

The Perception of Stakeholders' on Academic Performance of Junior high School Students: Hard Evidence from the Sanarigu district of Northern Region, Ghana

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Abstract— *The study investigated stakeholders' perception and academic performance of students in Junior High Schools (JHS), with hard evidence from the Choggu Circuit in the Sanarigu District. Simple stratified, proportional random sampling was used to select a sample size of 191, representing 20 percent of the total population of 36 teachers and the entire seven member School Management Committee (SMC) and Parent Teachers Association (PTA) executives of the schools involved. Questionnaire and interview schedule were the main instruments used to elicit responses. Data analysis and interpretation indicated that academic performance of JHS is perceived by stakeholders to be hampered by quality teacher delivery and inadequate / unavailability of educational resources. In the light of these findings, suggestions for improvement in the quality of teaching and learning were made.*

Keywords— *stakeholder, perception, proportional, interpretation, improvement, students.*

I. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The differential scholastic achievement of students in Ghana has been and still a source of concern and research interest to stakeholders¹ and parents. This is so because of the importance that education has on national development of the country. There is a consensus of opinion about the fallen standard of education (West African Examination Council [WAEC], (Chief Examiner, 2010). Moreover, parents and government are in total agreement that their huge investment on education is not yielding the desired dividend.

Stakeholders¹: In this study is dilimited to GES, District Education Director, Circuit supervisors, Headteachers and the PTA

The annual releases of Basic Education Certificate Examination results (BECE) conducted by WAEC justified the problematic nature and generalization of poor Junior High School (JHS) students' performance in different school subjects. For instance, the percentage of failure compared with students who passed between 2006 and 2011 was 40%. This gives a worrying picture of the situation (WAEC, 2010).

According to Trend in International Mathematics and Science Study (2007) factors that influence academic performance in the JHS with regards to teaching and learning in the core subjects includes the following: Students' inability to read and comprehend the language of the test, low availability of educational resources at home, majority of students coming from economically disadvantaged homes, lack of differentiation of the curriculum, curriculum overload and school climates that are not supportive of instruction and poor instruction practices. Others also include low teachers' qualifications and poor working conditions for teachers.

Education at the JHS level is supposed to be the bedrock and the foundation towards higher knowledge in Senior High Schools (SHS). It is an investment as well as an instrument that can be used to achieve a more rapid economic, socio-political, technological, scientific and cultural development in the country. The National Policy on Education (2004) stipulated that basic education is an instrument for national development that foster the worth

and development of the individual for further education and development, general development of the society and equality of educational opportunities to all Ghanaian children, irrespective of any real or marginal disabilities.

The role of basic education is to lay the foundation for further education and if a good foundation is laid at that level, there are likely to be fewer problems at subsequent levels. However, different scholars have put the blame on performance in JHS to peers influence, low teacher retention and motivation (Aremu & Sokan, 2009, Aremu & Oluwole, 2010; Aremu, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, performance of students in the BECE has been declining and this leaves many parents and stakeholders to begin to wonder what the actual causes are. The situation for most of the graduates of the JHS in 2011 was that only 46% of the graduates passed the BECE. This shows awful drop in percent.age of successful graduates of JHS in the country by 7% in 2010 and 4% in 2009 (WAEC, 2012).

It becomes obvious from the foregoing revelations that education reforms in Ghana have not been able to address the real challenges confronting the sector. While some experts in education argue that there has been inadequate preparation of students at JHS for SHS education, others also argue that the poor academic performance of the students is due to government's inability to supply the needed logistics and infrastructure to support teaching and learning in basic schools.

Junior High School education is undoubtedly a tool for nation's development and requires long term investment and coordinated efforts on the part of government, parents, teachers, students, corporate bodies and the general public who are stakeholders in the educational sector. The lack of involvement of many of these stakeholders, especially parents, makes it difficult for them to ascertain the real issues confronting the Ghanaian educational sector. Hence, the need to investigate the stakeholders' perception on academic performance of students in JHS in the study area.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Investigate the state of teaching and learning in JHS in the Choggu Circuit of the Sanarigu District
2. Ascertain the success of strategies used by stakeholders to enhance academic performance in the Choggu Circuit of the Sanarigu District; and

3. Exerminate the effectiveness of assessment techniques used in the in the Choggu Circuit of the Sanarigu District.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Perception

Perceptions are experiences occasioned by stimuli of the five sensory organs, comprising the eye, tongue, nose, ear and skin which enable humans and other primates to see, taste, smell, hear and feel. Perceptions are, therefore, distinct from memory images, streams of associations and hallucinations mainly because the latter forms are directly caused by external stimuli. Perception has been describe by Wortman, Loftus, Elizabeth, Mashall and Mary (2005)) as "the process whereby the brain interprets sensations it receives giving them order and meaning", or "the selection, organization and interpretation of sensory input".

Apart from the role of our organs and the brain, there are several other factors that influence or account for the way we perceive events in the environment. These include attitudes, expectations, motivations, physiological and psychological needs, and personality. Each factor can positively or negatively influence the way an individual perceives the world. The implication is that one's perception of effectiveness of teaching and learning depends on the knowledge, experiences, beliefs and expectations of the individual.

Basic Education Systems in Ghana

Basic education is the minimum period of schooling needed to ensure that children acquire basic literacy, numeracy and problem-solving skills as well as skills for creativity and healthy living (Bakare, 2005). This definition underscores the importance of basic education as a right to every Ghanaian child.

For this reason, the Constitution of the Republic of Ghana makes it mandatory for every Ghanaian child to have access to quality basic education. The Government had therefore committed herself to a number of International Protocols in ensuring basic education for all Ghanaian children. Basic Education in Ghana is therefore free, compulsory and universal. The current basic education system is derived from the Educational Act of 2008 (Act 778). It comprises eleven (11) years of basic education made up of: 2 years kindergarten, 6 years primary, and 3 years JHS, thus 2-6-3 basic education system.

The 1992 Constitution of Ghana-Article 25 Clause (1)

The Constitution of the Republic of Ghana provides direction for basic education delivery in this country.

Headteachers should therefore be familiar with the section of the Constitution that provides the mandate for basic education delivery. The 1992 Constitution, Article 25 Clause (1) states: "All persons shall have the right to equal educational opportunities and facilities and with a view of achieving the full realization of that right. In this regard, basic education shall be free, compulsory and should be available".

The 1992 Constitution of the Republic of Ghana is therefore currently the fundamental law that guarantees the Ghanaian Child right to basic education. The Constitution also commits the Government of Ghana and all other institutions charged with that responsibility to provide quality basic education for all, irrespective of their age, sex, religion, tribe, parentage, physical condition and locality. Therefore, constitution is required to protect the Rights of all children in school. The Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (fCUBE) was a comprehensive programme aimed at ensuring universal access to quality education among all Ghanaian children at school going age. It was introduced in 1995 in fulfillment of the 1990 International Convention of Education for All (EFA) and the 1992 Constitution of Ghana, to ensure that all children of school-going age had the right and access to quality basic education.

Academic Performance of Students in Schools

A position on education by Otumfuo Osei Tutu II Asantehene in 1999 stated that our education today is not what it used to be despite the flames of brilliance we see displayed our children. In other words, we could do with an improvement in the standards of education we give to our children. This should be so because all over the country the standard of education has fallen drastically due to the performance of students in schools. Complaints came from parents and the public when the annual report of the Chief Examiner of WAEC point to this inescapable fact (Otumfuo Osei Tutu II, 1999).

Morakinyo (2003) believe that the falling level of academic achievement is attributable to teacher's non-use of verbal reinforcement strategy. Others found out that the attitude of some teachers to their job is reflected in their poor attendance to lessons, lateness to school, unsavory comments about student's performance that could damage their ego, poor method of teaching and the likes affect students' academic performance.

Causes of Poor Academic Performance

Aremu and Sokan (2003) submit that the search for the causations of poor academic performance is unending and

some of the factors they put forward are: motivational orientation, self-esteem/self-efficacy, emotional problems, study habits, teacher consultation and poor interpersonal relationships. Bakare (2005) also made efforts to categorize factors militating against good academic performance into four principal areas which are: among others, physical and health factors, psycho-emotional factors, lack of interest in school programme, type of discipline at home, lack of role models and finance; interpersonal relationship among the school personnel and issues such as instability of educational policy, under-funding of educational_sector, leadership and job losses.

School-Community Relation

Lerner (2005) says, "...the school aims at getting society to realize its duties and responsibilities towards it". In his view based upon closed study of the children, it will be mediocre on the part of motivation to support and champion the course of education. Thompson (2005) also stated that the school and the community, efforts to develop the school as a community both as a microcosm of the external community and as a functioning part of the community.

He further stressed that efforts should be made to serve the community directly and to meet the learning needs of the community members. Efforts again should also be made to increase in the relevance of the education to be provided to the young through environmental related curriculum reforms. Aseidu-Akrofi (2008) discusses why the school should relate properly to the community and concludes "...generally speaking, it is obvious that schools are institutions specially contrived to perpetuate society's values. norms, ideas and beliefs. The children in the schools also come from the communities that serve them. In a particular sense however, schools are instrument -for change."

Keith and Girling, (2009) in Mankoe and Mensah, (2003) pointed out that the establishment of strong School-Community relations brings benefits in several important areas such as students academic achievement, political support, positive child development, dissemination of information, reinforcement of people's beliefs in education, avoidance of conflicts, positive fulfillment of societal goals and conducive learning environment.

The Concept of SMC/PTA

The School Management Committee is designated under the Ghana Education Service (GES) Act of 1994. It is School-Community based institution aimed at strengthening community participation and mobilization for education

delivery. The membership of the SMC is a representation of the entire school community of a particular school or cluster of schools. The community therefore becomes its constituency.

The stakeholders who form the SMC include the following: District Director of Education or representative as an ex-official member, Headmaster, District Assembly representative (usually Assembly Person), Unit Committee representative, appointed by the chief of the town/village, representative from educational unit (if the school is a unit school), two members of teaching staff (JHS and Primary, one each), past Students' Association representative and co-opted members to perform specific functions (optional)

Some of the powers and functions of the SMC is to control the general policy of the school and to present periodic report to the Director-General of Education through the District Director of Education. They also help the Headteacher in solving conflict and report to the District Director of Education and to refer serious disciplinary cases to the latter for actions.

The membership of the PTA are parents, guardians and teachers who are interested in children education. Some of the powers and functions of the PTA include the following: Assist in school maintenance and the repair of infrastructure, see to the performance of students/students, help in solving school problems, help to maintain discipline by reporting lateness, truancy etc. to school authority and co-operate with other organizations/agencies having common interest regarding quality education. Funding of the PTA comes from members' contribution, voluntary contribution from stakeholders, NGO and the community.

Views of the Parental Role in Education

The role of parents in their children education has long been recognized as a significant factor in educational success and school improvement (Epstein, 2006; Safran, 2009). In recent years we have reached the stage where certain educational organizations and international conferences concentrate almost entirely on the issue of partnership between schools and parents. Within this area of interest lies a vast spread of concerns and purposes.

Parents clearly have rights in terms of their children education. Hughes (2004) provides interesting insight into the notion of 'parents as consumers', a view promoted in the Ghanaian society. Within this view is the associated idea of education as a commodity. Parents are given the right to 'shop' for their children's education in the school of their choice. Vincent and Tomlinson (2007) suggest that this

view of parent power, together with the notion of schools' partnership with parents is little more than rhetoric. In reality there is little opportunity for parents to exercise an individual or collective 'voice' which will have an effect on the children's school experience.

An alternative view of parents is that they can be seen as a 'problem' for teachers. In particular children are frequently judged to come from 'poor background', from a home environment which is unsupportive of the educational process. Such views of parents were radically challenged by researchers such as Tizard and Hughes (2004) and Walkerdine, (2008) who recognized the substantial contribution made to their children's pre-school education by parents from working class as well as middle class backgrounds (Vincent & Tomlinson, 2007).

Teacher in Education Delivery

Fullan and Hargreaves (2006) noted that teachers constitute one of the most powerful influences in the life and development of the youth and those teachers play a vital role in destroying every generation. They proposed that with the decline of the church, break-up of traditional community and diminishing contact, many children live with parents who cannot be there for their children on regular bases. The moral role and importance of today's teachers is probably greater than it has been for a long time. Comparing the work of the teacher to that of urban planners or architects and psychotherapists, Fullan and Hargreaves (2006) noted that teachers are always confronted with several deciders' of great importance, which affects both their students and colleagues.

A United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) publication on Education for All (1992) agrees with Fullan and Hargreaves (2006) that the determination of educational performance has no effective substitute for teachers who are committed to their work. The UNESCO publication identifies the following as some of the major roles played by teachers in education delivery: teacher play a central role in the delivery of learning opportunities, the teacher, acting through the school, serves as the foundation for, providing well-being and that of the society, and above all and teachers serve as the primary source of removing ignorance and illiteracy.

According to Hanson (cited in Anderson and Burma, 2006:8), teachers constitute a principal input to the production of a nation's intellectual capital. Burma (2006) considers the role of teachers in any educational system and concludes that "depending on the quality and quantity of

teacher supply, the quality and quantity of educational output will be greater or smaller”.

Teacher Qualification and Student Performance

The importance of qualified teachers in promoting quality education is widely acknowledged. The quality is even more important in the case of teaching JHS students. Previous research on teacher effectiveness has established that teacher background and quality (age, sex, education and experience) affect teaching behavior and teaching quality (Srong, 2011).

In the opinion of scholars like Hayman and Loxley (2008), teaching experience is also related to students' achievement in developing countries but the effects are less positive for teachers of formal education. This is because, according to Hayman and Loxley (2008), out of 23 students which examined the effect of teachers' experience, only 43% reported positive effect in Africa. There were mixed results, however, with multivariate studies reporting positive effects in Botswana, though a study in Uganda reported no effect.

In conclusion, Avalos and Haddad (2008) and Fullan (2007) held the view that one way in which teacher education and experience could affect students through more effective use of material inputs, such as textbooks. However, teacher education experience, could also contribute to the use of personally developed materials, which in turn could enhance students' achievement. Another way that teacher education and experience could affect students' achievement is by ensuring that more of the intended curriculum is actually taught during the course.

Continuous Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development is variously called Teacher Development, In-Service Education and Training (INSET), Staff Development, Career, Human Resource, professional development, continuing education and lifelong learning. The definitions and meanings given to these terms by different writers are sometimes different and overlap. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) may be defined as: 'all learning experiences and planned activities which are intended to be of direct benefit to the individual teacher, groups of teachers or their schools and which contribute to the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom. It is the process by which teachers individually or in groups acquire and develop critically the competencies essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with learners and colleagues through each phase of their teaching career'.

The world is changing so rapidly, teaching skills required are now for a career of 30 or 40 years. CPD is the process by which teachers (likewise other professional) reflect upon their competencies, maintain them to date, and develop them further. If we also keep in mind the characteristics of present day society with present transition, with the continuous change and adaptation to new technology, socio-cultural changes in in-service training turns to be the only tool to face these changes, as well as to demonstrate people's access to culture, information and work (Murillo, 2009). Continuous development is important in every field of life because of the technological world we have now found ourselves.

Classroom Instructional Strategies

Daniel Amofa et al. (2008) stated that "Classroom management refers to how a teacher, plans, controls, coordinates, direct and organizes conditions and interaction in the classroom. It involves what the teacher does in the classroom to make it possible for every pupil to benefit in the teaching and learning process. It includes ensuring harmony in the teaching and learning environment; provision of healthy conditions under which classroom activities can be carried out effectively; the proper planning of classroom activities and the use of resources as well as the establishment of certain guidelines for behavior".

As noted in the above definition, classroom instructional strategies are activities which come under class management such as checking class attendance, keeping records of class, re-arranging table, chairs or desks for group work, organizing procedure and resources.

III. METHODOLOGY

Introduction

For effective administration and supervision, the District is divided into 10 circuits. These are Choggu, Gumani/Nyanshegu, Kamina'A' &'B", Kumbungu Road, Mile 9 Nyankpala Road, Sanarigu and Tishigu circuits.

Research Design

The descriptive survey design was considered appropriate because, it gives an opportunity for the researcher to get the opinion of the population concerning some issues of interest and relevance to the study.

Population

The target population included District Director of Education, Circuit Supervisors, Head/teachers, and SMC/PTA members of Choggu Circuit JHS. Available statistics from the offices of the Headteachers of JHS put

the overall target population together at 334. The breakdown of the 334 target population is as follows: one District Director of Education, four Circuit Supervisors, 10 Head teachers, 179 teachers, 70 SMC executives, 70 PTA executives.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

In order to increase the validity of the data of the study, a stratified sampling was adopted for selecting the respondents. This technique incorporates elements of proportional simple random sampling. Table 3.2 shows the breakdown of the study population number of respondents selected from each stratum. The ten schools formed the sampling frame. The seven member SMC executives and seven member PTA were included through purposive sampling technique. Then a proportion of 20% of the teachers were also selected for the study. The 20% inclusion of the respondents of the teacher category was deemed appropriate because it was able to ensure that a large number of the population was included so that generalization of the outcome could be made.

All the seven-member PTA/SMC executives are therefore automatic part of the sample. Twenty percent of the population of teachers was randomly selected (Ary, Jacob & Razaviel (2010). A set of criteria for selecting respondents is established. The total number of the SMC and PTA Executives for the ten JHS is 140 and that of the 179 teachers was put together.

The Choggu Circuit is made up of four circuits with twenty JHS; and to ensure a fair representative sample for the study, five schools each was picked from the four circuits. The sample frame was obtained from the various JHS headmasters and the MDEO. In the end, one District Director of Education, four Circuit Supervisors, 70 SMC, 70 PTA, 10 head teachers and 36 teachers from all the selected ten JHS were randomly sampled.

The Research Instruments

Questionnaire was used because generally, questionnaire has a high degree of transparency and accountability as compared to interview technique. The questionnaires are pre-coded that provide lots of tick boxes for respondent to fill in. The questionnaires will target the SMC and PTA and teachers in the Choggu Circuit whiles the structured interview schedule will target the District Director, Circuit Supervisors and the Head teachers in the JHS.

IV. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Demographic Profile of Respondents

This section looked at the demographics of the respondents. Among the key issues presented here include the age and gender of respondents. The presentation then concluded with analysis of data and discussions.

Age Grouping of Respondents

The age categories of the respondents were grouped into four with 55 years and above being the highest age group and below 35 years also being the lowest age group. According to the field data, 36 (18.8%) respondents were below 35 years whilst 75 (39.3%) respondents were found to be in the age group of 35 years and 44 years.

Table.4.1: Age distribution of respondents (N=191)

Age Distribution	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Below 35 years	36	18.8
35-44 years	75	39.3
45-54 years	58	30.4
55 years and above	22	11.5
Totals	191	100

Source: Field survey, 2013

Further analysis of the field data on the age of the respondents also showed that 58 (30.4%) respondents fell within the age group of 45 years 54 years whilst the remaining 22 (11.5%) respondents were also 55 years and above. The indication is that majority of respondents in the study area are youthful. This therefore agreed that they are more likely to have much interest in issues of education especially at the basic level as the age distribution revealed that most of the respondents were within the reproductive age groups.

Academic Qualifications of Respondents

Another important issue the study considered with regard to demographics of the respondents their level of education. This was to help inform the extent to which the respondents could contribute meaningfully to the issue of the stakeholder perception on academic performance of students in JHS in Choggu Circuit. As indicated in the field results, 72(37.7%) respondents chose 'other', meaning they have other qualification apart from those stated. The results are shown in Table 4.2.

Table.4.2: Academic Qualifications of Respondents
(N=191)

Academic qualifications of respondents	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Tertiary Education	65	34
Secondary education	20	10.5
Basic education	34	17.8
Others	72	37.7
Totals	191	100

Source: Field survey, 2013

More similarly, 17.8% of the respondents also revealed that they had only basic education. On the other hand, 10.5% of the respondents also revealed that they had secondary level of education with remaining 34% choosing 'tertiary' as their highest educational level. The results therefore suggest that majority of the respondents had, at least, basic education. Owing to this, they were more likely to have interest in academic performance of their wards.

The Frequency of Visits to Wards in School by Parents

In an attempt to investigate stakeholder perception on academic performance of students in JHS, one important issue the study considered with respect to the establishment of state of teaching and learning in the JHS was the frequency at which parents visited their wards in school to ascertain their performance. Smith (2004) stated that parents' perception on the performance of their wards in school was more likely to depend on the extent to which they get information from the schools. In this regard, four objective variables were presented to the respondents to indicate if they were paying regular visits to their wards in school. The field data are illustrated in the Table 4.3.

Table.4.3: How often do you Visit your Ward at School?

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very often	15	10.7
Often	36	25.7
Not often	65	46.4
Not at all	24	17.1
Totals	140	100

Field survey, 2013

As seen in table 4.3, only 15 (10.7%) respondents chose 'very often' whilst 36 (25.7%) also chose 'often'. This was to suggest that they agreed that they were paying regular visits to their wards in school to enquire about their performance.

On the other hand, 65 (46.4%) respondents selected to investigate the frequency at which parents visited their wards in school confessed that they often did not visit their wards in school to enquire about their performance. In addition, 24 (17.1%) respondents chose 'undecided' to suggest that they were not sure of paying regular visits to their wards in school. From the above analysis, it was deduced that majority of the respondents did not pay regular visits to their wards in schools. On the basis of this finding, one can say that most parents need to be encouraged to visit their wards in school to enquire about the state of teaching and learning those schools since the field results revealed non-regular visits to such schools by parents.

Economic Activities as Being Important than Ward's Education

Another important issue the study considered with respect to state of teaching and learning was as to whether parents preferred their wards being engaged in economic activities to continuing their education. Close examination of the field data in respect of this revealed that majority of the respondents preferred their wards to stay in school and continue their education. According to the field data, significant majority of the respondents revealed that they wished their wards could stay in school for better education than to engage in economic activities. The field data are shown in the Table 4.4.

Table.4.4: Should your Ward stop Education and Engage in Economic Activities?

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Yes	55	39.3
No	85	60.7
Totals	140	100

Field survey, 2013

Reading from the Table, it was deduced that only 55 respondents who represented 39.3% chose 'yes' to suggest that they preferred their wards to engage in economic activities. On the reverse, 85 (60.7%) of the respondents who constituted the majority chose 'no' to suggest that they preferred their wards to be in school. By this revelation, it was quite clear that respondents preferred their wards to be in school to them being engaged in economic activities. This revelation could be as a result of the great importance many Ghanaians attach to education of their wards.

Occupation as a Barrier to Parents' Ability to Visit their Wards

In respect of the literature, Morakinyo (2003) believed that the falling level of academic achievement is partly

attributable to lack of interests most parents show in their children’s education. In relation to the above issues on the establishment of state of teaching and learning, the study also elicited the views of respondents on the extent to which they agreed with the idea of their occupations serving as blockage to their desires to visit their wards in schools. The results are shown in Table 4.5.

Table.4.5: Occupation as a Barrier to Monitoring of Wards’ Performance

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Yes	59	42
No	81	58
Totals	140	100

Field survey, 2013

Analyzing the field data, it was discovered that 59 (42%) of the respondents indicated ‘yes’ whilst 81 (58%) indicated

‘no’. From this analysis, it was clear that majority of the respondents did not see their occupations as barriers to their abilities to monitor their wards’ academic performance. This revelation is a further indication that most parents attached importance to the education of their wards.

Influences of Economic Activities may have on Children’s Academic Performance

In addition, the study considered the views of respondents on the extent to which economic activities could negatively influence children’s academic performance. Four objective variables were presented to the respondents to express their views. The key issues the study presented to the respondents included lack of interest in learning, truancy, absenteeism and dropout on the parts of the wards. It was found that all these issues could occur as a result of economic activities students were made to engage in by their parents. The filed data are shown in the Figure 4.2.

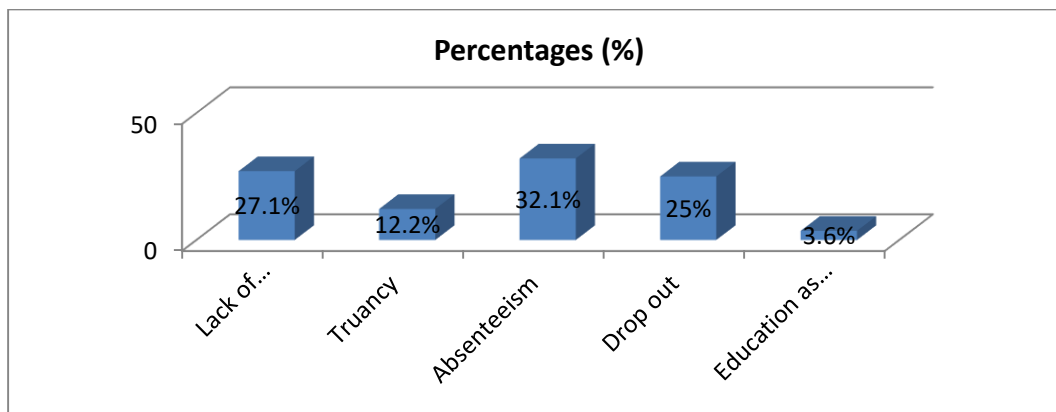


Fig.4.2: Effect of Activities on Children Academic Performance

Field survey, 2013

The study found that, 27.1% of the respondents thought that if children were engaged in economic activities, they were more likely to lose interest in learning whilst 12.2% also said economic activities could result in child truancy. Similarly, majority of the respondents suggested that one key influence of economic activities on children’s education was absenteeism. Dropouts was another important issue the study revealed as an influence economic activities may have on children’s education. From the analysis, one can state that economic activities were more likely to impact negatively on children’s academic performance thereby leading to higher dropout rates among other factors.

Challenges of Providing Basic Materials for Wards by Parents

As part of identifying the state of teaching and learning of JHS students, the study enquired from the respondents if they were facing challenges in providing basic materials for their wards in school. Aremu and Sokan (2003) submit that the causations of poor academic performance is unending and some of the factors be attributed to difficulties parents faced in providing basic materials to aid their wards’ learning process. On the basis of this, the study enquired from respondents if they were actually facing such challenges in providing basic materials to facilitate the learning of their wards in school.

After the analysis of the field data, it was discovered that this was a huge challenge to many stakeholders. As shown on the Table 4.6, 50 respondents who represented 35.7% chose ‘very challenging’ whilst 61 respondents who constituted 43.6% also indicated ‘challenging’ to suggest their level of agreement with the assertion.

Table.4.6: The Challenge of Providing Basic Materials for Wards by Parents

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very challenging	50	35.7
Challenging	61	43.6
Less challenging	25	17.9
Undecided	4	2.9
Totals	140	100

Field survey, 2013

On the reverse, only 25 (17.9%) respondents disagreed with facing challenges in providing basic materials to their wards in school. Similarly, 4 respondents who constituted 2.9% of the entire respondents chose ‘undecided’ to suggest that they could not tell whether they faced challenges or not. It was therefore obvious from the field data that majority of the respondents attested to the fact that they faced serious economic challenges in proving basic materials to aid their wards’ learning in school. By this revelation, the state of teaching and learning of most JHS were likely to be affected negatively due to inability of parents to provide basic learning materials for their wards. The net effect is that this could lead to poor academic performance in final examinations of these wards.

Importance of PTA Meeting Attendance

On the issue of the importance parents attach to PTA meetings and its effects on the state of teaching and learning in their wards’ schools, the study gathered that respondents saw this phenomenon as being important. In order to elicit views of the respondents, four objective variables were presented to them and the field data are illustrated in the

Table 4.7. According to the field data, 60 (42.9%) respondents who constituted the majority chose ‘very important’ to indicated the extent to which they attached importance to PTA meetings as a way of enhancing teaching and learning for improved performance of their wards.

Table.4.7: Importance of PTA Meeting Attendance

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very important	60	42.9
Important	44	31.4
Less important	30	21.4
Undecided	6	4.3
Totals	140	100

Field survey, 2013

Similarly, 44 (31.4%) respondents also indicated ‘important’ with the remaining of them rejecting PTA meeting as being important. Specifically, 30 (21.4%) respondents chose ‘less important’ whilst 6 respondents who represented 4.3% said they were undecided as to whether PTA meetings were important for effective performance of their wards or not. On a balance of the data presented in the above analysis, it is conclusive that parents in the Tamale Districtpolis saw PTA meetings as being an integral part of ensuring quality teaching and learning in JHS.

The Effectiveness of Instructional Strategies Being Used Class Size

In order to achieve this objective, the study first of all enquired from respondents as to the sizes of the classes being taught by them in their various schools. The study grouped the class sizes into- four intervals. These included below 30 students, 30-40 students, 41-50 students and 51 and above students in a class. The field results are shown in the Table

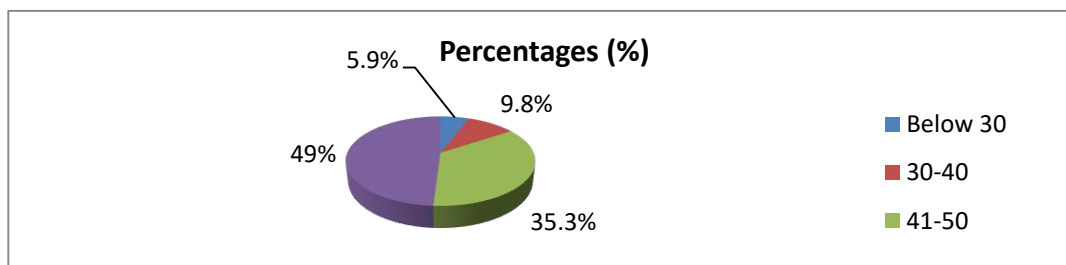


Fig.4.3: Class Size

Field data, 2013, n=51

Statistically, only 5.9% and 9.8% of the respondents chose below 30 and 30-40 as being the sizes of their classes respectively. Majority of the respondents were relatively handling larger classes. Specifically, 35.3% of the respondents revealed that they had class size of 41-50 students whilst the remaining respondents who constituted significant majority also said they had a class size of 51 students and above. The indication is that most teachers of JHS were handling larger classes than they could control and this was more likely to negatively affect quality teaching and learning thereby leading to ineffectiveness of the institutional strategies being used in the schools.

Ability to Effectively Manage a Class due to its Size

As contained in the literature, it was revealed that so many factors have therefore been assigned to the abysmal performance of the students, but the high among them include insufficient number of trained teachers, teacher absenteeism, inadequate classrooms, lack of cooperation between teachers and parents and lack of monitoring and supervision (GES, 2010). In line with this, the study sought views of respondents on their ability to effectively manage classes they teach taking into consideration the size of those classes.

According to the field data, respondents indicated that they found it difficult to manage classrooms they taught due to their sizes. The field results are illustrated in the Table 4.8. With the four objective variables presented to the respondents, 10 respondents chose ‘very effective’ whilst 16 respondents similarly chose ‘effective’, representing 19.6% and 31.4% respectively. This is to suggest that they had the abilities to effectively manage the classes they taught irrespective of their sizes.

Table.4.8: Ability to Effectively Manage a Class due to its Size

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very effective	10	19.6
Effective	16	31.4
Less effective	24	47
Undecided	1	2
Totals	51	100

Field data, 2013, n=51

On the other hand, 24 (47%) respondents attested to the fact that class management was highly ineffective due to large number of students. On a balance of fair judgment, one can deduce that most teachers in the affected JHS, were not able to effectively manage classes they handled due to large

number of students in those classes. The tendency is that teachers will not be able to attend to individual needs of all students. They may not also be able to offer fair assessment of students during examinations and this will ultimately lead to poor academic performance of these students.

Preparation of Lesson Notes as Strategies

Another issue the study considered was lesson notes preparation by teachers as strategies. According to the field results, overwhelming majority of the respondents were of indication that lesson notes preparations were major effective strategies being applied to ensure efficient performance. Field results are illustrated in the Table 4.9.

Table.4.9: Preparation of Lesson Notes as Strategies

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very often	10	19.6
Often	30	58.8
Not often	7	13.7
Not sure	4	7.8
Totals	51	100

Field survey, 2013

According to the field data, 10 respondents who constituted 19.6% indicated ‘very often’ whilst another 30 (58.8%) also chose ‘often’ to indicate the effectiveness of application of lesson notes preparation as a strategy. On the other hand, 7 (13.7%) and 4 (7.8%) respondents chose ‘not often’ and ‘not sure’ respectively to suggest that lesson notes preparation was not an effective strategy in the study area. It can therefore be stated that teachers in the study area effectively apply lesson notes preparation as a strategy to enhance performance. This could be as a result of effective supervision of Head-Teachers and Circuit Supervisors working in the area. It could also be attributed to motivation packages being presented to teachers especially by way of pay rises.

Effectiveness of Teachers’ Supervision

With reference to the literature, it was established that educational planners, advisors and researchers have agreed that, any discussion on quality education should include the learning behavior of the child, the teacher quality, availability of equipment and facilities, suitable curriculum, management system and its adaptation to the changing environs (Combs, 2009; Dawood, 2009; Robbins and Alvy, 2005; Hallak, 2001; Bishops, 2005). This makes teachers as important and integral part in ensuring efficient performance of students in the basic schools in particular. In line with this, the study sought the views of respondents on

the effectiveness of teachers’ supervision in the study area. This was to help inform the study on the effectiveness of strategies being used by teachers. The field results are shown in the Table 4.10.

Table.4.10: Effectiveness of Teachers’ Supervision

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very effective	13	25.5
Not effective	26	51
Effective	8	15.7
Not at all	4	7.8
Totals	51	100

Field survey, 2013

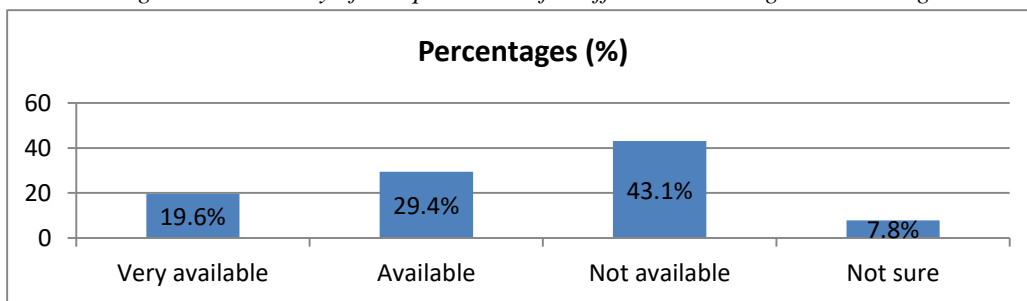
Reading from Table 4.10, it was discovered that 13 (25.5%) respondents indicated that teachers’ supervision was very

effective whilst 26 (51%) of them indicated that supervision of teachers was not effective. However, 8 respondents who constituted 15.7% opted for ‘effective’ whilst the 4 remaining respondents who constituted 7.8% indicated ‘not at all’, suggesting that teachers’ supervision was not at all effective. From the above data, it was obvious that supervision of teacher’s was not effective.

Availability of Adequate TLMs for Effective Teaching and Learning

More importantly, the study tried to investigate the effectiveness of instructional strategies being used in JHS, specifically the study looked at whether there were adequate TLMs for effective teaching and learning. To achieve this, a scale of four were presented to respondents to evaluate the phenomenon and it was revealed that these teaching and learning materials were not often available. The results are shown in the Figure 4.4.

Fig.4.4: Availability of Adequate TLMs for Effective Teaching and Learning



Field survey, 2013

According to the field data, 19.6% of the respondents indicated ‘very available’ whilst 29.4% also chose ‘available’ to indicate the availability of TLMs for effective teaching and learning in the JHS. On the other hand, 43.1% and 7.8% of the remaining respondents who constituted the majority chose ‘not available’ and ‘not sure’ respectively to suggest that these materials were not adequately available in the study area. It can therefore be stated that teachers in the study area did not have enough TLMs to effectively teach so as to enhance performance. This could impact negatively on quality teaching and learning in the study area.

Regular In-service Training for Teachers and its Effectiveness

The last issue the study considered with respect to the effectiveness of strategies being used in the JHS was with respect to whether regular in-service trainings were offered teachers to improve their effectiveness. During the literature, it was observed that as part of efforts to ensure effective quality teaching and learning, continuing professional development is variously called for teacher

development through in-service education and training. This places teacher in-service training on higher pedestal in terms of fulfilling the quest to ensure effectiveness of instructional strategies being used in the JHS. The field data are illustrated in the Table 4.11.

Table.4.11: Availability of Regular In-service Training for Teachers

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very often	6	11.8
Often	16	31.4
Not often	24	47.1
Undecided	5	9.8
Totals	51	100

Field survey, 2013

Reading from Table 4.11, 6 respondents or 11.8% and 16 respondents 31.4% of the respondents chose ‘very often’ and ‘often’ respectively. On the other hand, 24 (47.1%) respondents revealed that teachers were not offered the

opportunity to undergo in-service training to improve their teaching skills. The indication is that most teachers of JHS were relying on old methods of teaching thereby leading to ineffectiveness of the institutional strategies being used in the schools.

The Effectiveness of Assessment Techniques

This section of the study presents findings and discussion on the effectiveness of assessment techniques being use. In order to achieve the above objective, the study considered the extent to which innovation of teachers could serve as effective assessment techniques. This was to help investigate the Parental Perception on Academic Performance of Students in JHS. According to the field results, overwhelming majority of the respondents were of indication that lesson notes preparations were major effective strategies being applied to ensure better performance . Field results are illustrated in the Table 4.12.

Table.4.12: Innovation of Teachers as Effective Assessment Technique

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Strongly disagree	12	23.5
Disagree	22	43.1
Agree	15	29.4
Strongly agree	2	4
Totals	51	100

Field survey, 2013

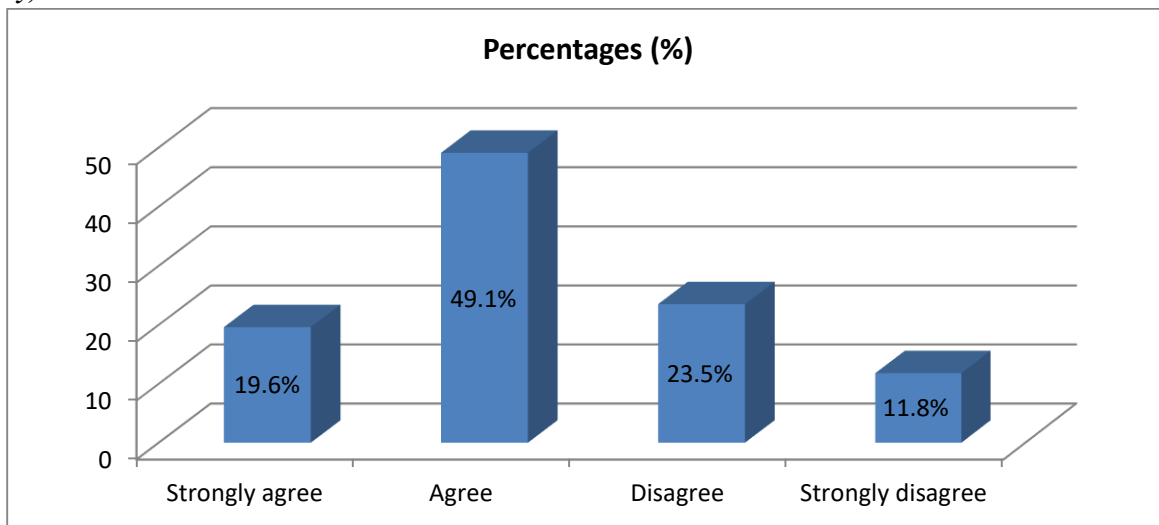


Fig.4.5: Effectiveness of Supervision and Monitoring of Teachers

Field survey, 2013

Reading from figure 4.5, it was however discovered that only 23.5% of the respondents indicated ‘disagree’ whilst 11.8% also indicated chose ‘disagree’. From the above data,

As illustrated by the statistics, 34 (66.6%) respondents disagreed with the assertion that teachers assessment technique was effective On the other hand, minority of the respondents agreed with the assertion. Indeed, only 17.(33.4%) of the respondents chose ‘agree’ with the remaining 4% also indicating ‘strongly agree’, that most teachers of JHS were not innovative in terms of assessment technique in class.

Effectiveness of Supervision and Monitoring

In the establishment of effectiveness of assessment techniques, the study elicited views of respondents with respect to effectiveness of supervision and monitoring of teachers. The field results are shown in the figure 4.5. It was therefore revealed by the field data that 19.6% of the respondents indicated ‘strongly agree’ whilst 49.1% of them who constituted significant majority also chose ‘agree’ to suggest that they agreed with the assertion that there was effective supervision and monitoring of teachers by authorities in the district.

it was obvious that supervision and monitoring of teachers was effective.

TLMs as Means for Effective Teaching

In reference to the literature, Windham (2008) also holds a view that the quality of an educational institution must be expressed in terms of the quality and quantity of its inputs and that those inputs include the teacher and the teacher characteristics, the facilities, equipment and educational materials or TLMs. This therefore had direct relationship with the view of this study where it sought to examine the

extent to which the availability of TLMs could serve as means for effective assessment technique in JHS. According to the field results, overwhelming majority of the respondents were of indication that this phenomenon was responsible for effectiveness of assessment techniques. Field results are illustrated in the Figure 4.6.

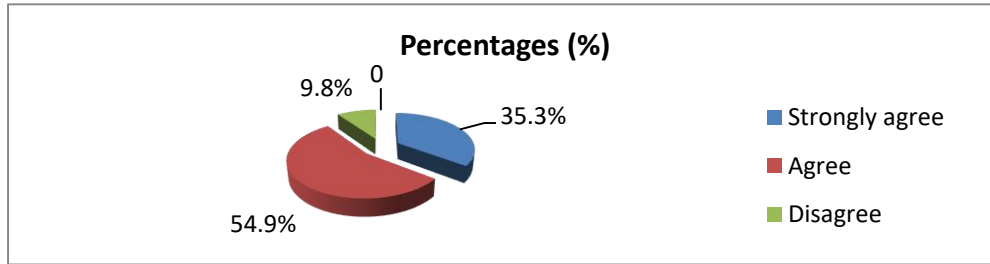


Fig.4.6: TLMs as Means for Effective Teaching

Field survey, 2013

Analysis of the field data revealed that 35.3% and 54.9% of the respondents chose ‘strongly agree’ and ‘agree’ respectively from the four (4) objective variables they were made to choose from. However, the remaining respondents who constituted 9.8% disagreed with the assertion. On the basis of the data presented in the above, it is convenient to state that TLMs as means for effective teaching could help promote effectiveness of assessment techniques being applied.

Application of Requisite Methodology by Teachers in Teaching

Another issue the study considered with regard to effectiveness of assessment techniques being used for teaching and learning in JHS. According to the field results, respondents were of indication that application of requisite methodology by teachers. Field results are illustrated in the Table 4.13.

Table.4.13: Application of Requisite Methodology by Teachers

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very often	14	27.5
Often	26	51
Not often	6	11.7
Undecided	5	9.8
Totals	51	100

Field survey, 2013

According to the field data, 14 (27.5%) respondents indicated ‘very often’ whilst 26 (51%) respondents also chose ‘often’ to indicate the applicability of requisite methodology by teachers in teaching at the JHS. On the other hand, 6 respondents and 5 respondents who constituted the minority chose ‘not often’ and ‘undecided’, representing 11.7% and 9.8% respectively. It can therefore be stated that teachers in the study area did apply the requisite methodology for teaching to enhance performance of students in the JHS. This could impact positively on quality teaching and learning in the study area. This finding further emphasizes Kariacou’s (1995) asserting that central to the process of quality teaching and learning at the basic school is the ability of the teacher to effectively apply the requisite methodology.

Effectiveness of Written and Oral Evaluation as Assessment Techniques

In a further analysis, respondents were also made to express their views on the effectiveness of assessment techniques being used by looking at the effectiveness of written and oral evaluation of students as assessment techniques. After the analysis of the field data, it was found that an overwhelming majority of the respondents attested to the fact that the use of these assessment techniques was very effective. The field results are shown in the Table 4.14.

Table.4.14: Effectiveness of Written and Oral Evaluation as Assessment Techniques

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very effective	15	29.4
Effective	30	58.8
Not effective	6	2
Undecided	0	0
Totals	51	100

Field survey 2013

Reading from the table, it can be deduced that 15 respondents or 29.9% of the respondents chose 'very effective' whilst 30 (58.8%) respondents similarly chose 'effective', suggesting that the use of written and oral evaluation as assessment techniques were very effective.

Effectiveness of In-service Training for Teachers as Assessment Technique

The last issue the study considered with respect to the evaluation of effectiveness of assessment techniques was the issue how effectively in-service training of teachers as assessment technique was organized in the District. As claimed by Morakinyo (2003), the falling level of academic achievement is attributable to teachers' lack of participation in refresher programmes. Similarly, four objective variables were presented to respondents to elicit their views on the phenomenon. It was therefore discovered that this assessment technique was not effectively applied in the JHS. The field data are presented in the Table 4.15.

Table.4.15: Effectiveness of In-service Training for Teachers as Assessment Technique

Variables	Frequencies	Percentages (%)
Very effective	5	9.8
Effective	15	29.4
Not effective	25	49
Undecided	1	2
Totals	51	100

Field survey 2013

As expressed in the field data, only 5 respondents or 9.8% of the respondents saw the phenomenon as being effective in the study area whilst 15 respondents who constituted 29.4% also chose 'effective'. However, 25 (49%) respondents who constituted the majority rejected the assertion by suggesting that in-service training for teachers was a rare phenomenon. This could be attributed to resource constraints due to the number of teachers.

V. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary of Major Findings

Data analysis established in of this study, indicated that; stakeholders' most stakeholders do not pay regular visits to their wards to ascertain the state of teaching and learning in the JHS.

The study further revealed that most parents preferred their wards to be in school to rather than them being engaged in economic activities. The importance most parents attached to education of their wards was further exemplified by the discovery that occupation of these parents could not serve as barriers to parents' abilities to visit their wards in schools to ascertain their state of learning.

Furthermore, the study found that economic activities were more likely to impact negatively on children's academic performance thereby leading to higher school dropout rates among other factors. This was also worsened by the revelation that most parents could not provide basic learning materials for their wards in JHS.

The Effectiveness of Instructional Strategies Being Used

In an attempt to identify the effectiveness of instructional strategies being used, the study revealed that most teachers were handling larger classes than they could control and this was more likely to negatively affect quality teaching and learning thereby leading to ineffectiveness of the institutional strategies being used in the schools.

On the issue of lesson notes preparation, the study found that teachers in the study area effectively apply lesson notes preparation as a strategy to enhance performance. This was further demonstrated by the revelation that there was effective supervision of teachers. More importantly, the study tried to investigate the effectiveness of instructional strategies being used by specifically looking at whether there were adequate TLMs for effective teaching and learning. As suggested by the field data,

Junior High Schools in the study area did not have enough TLMs to effectively enhance performance of students. Moreover, most teachers were relying on old methods of teaching thereby leading to ineffectiveness of the instructional strategies being used in the schools.

The Effectiveness of Assessment Techniques

The study sought to identify the effectiveness of assessment techniques being used in the study area. The study found that most teachers in the study area were innovative in applying assessment techniques.

In the establishment of effectiveness of assessment techniques, the study showed that supervision and

monitoring of teachers were ineffective. It was also found that most teachers in the study area did apply the requisite methodology for teaching to enhance performance of students in the JHS and that written and oral evaluation of students performance were effective and the assessment techniques being used in the study area. However, there was lack of regular in-service trainings to equip teachers with requisite assessment techniques to evaluate students' performance.

Conclusions

The study came to the realization that state of teaching and learning in the JHS in Choggu Circuit in the Sanarigu District, needed much contributions to ensure improvement in the performance of students. The study concluded that instructional strategies and assessment techniques being used in the various JHS were ineffective. Moreover, the study also revealed that there is inadequacy use of TLMs by teachers.

It is further revealed in the study that teachers did not use a number of techniques to collect information when assessing students. The most common mode of assessment are the tests, questioning, observing, interviewing and homework.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. There is the need for regular in-service training and adequate TLMs to promote effective teaching and learning.
2. The GES should empower Circuit Supervisors for effective supervision and monitoring of teachers to enhance students' performance.

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