of observational practices in promoting professional growth and improving educational quality.

However, during the interviews, with headteachers it was revealed that a consensus on the significant impact of management practices on academic performance. Head of school A expressed concerns about the consistency of practices affecting academic performance, stating that,

“Giving students regular exercises helps improve their understanding of subjects because teachers, after receiving the

results, assess themselves and correct their mistakes, but it has also motivated teachers to complete topics earlier.” (Head of school A)

This emphasises the importance of regular exercises in reinforcing student learning, emphasizing that structured practice is vital for enhancing understanding and retention among pupils. Furthermore, research by Black and Wiliam (1998) supports this notion, highlighting the role of formative assessments in improving student achievement.

4.2.1.2 Communication Channels

The data reveals that 21 teachers (36.2%) strongly agreed and 33 (56.9%) agreed that effective communication channels exist between teachers and school management, with only 4 (6.9%) expressing disagreement. This reflects a generally favourable perception of communication, essential for fostering collaboration and transparency. Effective communication is critical in educational settings, as highlighted by Johnson (2018), who noted that open lines of communication facilitate a shared understanding of goals and challenges, ultimately enhancing school performance.

4.2.1.3 Involvement in Decision-Making

The responses indicate that 17 teachers (29.3%) strongly agreed, and 29 (50.0%) agreed that school management involves teachers in decision-making processes. However, 7 (12.1%) remained neutral, and 5 (8.6%) disagreed. This suggests a mixed perception regarding teacher involvement in governance. While a majority feel included, the notable percentage of neutral and negative responses may point to opportunities for improvement in participatory practices. As noted by Davis (2019),

inclusive decision-making can empower educators and improve morale, which is essential for fostering a supportive educational environment.

The findings were supplemented by interviews. Finally, Head of school D underscored the importance of open discussions regarding academic challenges, mentioning that,

“It is important to talk to teachers and students about academic challenges.” (Head of school D)

This suggests that creating a dialogue around academic issues fosters a supportive learning environment. This perspective is supported by Fullan (2001), who advocates for open communication to facilitate educational improvement. Furthermore, the findings were supplemented by head of school B during interviews highlighted the importance of involving teachers in decision-making, asserting,

“It is important to talk to teachers and students about academic challenges.” (Head of school B)

This suggests that including teachers in educational decisions fosters ownership and accountability, which aligns with Hargreaves (2000). This indicates that participatory management practices enhance commitment among staff and contribute positively to the academic environment.

4.2.1.4 Professional Development Opportunities

Findings show that 16 teachers (27.6%) strongly agreed and 27 (46.6%) agreed that professional development opportunities are regularly provided. Meanwhile, 10 (17.2%) remained neutral, and 5 (8.6%) disagreed. While the majority affirm the availability of professional development, the substantial number of neutral responses highlights a need for enhanced communication about these opportunities. Research

by Clark & Johnson (2022) indicates that regular access to professional development correlates positively with job satisfaction and teaching effectiveness, suggesting that the school could benefit from ensuring all teachers are aware of available programs. The findings are supplemented by interview, in addition, Head teacher D discussed the necessity of regular academic meetings, stating that,

“Every Tuesday, we hold a meeting with all the teachers to discuss teaching progress.” (Head of school E)

This reveals that structured professional development meetings are vital for ongoing teacher improvement, aligning with findings from Darling-Hammond et al. (2017). Regular collaboration among educators is essential for enhancing teaching effectiveness.

District Education Officer D discussed collaborations for teacher training, stating that,

“We collaborate with high-performing schools for teacher training.” (District Education Officer B)

This reflects a commitment to enhancing teacher quality through professional development, aligning with Darling-Hammond (2010), who argues that continuous professional development is crucial for improving teaching effectiveness.

4.2.1.5 Clear Expectations and Goals

Regarding the clarity of expectations and goals for academic performance, 17 teachers (29.3%) strongly agreed, and 35 (60.3%) agreed, with only 4 (6.9%) disagreeing. This indicates a strong consensus on the management's role in establishing clear academic goals, which is vital for guiding teachers and students alike. Miller & Smith (2019) found that well-defined expectations contribute to

higher levels of accountability and performance among educators, reflecting the effectiveness of the school's management strategies.

4.2.1.6 Recognition of Achievements

The responses to the statement on recognizing and rewarding teachers' achievements indicate that 20 teachers (34.5%) strongly agreed and 25 (43.1%) agreed, with only 6 (10.3%) disagreeing. This suggests that most teachers feel acknowledged for their efforts, which is crucial for maintaining motivation and morale. Johnson (2020) emphasizes the importance of recognition in educational settings as a means to promote teacher engagement and retention. The positive responses indicate a supportive management approach, although there remains room for improvement in formal recognition practices.

4.2.1.7 Adequate Resources for Effective Teaching

Lastly, when asked if adequate resources for effective teaching are provided, 17 teachers (29.3%) strongly agreed, 32 (55.2%) agreed, while only 6 (10.3%) disagreed. This response suggests a generally positive view of resource availability, critical for facilitating effective teaching and learning. The provision of adequate resources aligns with findings from Davis (2019), which indicate that resource availability directly impacts teachers' instructional capabilities and student learning outcomes. However, the small percentage of disagreement may indicate specific areas for resource enhancement.

4.2.2 Responses from Pupils'

The second part of the first specific research objective aimed to identify the specific school management practices that influence pupils' academic performance in

primary schools within Dodoma City Council from pupils' perspective. Table 4.2 summarizes the responses from pupils regarding various aspects of school management practices.

Table 4.2: Pupils' Responses on School Management Practices

Question Statement	SA	A	N	D	Total
The school management regularly visits our classes to check on our learning.	36	13	1	2	51
The school management talks to us about our academic goals.	41	9	1	0	51
The school management organizes activities that help us learn better.	42	6	3	0	51
The school management provides us with the materials we need for learning.	38	11	2	0	51
The school management encourages us to participate in class.	41	10	0	0	51
The school management asks for our opinions about the school.	37	13	1	0	51
The school management helps us when we have problems at school.	41	9	1	0	51

4.2.2.1 Classroom Visits by Management

The responses indicate that 36 pupils (70.6%) strongly agreed and 13 (25.5%) agreed that school management regularly visits their classes to check on their learning, with only 3 pupils (3.9%) expressing disagreement. This high percentage reflects a strong commitment from the school management to actively engage in monitoring the learning environment, which is vital for student success. According to Hattie (2017), regular classroom observations by school leaders can enhance educational outcomes by fostering a culture of accountability and support among teachers.

4.2.2.2 Discussion of Academic Goals

Regarding discussions about academic goals, 41 pupils (80.4%) strongly agreed that school management talks to them about their academic aspirations, while 9 (17.6%) agreed. This indicates a strong emphasis on setting educational objectives, fostering a sense of purpose and motivation among students. Research by Schunk &

Zimmerman (2012) highlights the significance of goal-setting discussions in enhancing student engagement and academic performance, supporting the positive feedback from the pupils.

4.2.2.3 Organized Learning Activities

The findings show that 42 pupils (82.4%) strongly agreed and 6 (11.8%) agreed that school management organizes activities that help them learn better, with only 3 (5.9%) neutral. This overwhelming support signifies the effective implementation of engaging learning activities, which can enhance understanding and retention of material. Freeman et al. (2014) emphasize that well-structured extracurricular activities are instrumental in improving academic performance by promoting active learning and critical thinking skills.

4.2.2.4 Provision of Learning Materials

When asked about the provision of learning materials, 38 pupils (74.5%) strongly agreed, and 11 (21.6%) agreed, with only 2 (3.9%) expressing neutrality. This reflects a positive perception of resource availability, essential for effective learning. The availability of adequate learning materials aligns with findings from Davis (2019), who states that access to resources is crucial for facilitating an effective learning environment and improving educational outcomes.

4.2.2.5 Encouragement for Participation

In terms of encouragement to participate in class, 41 pupils (80.4%) strongly agreed, and 10 (19.6%) agreed, with no disagreements. This suggests that the school management actively promotes a participatory learning atmosphere, which can boost

student confidence and engagement. Kagan (1994) highlights that fostering a culture of participation enhances collaboration among students and promotes a positive learning experience.

4.2.2.6 Solicitation of Student Opinions

The findings indicate that 37 pupils (72.5%) strongly agreed and 13 (25.5%) agreed that school management asks for their opinions about the school, with only 1 (2.0%) remaining neutral. This shows that the school management values student input, which can contribute to a more responsive and inclusive educational environment. Rudduck & Flutter (2004) stress the importance of student voice in shaping school policies and practices, suggesting that involving pupils in decision-making fosters a sense of ownership and belonging.

4.2.2.7 Support Measures for Struggling Students

Lastly, when asked if school management helps them when they have problems, 41 pupils (80.4%) strongly agreed and 9 (17.6%) agreed, with only 1 (2.0%) remaining neutral. This demonstrates a strong support system in place for addressing student issues, which is critical for maintaining a positive school climate. According to Weissberg *et al* (2015), effective support structures are essential for promoting pupils' emotional and social well-being, contributing to overall academic success.

During the interviews, also, the insights from Ward Education Officers also highlighted the significance of support measures for struggling pupils. Ward Education Officer A raised concerns about the support systems in place, stating,

“We create learning communities and study clubs to support struggling students.” (Ward Education Officer A)

This implies that creating learning communities provides essential support for those facing academic challenges, aligning with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of social learning. Furthermore, this collaborative learning environment is crucial for enhancing student performance.

Ward Education Officer B emphasized the importance of incentives for improving student performance, saying that,

“We increase incentives for teachers and students to encourage them to strive harder.” (Ward Education Officer B)

This indicates that motivation plays a critical role in engaging both teachers and students. Research by Ryan and Deci (2000) reinforces this point, emphasizing that motivation is fundamental to achieving educational success.

Moreover, Ward Education Officer C discussed community collaboration to reduce truancy, stating that,

“We can reduce absenteeism by collaborating with parents and the community.” (Ward Education Officer C)

This implies that involving parents and community members is essential for creating a supportive educational environment. This aligns with Epstein's (2018) research on the impact of family and community engagement in student success.

In addition, Ward Education Officer D focused on the need for improved infrastructure, saying that,

“We need to improve school infrastructure so that students can learn better.” (Ward Education Officer D)

This indicates that the physical conditions of schools significantly impact learning outcomes. Barrett *et al* (2013) supports this observation, highlighting the link between school facilities and student performance.

Lastly, Ward Education Officer E emphasized the importance of community engagement in academic initiatives, affirming that,

“Collaboration with the community is important in supporting school projects.” (Ward Education Officer E)

This suggests that partnerships between schools and communities enhance educational resources and support for students. This aligns with Henderson and Mapp's (2002) findings, which argue that effective school-community partnerships can significantly improve student outcomes.

Combating Truancy to Improve Academic Performance

In addition, District Education Officer C focused on district-led initiatives to address truancy, stating, “Our strategy is to monitor and reduce school absenteeism through various community and school-level interventions.” The officer highlighted the need for both monitoring and preventive measures, such as working closely with families and community leaders to address the root causes of absenteeism.

Addressing truancy is a critical factor in improving academic performance, as students who frequently miss school tend to fall behind in their studies. According to research by Bowers and Latz (2014), effective truancy prevention strategies are essential for academic success, as regular attendance is a key predictor of a student's overall performance. Schools that implement active measures to combat truancy such as engaging with parents, providing counselling, or offering incentives for regular attendance tend to see significant improvements in student achievement.

Additionally, during interview with District Education Officer E emphasized the importance of psychological support in schools, explaining that,

“We are directing education officers to provide counselling services to students who may be struggling with emotional or mental health issues.” (District Education Officer E)

This statement underscores the recognition that students' mental well-being is critical to their academic success. The provision of psychological support helps students cope with stress, anxiety, or other emotional challenges that may hinder their academic progress. Research by Pianta et al. (2007) supports this view, highlighting that social-emotional support is crucial for creating a healthy learning environment. Schools that offer counselling services or provide access to trained counsellors enable students to better manage their personal challenges, which can lead to improved concentration, higher engagement in schoolwork, and better academic outcomes overall.

4.3 Pupils' Perceptions of the Influence of School Management Practices on Academic Performance

The second specific research objective aimed to assess pupils' perceptions regarding the influence of school management practices on their academic performance. Table 4.3 summarizes pupils' perceptions of school management.

Table 2.3: Pupils' Perceptions of School Management Practices

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
The school management cares about our academic success	21	34	2	1	0	58
I feel motivated by the recognition received from school management	22	33	2	1	1	58
The resources provided by the school management help us perform better academically	18	34	5	1	1	58
The feedback from teachers, influenced the school management, is helpful to us	17	28	5	5	3	58
The school management's involvement in our education positively impacts our academic performance.	16	27	5	5	5	58
The school management listens to our concerns and addresses us effectively	19	33	3	2	1	58
The overall school environment, shaped by the management, supports our academic success.	21	34	2	2	1	58

4.3.1 Care for Academic Success

When asked if pupils believe that the school management cares about their academic success, 21 pupils (36.2%) strongly agreed, and 34 (58.6%) agreed, resulting in a total of 94.8% of respondents affirming this perception. This finding is consistent with the research by Eccles and Roeser (2011), who state that when school management demonstrates genuine concern for student achievement, it significantly enhances pupils' motivation and engagement in learning.

4.3.2 Motivation through Recognition

On whether pupils feel motivated by the recognition they receive from school management, 22 pupils (37.9%) strongly agreed, and 33 (56.9%) agreed. This strong consensus (94.8% positive responses) aligns with Skinner (1953), who affirms that positive reinforcement can significantly boost students' self-esteem and motivation, suggesting that recognition from school management plays a crucial role in fostering a motivating educational environment.

4.3.3 Impact of Resources on Academic Performance

Regarding pupils' perception of the resources provided by school management aiding their academic performance, 18 pupils (31.0%) strongly agreed, and 34 (58.6%) agreed. This indicates that a majority of teachers believe pupils see the value of resources in enhancing their learning experience. This finding is consistent with Baker et al. (2006), who highlight that access to adequate resources is a critical factor influencing student performance.

4.3.4 Usefulness of Feedback

Teachers were asked if pupils think that feedback from teachers, influenced by school management, is helpful. Here, 17 pupils (29.3%) strongly agreed, 28 (48.3%) agreed, while 5 (8.6%) remained neutral, and 5 (8.6%) disagreed. This suggests a positive but somewhat mixed perception of the effectiveness of feedback, aligning with the findings of Hattie and Timperley (2007), who emphasize that effective feedback is vital for learning and development, indicating potential areas for improvement in communication strategies.

4.3.5 Positive Impact of Management Involvement

Regarding whether pupils believe the school management's involvement in their education positively impacts their academic performance, 16 pupils (27.6%) strongly agreed, and 27 (46.6%) agreed. While there is a majority who see the positive impact of management involvement, the presence of neutral and negative responses (10.3% disagreeing) highlights a need for enhanced communication and transparency in how management supports educational processes. This is in line with the findings of

Leithwood *et al* (2004), who state that effective school leadership positively influences students' academic outcomes.

4.3.6 Addressing Concerns

When discussing whether pupils feel that school management listens to their concerns and addresses them effectively, 19 pupils (32.8%) strongly agreed, and 33 (56.9%) agreed. This indicates a generally positive perception of management's responsiveness to student concerns, which aligns with the research by Cohen *et al* (2009), who affirm that effective communication and responsiveness are essential for fostering a supportive school climate.

4.3.7 Supportive School Environment

Finally, regarding pupils' perception of the overall school environment, shaped by management, supporting their academic success, 21 pupils (36.2%) strongly agreed, and 34 (58.6%) agreed. This demonstrates a strong belief in the role of management in creating an environment conducive to academic success, consistent with Ferguson (2016), who highlights that an encouraging school environment is vital for promoting student achievement.

4.4 Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools

4.4.1 Teachers' Perspective

The first part of the third specific research objective aimed to investigate the academic performance of pupils in primary schools within Dodoma City Council from teachers' perspectives. Table 4.4 summarizes teachers' responses regarding various aspects of pupils' academic performance.

Table 4.4: Teachers Responses on Pupils' Academic Performance

Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
Pupils in my class generally perform well in their academic subjects	10	39	2	5	1	58
The majority of pupils meet the expected academic standards	12	37	3	5	1	58
Pupils show consistent improvement in their academic performance over time	11	38	2	6	1	58
Pupils in my class have good study habits and attitudes towards learning	15	39	2	2	0	58
There is a noticeable difference in academic performance between high and low achievers	13	37	4	3	1	58
Pupils receive adequate support to improve their academic performance	15	40	1	1	1	58
The academic performance of pupils is regularly monitored and assessed	20	34	2	2	0	58

4.4.1.1 General Performance of Pupils

In response to the statement that pupils in their class generally perform well in academic subjects, 10 teachers (17.2%) strongly agreed, and 39 (67.2%) agreed, with only 8 teachers expressing disagreement. This indicates a positive perception of pupils overall academic performance, suggesting that most teachers believe their pupils are succeeding in their studies. This finding is consistent with research by Hattie (2012), which emphasizes that teacher perceptions of student performance significantly correlate with actual academic outcomes.

4.4.1.2 Meeting Academic Standards

Regarding the statement that the majority of pupils meet expected academic standards, 12 teachers (20.7%) strongly agreed, and 37 (63.8%) agreed. The data shows a limited number of teachers (6.9%) who disagreed, highlighting confidence in students meeting academic benchmarks. This aligns with the findings of Baker *et al* (2014), which suggest that when teachers perceive students as meeting standards,

it can lead to a more supportive learning environment, positively impacting students' academic achievements.

4.4.1.3 Improvement over Time

When assessing pupils' consistent improvement in academic performance over time, 11 teachers (19.0%) strongly agreed, and 38 (65.5%) agreed, with a minimal number (7.0%) expressing neutrality or disagreement. This indicates a favourable view of student progress and suggests that the teaching strategies implemented are effective in promoting academic growth. According to Marzano (2009), continuous improvement is often a result of effective instructional practices and support from the school management, which is supported by the current findings.

4.4.1.4 Study Habits and Attitudes

In relation to the statement that pupils have good study habits and attitudes towards learning, 15 teachers (25.9%) strongly agreed, and 39 (67.2%) agreed. The absence of any strong disagreement suggests that teachers recognize positive study behaviours among their students. Dweck (2006) emphasizes the impact of positive attitudes towards learning on student performance, supporting the notion that effective classroom management can foster favourable study habits.

4.4.1.5 Difference in Performance Levels

When asked if there is a noticeable difference in academic performance between high and low achievers, 13 teachers (22.4%) strongly agreed, and 37 (63.8%) agreed, with only 4 (6.9%) expressing neutrality. This reveals an acknowledgment of varying levels of academic performance among students, which is critical for tailoring

educational approaches. Tomlinson (2001) discusses the importance of differentiated instruction to address diverse learning needs, reflecting the teachers' awareness of performance disparities.

4.4.1.6 Adequate Support for Improvement of student performance.

On the question of whether pupils receive adequate support to improve their academic performance, 15 teachers (25.9%) strongly agreed, and 40 (69.0%) agreed. The low number of neutral and disagreeing responses indicates confidence in the support systems in place. This finding supports research by Tharp and Gallimore (1988), which highlights the importance of supportive learning environments in enhancing student performance.

During the interviews, district education officers highlighted various initiatives aimed at improving academic performance in schools by emphasizing the importance of parental involvement in supporting school activities, asserting that,

“We are encouraging parents to contribute to school feeding programs to ensure students are well-fed and able to concentrate on their studies.” (District Education Officer B)

This statement underscores the vital role that parents play in providing essential resources such as food, which directly impacts students' ability to focus and perform academically. By actively engaging parents in such programs, schools can address some of the basic needs of students, creating a more conducive learning environment. This perspective aligns with the research of Henderson and Mapp (2002), who found that parental engagement in school activities is closely linked to improved student performance. According to Henderson and Mapp (2002), when parents are involved in their children's education, students are more likely to attend

school regularly, participate actively in class, and achieve better academic outcomes. In this context, involving parents in initiatives like school feeding programs not only enhances student welfare but also fosters a sense of community ownership in the success of the school.

4.4.1.7 Monitoring and Assessment

Finally, regarding the statement that the academic performance of pupils is regularly monitored and assessed, 20 teachers (34.5%) strongly agreed, and 34 (58.6%) agreed, with no teachers disagreeing. This reflects a systematic approach to assessment and monitoring within the classroom, essential for tracking academic progress. According to Black and Wiliam (1998), formative assessment is crucial for improving student outcomes, aligning with the findings that emphasize the importance of regular monitoring.

4.4.2 Pupils' Perspective

The second part of the third specific research objective aimed to investigate the academic performance of pupils in primary schools within Dodoma City Council from pupils' perspectives. Table 4.5 summarizes pupils' responses regarding their self-perception of academic performance.

Table 4.5: Pupils' Self-Assessment of Academic Performance

Question Statement	SA	A	N	SD	Total
I generally perform well in my academic subjects.	35	14	2	0	51
I meet the expected academic standards.	28	21	2	0	51
I show consistent improvement in my academic performance over time.	31	18	2	0	51
I have good study habits and attitudes towards learning.	32	17	2	0	51
There is a noticeable difference in academic performance between students in my class.	20	28	1	2	51
I receive adequate support from my teachers to improve my academic performance.	40	9	2	0	51
My academic performance is regularly monitored and assessed by my teachers.	39	10	2	0	51

4.4.2.1 General Performance in Academic Subjects

When asked whether they generally perform well in their academic subjects, 35 pupils (68.6%) strongly agreed, and 14 (27.5%) agreed, resulting in an overwhelming majority (96.1%) expressing confidence in their academic abilities. This reflects a strong sense of self-efficacy among pupils, which has been linked to enhanced academic performance (Bandura, 1997). The absence of disagreement indicates that students perceive their performance positively.

4.4.2.2 Meeting Expected Academic Standards

In response to the statement regarding meeting expected academic standards, 28 pupils (54.9%) strongly agreed, and 21 (41.2%) agreed. This shows that most students believe they meet the benchmarks set for their academic performance. Such confidence is essential, as research indicates that self-assessment can significantly influence motivation and engagement in the classroom (Zimmerman, 2002).

4.4.2.3 Consistent Improvement

Regarding whether they show consistent improvement in their academic performance over time, 31 pupils (60.8%) strongly agreed, and 18 (35.3%) agreed. This suggests

that students recognize their growth and development in their studies. According to Hattie (2012), recognizing one's progress is crucial for maintaining motivation and setting future academic goals.

4.4.2.4 Study Habits and Attitudes towards Learning

On the statement about having good study habits and attitudes towards learning, 32 pupils (62.7%) strongly agreed, and 17 (33.3%) agreed. This indicates that students perceive themselves as possessing the necessary skills and attitudes to succeed academically. Research by Dweck (2006) emphasizes the impact of a growth mindset on learning outcomes, reinforcing the importance of self-assessment in fostering positive study habits.

4.4.2.5 Perceptions of Performance Differences

When asked if there is a noticeable difference in academic performance between students in their class, 20 pupils (39.2%) strongly agreed, and 28 (54.9%) agreed. Only 1 pupil remained neutral, and 2 disagreed. This highlights the students' awareness of varying academic abilities within their class, which aligns with Tomlinson's (2001) discussion on differentiation in the classroom. Recognizing these differences can encourage collaborative learning and peer support.

4.4.2.6 Adequate Support from Teachers

In response to whether they receive adequate support from teachers to improve academic performance, 40 pupils (78.4%) strongly agreed, and 9 (17.6%) agreed. This overwhelmingly positive perception of support indicates that students feel their teachers are providing the necessary guidance for their academic success. According

to Tharp & Gallimore (1988), supportive teacher-student relationships are fundamental to enhancing student learning outcomes.

4.4.2.7 Monitoring and Assessment of Academic Performance

Finally, regarding the regular monitoring and assessment of their academic performance by teachers, 39 pupils (76.5%) strongly agreed, and 10 (19.6%) agreed. This reflects students' awareness of assessment practices in place and their perception of being evaluated consistently. Black & Wiliam (1998) emphasize the significance of formative assessment in promoting learning, indicating that pupils' understanding of assessment can positively influence their academic performance.

Further, during the interviews, the combined insights from headteachers and ward education officers stressed the importance of monitoring and evaluating academic progress. Head of school A highlighted the need for monitoring teacher engagement, affirming that,

“I use a teacher attendance register in the classroom.” (Head of school K)

This emphasizes that tracking attendance is crucial for effective educational outcomes, supported by Grissom et al. (2015), who underscore the significance of systematic attendance tracking as a key indicator of teacher engagement.

Head of school B mentioned the use of formative assessments to track student progress, saying that,

“We track by conducting assessments of their academic development.” (Head of school X)

This indicates that ongoing assessments are vital for understanding student learning trajectories. This perspective aligns with Black and Wiliam's (1998) emphasis on formative assessments in promoting learning. (Interview with Head of school F)

Moreover, Head of school C discussed the implementation of trial exams, affirming that,

“We conduct tests every week on Monday.” (Head of school M)

This reveals that regular testing provides insights into academic progress and helps identify areas needing improvement. This approach resonates with Stiggins (2005), who highlights the importance of assessments in guiding instructional practices.

In addition, Ward Education Officer A emphasized the use of reports to monitor progress, affirming that,

“I use various examination reports to track pupils’ progress.” (Ward Education Officer Y)

This suggests that standardized testing plays a critical role in evaluating student performance, a perspective supported by Carnoy and Loeb (2002), who argue that data-driven decision-making enhances educational effectiveness.

Lastly, Ward Education Officer B stressed the need for internal inspections, saying that,

“We conduct internal inspections to identify challenges facing pupils.” (Ward Education Officer H)

This statement indicates that systematic evaluations are essential for recognizing and addressing obstacles within the educational environment. By implementing regular internal inspections, education officials can gain insights into the specific challenges students encounter, whether they relate to curriculum delivery, resource availability, or teacher support. This proactive approach enables timely interventions and targeted strategies to enhance educational quality. The importance of such evaluations aligns with the findings of Dwyer and Murnane (2011), who emphasize that regular

assessments are vital for improving student outcomes. This underscores the critical role of ongoing evaluations in fostering a more effective and supportive learning atmosphere.

During the interviews, the insights from district education officers further illustrated the importance of district-level programs and initiatives in enhancing academic performance. District Education Officer A expressed concerns regarding the necessity of regular assessments, asserting that,

“We conduct frequent examinations at the district level.”
(District Education Officer X)

This statement highlights that ongoing evaluations are essential for identifying schools that require additional support. Regular assessments enable education officials to monitor student performance and identify trends, strengths, and weaknesses across different schools. By systematically evaluating student outcomes, the district can pinpoint specific areas where intervention is needed, ensuring that resources are allocated effectively. This approach aligns with Sanders and Harvey (2002), who emphasize the significance of district-level initiatives in promoting school improvement. The findings underscore the critical role that continuous assessments play in enhancing educational quality and fostering a supportive learning environment for both teachers and pupils.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study that investigated the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council.

5.2 Summary of the Study

The study reported in this dissertation examined the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council. The study was guided by three objectives: (1) to determine the kinds of management practices that influence pupils' academic performance; (2) to find out pupils' academic performance in primary schools; and (3) to assess pupils' perceptions about the influence of school management practices on their academic performance. The research employed a mixed-methods approach. It utilized a convergent parallel mixed methods design to gather information about the experiences and perceptions of various stakeholders regarding school management practices and their impact on academic performance. The investigation was guided by the Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasizes the importance of effective management practices in fostering educational outcomes. The sample size of the study included 129 participants, consisting of teachers, pupils, headteachers, ward education officers, and district education officers.

The respondents were chosen using purposive sampling for the selection of headteachers, ward education officers, and district education officers, whereas

random sampling was used for the selection of teachers and students. The study employed interviews, questionnaires, observation, and documentary reviews for data collection. In addition, qualitative data were subjected to thematic or content analysis to identify key themes and patterns related to the impact of school management practices on pupils' academic performance.

5.3 Major Findings of the Study

5.3.1 Management Practices Influencing Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools

The first objective aimed to determine the kinds of management practices that influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council. The findings have revealed that effective leadership, resource allocation, and community involvement significantly impact academic outcomes. The findings indicated that schools with strong leadership practices, such as participative decision-making and regular performance feedback, saw higher levels of student engagement and achievement. Additionally, adequate resource allocation, including learning materials and infrastructure, was found to enhance the teaching and learning environment.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that transformational leadership practices are vital in shaping an effective educational environment. Headteachers who adopted a collaborative leadership style, involving teachers in decision-making processes, fostered a sense of ownership among staff. This participatory approach was linked to higher morale among teachers, which translated into improved teaching quality and

positively impacted student performance. Teachers noted that when their opinions were considered, they felt more motivated to contribute to their students' success.

Moreover, the effective management of resources emerged as a critical factor. Schools that prioritized resource allocation such as textbooks, learning materials, and technology were able to provide a more conducive learning environment. Interviews with headteachers revealed that schools with sufficient resources had better classroom experiences, enabling teachers to deliver quality instruction and engage students more effectively. Ward education officers corroborated this finding by indicating that schools with well-managed resources generally had improved academic outcomes.

Additionally, the involvement of the community in school management practices played a significant role in shaping academic outcomes. Headteachers and ward education officers highlighted that schools with active parent-teacher associations (PTAs) and community engagement initiatives witnessed higher student participation and performance. Teachers echoed this sentiment, noting that community support often led to additional resources and moral support for students. This community-centric approach was especially effective in schools located in areas where parental involvement was traditionally low, demonstrating the transformative potential of inclusive management practices.

5.3.2 Pupils' Perceptions of the Influence of School Management Practices on Academic Performance.

The second objective examined pupils' perceptions of the influence of school management practices on their academic performance. Findings indicated that pupils

perceived a direct connection between management practices and their academic outcomes. Many pupils reported feeling motivated when school leaders actively recognized their achievements and provided constructive feedback. Interviews revealed that students appreciated management practices that prioritized their voices in school decisions, such as setting academic goals and creating classroom norms. Teachers echoed these sentiments, stating that when management practices were transparent and involved student input, it fostered a sense of agency among pupils.

Furthermore, the findings indicated that pupils valued a supportive and engaging learning environment fostered by effective management. Students expressed that when teachers received adequate support from the administration, it led to more engaging lessons and a greater focus on individual learning needs. Headteachers confirmed that providing professional development for teachers was a priority, as it directly impacted student engagement and performance.

Lastly, pupils highlighted the role of management in creating a positive school culture, which they believed significantly impacted their academic performance. Many students noted that schools that emphasized discipline, respect, and collaborative learning environments were more likely to produce positive academic outcomes. District education officers supported this observation, noting that schools with strong management frameworks often exhibited fewer disciplinary issues and a more focused academic environment.

5.3.3 Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools

The third specific objective explored pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council. Findings have revealed that there is significant variation in pupils' performance across schools, often correlating with the management practices in place.

Schools characterized by supportive management practices demonstrated higher student grades and lower dropout rates, highlighting the critical role of effective management in fostering academic success. Furthermore, discrepancies in performance were noted between schools that implemented structured management practices versus those with less organized approaches.

Specifically, quantitative data showed that schools with effective management recorded average exam scores that were consistently above the district average. Teachers confirmed that they observed improved student performance in classrooms where management practices were strong and supportive.

Moreover, qualitative insights from interviews with teachers and ward education officers indicated that a supportive management environment encourages teachers to innovate and adapt their teaching strategies. Teachers expressed that when they felt supported by their school leaders, they were more likely to implement new teaching methods and engage pupils in active learning, which in turn positively influenced academic performance. This finding highlights the necessity of fostering a supportive leadership framework within schools to boost academic success.

Additionally, pupils' feedback emphasized the importance of emotional and psychological support provided by school management. Many students noted that

having access to guidance counsellors and a safe learning environment contributed to their ability to focus on studies and excel academically. Ward education officers reinforced this view, stressing that schools with comprehensive support systems for students reported better academic results and a decrease in behavioural issues.

5.4 Conclusions

The study in this dissertation examined the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council. The following conclusion are made based on the findings of this study; First, effective management practices, including clear communication, supportive leadership, and the involvement of various stakeholders, play a crucial role in enhancing pupils' academic outcomes.

The perspectives of teachers, headteachers, ward education officers, and district education officers consistently highlighted the importance of collaborative management approaches in fostering an environment conducive to learning. Additionally, pupils expressed that their academic motivation and engagement were closely tied to how management practices were implemented. Overall, the study underscores the critical link between school management practices and academic performance, suggesting that enhancing these practices could lead to improved educational outcomes for pupils.

5.5 Recommendations of the Study

5.5.1 Recommendations for Action

The study recommends that schools improve communication and collaboration between management, teachers, and pupils. Regular meetings and feedback

mechanisms, such as suggestion boxes or surveys, can help school leaders understand challenges and make better decisions to support teaching and learning.

It is also recommended that schools provide ongoing professional development for teachers. Training in modern teaching methods, classroom management, and teamwork can help teachers address challenges and improve pupils' academic performance. Workshops, peer coaching, and mentorship programs can be effective ways to build these skills.

Creating a positive school culture is important for learning. Schools should encourage respect, discipline, and student participation through clubs, competitions, and mentorship programs. Recognizing and rewarding students' achievements can motivate pupils and promote a culture of excellence.

From a policy perspective, education authorities should strengthen school management support through leadership training, monitoring, and fair resource allocation. Including management performance in national assessments can guide policy and improve school outcomes.

5.5.2 Recommendations for Further Research

Future research should explore the role of parental and community involvement in pupils' academic performance. Studies could also examine which management strategies work best in schools with diverse pupil populations and how policies influence management practices and learning outcomes.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: SREUCTURED QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Dear respondent

I am **Rehema Mustafa** pursuing a Masters of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies at the Open University of Tanzania. I kindly request you to fill-in this questionnaire which is part of my master's research. Please be ensured that the data you provide was used only for purposes of this study and was treated confidential.

Instructions

Please fill-in this structured questionnaire by putting (V) in the blanks and provide the required explanation where necessary.

Tick appropriately in the boxes provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age:

[] 18-25 Years

[] 26-35 Years

[] 36-45 Years

[] 46-55 Years

[] Above 55 Years

2. Gender:

o Male

o Female

- Other

3. Teaching Experience:

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

4. Highest Educational Qualification:

- Certificate
- Diploma
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- PhD

5. Current Position:

- Classroom Teacher
- Head of Department
- Deputy Headteacher
- Headteacher

6. Number of Years at Current School:

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years

- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

SECTION B: CLOSED ENDED QUESTIONS**Objective 1: The Kinds of Management Practices Influencing Pupils' Academic Performance**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding management practices at your school:

1. The school management regularly observes classroom teaching and provide feedback.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
2. There are effective communication channels between teachers and school management.
 - Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Neutral
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
3. The school management involves teachers in decision-making processes.
 - Strongly Disagree

o Disagree

o Neutral

o Agree

o Strongly Agree

4. Professional development opportunities are regularly provided by the school management.

o Strongly Disagree

o Disagree

o Neutral

o Agree

o Strongly Agree

5. The school management sets clear expectations and goals for academic performance.

o Strongly Disagree

o Disagree

o Neutral

o Agree

o Strongly Agree

6. The school management recognizes and rewards teachers' achievements.

o Strongly Disagree

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

7. The school management provides adequate resources for effective teaching.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Objective 2: Pupils' academic performance in primary schools

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding pupils' academic performance:

8. Pupils in my class generally perform well in their academic subjects.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

9. The majority of pupils meet the expected academic standards.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

10. Pupils show consistent improvement in their academic performance over time.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

11. Pupils in my class have good study habits and attitudes towards learning.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

12. There is a noticeable difference in academic performance between high and low achievers.

- Strongly Disagree

o Disagree

o Neutral

o Agree

o Strongly Agree

13. Pupils receive adequate support to improve their academic performance.

o Strongly Disagree

o Disagree

o Neutral

o Agree

o Strongly Agree

14. The academic performance of pupils is regularly monitored and assessed.

o Strongly Disagree

o Disagree

o Neutral

o Agree

o Strongly Agree

Objective 3: pupils' perceptions on school management practices on their academic performance.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding pupils' perceptions of school management practices:

15. Pupils believe that the school management cares about their academic success.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

16. Pupils feel motivated by the recognition they receive from the school management.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

17. Pupils perceive that the resources provided by the school management help them perform better academically.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree

- Strongly Agree

18. Pupils think that the feedback from teachers, influenced by the school management, is helpful.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

19. Pupils believe that the school management's involvement in their education positively impacts their academic performance.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

20. Pupils feel that the school management listens to their concerns and addresses them effectively.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral

○ Agree

○ Strongly Agree

21. Pupils perceive that the overall school environment, shaped by the management, supports their academic success.

○ Strongly Disagree

○ Disagree

○ Neutral

○ Agree

○ Strongly Agree

APPENDIX II: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPILS

Dear respondents

I am Rehema Mustafa pursuing a Masters of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies. I ask you to provide me with data to accomplish my study. I ensure that the given data was confidential amid me and you. Do not write your name anywhere.

Instructions

Kindly answer all questions freely and honestly by putting (V) in blanks and give the required explanation where necessary.

Tick appropriately in the boxes provided.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age:

7-9 Years

10-12 Years

13-15 Years

Above 16 Years

2. Gender:

Male

Female

Other

3. Grade Level:

Standard 1

- Standard 2
- Standard 3
- Standard 4
- Standard 5
- Standard 6
- Standard 7

4. Number of Years at Current School:

- Less than 1 year
- 1-3 years
- 4-6 years
- More than 6 years

5. Average Academic Performance:

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Average
- Below Average

SECTION B: CLOSED ENDED QUESTIONS

Objective 1: To determine the kinds of management practices that influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding school management practices:

1. The school management regularly visits our classes to check on our learning.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

2. The school management talks to us about our academic goals.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

3. The school management organizes activities that help us learn better.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

4. The school management provides us with the materials we need for learning.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

5. The school management encourages us to participate in class.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

6. The school management asks for our opinions about the school.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

7. The school management helps us when we have problems at school.

- Strongly Disagree

- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Objective 2: To find out pupils' academic performance

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about your academic performance:

8. I generally perform well in my academic subjects.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

9. I meet the expected academic standards.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

10. I show consistent improvement in my academic performance over time.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

11. I have good study habits and attitudes towards learning.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

12. There is a noticeable difference in academic performance between students in my class.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

13. I receive adequate support from my teachers to improve my academic performance.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

14. My academic performance is regularly monitored and assessed by my teachers.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Objective 3: To assess pupils' perceptions about the influence of school management practices on their academic performance.

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements regarding your perceptions of school management practices:

15. I believe that the school management cares about my academic success.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral

- Agree
- Strongly Agree

16. I feel motivated by the recognition I receive from the school management.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

17. The resources provided by the school management help me perform better academically.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

18. The feedback from my teachers, influenced by the school management, is helpful.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral

- Agree
- Strongly Agree

19. The school management's involvement in my education positively impacts my academic performance.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

20. I feel that the school management listens to my concerns and addresses them effectively.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

21. The overall school environment, shaped by the management, supports my academic success.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree

- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

APPENDIX III: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD TEACHERS**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

1. Age:

[] 18-25 Years

[] 26-35 Years

[] 36-45 Years

[] 46-55 Years

[] Above 55 Years

2. Gender:

- Male
- Female
- Other

3. Number of Years as Head Teacher:

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

4. Highest Educational Qualification:

- Certificate
- Diploma
- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree

- PhD

5. Number of Years at Current School:

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

SECTION B: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Objective 1: Management Practices That Influence Pupils' Academic Performance

1. Can you describe the management practices you implement that you believe have a positive impact on pupils' academic performance?
2. How do you involve teachers in decision-making processes related to academic performance?
3. What strategies do you use to monitor and evaluate teachers' performance and its impact on students' academic success?

Objective 2: Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools Performance

Records:

1. How would you describe the general academic performance of pupils in your school?
2. What measures are in place to support pupils who are struggling academically?
3. How do you track and analyse pupils' academic performance over time?

Objective 3: Pupils' Perceptions about the Influence of School Management Practices on Their Academic Performance.

1. How do you think pupils perceive the efforts made by the school management to enhance their academic performance?
2. What feedback have you received from pupils regarding the support and resources provided by the school management?
3. In what ways do you think the school management's involvement in academic activities impacts pupils' attitudes towards learning?

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR WARD EDUCATION OFFICERS**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

1. Age:

[] 18-25 Years

[] 26-35 Years

[] 36-45 Years

[] 46-55 Years

[] Above 55 Years

2. Gender:

- o Male
- o Female
- o Other

3. Number of Years as Ward Education Officer:

- o Less than 1 year
- o 1-5 years
- o 6-10 years
- o More than 10 years

4. Highest Educational Qualification:

- o Certificate
- o Diploma
- o Bachelor's Degree
- o Master's Degree

- Other: _____

5. Number of Years in Current Ward:

- Less than 1 year
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- More than 10 years

SECTION B: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Objective 1: Management Practices That Influence Pupils' Academic Performance

1. What are the key management practices you observe in schools that positively impact pupils' academic performance?
2. How do you support head teachers and teachers in implementing effective management practices?
3. What are some challenges you face in promoting management practices that enhance academic performance?

Objective 2: Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools Performance

Records:

1. How would you assess the overall academic performance of pupils in your ward?
2. What initiatives have been taken at the ward level to improve pupils' academic performance?
3. How do you monitor and evaluate the academic progress of pupils across different schools in your ward?

Objective 3: Pupils' Perceptions about the Influence of School Management Practices on Their Academic Performance.

1. How do you gather feedback from pupils regarding the effectiveness of school management practices?
2. What are the common perceptions among pupils about the support they receive from school management?
3. How do you address any negative perceptions or feedback from pupils about school management practices?

APPENDIX V: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR DISTRICT EDUCATION OFFICERS

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Age:

[] 26-35 Years

[] 36-45 Years

[] 46-55 Years

[] Above 55 Years

2. Gender:

- o Male
- o Female
- o Other

3. Number of Years as District Education Officer:

- o Less than 1 year
- o 1-5 years
- o 6-10 years
- o More than 10 years

4. Highest Educational Qualification:

- o Certificate
- o Diploma
- o Bachelor's Degree
- o Master's Degree

- o PhD

5. Number of Years in Current District:

- o Less than 1 year
- o 1-5 years
- o 6-10 years
- o More than 10 years

SECTION B: OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Objective 1: Management Practices That Influence Pupils' Academic Performance

1. What management practices have you found to be most effective in improving academic performance in primary schools?
2. How do you support schools in the implementation of these management practices?
3. What are the main challenges you encounter in ensuring consistent management practices across schools in the district?

Objective 2: Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools Performance

Records:

1. How would you evaluate the academic performance of pupils in primary schools within your district?
2. What district-level programs or initiatives have been implemented to enhance pupils' academic performance?
3. How do you track and report on the academic achievements of pupils across different schools in your district?

Objective 3: Pupils' Perceptions about the Influence of School Management Practices on Their Academic Performance.

1. How do you collect and analyze pupils' feedback regarding school management practices?
2. What are the general perceptions of pupils about the role of school management in their academic success?
3. How do you address and rectify any issues raised by pupils concerning school management practices?

APPENDIX VI: OBSERVATION GUIDE

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. School name put code Number: _____
2. Date of Observation: _____
3. Time of Observation: _____
4. Observer's Name: _____
5. Observer's Role/Position: _____

SECTION B: SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

Objective 1: Management Practices That Influence Pupils' Academic Performance

1. Are there visible signs of school management involvement in classroom activities (e.g., visits, interactions with teachers and students)?
2. How are the classrooms organized and managed (e.g., seating arrangements, availability of learning materials)?
3. Are there any posters or notices in the school that promote academic excellence or provide information about school policies?

Objective 2: Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools Performance Records:

1. What is the general level of pupil engagement and participation in the classroom?
2. How are pupils' academic works displayed within the school (e.g., honour boards, classroom displays, school corridors)?

3. Are there any sessions or activities focused on academic support during the observation period (e.g., tutoring, extra classes)?

Objective 3: Pupils' Perceptions about the Influence of School Management Practices on Their Academic Performance.

1. Do pupils show signs of motivation and positive attitudes towards learning (e.g., active participation, asking questions)?
2. How do pupils react to the presence and involvement of school management during activities or classes?
3. Are there any discussions or interactions where pupils express their views on school management practices?

APPENDIX VII: DOCUMENT REVIEW GUIDE**SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION**

1. School Name: put code number _____
2. Document Title: _____
3. Date of Document: _____
4. Type of Document (e.g., policy, report, meeting minutes): _____
5. Date of Review: _____
6. Reviewer's: _____

SECTION B: SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES**Objective 1: Management Practices That Influence Pupils' Academic Performance****1. Presence of Management Policies:**

- o Does the document include policies or guidelines related to classroom management practices?
- o Are there any documented strategies for teacher evaluations and feedback mechanisms?
- o Are there records of school management's involvement in academic planning and decision-making processes?

2. Implementation Evidence:

- o Are there documented instances of management practices being implemented (e.g., meeting minutes, action plans)?
- o Does the document provide evidence of regular school management visits or inspections?

3. Support and Resources:

- Are there records of resources provided to support teaching and learning (e.g., materials, training programs)?
- Does the document outline any support programs for teachers initiated by the school management?

Objective 2: Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools Performance

Records:

- Are there records of pupils' academic performance over time (e.g., exam results, progress reports)?
- Does the document provide data on overall academic performance trends within the school?

2. Support Measures:

- Are there documented support measures for academically struggling pupils (e.g., remedial classes, counselling)?
- Does the document detail any academic enrichment programs or initiatives?

3. Assessment Practices:

- Are there records of regular assessments and evaluations of pupils' academic performance?
- Does the document provide evidence of feedback mechanisms for pupils' academic improvement?

Objective 3: Pupils' Perceptions about the Influence of School Management Practices on Their Academic Performance.

1. Pupil Feedback:

- Are there records of surveys or feedback forms from pupils regarding school management practices?
- Does the document include any reports or summaries of pupil feedback on academic support and resources?

2. Engagement Records:

- Are there documented instances of pupils' involvement in school management discussions or decision-making processes?
- Does the document provide evidence of initiatives or programs aimed at increasing pupil engagement and motivation?

3. Impact Analysis:

- Are there records of analyses or reports assessing the impact of school management practices on pupils' academic performance?
- Does the document outline any strategies for addressing pupils' concerns or suggestions regarding school management?

APPENDIX IX: RESEARCH PERMIT LETTER

 JAMHURI YA MUUNGANO WA TANZANIA
 OFISI YA RAIS
 TAWALA ZA MIKOZA NA SERIKALI ZA MITAA
 HALMASHAURI YA JIJI LA DODOMA

Unapojibu tafadahili taja:

Kumb. Na. HJD/E.10/4/206 19 Agosti, 2024

Mkuu wa Divisheni,
 DSivisheni ya Elimu ya Awali na Msingi,
 Hamashauri ya Jiji,
 S.L.P 1249,
DODOMA.

YAH: KIBALI CHA UTAFITI/KUKUSANYA TAARIFA

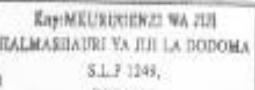
Husika na somo tajwa hapo juu.

2. Namtambulisha kwenu, Ndg. Rehema Mustafa, kutoka Chuo Kikuu Huria cha Tanzania kufanya utafiti katika Halmashauri ya Jiji la Dodoma. Utafiti huo unahusu "Influence of school management practices on pupils academic performance in primary schools in Dodoma City Council" Utafiti huo utafanyika kwa muda wa wiki mbili kuanzia tarehe 19 Agosti, 2024 hadi tarehe 30 Agosti, 2024. Utafiti huo utafanyika shule ya Msingi Kisasa, Kaloleni, Nzuguni B, Veyula na Dodoma Viziwi.

3. Kwa barua hii, naomba apokelewe na kupatiwa ushirikiano ili aweze kufanikisha utafiti wake kama ilivyoolezwa hapo juu.

4. Ahsante.


 Violet G. Mwakatuma
 Kny: MKURUGENZI WA JIJI
DODOMA

	Kny: MKURUGENZI WA JIJI HALMASHAURI YA JIJI LA DODOMA S.L.P 1249, DODOMA
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1 Mtaa wa CDA, S.L.P. 1249, 41183 Dodoma, Simu: +255262354817, Nukushi: +255262321550, Barua Pepe: col@ Dodomaacc.go.tz, Tovuti: www.dodomaacc.go.tz

MANUSCRIPT

The Kinds of School Management Practices That Influence Pupils' Academic Performance in Primary Schools in Dodoma City Council.

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The Open University of Tanzania

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to examine the influence of school management practices on pupils' academic performance in public primary schools within Dodoma City Council. A mixed-methods approach was employed, involving 63 teachers, 51 pupils, 5 headteachers, 5 ward education officers, and 1 district education officer. Data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, observations, and document reviews. Findings revealed that effective management practices such as regular classroom monitoring, clear goal setting, teacher motivation, resource provision, and community engagement positively influenced pupils' academic outcomes. The study concluded that participatory and supportive leadership, along with professional development and consistent communication, are vital for improving performance. It recommended enhancing infrastructure, strengthening supervision and training programs, and increasing stakeholder involvement in school activities to raise academic achievement.

Keywords: School Management Practices, Academic Performance, Primary Education, Leadership.

Introduction

The influence of school management on pupils' academic achievement is a subject of increasing global attention (Murphy, 2018). School management, understood as the authority to coordinate and guide educational operations, plays a vital role in shaping academic outcomes (Lee & Edmondson, 2017). Academic achievement, defined as the degree to which educational objectives are met, is shaped by multiple factors, including school leadership, teacher quality, parental involvement, and broader socio-economic systems (York, 2019; Konold et al., 2018). Effective management is

not confined to school heads alone but is a shared process involving teachers and staff through collaborative leadership practices (Robinson et al., 2020).

Globally, education policies such as the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (Ferrer-Estévez & Chalmeta, 2021) and national reforms from the UK's Department for Education to Malaysia's Education Blueprint emphasize the centrality of strong leadership in improving school performance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Da Wan, 2020). In Sub-Saharan Africa, studies highlight school leadership as a key driver of academic performance, especially in resource-constrained settings (Adeniyi et al., 2024; Senguo & Ilomo, 2020). Tanzanian policies, such as the Education and Training Policy (2014), stress transparent governance and professional development for school leaders to enhance learning outcomes (URT, 2014; 2015; MoEST, 2016).

Despite these efforts, challenges such as overcrowding, poor infrastructure, and weak management persist, limiting progress (World Bank, 2019; Brookings, 2020). This article aims to explore the specific school management practices that influence academic performance in Dodoma City Council's primary schools, while also addressing critical policy and practice gaps in the Tanzanian context.

The Justification of the Study

This study is significant as it explores the ongoing variations in academic performance among primary schools in Dodoma City Council, despite continued government efforts to improve education quality. Many schools still experience challenges related to weak or inconsistent management practices. Investigating the specific types of school management approaches that influence pupils' academic outcomes is crucial for identifying areas that require improvement. Although international and regional research has highlighted the importance of school leadership in enhancing educational performance, there is limited evidence focused on the Tanzanian primary education context. By concentrating on Dodoma City, the study aims to provide localized insights into how factors such as leadership style, teacher support, resource distribution, and community involvement impact learning outcomes. The results of this study will offer practical recommendations to education stakeholders, including policymakers and school administrators, on how to

strengthen school management systems to boost academic achievement and promote effective teaching and learning environments.

Theoretical Literature Review

Transformational Leadership Theory

Transformational Leadership Theory, introduced by Burns (1978) and later expanded by Bass (1985), describes leadership as a dynamic process where leaders inspire followers to reach higher levels of motivation and morality. Bass identified four critical dimensions: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration, emphasizing a leader's role in encouraging innovation, providing personal support, and aligning individual values with organizational goals. The theory assumes that leaders can transform followers by fostering intrinsic motivation, promoting creativity, and communicating a compelling vision that encourages commitment beyond self-interest (Effelsberg, 2014; Chua & Ayoko, 2021). In education, this theory is highly relevant, especially in the context of primary schools in Dodoma City Council, where effective school leadership can significantly enhance pupils' academic outcomes. Transformational leaders create a supportive environment for both teachers and students, encouraging innovative teaching practices and fostering a culture of academic excellence. By addressing individual needs and promoting collaboration, such leaders improve both performance and satisfaction across the school community. The strength of the theory lies in its comprehensive focus on vision, personal growth, and motivation, and it is supported by extensive empirical evidence (Tarker, 2021). Its flexibility across different organizational settings, including education, makes it a valuable framework for improving school leadership practices aimed at raising academic performance.

Emperical studies

2.3.1 Management Practices

Various studies have explored the impact of school management practices on pupils' academic outcomes. Masci, De Witte, and Agasisti (2018) examined how factors

such as school size, principal attributes, and management approaches affected the academic performance of Italian middle school students, finding that while student characteristics were more influential, management practices of principals did affect mathematics achievement. However, this research focused on middle schools in Italy, leaving a gap in knowledge regarding primary education management in Tanzania. In Kenya, Mutungwa and Orodho (2015) investigated resource management challenges in public primary schools and identified issues like insufficient funding and poor resource utilization, which negatively influenced academic results. They recommended involving teachers and learners in decision-making to improve outcomes. Moshi (2016) assessed the influence of teachers' working conditions on pupil performance in rural Tanzania, reporting that inadequate infrastructure, low salaries, and lack of teaching aids led to high teacher turnover and lower student achievement. Meanwhile, Nwune, Okwuduba, and Anidi (2021) found a significant association between parenting styles and pupils' academic success in Nigeria, though their study did not address school management influences. Gitau (2016) highlighted that headteachers' instructional supervision practices, including lesson evaluations and teacher meetings, had a positive impact on pupils' performance in Kenyan primary schools. Ojera (2016) further noted that poor financial management and inconsistent government funding hampered academic progress in Kenyan schools. Collectively, these studies emphasize the critical role of management, leadership, resource allocation, and supervision in academic success, yet localized research on Dodoma City Council's primary schools remains scarce and necessary.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework illustrates that effective School Management Practices directly impact Academic Performance in primary schools. Additionally, Teacher Qualifications and Training, Socio-Economic Status, and Parental Involvement act as potential mediating variables. These variables can influence the strength and direction of the relationship between School Management Practices and Academic Performance. Effective management practices may enhance teacher quality, address

socio-economic barriers, and foster parental involvement, ultimately leading to improved academic outcomes for pupils.

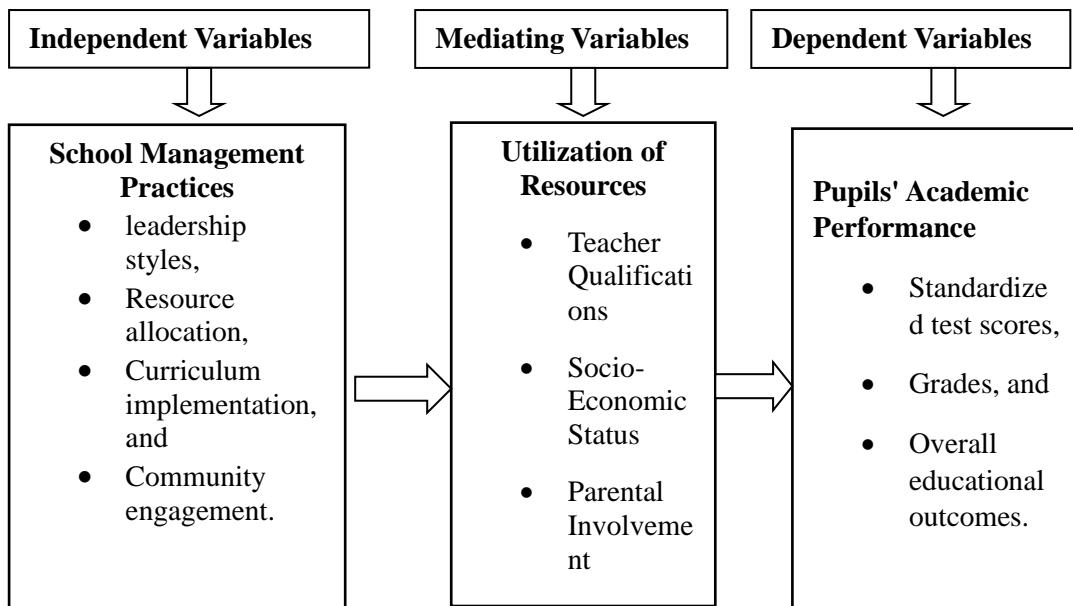


Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researcher's own construct

The Research Methodology

This study adopted a pragmatic research paradigm, which supports using both quantitative and qualitative methods to address real-world problems (Kaushik & Walsh, 2019). Pragmatism emphasizes selecting research methods based on the research questions, allowing for a blend of objective and subjective knowledge (Kelly & Cordeiro, 2020). This approach enables triangulation, improving the validity and reliability of findings (Yardley & Bishop, 2017). It is particularly suitable for educational research like this study, where exploring the influence of school management on pupils' academic performance requires both statistical measurement and in-depth understanding of experiences and perceptions.

The research utilized a mixed-methods approach with a convergent parallel design, collecting quantitative and qualitative data concurrently but analyzing them separately before integrating the results (Demir & Pismek, 2018). Quantitative data were gathered through structured questionnaires administered to teachers and pupils

to measure variables such as management practices and academic outcomes, analyzed statistically with SPSS (Johnson, 2020). Qualitative data were collected via semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders (headteachers, ward and district officers), focus groups, classroom observations, and document reviews to explore participants' perceptions and contextual factors (Hennink, 2020; Opie, 2019). NVIVO software facilitated thematic analysis of qualitative data using a grounded theory approach, enhancing insight into management practices' impact (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This mixed-method design provided a comprehensive analysis by combining numerical data with rich qualitative context (Guetterman & Fetter, 2018).

The study was conducted in **Dodoma City Council**, an area facing challenges such as resource shortages, inadequate teacher training, poor infrastructure, and weak governance, all affecting academic performance. The target population included pupils, teachers, head teachers, ward education officers, and a district education officer from five public primary schools selected through stratified and random sampling to ensure geographic and demographic representation. Proportional sampling was used, selecting 50% of teachers and 1% of pupils from each school, resulting in samples of 63 teachers and 51 pupils overall. Purposive sampling identified key education administrators for interviews. Data collection tools included structured questionnaires, interview and observation guides, and document review templates. Quantitative data were statistically analyzed for patterns and relationships, while qualitative data underwent thematic coding to reveal deeper insights, providing a holistic understanding of how school management practices influence pupils' academic outcomes in Dodoma.

Results and Discussion

Management Practices Influencing Pupils' Academic Performance

This part aimed to identify the specific school management practices that influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools within Dodoma City Council from teachers' perspective. Table 4.1 summarizes the responses from teachers regarding various aspects of school management practices.

Table 4.1: Teachers Responses on School Management Practices

Question Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD	Total
The school management regularly observes classroom teaching and provides feedback	23	29	2	3	1	58
There are effective communication channels between teachers and school management	21	33	2	1	1	58
The school management involves teachers in decision-making processes	17	29	7	3	2	58
Professional development opportunities are regularly provided by the school management	16	27	10	3	2	58
The school management sets clear expectations and goals for academic performance	17	35	2	2	2	58
The school management recognizes and rewards teachers' achievements	20	25	7	5	1	58
The school management provides adequate resources for effective teaching	17	32	3	5	1	58

Classroom Observation and Feedback

Findings of the study revealed that a significant 23 teachers (39.7%) strongly agreed, and 29 (50.0%) agreed that school management regularly observes classroom teaching and provides feedback. Only 2 (3.4%) remained neutral, while 4 teachers expressed disagreement. This response indicates a robust practice of monitoring and support within the school environment. The findings align with Smith & Roberts (2020), who emphasized that consistent feedback from management enhances teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. The positive responses suggest that the school's management recognizes the importance of observational practices in promoting professional growth and improving educational quality.

However, during the interviews, with headteachers it was revealed that a consensus on the significant impact of management practices on academic performance. Headteacher A expressed concerns about the consistency of practices affecting academic performance, stating that,

“Giving students regular exercises helps improve their understanding of subjects because teachers, after receiving the results, assess themselves and correct their mistakes, but it has also motivated teachers to complete topics earlier.” (Interview With Ward Education Officer A 12.07.2024)

This emphasises the importance of regular exercises in reinforcing student learning, emphasizing that structured practice is vital for enhancing understanding and

retention among pupils. Furthermore, research by Black and Wiliam (1998) supports this notion, highlighting the role of formative assessments in improving student achievement.

Communication Channels

The data reveals that 21 teachers (36.2%) strongly agreed and 33 (56.9%) agreed that effective communication channels exist between teachers and school management, with only 4 (6.9%) expressing disagreement. This reflects a generally favourable perception of communication, essential for fostering collaboration and transparency. Effective communication is critical in educational settings, as highlighted by Johnson (2018), who noted that open lines of communication facilitate a shared understanding of goals and challenges, ultimately enhancing school performance.

Involvement in Decision-Making

The responses indicate that 17 teachers (29.3%) strongly agreed, and 29 (50.0%) agreed that school management involves teachers in decision-making processes. However, 7 (12.1%) remained neutral, and 5 (8.6%) disagreed. This suggests a mixed perception regarding teacher involvement in governance. While a majority feel included, the notable percentage of neutral and negative responses may point to opportunities for improvement in participatory practices. As noted by Davis (2019), inclusive decision-making can empower educators and improve morale, which is essential for fostering a supportive educational environment.

The findings were supplemented by interviews. Finally, Headteacher D underscored the importance of open discussions regarding academic challenges, mentioning that,

“It is important to talk to teachers and students about academic challenges.” (Interview With headteacher D 10.07.2024)

This suggests that creating a dialogue around academic issues fosters a supportive learning environment. This perspective is supported by Fullan (2001), who advocates for open communication to facilitate educational improvement. Furthermore, the findings were supplemented by headteacher B during interviews highlighted the importance of involving teachers in decision-making, asserting,

“It is important to talk to teachers and students about academic challenges.” (Interview With headteacher B 10.07.2024)

This suggests that including teachers in educational decisions fosters ownership and accountability, which aligns with Hargreaves (2000). This indicates that participatory management practices enhance commitment among staff and contribute positively to the academic environment.

Professional Development Opportunities

The data shows that 16 teachers (27.6%) strongly agreed and 27 (46.6%) agreed that professional development opportunities are regularly provided. Meanwhile, 10 (17.2%) remained neutral, and 5 (8.6%) disagreed. While the majority affirm the availability of professional development, the substantial number of neutral responses highlights a need for enhanced communication about these opportunities. Research by Clark & Johnson (2022) indicates that regular access to professional development correlates positively with job satisfaction and teaching effectiveness, suggesting that the school could benefit from ensuring all teachers are aware of available programs. The findings are supplemented by interview, in addition, Headteacher D discussed the necessity of regular academic meetings, stating that,

“Every Tuesday, we hold a meeting with all the teachers to discuss teaching progress.” (Interview With Headteacher D 12.07.2024)

This reveals that structured professional development meetings are vital for ongoing teacher improvement, aligning with findings from Darling-Hammond et al. (2017). Regular collaboration among educators is essential for enhancing teaching effectiveness.

District Education Officer D discussed collaborations for teacher training, stating that,

“We collaborate with high-performing schools for teacher training.” (Interview With District Education Officer B 12.07.2024)

This reflects a commitment to enhancing teacher quality through professional development, aligning with Darling-Hammond (2010), who argues that continuous professional development is crucial for improving teaching effectiveness.

Clear Expectations and Goals

Regarding the clarity of expectations and goals for academic performance, 17 teachers (29.3%) strongly agreed, and 35 (60.3%) agreed, with only 4 (6.9%) disagreeing. This indicates a strong consensus on the management's role in establishing clear academic goals, which is vital for guiding teachers and students alike. Miller & Smith (2019) found that well-defined expectations contribute to higher levels of accountability and performance among educators, reflecting the effectiveness of the school's management strategies.

Recognition of Achievements

The responses to the statement on recognizing and rewarding teachers' achievements indicate that 20 teachers (34.5%) strongly agreed and 25 (43.1%) agreed, with only 6 (10.3%) disagreeing. This suggests that most teachers feel acknowledged for their efforts, which is crucial for maintaining motivation and morale. Johnson (2020) emphasizes the importance of recognition in educational settings as a means to promote teacher engagement and retention. The positive responses indicate a supportive management approach, although there remains room for improvement in formal recognition practices.

Adequate Resources for Effective Teaching

Lastly, when asked if adequate resources for effective teaching are provided, 17 teachers (29.3%) strongly agreed, 32 (55.2%) agreed, while only 6 (10.3%) disagreed. This response suggests a generally positive view of resource availability, critical for facilitating effective teaching and learning. The provision of adequate resources aligns with findings from Davis (2019), which indicate that resource availability directly impacts teachers' instructional capabilities and student learning outcomes. However, the small percentage of disagreement may indicate specific areas for resource enhancement.

4.4.1.2 Responses from Pupils'

The second part of the first specific research objective aimed to identify the specific school management practices that influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools within Dodoma City Council from pupils' perspective. Table 4.6 summarizes the responses from pupils regarding various aspects of school management practices.

Table 4.6: Pupils' Responses on School Management Practices

Question Statement	SA	A	N	D	Total
The school management regularly visits our classes to check on our learning.	36	13	1	2	51
The school management talks to us about our academic goals.	41	9	1	0	51
The school management organizes activities that help us learn better.	42	6	3	0	51
The school management provides us with the materials we need for learning.	38	11	2	0	51
The school management encourages us to participate in class.	41	10	0	0	51
The school management asks for our opinions about the school.	37	13	1	0	51
The school management helps us when we have problems at school.	41	9	1	0	51

Classroom Visits by Management

The responses indicate that 36 pupils (70.6%) strongly agreed and 13 (25.5%) agreed that school management regularly visits their classes to check on their learning, with only 3 pupils (3.9%) expressing disagreement. This high percentage reflects a strong commitment from the school management to actively engage in monitoring the learning environment, which is vital for student success. According to Hattie (2017), regular classroom observations by school leaders can enhance educational outcomes by fostering a culture of accountability and support among teachers.

Discussion of Academic Goals

Regarding discussions about academic goals, 41 pupils (80.4%) strongly agreed that school management talks to them about their academic aspirations, while 9 (17.6%) agreed. This indicates a strong emphasis on setting educational objectives, fostering a sense of purpose and motivation among students. Research by Schunk & Zimmerman (2012) highlights the significance of goal-setting discussions in

enhancing student engagement and academic performance, supporting the positive feedback from the pupils.

Organized Learning Activities

The data shows that 42 pupils (82.4%) strongly agreed and 6 (11.8%) agreed that school management organizes activities that help them learn better, with only 3 (5.9%) neutral. This overwhelming support signifies the effective implementation of engaging learning activities, which can enhance understanding and retention of material. Freeman et al. (2014) emphasize that well-structured extracurricular activities are instrumental in improving academic performance by promoting active learning and critical thinking skills.

Provision of Learning Materials

When asked about the provision of learning materials, 38 pupils (74.5%) strongly agreed, and 11 (21.6%) agreed, with only 2 (3.9%) expressing neutrality. This reflects a positive perception of resource availability, essential for effective learning. The availability of adequate learning materials aligns with findings from Davis (2019), who states that access to resources is crucial for facilitating an effective learning environment and improving educational outcomes.

Encouragement for Participation

In terms of encouragement to participate in class, 41 pupils (80.4%) strongly agreed, and 10 (19.6%) agreed, with no disagreements. This suggests that the school management actively promotes a participatory learning atmosphere, which can boost student confidence and engagement. Kagan (1994) highlights that fostering a culture of participation enhances collaboration among students and promotes a positive learning experience.

Solicitation of Student Opinions

The responses indicate that 37 pupils (72.5%) strongly agreed and 13 (25.5%) agreed that school management asks for their opinions about the school, with only 1 (2.0%) remaining neutral. This shows that the school management values student input, which can contribute to a more responsive and inclusive educational environment.

Rudduck & Flutter (2004) stress the importance of student voice in shaping school policies and practices, suggesting that involving pupils in decision-making fosters a sense of ownership and belonging.

Support Measures for Struggling Students

Lastly, when asked if school management helps them when they have problems, 41 pupils (80.4%) strongly agreed and 9 (17.6%) agreed, with only 1 (2.0%) remaining neutral. This demonstrates a strong support system in place for addressing student issues, which is critical for maintaining a positive school climate. According to Weissberg et al. (2015), effective support structures are essential for promoting students' emotional and social well-being, contributing to overall academic success. During the interviews, also, the insights from Ward Education Officers also highlighted the significance of support measures for struggling students. Ward Education Officer A raised concerns about the support systems in place, stating,

“We create learning communities and study clubs to support struggling students.” (Interview With Ward Education Officer A 14.07.2024)

This implies that creating learning communities provides essential support for those facing academic challenges, aligning with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of social learning. Furthermore, this collaborative learning environment is crucial for enhancing student performance.

Ward Education Officer B emphasized the importance of incentives for improving student performance, saying that,

“We increase incentives for teachers and students to encourage them to strive harder.” (Interview With Ward Education Officer B 14.07.2024)

This indicates that motivation plays a critical role in engaging both teachers and students. Research by Ryan and Deci (2000) reinforces this point, emphasizing that motivation is fundamental to achieving educational success.

Moreover, Ward Education Officer C discussed community collaboration to reduce truancy, stating that,

“We can reduce absenteeism by collaborating with parents and the community.” (Interview With Ward Education Officer C 10.07.2024)

This implies that involving parents and community members is essential for creating a supportive educational environment. This aligns with Epstein's (2018) research on the impact of family and community engagement in student success.

In addition, Ward Education Officer D focused on the need for improved infrastructure, saying that,

“We need to improve school infrastructure so that students can learn better.” (Interview With Ward Education Officer D 12.07.2024)

This indicates that the physical conditions of schools significantly impact learning outcomes. Barrett et al. (2013) supports this observation, highlighting the link between school facilities and student performance.

Lastly, Ward Education Officer E emphasized the importance of community engagement in academic initiatives, affirming that,

“Collaboration with the community is important in supporting school projects.” (Interview With Ward Education Officer E 12.07.2024)

This suggests that partnerships between schools and communities enhance educational resources and support for students. This aligns with Henderson and Mapp's (2002) findings, which argue that effective school-community partnerships can significantly improve student outcomes.

Combating Truancy to Improve Academic Performance

In addition, District Education Officer C focused on district-led initiatives to address truancy, stating,

“Our strategy is to monitor and reduce school absenteeism through various community and school-level interventions.”

The officer highlighted the need for both monitoring and preventive measures, such as working closely with families and community leaders to address the root causes of absenteeism. Addressing truancy is a critical factor in improving academic performance, as students who frequently miss school tend to fall behind in their

studies. According to research by Bowers and Latz (2014), effective truancy prevention strategies are essential for academic success, as regular attendance is a key predictor of a student's overall performance. Schools that implement active measures to combat truancy such as engaging with parents, providing counselling, or offering incentives for regular attendance tend to see significant improvements in student achievement.

Additionally, during interview with District Education Officer E emphasized the importance of psychological support in schools, explaining that,

"We are directing education officers to provide counselling services to students who may be struggling with emotional or mental health issues." (interview with District Education Officer E10.07.2024)

This statement underscores the recognition that students' mental well-being is critical to their academic success. The provision of psychological support helps students cope with stress, anxiety, or other emotional challenges that may hinder their academic progress. Research by Pianta et al. (2007) supports this view, highlighting that social-emotional support is crucial for creating a healthy learning environment. Schools that offer counselling services or provide access to trained counsellors enable students to better manage their personal challenges, which can lead to improved concentration, higher engagement in schoolwork, and better academic outcomes overall.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, school management practices significantly influence pupils' academic performance in primary schools within Dodoma City Council. The study revealed that regular classroom monitoring, constructive feedback, effective communication, professional development, clear goal setting, recognition of achievements, and adequate provision of learning resources are key elements that contribute positively to teaching effectiveness and student learning outcomes. Both teachers and pupils acknowledged these practices as crucial in fostering an environment conducive to learning. Furthermore, the involvement of various education officers and headteachers confirmed that strong leadership, inclusive

participation, and structured support systems play a vital role in improving academic results.

Additionally, findings from interviews and observations emphasized the importance of support systems for struggling pupils, motivation through incentives, psychological support, and the critical role of community engagement. Challenges such as truancy, limited infrastructure, and inconsistent professional training still hinder the full realization of school performance goals. These issues require collaborative efforts between school leadership, government authorities, and the community to enhance the effectiveness of school management practices and ultimately raise academic standards.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that school leaders strengthen and formalize effective management practices by institutionalizing regular classroom observations, timely feedback, and professional learning programs tailored to identify needs. Clear communication of academic goals and recognition mechanisms for teachers and students should be sustained and enhanced to maintain motivation and accountability. Involving all stakeholders including pupils, teachers, and parents in decision-making processes will foster shared responsibility and stronger commitment to learning outcomes.

Furthermore, the government and education stakeholders should improve infrastructure, increase access to teaching and learning materials, and provide ongoing psychological and academic support for pupils. Collaborative initiatives with the community such as study clubs, attendance monitoring, and parent engagement programs should be scaled up to address challenges like truancy and low performance. A holistic approach that combines leadership, participation, resource allocation, and community involvement is essential to improve the academic performance of primary school pupils in Dodoma City Council.

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