

## **INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS' QUALIFICATION ON STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN 'A'-LEVEL SCIENCES AT SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MUTARE DISTRICT, MANICALAND PROVINCE IN ZIMBABWE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research study reviewed the influence of teachers' qualification on students' performance in 'A'-level Science subjects at selected secondary schools in the Mutare District, Manicaland Province in Zimbabwe. The researchers were spurred into investigating this area because of the misgivings of various presuppositions as regards to poor performance in 'A'-level Science subjects. A qualitative research design was used in this study. Quota and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the schools and participants. The sample included twelve 'A'-level science teachers, three heads of department and three school heads. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis and observation were used in collecting the study data. These data were analysed and discussed using the thematic approach based on the research questions. The major findings of this research were that teaching qualification has a great influence on students' performance in 'A'-level Science subjects, as students taught by a qualified teacher performed better in the public examinations than those taught by unqualified teacher. Another finding was that practical lessons which are key components of Science subjects were been shunned by unqualified teachers. In addition, it emerged that most teachers were not using scientific methods in teaching Science subjects and this was negatively affecting their students' performance in Science subjects. Moreover, findings from this research study indicated that subject matter knowledge, pedagogy studies, professional development and years of experience were imperative and positively influencing students' academic achievements. The conclusions of this study were that teachers' qualification is crucial in any educational system and it is important to recruit qualified teachers in Science subjects. As a result, it is important to ensure that each teacher is academically and professionally qualified to teach their assigned subjects. This study therefore recommends that school heads should work closely with the district schools' inspectors to ensure the recruitment and deployment of academically and professionally qualified teachers. It also recommends the review of the teacher training system in Zimbabwe, in order to adequately prepare teachers to meet the current trends in education.

**Keywords:** Influence, qualification, performance, 'A'-level Science subjects.