

**THE EFFECTS OF SCHOOL LOCATION ON LEARNER'S ACADEMIC  
PERFORMANCE: A CASE OF COMMUNITY SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
MAKAMBAKO TOWN COUNCIL, NJOMBE**

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**2015**

## CERTIFICATION

The undersigned certifies that she has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by Open University of Tanzania a dissertation titled *“The Effects of School Distance on Students’ Academic Performance: A Case of Community Secondary Schools in Makambako Town Council”*, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Education in Administration, Planning and Policy Studies of The Open University of Tanzania.



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Date

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**DECLARATION**

I, **Joseph Anthon Mhiliwa**, do hereby declare that, this dissertation is my own original work and that it has not been presented to any other University for a similar or any other degree award.

.....

Signature

.....

Date

**DEDICATION**

I dedicate this study to my wife Rebecca, my lovely daughter Joline, Mr. and Mrs. Anthon Mhiliwa, and my brothers (Aloyce, Ephraim, and Stephen) whose unforgettable inspiration helped me realize the value of education.

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENT**

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**ABSTRACT**

The study set to determine the extent to which distance affected the academic achievement of students in community secondary schools in Makambako Town Council. The study was guided by four specific objectives, which were carried out through descriptive cross-sectional study design. Data were collected using semi-structured interview guide, questionnaires and documentary review, by involving 12 teachers, two educational officers, and 200 (80 boys and 120 girls) students. These study respondents were sampled through simple random and purposive sampling technique in which SPSS and inductive analysis procedures were employed to analyze their responses. The study determined that longer distance travelled by students to school made them reach schools late and with empty stomachs. Location of school has lead to mass failure to most of students, due to long walk among students have cause dropout from school and most of girls' student get pregnancy thus fails to attain their educational goals. Community secondary schools will continue performing poorly academically if there is no effort done to improve the provision of education to community secondary schools in Makambako Town Council.

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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

DEO	District Education Officer
DSE	Demand for Secondary Education
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination
MOEC	Ministry of Education and Culture
MOEVT	Ministry of Education and Vocational Training
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PE	Primary Education
PEDP	Primary Education Development Plan
SDT	Self-Determination Theory
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nation International Children's' Emergency Fund
UPE	Universal Primary Education

## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **1.1 General Introduction**

This introductory chapter provides background information, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, and research objectives. The chapter also presents research questions, scope of the study and significance of the study. Furthermore, the chapter gives a conceptual framework, definitions of key terms used in the study and organization of the study.

#### **1.2 Background to the Problem**

Demand for secondary education (SE) is growing as more countries progress towards attaining Universal Primary Education (UPE). In 2005, about 512 million students were enrolled in secondary schools worldwide, making an increase of more than 73 million from 1999 (UNESCO, 2007). Similar increase in secondary school enrolment has occurred in Tanzania from (2000) to (2011) as observed by Mbiti (2009).

The rapid expansion of secondary schools in Tanzania has been a result of increased social demand for Secondary Education brought about by the implementation of Universal Primary Education declared in the 1970s and later on the Primary Education Development Plan (PEDP) of 2002 (Ministry of Education and Culture-MOEC, 2004). The expansion of primary education (PE) have created demand for post-PE which calls for adequate supply of teachers and adequate secondary schools` learning environment as an increased incentive to complete primary school (UNICEF, 2006). To address the need for access and completion of Secondary



Education, consideration of the location of community secondary schools was not given prior critical concern in some regions in Tanzania and in Makambako in particular. Establishment of secondary schools did not consider factors which could contribute to high quality education for improved academic performance particularly traveling distance of learners and teachers to and from their schools.

Expanding enrolment through increased schools close to the people has been a great step towards universalizing education as the eligible students would access schools and participate in all the planned school activities. Location of secondary schools in different countries is widely dispersed from the students' homesteads. As a result, longer walking or travelling distance from home to school/college has mostly impacted school students particularly girls (Subrahmanian, 2003).

Furthermore, in the assessment of effect of travelling distance among students in community secondary schools in relation to the quality of education by Galabawa and Lwaitama (2008) revealed that most of the students arrived at school late, tired and lost interest in leaning and hence, poor academic performance. Access to quality Secondary Education is essential for developing active workforce for socio-economic development. To achieve the high quality workforce, involvement of educational stakeholders deems appropriate. In this regard, academic performance of secondary school learners at Makambako Town Council-depends heavily on stakeholders' (local development activists and policy makers) involvement in improving the quality of learning environment including the location of the school. Location is defined as the environmental condition around a school, which could be

urban or rural (Ezike, 1997). No its context (urban or rural), the location of the school has been found to be crucial to students` performance in their examinations.

Raychaudhuri, Debnath, Sen and Majumder (2010) report a positive relationship that exists between school location (closer distance to homesteads) and students` academic performance as they attend school regularly. Emore (2005) shares that distance to school together with school discipline; family background and school location caused truancy (attendance irregularity) among school students. Distance in association with location of the school seems to be one of the strong influencing origins for the academic performance among students. This was evidenced as well by Obemeata (1995) and Obayan (2003) who confirmed that school physical environment exerts dominant influence on students` academic performance.

Most of the ward or commonly known as community secondary schools in Tanzania were built through decentralization strategy which transferred decision making authority from higher authorities to the community members. The strategy mandated local authorities to decide about the location at which a new school was to be built. Following such mandate, most of the newly established schools were located far away from the vicinity of the community. Though political influences interfered with the decision of locating a given school/college (Hanson, 2003), such political interests aimed at gaining political popularity from the community members without considering other factors for secondary schools` location.

Long distance has opposing results among researchers on academic performance. It is commonly argued that longer distance to school reduces the ability of learners to

focus their attention in studies due to long walks or getting to class late. In some cases, because of traveling long distances without assured transport, students are trapped into unhealthy sexual behaviors which could not have been triggered if they walked reasonable distances to and from school. For example, it is common to hear girl students reported to be pregnant in most of the community schools because of living in a rented houses locally known a “*maghetto*”. This study presents some schools in Makambako Town Council, their distances from the village centre as well as their national examination results. Table 1.1 illustrates five schools and their estimated distances from the village centers.

**Table 1.1: Locations of Community Secondary Schools in Makambako TC and Academic Performance**

School	Distance	Year	Performance in division					Regional rank	National rank
			I	II	III	IV	Fail		
Mukilima	05km	2011	01	03	04	62	102	124/188	1874/3198
		2012	01	05	07	58	94	74/207	966/3396
		2013	02	03	21	42	80	50/81	1756/3256
Kipagano	6.5km	2011	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		2012	-	03	04	54	101	132/207	1432/3396
		2013	01	05	06	37	66	60/81	20067/3256
Lyamkena	05km	2011	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
		2012	-	-	-	-	-	--	-
		2013	03	06	25	73	43	26/81	883/3256
Maguvani	07km	2011	0	01	07	58	94	130/188	1911/3108
		2012	0	0	03	22	110	199/207	2817/3396
		2013	0	0	08	38	45	67/81	2214/3256
Makambako	01km	2011	12	29	17	-	-	-	-
		2012	08	25	23	-	-	-	-
		2013	-	22	27	-	-	-	-

Source: National Examination Council

Table 1.1 shows that community secondary schools which are located closer to the residential areas, performed well compared to their distant counterparts. Specifically, Maguvani secondary school attained poor results than other community school. This could be due to the long distance, which students have to cover to reach the school which is longer than other schools. In this school, most of the students use bicycles as means of transport. In addition, because of longer walking distance, some students at Maguvani secondary school have dropped out of school as use of bicycles made them tired thereby, losing an opportunity to sit for their Form four national examinations. The opposite was true for Makamabako secondary school where most of students were staying at school and they were doing well in the National Examinations. This situation prompted the researcher to look for a scientific explanation with regard to students' massive failure.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

There are several efforts which have been implemented to ensure SE offers quality learning outcomes. Such efforts include the establishments of the Tanzania Education and Training policies of 1995 and that of 2014 (Ministry of Education and Culture-MOEC, 1995; MOEVT, 2014) to guide educational provision at all levels, the Education Sector Development Programs for 2010-2015 (MOEVT, 2010) and other policy-related guidelines.

However, performance of some community secondary schools in the National Examinations has remained to be low in Makambako TC. This raised some questions for their poor performance in relation to their location and hence, this study. Investigation was deemed appropriate, as without it, schools would continue the

same without improvement in the students' performance while jeopardizing national efforts geared at having skilled and competent citizens.

#### **1.4 General and Specific Objectives of the Study**

This study explored the relationship between school location and learners' academic performance in community secondary schools in Makambako Town Council. To achieve the purpose of this study, four specific study objectives guided the process:

- (i) To investigate the extent to which school location affects the academic achievement of secondary school students in Makambako TC,
- (ii) To find out factors that determined location of community secondary schools in Makambako TC,
- (iii) To determine conditions used to allocate pupils to secondary schools, and
- (iv) Appropriate strategies to improve secondary school students' performance.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

The following four research questions were used by this study. Such questions were;

- (i) To what extent does school location affect students' academic performance in community secondary schools in Makambako TC?
- (ii) Which factors determine the location of community secondary schools in Makambako TC?
- (iii) Which conditions are used to allocate students to their respective secondary schools?
- (iv) What strategies should be used to improve secondary school students' academic performance in Makambako TC?

## **1.6 Significance of the Study**

This study provides information to planners, policy makers, teachers, parents and community members about the importance of appropriate location of the community secondary schools on learners' academic performance. Therefore, findings are appropriate in future planning and practice in building new secondary schools on proper strategies to institute better learning environment. Further, as long as school location was likely to affect academic performance of the learners, the findings open new avenues for future studies in different community secondary schools.

## **1.7 Scope, Delimitation and Limitations of the Study**

This study was delimited to only five community secondary schools (Maguvani, Kipagamo, Mukilima, Makambako and Lyamkena) in Makambako TC. Through these schools, students and teachers who participated in this study were drawn. Generalization of the study findings is limited to community secondary schools found in Makambako TC and any other schools with similar conditions. The other limitation of this study was that time and funds for conducting intensive and extensive fieldwork were limited. This was the major reason that only five schools were involved in the study. Also due to time limitation, the study did not involve other educational stakeholders for which generalization is also limited.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides related literatures to the study. It shows efforts employed by empirical studies of other researchers and their findings, theoretical framework, and identification of the research gap. The first section presents the theoretical framework of the study and it covers theories of motivation, and the second section reviews empirical literatures on the relationship between school location and learners academic performance.

#### 2.2 Theoretical Framework

This study was informed by two theories: *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT) which was developed by psychologists *Deci* and *Ryan* (1985), and the Motivational theory developed by *Maslow* (1940). The motivational theory by *Maslow* (1940) argues that *motivation* is a driving force for most of human behavior and its inherent growth and development tendencies. It emphasizes the degree to which an individual's behavior is self-motivated and self-determined. When applied to education, the self-determination theory is concerned with promoting in students an interest in learning, value of education, and confidence in their own capacities and attributes.

According to *Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs* motivational model (1940), motivational theories also explain that *learners' goals* affect the way they engage with academic tasks. Motivation is concerned with the *will* that students bring to a task and their level of interest which guide their behavior, and their belief about the

causes of their success or failure. *Weiner* (2004) elaborates that students' beliefs about the causes of academic success or failure affect their emotions and motivations. For example, when students attribute failure with the lack of efforts, and efforts is perceived as controllable, they experience the emotion of *guilt* and consequently increase their involvement in school activities for improved performance in their examinations and general life. In this study, the researcher determined the relationship that exists between motivation theory and self-determination theory on location of school and academic performance of learners

Individual learners' motivation towards education in community secondary schools should be complemented by schools' friendly environment to attract and motivate students for engaged learning in community secondary school. When a school is located far from where the students reside, they would drop from schools due to longer walking distance to and from the school.

On the other hand, poor support from parents/guardians marked by lack of follow-up on students would demoralize students as it would be difficult for the parents to diagnose learning trends of their children. Through parents' follow-up on their children's learning progress, it would be easy to realize other needs as exercise books, paying of school fees in time, provision of means of transportation and other needs of a child.

Similar to the emphasis by Maslow (1940), *Deci* and *Ryan* (1985) emphasized on learner's motivation. *Self-Determination Theory* (SDT) postulates the ability that educators have for moving the learner from a motivation state developed, regulated,



and maintained through the teacher or classroom rules to become self-motivated students. These theorists add that through punishment or teacher-imposed incentives, the value of education could be instilled and become valued by students who are motivated through valuing particularly when such learning is related to their lives. By delivering the content which is of direct relation and use to students, SDT argues that the one's innate needs is satisfied and the fundamentally changes human behavior. It is essential to educational planners and implementer's to note that the motivation cannot be taken for granted without appropriate environmental factors as they can either encourage or thwart the innate tendency to act to satisfy the needs (Deci & Ryan, 2002).

To this study, the two theories are relevant as they all emphasis motivation as a powerful engine to make students and teachers work intensively to achieve the desired goals. In this case, the school surroundings are essential since environmental factors attract both students and teachers as key partners in quality education provision.

## **2.3 Empirical Literature Review**

This section presents various studies conducted locally and internationally on the areas related to this study. Such presentation is organized based on the current study specific objectives.

### **2.3.1 Effects of School Location on Students' Academic Achievement**

Poor academic performance has been associated with the location of community secondary schools in various studies. Numerous studies link learner's poor academic

performance in specific with the walking distance which the learners travel to reach their schools. For example; Engelbrecht *et al.* (1996) in a study which investigated the location of schools, revealed that distance traveled by learners from home to school correlated positively with the academic performance of the students. The researcher elaborates further that most of the learners were affected by the distance which made them use most of their time on traveling than learning. The investigation by Morakinyo (2003) on the effect of distance to school students found that the falling level of academic achievement was attributed to teacher's non-use of verbal reinforcement strategy.

Moyo (2013) investigated the effects of poverty on access to education involving students from Tshazi Secondary School in the Insiza district in Kenya through questionnaires, interviews and content analysis. In that study, Moyo associated walking over long distances to and from school might lead to late coming at school and at home after school in evening. It was also explained that because of longer walking distance, fatigue and hunger lead students to drowsiness during learning as a result of walking over long distances compared to students from rich families who usually cycled to school making them at the advantage of arriving at school early without having lost any considerable amount of energy.

Walking distance as it has been identified by several researchers appears to be a common factor for poor academic performance. Adeboyeje, Olaniyi and Adepoju (2003) identify home-school distance through involvement of stakeholders as one among several factors that causes poor performance of students in public examinations. Other factors were identified to include poor location of the school,

incessant changes in government policies, closure of schools, which is contingent upon teachers' strike action, high student teacher ratio, poor supervision, monitoring and evaluation machinery, lack of good textbooks, poor content and context of instruction, poor and non conducive environment among others. In their explanation, Onderi, Kiplangat, and Awino (2014) citing Oriko (2002) and Reche *et al.* (2012) indicate that walking long distances to school greatly make students reach it with empty stomachs and lateness influencing negatively, their academic performance.

Other studies have found that the performance of students can be affected by little time to concentrate in studies due to distance as explained with and non-use of verbal reinforcement strategy by teachers. In addition, studies show that the attitude of some teachers to students lead to poor attendance in lessons, lateness to school, unsavory comments about student's performance that could damage their ego, and poor method of teaching.

Onyeachu (1996) examined the influence of school environment on the student academic performance in secondary schools in Lagos State. The study revealed a strong relationship on performance of learners in relation with school environment. Factors such as school facilities, class size, school location, and school plant planning were also examined to determine their effects on the academic achievement of secondary school students. In that study it was found out that most of secondary schools have inadequate facilities to support teaching and learning process thus leading to mass failures.

Moreover, Adell (2002) argued that poor performance in schools is an international problem that has been linked to the low social-economic background of the learners and school location which affect academic performance. Besides, the study by Brecht, Kruger and Booyesen (1996) assessing the provision of education revealed that performance of learners does not exist in a vacuum as it is closely linked to the broad social, economic and political structures of the particular country and its services. They explained that education and politics exist in a symbiotic relationship in view of the fact that education is always addressed within an environment of politics. This implies that these differences in academic performance are linked to social factors such as poverty, political, socio-economic problems.

Provision of education in a developing country like Tanzania is vital for the development of the Nation. In that regard, efforts are required to improve our education standards, particularly on the involvement community members in matters related to education as key beneficiaries and sources of curricular contents. Other than distance, academic performance of the learners is affected with numerous factors like students attendance and the the social status of their parents who fail to provide their sons and daughters with the basic school needs like exercise books, paying school fees timely, and other needed school contributions. geographical location of the school affect attitude of leaners towards academic performance (Onomuodeke,1995).

The other study by Komba, Hizza and Jonathan (2013) was conducted to link education providers, facilitators, and learning environments (facilities and infrastructure, availability of materials and performance) of ward secondary schools in Moshi district by involving four ward secondary schools. Through a total of 100

students, four head of schools, eight teachers, four ward education officers, two Municipal/District education officers using surveying interview method, elite interviews and document review found that there was no impressive performance among ward secondary schools in Moshi Municipal. Among the challenges that limited their performance included the lack of friendly teaching and learning environment.

Joseph (2004) conducted a doctoral study on the effects of location using questionnaire to collect the data to 40 schools considered to be poorly performing and forty schools that were performing well in the matric examinations based in disadvantaged community. The data obtained suggested that many schools (66.5% of schools surveyed) lacked effective management structures that are essential for the implementation of quality teaching and learning.

The other cause of poor performance in school was lack of support and active participation of the parents in the education of the learners. Several other causes were identified to include poor management of school resources for effective teaching and learning, lack of physical facilities remained an issue to the poorly performing schools as 54.5% of the surveyed schools, such school lacked shared vision and cooperation among the stakeholders of education for the provision of quality education, and non-discipline and non-committed learner bodies.

Similarly, Galabawa (2002) in a study which he conducted to and using and revealed that, when schools are located far distance from home, academic performance of learners is affected, as most of them remain with little time to concentrate on their

(private or in school) studies due to the long distances they travel to reach their schools.

### **2.3.2 Perceived Factors for the location of Community Secondary Schools**

In this sub-section, the study presents various studies conducted in different areas identifying factors which community members and their leaders consider appropriate for locating a school. Location of a particular school all around the world is conducted in the view of ensuring that effective teaching and learning process would take place.

This is to argue that infrastructures, proximity, and other amenities for approving learning environment come at its emphasis. Joshua and Modupe (2012) employing descriptive survey design to 60 principals and 540 teachers, examined the state of learning environment and infrastructure with their effects on teaching and learning activities. Their study concluded that the school should have developed learning infrastructure and environment created collaboratively by the school and other stakeholders for more conducive working environment which would sustain high-quality education assurance practices in secondary schools.

Infrastructures are focused by several stakeholders in the view of the leave no child behind academically (Isaiah, 2013). Isaiah identifies that school facilities are critical as they determine trends in school activities and processes in the view that are essential influences on teacher performance and student achievement. The author elaborates that school physical environment play key roles in influencing teachers level of satisfaction and their level of performance or productivity. Therefore, facility

quality is an important predictor of the decisions of teachers to leave their current position. It is because of the importance of the physical environment to the quality of education that, Farombi (1998) opined that a wealthy nation or society establish good schools with quality teachers, learning infrastructures that with such, students may learn with ease thus bringing about good academic achievement.

Hallak (1990) in specific stipulates clearly that facilities (school buildings, classrooms, accomodation, libraries, furture, recreational equipment, apparatus and other instructional materials) form one of the potent factors that contribute to academic achievement in the school system. In the view of their essential role to students' learning, he went reiterates that educational facilities should be located in appropriate places, while the needs of the users should be put into consideration. Hallak (1990) recommended that appropriate places in which school and its facilities are located significantly contributes to academic achievement. This was as well shown by Haverinen-Shaughnessy, Moschandreas, and Shaughnessy (2011) that locating a secondary school at place which would significantly lead into poor learning environments have proved to contribute to irregular student attendance and dropping out of school and teachers' absenteeism and ability to engage in the teaching and learning process.

Cohen (2010) despite acknowledging that most of the studies conducted on environmental conditions and its positive academic performance of students are limited, he informs that the quality of the school environment is essential on positive learning outcomes. He identifies two major sources of environmental problems in

schools: the quality of the land on which the school is built, and the quality of the school facility itself. Cohen (2010) further adds that there is a need for stakeholders to involve environmental planners to focus their attention on particular facility, and area in which the school facility will be located. School staffs should be involved as environmental injustices affect school's student and staff population. Their involvement is necessary as without their involvement experiences on the quality of the school and the extent to which it may affect or influence other buildings and developments in the neighborhood, city, or region would be missed.

### **2.3.3 Criteria Considered in the Allocation of Students**

Selection of pupils to join secondary education uses different criteria or policy guidelines among countries. For example, West, Barham and Hind (2009) report different criteria used in selecting pupils in England with significant proportion of academies and foundation schools basing on aptitude/ability in a subject area. They also report other criteria such as the use of interviews to very few schools though it has been prohibited by the Education and Inspections Act 2006 with some use of pre-admission 'meetings', use of other faiths to more voluntary aided schools, aptitude/ability in a subject area or sought reports from the primary school headteachers was used by a small number of grammar schools which by definition are academically selective, and the use of supplementary information form (SIF). West et al. (2009) report as well that religion, compassionate/exceptional factors, and random allocation were rarely used in selecting pupils in England.

Another study was conducted in Mumias in Kenya by Alari, Migosi and Avusa (2013) using interview through phenomenological design involving teachers and



students. The study found that majority (101) of the students equivalent to 67 of them strongly agreed and 34 agreed on the use of Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination (KCPE) to be the only placement criteria in secondary schools. Meanwhile, 6 of the teachers strongly agreed while 5 agreed that public secondary school placement of students should be based on other factors other than KCPE results. Though most countries use academic/subject performance as a major criteria for placing pupils into secondary schools, OECD (2008) advances a caution that the criteria poses the risk to equity arguing that it increases the risk of inequity because better-educated parents make better-informed choices.

### **2.3.4 Appropriate Strategies to Improve Community Secondary School**

#### **Performance**

Several strategies have been applied in the world to improve academic performance of the secondary school students. Two strategies have been identified to include the partnerships involving schools, families, and community agencies and organizations across the country and the opening of seven days a week ([www.directionservice.org/cadre/pdf/children\\_strategy\\_7.pdf](http://www.directionservice.org/cadre/pdf/children_strategy_7.pdf)). It is described that as schools and communities work together, both are strengthened in synergistic ways and make gains that outpace what either entity could accomplish on its own. Further, in New York City the Beacon School-Based Community Centers there are 81 schools programs which operate in all seven days of the week

A study by Nyagosia, Waweru and Njuguna (2013) cite seven correlates of effective schools by Lezotte (2010) who describes the seven Correlates of Effective Schools as powerful indicators of successful places where all children learn, regardless of

socioeconomic status or ethnicity. One of the correlate of Effective schools is the strong instructional leadership. It is informed by Lezotte (2001), and Musungu and Nasongo (2008) in Nyagosia et al. (2013) that the core role of the instructional leader is to ensure the achievement of the established mission through creating a good environment for the schools through supervising teachers' work by inspecting records such as schemes of work, lesson books, records of work covered, class attendance records, and clock in/clock out book. Joseph (2004) revealed literatures indicating that effective management and leadership is an essential characteristic of a successful school. The author reports that managers of schools that are poorly performing in the matric examination have to set up proper systems in place to ensure effective teaching and learning.

Joseph (2004) highlights such proper systems to include effective participation of all stakeholders in the management of the education of the learners is essential to improve the academic performance of learners in the matrix examination. It was exemplified that when there is active participation of parents in the education of their children it would essentially improve the discipline of the school as well as the academic performance of the learners. The other involved ensuring quality subject delivery by educators in the classroom.

Joseph (2004) informs as well that poor socio-economic conditions can negatively influence the academic performance of learners. Leadership was identified by Komla (2012) as an essential strategy. In a doctoral study involving four disadvantaged case rural schools (two low-achieving and two top-achieving) by Komla (2012) in Ghana

used qualitative methods of data collection (interviews and focus group meetings) through principals, teachers, students, parents, local education officers and community leaders. In that study it was found that effective leadership was essential.

Norviewu-Mortty (2012) identified seven interconnected elements of an effective leadership as a strategy for improving academic standards in disadvantaged schools in the Saboba District. Such elements are: shared school vision, the principal's positive personal attributes, successful instructional and managerial leadership, thriving collegial leadership, productive school and community partnerships for recruiting resources for the school, innovative physical and human resourcing and emerging positive values.

Lezotte (1991) proposed that in effective schools there is a clearly articulated school mission through whom the staff shares an understanding of and commitment to instructional goals, priorities, assessment procedures, and accountability. Therefore, clear and focused mission by those engaged in the educational practices is appropriate at improving school and learners' performance. Having schools through their managers which have missions was as well reported by Joseph (2004).

In that report, Joseph urges that school managers of the poorly performing schools to be visionary and innovative to turn their schools into centers of excellence. They must seek the assistance and cooperation of the community and the business people to improve the quality of education provided in schools. Through such assistance,

necessary physical facilities would be obtained to enhance the quality of teaching and learning and the academic performance of learners in the various subjects.

School safety and order is crucial to an effective school. Lezotte (2001) describes that in an effective school there is an orderly, purposeful, businesslike atmosphere, which is free from the threat of physical harm. School safety and order are crucial to an effective school. Lezotte (2001) describes that in an effective school there is an orderly, purposeful, businesslike atmosphere, which is free from the threat of physical harm. Indicators such as rising cases of strikes, drug abuse, arson and other forms of student-perpetrated violence should be avoided as they lead to loss of life and destruction of school property.

Moreover, Lezotte (2001) revealed that for school to be effective there should be a climate of high expectations in which the staff believes and demonstrates that all students can obtain mastery of the school's essential curriculum through challenging curricula and demanding tasks. School safety and order is crucial to an effective school. Lezotte (2001) describes that in an effective school there is an orderly, purposeful, businesslike atmosphere, which is free from the threat of physical harm. Indicators such as rising cases of strikes, drug abuse, arson and other forms of student-perpetrated violence should be avoided as they lead to loss of life and destruction of school property.

As well, Lezotte (2001) revealed that for school to be effective there should be a climate of high expectations in which the staff believes and demonstrates that all students can obtain mastery of the school's essential curriculum through challenging curricula and demanding tasks. To ensure improved academic performance of

previously disadvantaged schools, Joseph (2004) recommended two components: organizational support and individual support. In the organizational support it was reported that the School Management Teams [SMTs] of schools have to set up management systems in place to ensure effective teaching and learning at schools. Such management system should provide a suitable atmosphere needed for effective curriculum delivery at schools. There should be management of the human, physical and financial resources of a school for quality education for all. There should be management strategies that provide opportunities for all stakeholders to participate effectively in the school development programs.

In addition, schools have introduced and implement strategies to improve the learner attendance and discipline for quality education and to improve the academic performance, and introduce programs to increase the participation and support of parents in the education of learners.

On the individual support, Joseph (2004) recommended that sufficient individual support to the learners and educators are essential by organizing various programs to support them to improve the academic performance in the grade 12 examinations. The author adds that workshops and in-house training for educators are necessary ways to support the educators to enhance the quality of curriculum delivery at schools. Importantly, academic support programs like extra lessons during afternoons and holidays were also put forward to assist learners to improve their performance. Schools were required to place some necessary systems to address the socio-economic needs of learners.

In order to realize improved academic performance in Tanzania, the Ministry of Education and Culture [MOEC] (2000) in Tanzania highlighted seven programs;

- (a) Conduct a teacher's efficiency Needs Assessment *Target by 2000 for effective use of teaching force through program review and effective teacher deployment and management: Target – PTR to rise from 17 to 30 by 2005.*
- (b) Rationalization of the number of subjects and combinations offered in schools, Form I-IV and Form V-VI: *target- revised guidelines for this by mid 2002.*
- (c) Shifting an increased proportion of the cost of boarding facilities from the government to beneficiaries: *target –reduce government contribution by 50 per cent. Assessment of real boarding costs by 2001. Reduction of Government share on boarding for the rich by 2002.*
- (d) Strengthening the capacity of regions, districts and school authorities, through legislation to give them authority for the planning and delivery of secondary school services: *target–legislative amendments in place by 2001.*
- (e) Create a data collection and analysis unit in MOEC. *Target place by 2002.*
- (f) Reduce system wastage by improving or introducing adolescent counseling services to include HIV/AIDS problems, and encouraging greater partnerships between schools and parents; *target-immediate commencement of improved counseling services and full trained counselors by 2005.*
- (g) Community construction of hostels near day secondary schools in under-served and difficult life areas to prevent student drop out due to indiscipline and health problems. *Target Hostels built by 2005.*

These were good plans introduced by Government in order to improve education provision in the country, some of these programmes have been implemented such as provision of adolescent counseling services to include HIV/AIDS problems, and encouraging greater partnerships between schools and parents. Construction of hostels near day secondary schools in under-served and difficult life areas to prevent student drop out is still going on by involving community members' contributions.

#### **2.4 Research Gap**

Most of the literatures reviewed in this study have their origin of practice in the developed countries and few of the studies are available from developing countries, with very limited literatures from Tanzania. Therefore, this study was essentially designed to establish the relationship existing between the school location and learners' academic performance in Makambako TC for contributing to the existing gap of knowledge. It came to the researcher's interest that a study was required to establish the relationship for the policymakers, decision-makers and practitioners to make informed decisions in later stages for improved students' and teachers' learning and working conditions respectively. Such need came as other researchers and scholars have minimally focused on the relationship, which exists between the school location and academic performance. Particularly in Njombe region. Their focus has been on causes of poor academic performance relating to other factors such as indiscipline, ineffectiveness of teachers, poor instructional materials of the teachers, and low government fund to enhance effective learning to take place.

## **2.5 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is an abstract indication of how concepts and constructs are expected to interact in the actual setting, affect each other and laying the future study. The current study conceptualizes academic performance as an outcome construct brought by several important elements invested by stakeholders. For better understanding of the effects of school location on academic performance, this study reviewed quality determinants as were proposed by Delors (1998), Bergman (1996), and Omari (1995). These authors grouped such quality determinants into input, process and output components. Specifically, this study adopts a quality assurance model as presented by Omari (1995).

### **2.5.1 Inputs**

Under input, Omari (1995) assumed that provision of quality education requires adequate number of high quality teachers, and the availability of teaching and learning resources. Such resources include textbooks, chairs, and quality of teachers. Omari (1995) stressed the importance of high quality teachers in relation to teaching and learning process. The importance of teachers is also in various government documents and the demand by prominent educational scholars like Mwalimu Nyerere. Nyerere (1965) argues that no educational system which is of high quality than its teachers.

Therefore, the importance of teachers is given high consideration in variety of ways. The MOEC (1995) and MOEVT (2014) all stress the importance of teachers in the quality of learning outcomes of the learners. Apart from determining the relationship existing between the school location and academic performance, the current study



also determined the contribution of teachers in reducing such effects for improving learners' performance. Learners' performance on other hand depends on stakeholders' involvement. Such stakeholders include leaders from various authorities (ward executive officers and those from the district) and parents or community members as well. Involvement of educational stakeholders has direct and indirect effect in education provision as the two parts have critical responsibility of ensuring smooth schooling of the students.

As location of school depend on decisions made by leaders (local and government), Osokoya and Akuche (2005) urge administrators, teachers and community members to ensure availability of good infrastructures for quality learning outcomes. With particular concern, political decisions in Tanzania are necessary today as to increase the teacher- student ratio and number of secondary schools for locating students to the most nearby schools. Geographical location of the school is also necessary as distance from home residence of the learners and their facilitators is important to make them attracted with learning activities than longer traveling.

### **2.5.2 Process**

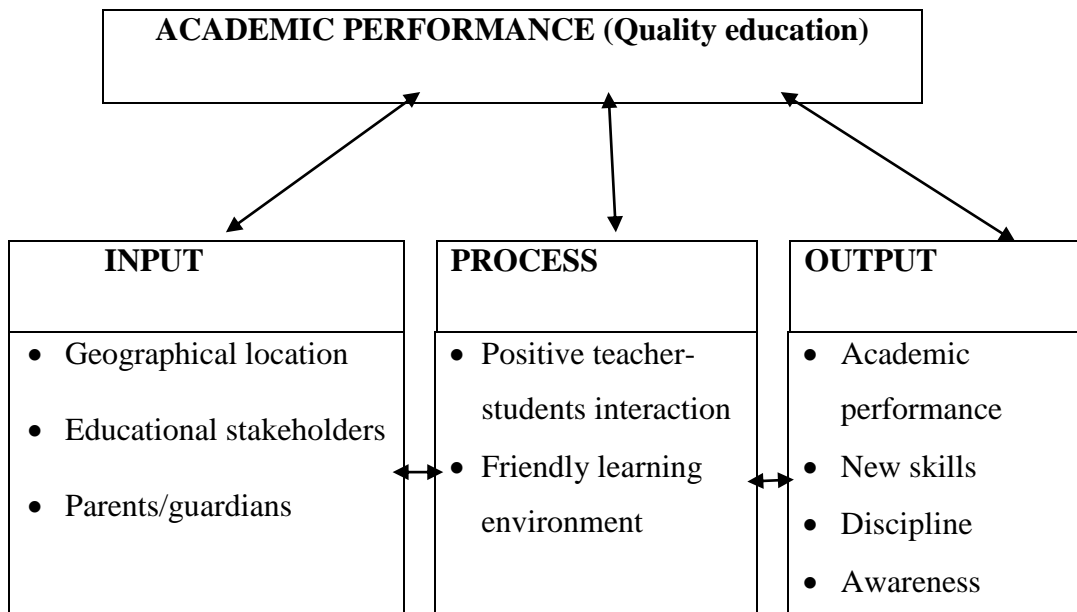
Omari (1995) argues that quality-learning outcome is an interaction of several elements. Such element include the quality of the teacher/student interaction in the teaching and learning process, if teacher and student have good interaction make a student to be free to express to the teacher when facing difficulties during teaching and learning process. Good infrastructure such as availability of chairs, tables, cool environment enhance learner to concentrate in studying, hence good performance is

archived. Good means of communication, appropriate management and administration, highly committed teachers, order and discipline in the school community leads to academic performance of the learners.

Parents/Guardians these are the ones who take ultimate responsibility for the upbringing of their children and set good examples for them to follow. They are responsible on instilling a sense of responsibility in their children and helping them to become good citizens, by supporting children to learn by providing with necessary requirements for learning to take place. Their full involvement is essential for smooth running of schools.

### **2.5.3 Output**

The output phase considers the kind of academic performance aimed to be achieved, namely academic performance, social skills, disciplined students and well educated graduates. These are considered to be manifestations of high education expected to be achieved. Serious investment in input and high quality process (positive interaction) between the learner and the facilitator (teacher) is necessary. Through such investment, the available learning materials would have significant contributions to the achievement of educational goals.



**Figure 2.1: Illustrating a Conceptual Relationship between School Location and Learners' Academic Performance**

Source: Quality Assurance Model adopted by Omari (1995)

Attainment of the educational goals is linked to the increased skills, learner (s) would acquire in the new learning contents, gain discipline in doing things precisely and aware of several issues happening in the society and their solutions where problems arises. Figure 2.1 illustrates a conceptual relationship of various components for quality learning outcomes.

## 2.6 Definitions of Operational Terms

**Secondary school:** Dodge (1962) defines secondary school as an educational institution where learners who passed examinations join for further schooling. The term secondary school as used in this study refers to the educational level above primary school.

**Community Secondary Schools:** Community secondary schools are schools

initiated by community members, generally commence by building the schools, and the local authority supports them by providing roofing materials and cement. In running the schools, the local authorities receive grants from the central government. In this study, community secondary schools include all secondary schools which were built through the funds and human contributions which were raised locally.

**School location:** In this study, location of school means the area where the schools are built in relation to the distance from residences of the learners and facilitators.

**Poor academic performance:** Academic performance is a term used for students based on and how poor they are doing in their studies. Poor academic performance is the outcome of the extent to which a student, teacher or institution has achieved their educational goals (McGill &Karn, 1997).

**Effective Learning:** is a state in which an individual is satisfied that he/she has acquired critical mind, which lead the learner to discover more things that are around him/her (Dale, 1964).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

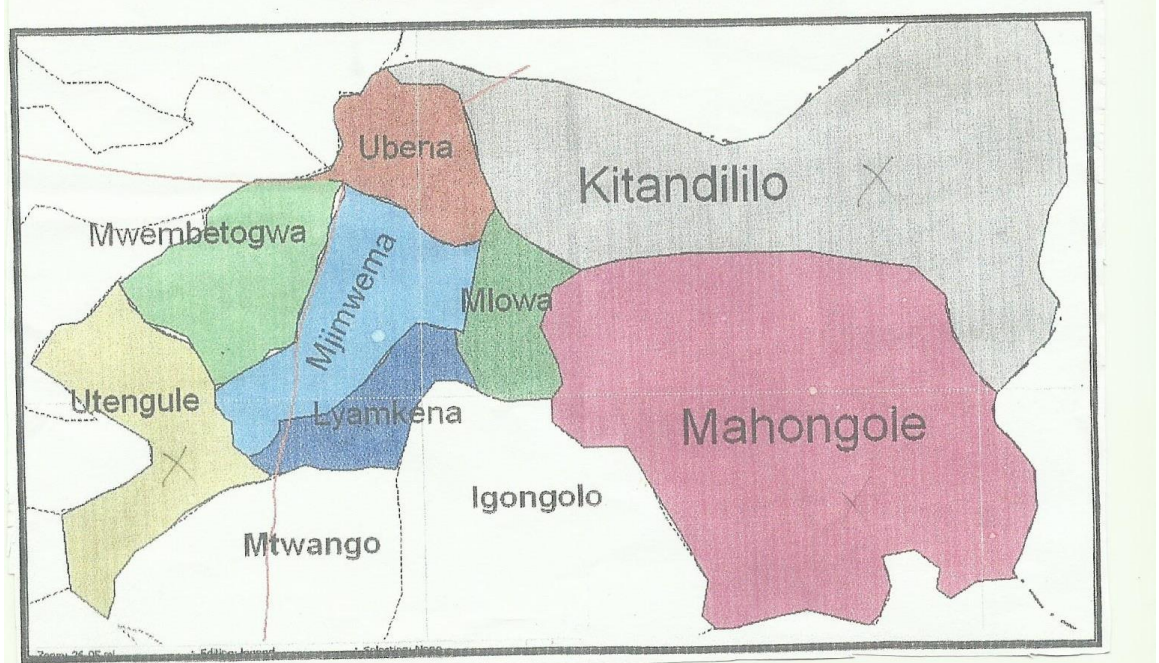
This section presents and justifies the choice of the study area, research design, and target population, sample and sampling procedure. The section also provides details on different approaches used in data collection and analysis as well as presentation of findings.

#### **3.2 Area of the Study**

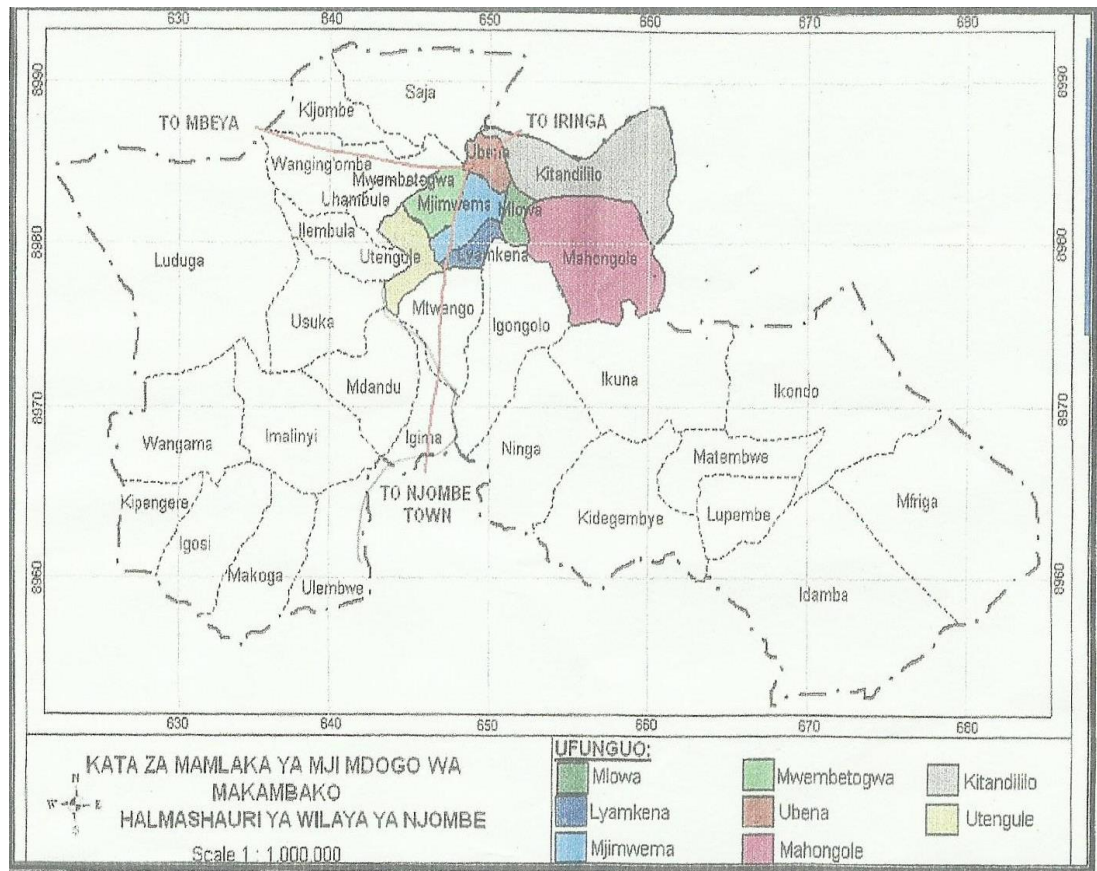
The study was conducted in Makambako TC, which is a medium-sized town and ward in the Njombe region. The area is found in Southern Highlands, located

roughly 40 miles north of Njombe city by road (Google map). The main crop grown is maize, tomato cultivation and trade. It is located at a junction between Njombe, Iringa, and Mbeya, approximately 40 miles North of the district capital of Njombe. According to Geospatial intelligence Agency (1995), Makambako, is found at  $8^{\circ} 51' 00''$  S and  $34^{\circ} 50' 00''$  E.

The Makambako ward is constituted of 14 villages; Ikwete, Maguvani, Kiumba, Ubena, Idofi, Mlowa, Mkolongo, Lymkena, Mwembegogwa, Mjimwema and Kipagamo. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2013), Makambako TC has a total of 93827 people (44031 men and 49796 female). The Figure 3.1 represents or map of Makambako TC indicating wards, which were involved in the study



**Figure 3.1: The Map of Makambako, with its Boundaries**



**Figure 3.2: The Map shows Villages which make Makambako Town Council and its Boundaries from Njombe Town Council**

### 3.3 Research Approach

There are three approaches used in conducting studies for fulfilling research purposes. Such approaches are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Creswell, 2003). For the purpose of this study, a dominantly qualitative approach was used to answer the specific objectives which guided the process. Qualitative approach is a research approach used when a researcher intends to understand phenomena in its contexts (De Vos, 2011; Hoepfl, 1997). Importantly, the approach produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or means of quantification (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Use of this approach by the current study was based on the fact that effect of distance to the school is a human experience which could be best

understood through insiders' experiences.

### **3.4 Research Design**

Research design refers to all the procedures selected by the researcher for studying a particular set of questions (Borg & Gall, 1989). It is a plan showing how research would be carried out by the researcher in order to obtain relevant data which fulfill the research objectives. In this study, the descriptive cross-sectional survey design was employed. This design deemed appropriate because it allows collection of data to study problems which are comparative in nature among various attributes of a group but at a single point in time (McNabb, 2004).



This study aimed to come-up with rich data on the effects of the school location on learner's academic performance among the selected community secondary schools in Makambako TC. In this study, data were collected from students, head of schools, district education officers, and parents. For students data was collected by using questionnaires each student answered question according to his/her understanding towards the problem. To parents data was collected through direct interview and questionnaires on how long distance affect academic of their children, also Heads of Schools and district education officers' data was collected through direct interview.

### **3.5 Target Population, Sample and Sampling Procedure**

#### **3.5.1 Target Populations**

A population is any group of individuals that has one or more characteristics in common and that is the interest to the researcher (Best & Kahn, 2006). The population for this study included all community secondary school students, teachers, Head of community secondary schools, District Education Officers, and community members from the selected community secondary schools in Makambako TC. Among the 12 secondary schools, five secondary schools were involved in the study.

#### **3.5.2 Sampling Techniques and Sample Size**

A sampling technique is a tactic used to select study a sample. A sample should be carefully selected, because through such selection the researcher is able to determine major characteristics required of the population (Leedy & Ormrod, 2001). In this research, purposive sampling and simple random sampling were used to obtain

research participants. Use of the purposive sampling technique was entirely aimed at obtaining rich and reliable data from the selected specific respondents (Kothari, 2000).

Respondents who were purposively sampled included the DEOs, Head of community secondary schools and parents. Selection of these respondents was done through purposive sampling technique because they are the ones who are daily involved in one way or another with students' learning. In addition, the DEOs of the Makambako TC were selected purposively because they are responsible for ensuring that there is an effective provision of education in their respective administrative areas including Makambako TC. On other hand, parents/guardians of the students of the involved community secondary schools were purposively involved to share their experiences on the effect of school location on academic performance. Purposive sampling technique was used to students who use more than 12 kilometers to and from home/school because are the once who distance affects their academic performance.

In this research, five community secondary schools constituted a sample. This number of secondary schools sufficed the purpose of the study as those who were involved were able to share their accumulated experiences on school learning and the associated effects of longer walking distance to school learning outcomes. This number of schools enabled the researcher to obtain a total of 200 students (40 from each school), 08 secondary school teachers, 40 parents/guardians and 02 educational officers. Makambako secondary school was chosen purposively for comparison purposes with other community secondary schools as the school has got a hostel.

The number of students engaged in this study, constituted those who daily walked more than 12 kilometers to the school. This number as it was randomly selected from each school, it was assumed by the study that it had represented the rider population of the shared experience on learning contexts. The given number of students formed the basis of obtaining parents who were purposively involved in the study.

### **3.6 Methods of Data Collection**

There are two data sources used in field any research. Brodeur, Israel and Craig (2014) categorize such data sources into two; primary and secondary data sources. White (2010) differentiates primary and secondary data arguing that, primary data involves immense collection and analysis of data in which the researcher is directly involved through focus groups, surveys, interviews, observations and tests.

Meanwhile, secondary sources involve collection of data from the government agencies. Such government agencies may have collected such data from non-governmental organizations or individuals as well. This study collected data from both government officials (education officer and teachers) using both secondary and primary data sources specifically the study collected data through interviews, documentary review, questionnaire and focus group discussion.

#### **3.6.1 Interview**

An interview is a scheduled set of questions administered through verbal communication (face to face) or mediated through technology such as cell phone

conversation, and social media such as twitter, face book) between a researcher and the respondents (Kothari, 2004). In conducting conversation between the researcher and respondents, three ways could be used. Such ways have been categorized by Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008) into structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews. Based on the nature of this study, semi- structured interview was used as it allows significant in-depth data gathering.

Interviews with education officers, teachers, students and selected parents/guardians from which these schools are found were a basis for obtaining first hand information. The method was used to collect views from the involved respondents on the relationship existing between school location and the learner's academic performance. Interview sessions were audio-taped to allow the researcher to listen several times before he developed meaning out of the conversations. Interview sessions took an average of 45 minutes per session.

### **3.6.2 Survey**

Alford (2011) describes questionnaire as the type of survey method which is a data collection methods involving measurement process in which questions are asked to respondents in a small number of people representing large number of people. Questionnaire is the most widely used data collection technique which provides an efficient way of collecting responses from a large sample prior to quantitative analysis (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). It works better with standardized questions which can be confidently interpreted the same way by all respondents (Robson, 2002).

Furthermore, questionnaires have a high rate of response, which saves time and cost. The questionnaire was employed to teachers, parents, and students as a way of triangulating data collected through interviews on the effects of the school location on academic performance of the students in community secondary schools. The technique was employed after the interview sessions in which respondents were left free to fill in answers to the given questions which were later subjected to analysis.

### **3.6.3 Documentary Review**

A document is a piece of written, printed, or electronic matter that provides information or evidence that serves as an official record with the help of marks, words or symbols (Buckland, 1991). This method has been considered by many qualitative studies as potential source of data (Mason, 1996). To fulfill the research purpose on effects of school location on academic performance, national examination and end of academic year or annual examinations results were reviewed. Use of these documents was important as Yin (1994) notes that documents complement other sources of information with the idea that documents corroborate and augment audience from other sources. Use of these documents was entirely based on Scott's (1990) caution that a document must be authentic (genuine), credible (free from error and distortion), representative (typical) and meaningful (clear and comprehensive). The method was used to collect data on the performance of students and factors for such location of school, for the purpose of ascertaining poor performance of the students.

### **3.7 Data Analysis Procedure**

Data analysis procedure entails organizing data in ways that allow researchers to see patterns, identifying themes, discovering relationships, develop expectations and make interpretations, mount critique or generate theories (Hatch, 2000). Both qualitative and quantitative data were subjected to data analysis producers to develop meaning. Qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews were subjected to the inductive data analysis procedure. The procedure allows analysis of data as per specific objective before a broad picture is developed from such data (Thomas, 2006). The procedure involves description of information, condensing such data into categories or themes for valid inference and interpretation (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

On the other hand, data which were collected through questionnaire were analyzed through the window-based program called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 17. Such data are presented in the form of graphs and tables. Furthermore data collected through documents (national and annual examinational results) were analyzed through the content analysis procedure. This procedure involves analysis of text data by reducing and sense marking effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings (Patton, 2002).

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

It is a common practice that researchers describe adherence to principles underlying conduct of studies involving human beings. Description of principles for conducting

research involves an aspect of ethical issues. Howe and Moses (1999) identify some of such ethical issues commonly observed include research permission, confidentiality, informed consent, and respect of the study site and respondents.

Before the fieldwork was conducted, the researcher of this study collected a permission letter from the research office of the Open University of Tanzania. The collected letter introduced the researcher to the local authorities where the study was conducted. After the research permission was solicited and arrived to the study sites, research participants were informed about the purpose of this study which helped to obtain participants who joined the study on their free will.

During the data collection, research participants were also assured of their privacy during reporting. Through ensured confidentiality, respondents felt free to express their experience and feeling about the effects of school location on students' academic performance within Makambako TC. Importantly the researcher respected the study participants and their localities.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the analysis and discusses the findings of the study obtained from the field. The findings are presented in accordance with the main themes embraced in the research objectives. Such objectives were: the investigation of the extent to which school distance affects the academic achievement of secondary school students in Makambako TC; to explore factors that have been perceived to determine location of community secondary schools, to find out the criteria used to allocate students to secondary schools; and to suggest the appropriate measures to improve achievement of secondary school students in Makambako TC.

#### **4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

The study involved a total of 200 students who were sampled from the five secondary schools, four Head of community secondary schools; and eight teachers from the four secondary schools. In addition one DEO and one district academic officer of the Makambako TC also constituted the sample.



**Table 4.1: Students Characteristics**

Name of the School	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
Mukilima	23	17	40
Kipagamo	25	16	41
Maguvani	13	26	39
Lyamkena	22	18	40
Makambako		40	40
<b>Total</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>200</b>

Source: Field Data (2015)

On the other hand, 40 parents/guardians with students in the sampled community secondary schools were involved in determining the effects of distance on academic performance of their children. Table 4.1 summarizes students' characteristics which formed the basis of data analysis and interpretation.

Table 4.1 illustrates the distribution of students in each school which were involved in the study. It indicates a total of 117 (58.5%) female students and 83 (41.5%) male students who were involved in the study. Thus, majority of the respondents were female students.

### **4.3 Effects of School Distance on Secondary Students' Academic**

#### **Performance in Makambako TC**

In determining the effects of distance from home to school, the study conducted a documentary review to identify distance students travel to the schools. The review was conducted focusing on the few schools in the Makambako TC as were discussed on chapter three of this study. Table 4.2 illustrates such distance students travelled to and from schools.

**Table 4.2: Distance to and from School**

Name of the school	Distance to the school			Total
	Below 6 km	At 6km-12km	Above 12 km	
Mukilima	09	20	11	40 (20%)
Kipagano	08	20	03	41 (20.5%)
Maguvani	04	19	16	39(19.5%)
Lyamkena	05	25	10	40 (20%)
Makambako	40	00	00	40 (20%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>200 (100%)</b>

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

As Table 4.2 illustrates, Maguvani and Lyamkena secondary schools had high numbers of students who walk or travel longer distance from their homes or rented houses compared to students of other schools. Among the involved students, 16 reported to walk at or above 12 kilometers per day. Because of longer walking distance to and from school, the study respondents (students) claimed that they reach schools late and tired. They elaborated that, such travelled distance to and from the schools posed serious impacts to their learning either in class or during their private studies when at home or in school. As a result most students claimed that they were unable to complete assignments as well as conducting private studies in the evening when in their homes.

On the other hand, 66 (33%) of students in Makambako TC walk shorter distance to their schools. This number of students informed that they walked such shorter distance to school because their homes were closely located to the schools. During the study, it was further informed by students that they were able to reach the school early, conduct school activities such as cleanliness and later prepare for their forthcoming school lessons.

Travelling a shorter distance to school made them to maintain friendly relationships with their teachers compared to their counterparts who have been in crisis with teachers. Those who walked longer distance were found claiming that they have been in poor relationship with teachers because of the inability to participate in morning school activities mainly cleanliness. Table 4.3 illustrates students' performance for students who walked six and beyond six kilometers to and from the schools.

**Table 4.3: National Examination Results for Students Walking Beyond Six Kilometers to and from the School**

School	Division I	Division II	Division III	Division IV	Fail	Total
Mukilima	-	-	-	20	21	41
Kipagamo	-	-	-	11	12	23
Lyamkena	-	-	-	12	07	19
Maguvani	-	-	-	22	29	51
Makambako	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-	<b>65</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>134</b>

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

The results as presented on Table 4.3 indicates clearly that longer walking distance to and from the school, have affected students' academic attainment in their terminal and National examinations. Most of students who walk beyond six kilometers were found to perform poorly in their National Examinations. It could also be observed from the Table 4.4 that no student who stayed further from school, attained division one to division three as all performed at division four and some totally failed.

Sometimes, failure of students to complete previously given home-works put them in crisis with the subject masters. Students held the view that longer distance to school impacted their academic achievement as was expected by subject masters, parents,

and students themselves. One of academic master from Maguvani secondary school shared the view arguing that longer distance impacted students' moral behaviors and perseverance to learning activities, hence poor performance to both internal and national examinations. The academic master added that some of such students who used to walk longer distance were bright but they have turned down to be among the poor performers in their class activities and examinations as well.

In contrast, the advantage of shorter distance to and from schools was revealed through a documentary review which was conducted by this study. In such review of documents, 66 (33%) of the sampled students, stayed in school hostels at Makambako secondary school or walked shorter distance to and from the school. It was established that the 33% of students did well in their terminal and national examinations compared to students who walked more than 12 kilometers each day (Table 4.4). This indicates that, distance affects academic performance of students in Makambako TC. It is in this indication that one could as well argue that shorter distance to and from school has academic advantage to schooling students. Table 4.4 illustrates the positive effect of shorter distance to and from the schools on academic performance.

**Table 4.4: National Examination Results for Students who stay in Hostel or Near School Environment**

School	Division I	Division II	Division III	Division IV	Fail	Total
Mukilima	01	03	-	-	-	04
Kipagamo	01	-	09	-	-	10
Lyamkena	-	-	04	-	-	04
Maguvani	-	01	06	-	-	07

Makambako	12	29	-	-	-	41
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>66</b>

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

One academic master of the involved schools was in favor of construction of hostels for students to stay at school and concentrate with schooling other than being interfered with non-academic issues. Construction of hostels was considered as an essential alternative to free students from the unacceptable behaviours on the way to or from the school or in their “*Maghetto*”. *Maghetto* is a Swahili word, implying houses or rooms rented by students. Non-academic matters were allegedly informed to confuse students as they caused learning interference. Figure 4.1 illustrates bicycles parked at one of the common tree at one of the community secondary schools in Makambako TC. Bicycles served as major means of transport used by students to make them reach schools early.

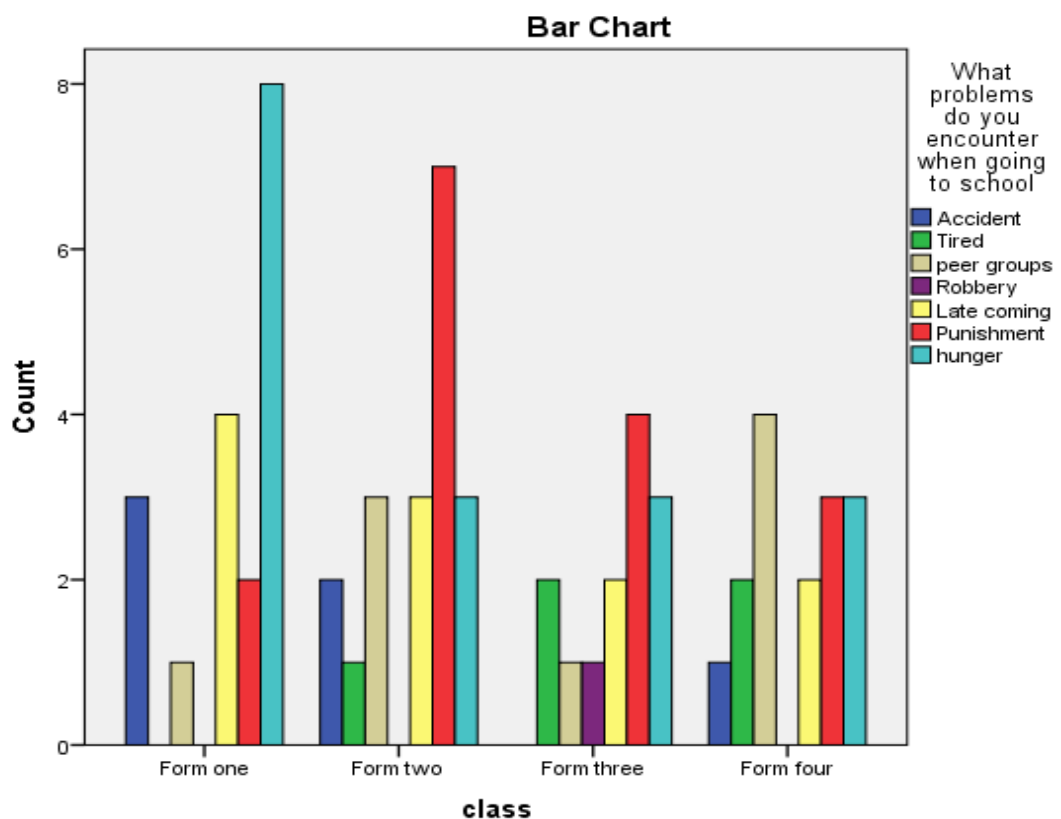


**Figure 4.1: Bicycles as the Most Common Means of Transport used by Students**

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

As it could be observed on Figure 4.1, bicycles have served as the most economical transport mean to make students reach their schools and return home easily. Though it could be considered that bicycles were the affordable means of transport, yet some students did not manage to have one. This indicates that a huge number of students who stayed far from their schools used their foot as the means of transport to reach schools.

Assertions made by students on the distance they travelled to and from school, this study explored from students about problems they encountered because of longer walking distance to school. Such problems were determined through the use of questionnaire and their responses are presented in Figure 4.2.



**Figure 4.2: Problems Encountered by Students as they Walk to and from School**

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

A Figure 4.2 illustrates, several problems identified to face students. Form one students identified hunger and late coming as serious problems they faced, whereas form two students had different responses. They identified punishment, late coming and peer groups as major problems they encountered. Meanwhile, the form three and form four students categorized punishment and hunger as common problems they faced though peer groups appeared to be high among the form four students.

It could be deduced from Figure 4.2 that across classes; hunger, lateness, punishment, peer pressure and tiredness emerged through careful analysis as major problems impacting students. Because of their lateness to school, students reported being punished by teachers which made them loose interest and concentration to school sessions. Such lose of interest and concentration to school resulted through psychological and mental disturbance caused by punishment. It was established that most of the late comers lost lessons offered in the first periods as some walk or travel from far places like Mahongole, Mlowa, Ikwete and Idofi. Loss of the daily first period counts much to student learning and its performance as such loss is not easily recovered by students. Because of inability of students to recover the loss, they also faced difficulty to make necessary preparation in their final examination.

It should be remembered that most of the students reside in the rented houses commonly known as “*Maghetto*” where they are responsible for all home related activities such as fetching water, food search and its preparation. As all these activities were potentially important for their survival, late coming accompanied with

tiredness when going to their residences after school sessions made them face difficult to obtain such basic needs. This situation affected students' academic as well as social preparation when at school or home. Figure 4.3 depicts the situation in one of the observed rented house by students. As it could be observed, the environment is appropriate for food preparation than conducting private studies after their meals. Inappropriateness of the rooms was found to be common in most of the observed houses as were found with soot, dirt-cooking utensils which could later cause epidemic diseases such as chlorella.



**Figure 4.3: One of Rooms used by Students for School and Residential Purposes**

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

The effect caused by longer walking distance to school was also revealed by one of the class masters at Lyamkena secondary school. The teacher elaborated that most of the students who travelled longer distance to school on foot, reached the school late when school sessions have commenced. The teacher highlighted on the need for



hostels to make students stay in schools for them to concentrate with academic matters.

Renting houses or rooms to be used by students as hostels was found by school girls to put them into high risk of pregnancies. They reported that they were being tempted by school boys, peer groups or adults to engage in sexual intercourse. This was common to school girls who claimed to walk or travel longer distance to school or as were visited by boys and men in their rooms they rented particularly during the evening. Girls claimed that because of poor living conditions they experience, were tempted to engage in sexual activities with some promises that they would be given some money to sustain their life within and outside the school premises. Some added that engagement in sexual activities subjected them to the risk of early pregnancies and infectious disease like HIV/AIDS.

This problem of early pregnancies affected a total of six girls from Mukilima, Makambako, and Lyamkena secondary schools who dropped from schooling. This was also confirmed by one of the respondents through interview. The respondent held this view adding that in addition to early pregnancies, tiredness made a significant contribution to school drop-out. These problems have been increasing because of some shoplifting or damage made by people to the bicycles with their bad intentions.

Such practices to the economically and most used mean of transport, made some students fail to attend schools. For that reason, poor students' attendance to schools

forced some parents to transfer their daughters or sons to other schools. For example, it was reported that one parent shifted his son from Lyamkena secondary school to Maguvani where it was convenient for the student.

To a lesser extent, accidents were also indicated among problems associated with longer walk to and from schools. Such problem was caused by students themselves or by other people who intentionally or unintentionally failed to obey road safety rules. Accidents were also caused by overcrowded bicycles in a limited road by students causing obstruction to one another. As they obstructed each other, some lacked tolerance and control resulting into occurrence of accidents. In one of the reported case, a student in Mukilima secondary school took six months to recover from the injuries, while the other student from Lyamkena secondary school died from road accident.

Long recovery from injuries affected the student in her learning achievement and academic performance. Drop-out on the other hand affected students, parents and nation's expectations from the schooling students. This implies that skills and knowledge designed for the students to acquire through schooling remain to be a crucial resource for use in both developed and developing countries to achieve modern socio-economic development. On the other hand, drop-out affect parents and schooling youth in achieving their expectations through schooling as it would be difficult for the youth to compete in securing jobs and practicing modern businesses in their future life.

Lack of hostels or dormitories in most of the Community secondary schools was highly linked to poor academic results, as most of students had inadequate time to engage in private studies when they reach home. Tiredness and lack of enough time to engage in private studies and the completion of homework assignments made students to have minimal knowledge ability among them which ultimately result into poor performance in their examinations. Most of students pointed out that, they had limited time for private studies as they reached home tired and in some cases, the home environment did not friendly favor their learning due to poor power electric supply. Students claimed to experience short of time for accomplishing school activities at home as family members tended to assign domestic activities for them to participate.

Respondents viewed hostels or dormitories in community secondary schools as necessarily to enable both students (boys and girls) to have enough time for private studies. Keeping students in hostels was considered as a useful means to free girls from home-related activities, out of the danger of early pregnancies, smoking and bad gang for boys while improving their academic performance.

Availability of dormitories was emphasized by Educational Officer as it made students performance well in their examinations. The Educational Officer exemplified the results of the Makambako secondary school mainly those by the advanced level secondary students. The Officer argued that the Makambako secondary school students performed well in their examinations as the majority of the students stayed within school premises or hostels. Accommodation of students with school premises differentiates their performance to the majority of students

from the community secondary schools. The officer exemplified that when students stay in hostels or dormitories they perform well in academic and in social life as they have more time for private study and low rate of pregnancy cases in schools. Thus, emphasis was to ensure that many community secondary schools introduce hostels to allocate more students in hostels for them to concentrate with studies.

The emphasis by the Educational Officer was made because most of the rented houses or rooms by students which were in poor conditions and unfavorable for positive learning. The poor conditions of the rented houses/rooms were revealed by the current study as some lacked chairs for students to sit on and conduct studies. Figure 4.4 illustrates the situation of the students' rented rooms. In such situation, a



student could be at high risk of health problems and sleeping.

**Figure 4.4: One of the Students' Rented Rooms**

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Effects of the longer walking distance to schools as were identified by respondents of this study, made students perform poorly because of reaching schools late and tired. Other researchers (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 1998; Moyo, 2013; Rechel *et al.*, 2012; Onyeachu, 1996) all found similar situation faced students in different contexts of their studies. These researchers acknowledge that longer distance to schools where students are to access education has made them reach late, tired and with empty stomachs. Researchers such as Onderi, Kiplangat and Awino (2014) directly relate longer travelling to school by students with high ability of reaching schools with empty stomachs.

On the other hand, some researchers consider distance as one among students which impacts negative the academic performance of students. (Morakinyo, 2003; Komba, Hizza, & Jonathan, 2013; Adeboyeje *et al.*, 2003; Adell, 2002; Galabawa, 2002; Bretch, Kruger & Booysen, 1996; and Joseph, 2004) consider distance as one among the problems which impacts academic performance of students. In construct, Morakinyo (2003) specifically considers lack of motivation as core to poor performance of the students.

#### **4.4 Location of Community Secondary Schools in Makambako TC**

Data for this study objective were collected to determine factors perceived by respondents as important before a new Community secondary school is established in Makambako TC. Data for this objective were collected from the four categories of respondents who were involved in this study. Analysis of the findings revealed

various factors as were given by respondents to be useful in determining the location or establishment of a new secondary school in Makambako TC.

Through the Interview with the parents/guardians, availability of land was one of the most essential determinant considerations in locating schools. Parents explained that building a school required enough space or land for different school activities including classrooms, play grounds, laboratories, staff houses and dormitories. Such land could also be used by schools in teaching and learning best farming practices for improving quality of production in the society. In addition, such land could be used for farming activities as we used to hear its practice in some schools like Lyamungo, Kibiti and Weruweru which helped in producing variety of crops for students' consumption and raised school income. One parent asserted;

*Farming or gardening is important for students to learn modern farming practices as not all would pass well their final examination and join advanced levels of education (Interview; 11<sup>th</sup> march, 2005).*

Enough land for the school activities was considered by parents as appropriate for serving different functions in the society and the school in particular. Through products which would be harvested from the gardens or farms, schools would earn income through selling the food products. In addition, such space was necessary for raising other school structures which could later serve the community within or outside Makambako TC as is one of the fast growing towns. When schools occupy large land for school purposes, expansion of the town in line with its high population increase would not cause unnecessary compensation costs. It is common that people tend to encroach school compounds for their socio-economic activities and claim to own that land when inhabit it for some years. In turn, it may cause the government or

any other educational authorities in re-locating people to other areas and sometimes it may involve compensation.

Importantly, large and enough land for the school serves as a protection to students particularly girls from the harmful influences caused by urbanization. Parents mentioned sexual activities as one which needed control through hostels constructed in large land under the protection of the matron and patron in school environment. Therefore, location of schools away from Makambako TC where large land was easy to find, intended to keep students away from disturbances in town and enable them to highly concentrate with studies in a safe and quiet environment, thus improving academic performance of learners.

In addition, political motives and administrators had influence in the location of some schools as it was practiced to Maguvani and Lyamkena secondary schools. Though this factor was given minimal consideration by parents with their children's community secondary schools, but it noted to have caused some problems to the community. Parents informed that they were being forced to agree about the location of some schools based on politician's interests. It was exemplified that one member of the Parliament (MP) in Makambako TC was pinpointed by parents as one of those who had political interest in locating some schools. It was elaborated that the MP initiated a building foundations of Lyamkena and Maguvani secondary schools by financing the cost and later left the construction costs to be shouldered by the Makambako TC. This made the Lyamkena secondary school to be out of the town because of political influences though it benefited from large land it occupies. Parents claimed the involvement of political interests in locating community

secondary schools to have both, advantage and disadvantages to the community surrounding such schools like the Lyamkena as it has continued serving the community with poor infrastructures.

In contrast, parents who live closer to schools were favored with the location of those schools as arguing that their sons and daughters were able to access schools easily and perform better. On the other hand, some parents claimed against such location of schools as their children used to travel longer to reach schools. This is to say that location of community secondary schools in Makambako TC was influenced by the availability of land to locate buildings, availability of social services, and political influences. All in all, location of community secondary schools should follow requirements of the MoEVT in the locating and registration of secondary school, such criteria may be availability of dormitories, playing grounds, library and other essential component of the school.

Several researchers have also determined some factor essential to be considered as community and the government intends to establish a new community school. Land as was highly considered by parents and the Educational Officer in the current study was found to be the major factor for locating schools by Joshua and Modupe (2012) and Hallak (1990). Appropriate place for locating school is paramount in the view that a place should have facilities to promote positive learning and preparation for both students and staff.

Findings as given by participants diverge with findings of other studies. Their difference is based on the fact that no study has confirmed that politicians have



influence in locating a school as it was found in Makambako TC. All in all studies (local or international) emphasis on the equal opportunities for all eligible children to access secondary education. The right to education as was emphasized by participants are in line to leave no child behind academically approach as identified by Isaiah (2013).

#### **4.5 Criteria used to Allocate Students to Secondary Schools**

Allocation of students to community secondary schools is mainly done by respective local authorities based on their own conditions. The local authority responsible for the selection and location of students in a particular secondary school is composed by the Regional Administrational System (RAS), Makambako Town Council Director, primary education officers, and Secondary education officers.

Based on the fact that the local authority through its board members was mandated to allocate students to particular schools, the study involved the Educational Officers in establishing such criteria through research. Interview method was employed to the Makambako Education Officer and Academic Officer to determine such criteria. Through the analysis, the study revealed that Makambako TC selected and allocated students to the particular Community secondary schools basing on “catchment area concept”.

The concept is used by the members involved in allocating students by looking at the school which is nearby to most students before allocating them to a school found far from their home places. Through the catchment area concept, students were being posted to the nearby secondary schools. In some situations where catchment area

concept was hard to apply, students were allocated to other schools even though it involves longer travelling to the students' home places.

The other criterion which was used to allocate students was the "Education for All" concept. The concept centers on the fact that access to SE is a right to all pupils who pass their Primary School Leaving Examinations [PSLE]. One Educational Officer exemplified that, in a certain year there were 1750 students who passed the PSLE in Makambako TC, and there was a limited capacity of the nearby secondary schools to take up all those who passed PSLE. Thus, they located students in any secondary school which had the capacity (enough infrastructures on chairs and desks and enough rooms) to absorb pupils for them to benefit from accessing SE as their rights. The catchment area and Education for All concepts have been in use as there are limited chances in some schools within the Makambako TC. As a result, students are being located to any school inconsiderate of the walking distance to schools which later affected their academic performance.

Other criterion used by Makambako TC to allocate students to a particular school was the population growth. Because of high population, the nearby primary schools tend to have so many pupils who sit for the PSLE compared to other schools. It was reported by the educational officer that their allocation was essentially based on areas with fewer students to fill vacancies. Mji mwema was among the wards which were reported to have high population.

Further, PSLE results formed a strong criterion upon the selection of students to secondary schools. The Educational officers insisted that academic passing of the

students in their PSLE was mostly considered in selecting and allocating students to schools. It was further informed by the educational officer that those who highly passed than others were being posted to special schools such as: Kibaha, Jangwani, and Ifunda with majority being located to community secondary schools in Makambako TC.

To a lesser extent, the selection board allocated students through a list of the reserved students to fill “gaps” to the first selection of students. The second selection is used by the selection board to fill vacancies following disappearance of some students who for the unknown reasons did not join SE as were expected. Therefore, their chances were being filled with other students without focusing on catchment schools.

The current study identified catchment area concept, population growth, education for all concept, and academic performance as major criteria for allocating pupils to secondary schools in Makambako TC. These factors are converges and diverges with factors established by other studies. For example, just as was emphasized by the Education Officer in the current study on the use of academic performance, this has been common criterion in several countries like England (West, Barham, & Hind, 2009; Coldron, Cripps & Shipton, 2010), and in Kenya as well (Aleri *et al.*, 2013). Though aptitude/ability is mostly used in England, some other criteria have been used to a lesser extent such as religion (West *et al.*, 2009).

In addition, use of catchment area concept has been common in several countries. Coldron, Cripps and Shipton (2010) refer to school given students because of the proximity as feeder schools. OECD (2013) inform that school catchment area is used

as a criterion because for administrators to ensure adequate capacity for students in those areas and plan for future needs, facilitate formal institutional areas such as official communities or neighbourhoods that require separate education administration for legal, historical, or economic purposes, and deliberate isolation of populations due to racial, ethnic or socio-economic differences with other populations. Though catchment area concept was preferred by participants, Cambridgeshire County Council (2009) challenged the use of catchment areas to organise school admissions informing that it sustains social inequalities as it distorts local housing markets and that it provides some certainty of secondary school provision and support closer working with local communities linked to primary schools.

Population growth has not been considered as an essential criterion to be used in selecting pupils for secondary education. Though it remained as an essential criterion for selecting pupils to join SE in Makambako TC in Tanzania, literatures have not identified population as an essential criterion.

#### **4.6 Appropriate Strategies to Improve Students' Academic Performance**

Better academic results are the expectations of the nation, parents and students. To achieve excellence in academics, involvement of stakeholders and other resources has been a claim of several educational literatures in the world. Bearing this fact in mind, the study sought to establish essential measures to be employed to improve students' academic performance. In determining measures to be employed by educational authorities in collaboration with community members to better students' academic achievement, the study involved educational officers, teachers and parents.

Semi-structured interviews were employed as data collection method to the specified respondents.

Respondents proposed an increased number of secondary schools, collective involvement of key stakeholders (government, non-governmental organizations- NGO's, and community members), increased efforts in constructing teachers' houses, locating schools around social services, and short and long-term plans in constructing hostels as major measures to improve school environments for effective teaching and learning.

Education Officer informed that improvement of student's results would be possible by reducing longer travelling distance by increasing the number of secondary schools in Makambako TC. By increasing the number of secondary schools, students would be located in their catchment secondary schools. Location of students in the nearby schools (catchment schools) was perceived to have positive influence to the school (teachers and students) performance as they would be getting to school early, healthy and energetic. This in turn, would make most of the students who walk or travel longer distance to concentrate with their studies as they would as well reduce conflict with their teachers. It was insisted by one academic master during the interview that;

*Such approach would reduce the temptations girls' students face from the boys or men in the streets and improve their access and completion of schools as well as their academic performance (Interview: 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2015).*

The other strategy proposed by respondents was the involvement of key stakeholders (government, community members and NGO's) in making decision related to the location of secondary schools. The involvement of all these key stakeholders would

help not only in making desired decisions for locating schools but also in building more classes, schools, laboratory and all other amenities for quality learning environment.

These stakeholders should as well be involved in sharing their experiences to solicit for donors who could sufficiently contribute in rehabilitating or building new schools. Wider involvement of NGO's and community members would make them part and parcel of the school management advisors as well as owners who in turn would raise students' schooling morale. Importantly, community and NGO's involvement would help in ensuring accountability in schools through careful monitoring of the use of funds and other resources for effective schools operations.

Construction of teachers' houses was as well suggested. This measure was suggested because most of the schools visited had no enough houses to keep teachers within school premises. By constructing staffs' houses, it reduces teachers fatigue as they would walking shorter distances to school and assume their responsibilities appropriately. One teacher explained that distance to school made to have poor preparation at their home. He identified that they faced community conflicts with parents as some claim that they harassed their students when in schools to a level that some parents attempted to fight teachers. The teacher was quoted as saying:

*Actually we are charged with a noble responsibility by the nation of ensuring that students learn academic and social matters such as cooperation and good discipline. While we work to ensure that our students acquire both academic and non-academic skills, parents threaten us that we are harassing their sons and daughters. This working condition discourages us much (Interview; Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup>, February, 2015).*

Availability of social services around school compounds was insisted as well as an important strategy in improving the quality of school environments for better academic performance. However, availability of such social services was viewed by teachers to be another problem they faced as land allocated for school use was small to accommodate different activities apart from academics. Nevertheless, teachers and educational officer insisted that there should be dedicated and purposive mechanisms to ensure availability of social services such as electricity, medical care, water and markets for the involved parties (students, teachers and parents) to benefit from them than being acquired in a distance from the school location. Easy accessibility to the social services would reduce wastage of time spent by teachers and students in searching for services.

The educational officer through the interview informed clearly that availability of the social services (transport facilities and electricity) within the school premises would help the remotely located schools like Lyamkena and Maguvani improve their students' performance. Easy access to services by these schools like any other school (shortly or far located) would make their teachers and students motivated to work energetically. Both teachers and students would not miss their first periods as they used because of transport facilities.

On the other hand, stakeholders (community members and NGO's) urged Makambako TC and any other local authorities to have achievable plans for building teacher's houses and students' dormitories annually. Such plans would help the TC and community members at large on problems associated with poor learning

environment for most of students. The education officer informed that the Makambako TC is undertaking a short and long term plans to ensure that schools have established dormitories and houses to serve students and teachers respectively.

During the study with the Education officer, it was found that the projection was too high to reach its targets as was expected that its implementation would reach its peak by 2030. The Education officer also urged communities to establish and contribute for the provision of midday meals in schools. Such provision of meals would help students particularly those who come from poor families or experiencing longer travel to school daily to have equal learning opportunities with their counterparts. The educational officer further advised community members to introduce such provision as it has proved success in other schools.

According to the District Academic Officer in Makambako TC, factors for poor performance of learners in Makambako TC included poor living environment for teachers. This problem made most of the teachers to hire houses which could accommodate their families far from schools. Consequently, many teachers arrived at their respective schools late affecting their preparation and implementation of their plans in classrooms. The educational officer clarified that such teachers solicited some houses far from their schools because in some places there were no adequate social services such as hospitals, markets and electricity around schools.

Electric power availability to the community secondary schools could enable teachers to prepare lessons well during the night and other school administrative works. Availability of social services like electricity and hospitals as well could



contribute highly in attracting new employees to stay in their respective schools while benefiting students' learning than schools with poor social services around. Social services such as that hospitals, markets, electricity, are crucial to both students and students as they enhance. Importantly, all the study participants argued that academic performance need a tranquil teaching and learning environment. Therefore, the study also holds the position that efforts are required to provide schools with necessary amenities to attract and retain teachers in particular schools.

Academic performance in school is a result of several factors which are interrelated. Working in collaboration between key stakeholders and schools helps in ridding off problems or hurdles which impinge effective delivery of education. To some extent study findings relates with arguments by the MOEC (2000) on construction of hostels as an important mean to improve students' academic performance. Therefore, the current study findings should be looked into with care if educational stakeholders are to improve their students' academic performance. For improved academic performance, monitoring and evaluation of learners is at the core as Henderson and Berla (2004) note. With hostels and staffs houses without commitment in teaching and learning process, it would be hard to improve it.

Overall, the study findings suggest that without change in school environmental conditions (hostels, availability of staffs' houses, and other social services like electricity and hospital or medical care) it would be hard to motivate learners and teachers to work and stay motivated. This is in line with the theoretical propositions by Deci and Ryan (1985) and Maslow (1940).

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

## **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter summarizes the study and its findings. It further presents conclusions drawn from the data discussion and its interpretation. Furthermore, it provides some recommendations for policy, practice and further research.

## **5.2 Summary of the Study**

The study sought to determine the effects of school location on learners' academic performance in Makambako TC. It further explored strategies to improve school learning environment for high academic performance of students in Makambako TC. The study, observed gender representation in sampling as both boys and girls were involved to provide their experiences on the effects of school location mainly distance on their academic performance in Makambako TC.

Data were collected through questionnaires administered to students, and interviews to teachers and Educational Officers in Makambako TC. Written documents provided evidence on the effect of distance to students learning such documents were the government circulars, research findings and educational journals. A descriptive cross-sectional design was employed as it was considered appropriate in collecting data on the effects of distance to the given population. The data gathered from the questionnaires were analyzed by the aid of window based program- statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 17. Meanwhile, interview data were analyzed through the inductive data analysis procedure. Documents were also analyzed through content analysis procedure. The study findings are summarized based on the objectives which guided the data collection as follows;

### **5.2.1 Effects of Distance on Academic Performance of students**

The study found that long walking to schools affected students' performance as compared to those who stay within school environment. In all school studied no student who walked more than six kilometers a day obtained division I-III. Most of students argued that longer distance made them reach schools tired and unprepared for classroom and private studies. Poor preparation in school sessions or in the evening impacted academics resulting into failures in their national Examinations. Some students also reported theft cases of their bicycles which they used as the major means of transport as they go to schools. Longer walking to school affected teachers as well as they reached late and tired in schools.

### **5.2.2 Perceived Factors Determining Location of Community Secondary**

#### **Schools in Makambako TC**

Some factors determining location of secondary schools were also revealed. Parents/guardians in Makambako TC identified the availability of land which they used for constructing different school buildings/classes, play grounds and dormitories. Others respondents argued that urbanization was crucial determinant factor as it was perceived that locating school in the TC would endanger school girls into sexual activities. On the other hand, urbanization would also influence boys to engage in juvenile activities. The other determining factor for school location was the political motives. Politicians influenced the location of some schools like Maguvani and Lyamkena to be located far from the neighboring community.

### 5.2.3 Criteria Considered Essential in Allocating Students to a Particular Secondary School

The study established that selection of students to the most of community secondary school was done through the catchment area concept. Sometimes, students were located to secondary schools without considering the distance they would travel rather their rights to education was paramount. On the other hand, secondary education officer informed that the selection of students to secondary schools was based on student's performance in their PSLE results. Their performance made those who did better than others to be posted to some special schools such as Kibaha, Jagwani and Ifunda while those who performed on average were located to community secondary schools in Makambako TC.

### 5.3 Conclusion

Community secondary schools will continue performing poorly academically if there is no effort done to improve the provision of education to community secondary schools in Makambako Town Council, because long walking has an effect towards poor academic performance as shown in table below:

**Table 5.1: National Examination Results for Students Walking beyond Six Kilometers to and from the School**

School	Division I	Division II	Division III	Division IV	Fail	Total
Mukilima	-	-	-	20	21	41
Kipagamo	-	-	-	11	12	23
Lyamkena	-	-	-	12	07	19
Maguvani	-	-	-	22	29	51
Makambako	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-	<b>65</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>134</b>

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

The location of community secondary schools depend on the availability of the open land for various school socio-economic activities. Therefore it is equally important that secondary schools in Tanzania be given enough land to allow schools to establish on their free will various structures and activities in their given land. To make this possible, educational stakeholders (parents, Educational supervisors and politicians) should work cooperatively and wisely to make the school environment attractive for both students and teachers.

Given that stakeholders identified different criteria they used to allocate pupils into various secondary schools, consideration on the students' ability to reach their schools is necessary. This would reduce claims that students do walk or travel longer to reach schools while being tempted differently on the way to school or home. These would potentially serve the students from poor families who do not afford to hire transport or buy their bicycles to help them reach schools earlier. The opposite is that "*Maghetto*" would continue harboring students in a way that facilitates pregnancies to girls and juvenile behaviors to boys. Academic ability is a key to the location of students as without it the educational quality would be compromised.

Construction of hostels for students and staff houses remains essential for high students' academic performance. Various actors (government, NGOs and parents) need to cooperatively work to find donors and other partners to better school learning contexts. Parents' awareness on the importance of education to their sons and daughters as well as community well-being is crucial. Their involvement in construction and contribution in various kinds is important for sharing their efforts with the government in improving teaching and learning contexts and facilities.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

This study recommends three aspects based on study findings: Such recommendations are based on policy, practices and further research. In order to improve student's academic performance, it was suggested that there should be more efforts to build new secondary schools in Makambako TC to match with high population growth. Construction of other schools and the rehabilitation or expansion of the existing schools would enable schools to have enough capacity to absorb students. Through increased school capacity to absorb many students would reduce dispersing teachers in schools which in the end schools remain with few teachers and inadequate infrastructures.

The other strategy was the establishment of schools close to the social services like transport facilities and electricity in community secondary schools which have difficulty living conditions like Lyamkena and Maguvani to motivate teachers to reside around school premises. Hence solve the problem of late coming to school to both teachers and students.

### **5.4.1 Recommendation for Policy Matters**

Given that educational policy governs the daily educational practices, it is essential that the policy provide the following:

- (i) It should clearly stipulate the amenities essential for the location of schools.
- (ii) That no school should open without hostels to accommodate students in school premises for discipline in learning habits, school attendance and in academic

performance. The policy should also limit opening of schools without teachers' houses as well.

- (iii) Encourage collaboration between public and private sectors in building, organizing and implementing school activities.

#### **5.4.2 Recommendation on Practice**

To improve schools and students' academic performance, parents or community members in collaboration with the local authority leaders should not be driven by their personal motives when locating schools. Educational authorities should develop, distribute and strictly administer standards to guide all providers (public and private) adhere to the laid standards.

#### **5.4.3 Recommendation for Further Research**

This study recommends the following areas for further research:

- (i) Similar study should be replicated in other areas to determine the effect of distance on students' academic performance.
- (ii) To conduct a study for determining the effects of staying in rented premises among secondary school girls
- (iii) A study is required on harmonized conditions which could be used to locate new secondary schools and students for improved academic performance.



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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Interview Guide for Parents/ Guardians

1. Gender ( )
2. Age ( )
3. What is the distance that your son or daughters travel to secondary school?
4. How do most students reach schools?
5. Which effects do you attach to such travelling distance on students schooling?
6. Which factors are considered in locating secondary schools in Makambako TC?
7. In which ways should the students' performance be improved in Makambako TC?
8. What support do you give your son or daughter?
  - (a) School fees paid in time.....
  - (b) Transport facilitation.....
  - (c) Assist them with home works .....
  - (d) Exercise books, pen, shoes etc.....

**Thank you for participating**

## Appendix II: Academic Teachers' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is intended to explore your views about school location affects the teaching and learning process at your school. Please respond to all the questions proposed bellow as academic teacher. The information you provide will strictly be treated confidentially and will be used only for the purpose of this Study.

1. Your Gender ( )
2. Your Age
3. Name of the school.....
4. Teaching experience (yrs).....
5. Distance from home to school, in km.....
6. (a) Where do you live? (Tick one option
  - (i) In school quarters ( )
  - (ii) Own house ( )
  - (iii) Rented house near the school ( )
  - (iv) Rented house distant from the school ( )
7. How far do you stay from the school?
  - (i) ½-1km ( )
  - (ii) 2km—4km ( )
  - (iii) 5km—7km ( )
  - (iv) More than 7kms ( )
  - (v) Any other (mention).....

8. How does the distance to school affect your efficiency in teaching?

.....  
 .....

9. In the following questions please **tick** in the box against the most appropriate answer.

(a) How many students live in school hostel/near the school?

Approximate number	
Most of the students	.....
Few students	.....
Very few students	.....
None/no hostel	.....

Suggest ways to address the problem.....



### Appendix III: Students' Questionnaire

The following questionnaire contains items which attempt to get your views on the location of the school and your academic performance during teaching and learning process in your school. You are hereby requested to respond to each question. The information you will provide will be treated strictly confidentially and is going to be used only for the purpose of this study.

1. Name of the school.....
2. Your age.....
3. Your Gender.....
4. Your class/ Form .....
5. How do you feel about having a secondary school in your locality?
6. (a) In your opinion, what can you say about the location of your school? Please put a tick in the appropriate answer.

Distance from home to school go and return	In kilometers
Very close to school	0-5km
Far from school	6-12km
Very far	$\geq 12$ km

(b) What problems do you encounter when you go to school

7. Does distance covered to reach school affect your academic performance?  
Yes/No  
If YES how?.....

8. Have you rented a house/room near your school? yes / no .....
- If YES what problems do you face by staying away from home? .....
9. What support do you get from your parents?
- (i) School fees paid in time.....
  - (ii) Transport facilitation.....
  - (iii) Text books.....
  - (iv) Exercise books, pen, shoes etc.....
  - (v) Homework.....

**Appendix IV: Interview Guide to Administrators**

This questionnaire intends to get your views on the location of the school and academic performance of students during teaching and learning process in community secondary school found in Makambako town council. You are hereby requested to respond to each question. The information you will provide will be treated strictly confidentially.

1. What is the total number of community secondary schools in Makambako town council?

.....  
.....

2. What is the total number of teachers in Makambako town council?  
Male..... female.....; are they enough? .....

If NO, what causes teacher shortage?  
.....  
.....

3. Where are these teachers living? Within school compound or outside school compound

.....  
.....

What is your plan in provision of houses for your teachers?

.....  
.....

4. What factors have been perceived to determine location of community secondary schools in Makambako town council.....

.....  
.....

5. To what extent does school location affect the academic achievement of secondary school students in Makambako town

.....  
.....

6. What factors do you consider when allocating students to schools?

.....  
.....

7. How do you rate their academic performance.....?

.....  
.....

8. Suggest measures for solving problem of school location in Makambako town council

.....  
.....

**Appendix V: Interview Guide to Class Master/Mistress**

This questionnaire is intended to explore your views about school location and how it affects students' attendance to school, on time they arrived at school. Please respond to the questions proposed below.

1. What is the number of students in your class?
  - (a) Boys.....
  - (b) Girls.....
  
2. How many students live in school hostel?
  - (a) Boys.....
  - (b) Girls.....
  
3. In your class how many students come late to school due to long distance from where they reside?.....
  
4. How does the distance from home to school affect your students in their learning process?.....

