

**HEAD TEACHERS' CANDIDATE PREPARATION STRATEGIES AND  
STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN THE PRIMARY CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION IN  
CHIMOIO DISTRICT, MOZAMBIQUE**

**SR. VICTORIA TITO**

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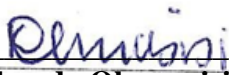
## DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this is my original work and that it has not been submitted to any other institution for academic purposes.


Signature   
**Victoria Tito**  
CMLA1904

Date: 23/08/2024

This research Thesis has been submitted for examination with our approval as the University supervisors.

Signature   
**Sr. Dr. Kinikonda Okemasisi**  
Lecturer School of Education  
Tangaza University

Date: 23/08/2024

Signature   
**Dr. Rose Wambui**  
Lecturer School of Education  
Tangaza University

Date: 23/08/2024

## **DEDICATION**

This Thesis is dedicated to God Almighty, who has sustained my life, and to the Congregation of Sisters of Divine Savior, who have been a constant source of support and encouragement throughout my studies.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the influence of head teachers' candidate preparation strategies on students' performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. The objectives of this study were: to find out the principals' supportive revision strategies and students' performance; to examine the influence of examination anxiety management on students' academic performance; to evaluate the influence of motivation strategy on students' academic performance; and to find out the influence of the teacher-student relationship on students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. The study was guided by Dimension Model Theory and Catastrophe Theory. A convergent parallel mixed method design was used. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design for quantitative data and a phenomenological design for qualitative data. The focus was on public primary schools, head teachers, teachers and Mozambique's Ministry of Education officer. Simple random sampling was used to select 18 out of 23 primary schools and 125 out of 312 teachers; criterion purposive sampling was used to select 18 head teachers and 1 Ministry of Education officer. Proportionate sampling simple random sampling was used to select 316 out of 1500 students. Questionnaires were used to collect data from students and teachers. An interview guide was used to collect data from head teachers and the Ministry of Education officer. Instrument reliability was tested using the test-retest technique, where a score of 0.82 was realized. The researcher ensured the validity of the quantitative instruments by consulting the experts. Member checking technique was used to validate qualitative instruments. Quantitative data was analyzed by the use of SPSS Version 25 and findings were reported in percentages, frequency tables, and graphs. The qualitative data were analyzed into themes according to the research questions and reported in narratives and direct quotations. The study revealed that head teachers' candidate preparation strategies, including revision, exam anxiety management, student motivation, and teacher-student relationship strategies, have an influence on students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. The study recommended that in preparing candidates for examinations, head teachers should prioritize and promote intrinsic motivation strategies. These include fostering a supportive learning environment, encouraging student autonomy, and emphasizing the value of learning itself. Such strategies are expected to have a more sustainable and positive impact on student engagement and academic performance.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYM**

<b>DEYA</b>	Director of Education and Youth Affairs
<b>MESA</b>	Mozambique Education Sector Analysis
<b>MNES</b>	Mozambique National Education Strategy
<b>MPCE</b>	Mozambique Primary Certificate of Education
<b>PCE</b>	Primary Certificate of Education
<b>UK</b>	United Kingdom
<b>USA</b>	United States of America



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

The academic performance of students holds significant importance and is acknowledged worldwide (Whittle, 2018; Humphrey & Nartey, 2023). This recognition exerts a profound influence on individuals, societies, and even global advancement. Ojere (2016) argues that the role of academic performance is pivotal in molding an individual's cognitive capacities, critical thinking proficiencies, and knowledge reservoir. It provides students with the essential groundwork to pursue further educational avenues and career prospects. A commendable academic performance can unlock access to a wide range of life paths. However, it is imperative to acknowledge that in order for students to excel in examinations, school administrators must implement effective strategies to adequately prepare them.

Zerdani (2021) defined exam preparation strategies as a set of systematic and effective approaches that individuals employ to enhance their readiness for upcoming exams or assessments. These strategies are designed to optimize learning, comprehension, retention, and recall of the material being tested. By adopting appropriate exam preparation strategies, students can manage their time efficiently, reduce anxiety, and increase their chances of achieving better results. These strategies typically encompass various techniques, habits, and actions that help learners thoroughly grasp the subject matter and perform in the examinations. Whittle (2018) contended that exam preparation strategies refer to the methods, techniques, procedures, and processes that a school head encourages teachers to use during instruction in preparing learners for examinations.

The strategies employed by a school head play a crucial role in preparing students for national examinations and can greatly influence their success or failure. Muwagga and Ssempala (2019) argued that taking and passing national examinations can be considered a pointer to effective preparation strategies. National examinations are typically designed to assess a student's knowledge, understanding, and application of the subjects they have been studying. If a student performs well on these examinations, it generally indicates that they have successfully prepared themselves for the content and challenges presented in the exams.

Hambleton (2018) and Walters et al. (2018) showed that a good candidate preparation strategy should include effective time management, surveying all questions before responding, dealing with difficult questions, dealing with multiple-choice questions, and underlying keyword questions. Directly, these strategies help students increase their scores on tests through the effective use of their time, effort, and test conditions (Okogu & Umodjere, 2016).

Kibogo (2016) asserted that the strategy used in preparing candidates for an examination can vary depending on a range of factors, including the subject matter, the examination's level, and the specific needs of the candidates. However, the author further emphasizes that effective preparation strategies are formulated to enhance the candidates' comprehension of the subject matter, their proficiency in problem-solving, and their overall performance in the examination. When preparing candidates for examinations, teachers may prioritize ensuring that candidates possess a solid grasp of the fundamental concepts and content encompassed by the examination.

When preparing candidates for examinations, a range of strategies can be employed. These may encompass the utilization of innovative educational technology, such as audio clips and videos, alongside other engaging elements, all designed to enhance students' focus and comprehension. Additionally, teachers can deliberately select strategies to stimulate students'

curiosity, prompting them to ask questions and engage in investigative or classroom experimental activities. Skillfully executed, these approaches have the potential to cultivate a constructive learning atmosphere and significantly enhance students' performance in examinations. The research conducted by Amzalag and Shapira (2021) demonstrated that when preparing students for national examinations, a school principal must consider the students' metacognitive attributes. Furthermore, Amzalag et al. (2021) revealed that insufficient preparation, a lack of exam strategies, and elevated anxiety levels have adverse impacts on test performance.

Harris and Orth (2019) studied the relationship between candidate confidence and exam scores and found that where school principals employed clear strategies in preparing candidates, performance was better. Hamal and Mohamed (2018) argued that the most important aspect of a candidate preparation strategy is to enable students to transfer classroom learning to testing, and this can especially be helpful for students with low achievement levels. These studies, however, did not elaborate on the strategies used by the head teachers to improve the performance of candidates in primary schools. Abe (2014) investigated the effectiveness of teacher-guided revision among candidates and concluded that it was useful in shaping a candidate's attitude towards a subject perceived as difficult. This study suggests that any strategy for preparing candidates for national examinations should focus on subject material, enable a candidate to select questions to answer, and reduce exam anxiety.

In China, educational performance on national examinations determines educational and training opportunities for students in the future (Silverman, 2018). Ojera (2016) studied the effect of intensive tutoring among candidates in mainland China and Taiwan and reported that tutoring in small groups led to an increase of up to 20% in mathematics scores. In both China

and Taiwan, candidates receive pressure from school head teachers, teachers, and parents in an effort to improve test scores. Teachers assign a large amount of homework to their candidates to help them perform well on examinations. In South Korea, candidates study up to 18 hours a day to score high grades in their examinations. Mayes (2018) and Silverman (2018) argued that in South Korea, school head teachers maintain a tight and highly monitored schedule for candidates to ensure that they meet the expected performance. Private tuition and coaching are common and highly recommended in their last year of high school. This often leads to burnout among students, and research by Bloemert and Vandegrift (2019) showed that South Korean students are most stressed during their exam times because the education system in South Korea is highly competitive and places a significant emphasis on standardized testing, especially the college entrance exam. This could be the reason why students often spend long hours studying, attending after-school academies, and participating in various extracurricular activities in an attempt to excel academically.

In the United States of America, high schools spend incredible amounts of time and resources preparing students for high school exit examinations (Mohamed & Mohamed, 2018). School head teachers organize prepackaged curriculum guides, practice workbooks, study guides, and computer-based preparation materials (Bourke & MacDonald, 2018). Students in their final year often attend extra coaching sessions away from school, and there is intense consultation and collaboration with teachers. In the United Kingdom, Weale (2018) highlighted examination anxiety and pressure on students to perform well as the key determinants of the strategy used by school head teachers in designing a candidate preparation program. Weale (2018) noted that candidates are often subjected to make-up sessions or extra classes, relaxation sessions, yoga classes, and resilience programs to support worried pupils. These studies

expressed a geographical gap because they were done in countries outside Mozambique. The current study sought to fill the gap by studying the influence of head teachers' candidate preparation strategies on students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.

In South Africa, candidates are required to excel in their Grade 12 exams to secure a place at the University. Goulas and Megalokonomou (2019) argue that the exit exams hold such high esteem in South Africa that school principals spare no effort, allocate resources, and arrange extra classes to bridge any performance gaps. In recent times, additional tutoring referred to as "shadow education," has become a prevalent practice in South Africa to prepare students for high school exit exams. This study clearly indicates that for students to achieve strong exam results, school administrators must invest effort in preparing them, including devising appropriate strategies.

In Nigeria, there have been concerns raised regarding a variety of exam preparation activities conducted by school administrators and teachers. The extent and intensity of exam preparation and supplementary tutoring have also raised concerns, as they could potentially create negative incentives for schools to focus solely on teaching to the test or even engage in collusion with examiners to facilitate cheating (Jayachandran, 2014). This underscores the notion that achieving excellence in examinations in Nigeria requires dedicated efforts not only from teachers but also from principals.

In Kenya, preparation for candidates for final exams is a shared responsibility with the school principal in charge. Teachers are encouraged to work harder with the students, and several consultative sessions are organized between teachers, students, and parents (Kariuki & Mbugua, 2019). This helps students develop positive attitudes toward exams, relieve fear and anxiety, and

become more competitive in the exams. In Tanzania, school head teachers are known to vary teachers' instructional methods when dealing with candidate classes and more when dealing with low achievers (Mboniryivuze & Yadav, 2021). To that effect, teachers become more available, accommodative, and ready to help the candidates.

Mozambique operates a 7-3-2 system of education where primary school takes 7 years, 3 years in middle school, and 2 years in secondary school, leaving between 3 and 5 years for university. The Mozambique National Examinations System administers the Mozambique Primary Certificate of Education (MPCE). A candidate must gain a primary school leaving certificate based on their standard 7 final exam results in order to progress to secondary school. Secondary school education in Mozambique is provided by the government as well as private institutions. The Mozambique Education Sector Analysis (MESA, 2019) and Servaas (2017) reported that among the challenges facing the education sector are the high teacher-to-student ratio (1:50) and a general lack of resources to facilitate teaching and learning. The majority of primary school candidates fail to reach the 40% threshold to enter secondary school.

This reality puts a lot of strain on the head teachers' side to ensure that candidates in primary school perform well in the national examinations and favorably compete for the few vacancies in secondary schools. However, research estimates by the World Bank (2020) and Classbase (2017) show that less than half of those who complete primary school join secondary school. Many reasons have been advanced for this sad statistics, but key among them is poor performance at the primary level. The way candidates are prepared for these examinations by the schools probably contributes to the number of students who fail.

National examinations are standardized and administered externally and require that candidates prepare well for them (Salvi, 2018). While these examinations are a measure of an

individual student's achievement, they are also an unspoken way of assessing the effectiveness of strategies put in place by school head teachers to prepare candidates. In the Chimoio district, performance among primary school candidates has been dismal despite efforts by the government to reverse the situation. In the last three years, the report from the office of the Director of Education and Youth Affairs (2021) showed that very few students managed to get a chance in the national schools. Research by Salvi (2018) and Jones (2017) attributes the failure of students in examinations to students' motivation, exam difficulty, and learning environment, but there is no mention of whether the head teachers' preparation strategies are linked to the students' performance, hence the need for the current study.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The pursuit of delivering quality education lends paramount significance to the academic performance of students on a global scale (Humphrey & Nartey, 2023). This acknowledgment of students' academic achievements has a profound impact on individuals, societies, and even worldwide progress. A creditable academic performance can open the doors to a diverse range of life opportunities (Gagnon, 2022). Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognize that for students to excel in their examinations, educational institutions must employ effective strategies to thoroughly equip them. Regrettably, this does not appear to be the situation for primary school students in the Chimoio district of Mozambique.

Over the years, the academic performance of primary school students in the Chimoio district national examinations has been declining. Data obtained from the Director of Education and Youth Affairs (2021) indicates that over fifty percent of the students fail to reach the threshold required for admission to secondary school. Reports from the World Bank (2020),

Maneb (2020), and Classbase (2017) all highlight that the performance level in the Chimoio District dropped to 49.7% in 2021, a significant drop from the 66.7% recorded in 2008.

The Mozambique National Education Strategy (MNES) instructed school head teachers to develop strategies aimed at ensuring improved performance in national examinations. Despite these dedicated efforts, candidates in the Chimoio District have consistently demonstrated unsatisfactory results. This situation is a source of concern for various stakeholders, including parents and the broader community. If students continue to achieve subpar academic results, there is worry that their self-esteem might suffer, leading to diminished motivation. This, in turn, could exacerbate the challenges they face in their learning journey. Students who grapple with persistent academic difficulties are at a higher risk of discontinuing their education, which could severely limit their future prospects for advanced learning and skilled employment. This unfortunate outcome has the potential to trap them in a cycle of poverty, further underscoring the importance of addressing the academic challenges faced by students in the Chimoio District.

The reviewed literature related to the study did not clearly reveal whether the declining performance of students in Chimoio District is linked to the strategies used to prepare them. This study, therefore, aimed to assess the influence of head teachers' revision strategies, anxiety management strategies, motivation and teacher-student relationships. It sought to establish a connection between these factors and the performance of students in the Primary Certificate of Education in the Chimoio District, Mozambique.

### **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to find out the influence of head teachers' candidate preparation strategies and students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. By doing so, the study sought to help school

administrators to design effective and appropriate student preparation strategies with the aim of improving students' performance.

#### **1.4. Research Objectives**

This study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To find out the head teachers' supportive revision strategies and students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique
2. To examine the influence of head teachers' candidate examination anxiety management and academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique
3. To evaluate the influence of head teachers' motivation strategies on students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.
4. To find out the influence of head teachers' support of the teacher-student relationship on students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

This study was based on the following research questions:

1. To what extent does head teachers' supportive revision strategies influence the academic performance of students in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique?
2. How does head teachers' candidate anxiety management strategies influence the academic performance of students in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique?

3. How do head teachers' motivation strategies influence the academic performance of students in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique?
4. To what extent does head teachers' support of the teacher-student relationship influence the academic performance of students in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique?

### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The findings of this study may be important to school head teachers, teachers, and policy makers in the education sector, particularly those concerned with student performance. This is because the study may raise fundamental issues related to candidate preparation and suggest best practices that can be applied by schools. The study findings may be useful to school administrators who run schools on a day-to-day basis as they may learn how best to approach candidate in examination preparation. The findings of this study may also be of use to teachers who interact with students for the most part of their school life as it may unearth useful strategies to use in improving students' performance in national examinations. Parents may benefit from the study findings as they may effectively understand the importance of effective candidate preparation strategies for their children. Learners may benefit from the findings of the current study in that well-prepared students are more likely to perform better on their exams, leading to higher grades and a deeper understanding of the subject matter. This success can boost their confidence and motivation, creating a positive cycle of learning. The study may also be of benefit to future research work as it may contribute to the body of knowledge on best practices to use in enabling improved performance in national examinations. Finally, the study may offer theoretical value on methodology and theories best suited for use in such future studies.

## **1.7 Scope and Delimitations of the Study**

This study was conducted in Chimoio District, Mozambique. The Chimoio District has been experiencing an increase in cases of student failure in primary school national examinations. Though there are both public and private schools in Chimoio District, the current study only focused on public primary schools. The target population of this study were head teachers, teachers, and ministry of education officers. The focus was on strategies employed by various school head teachers to improve the performance of candidates in the Primary Certificate of Education. Such strategies included revision strategies, exam anxiety management strategies, student motivation strategies, and teacher-student relationships. Thus, the study did not look at other factors that affect the performance of candidates in the Primary Certificate of Education.

## **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework refers to the structure that supports the theory or theories in a research study (Kothari, 2019). The reason a theoretical framework is included in a research study is that it strengthens the writing by providing the researcher with a theory to analyze critically, provides a connection to previous research, provides a generalization of observations intellectually, and allows the researcher to identify the limits of the generalization that is made. This study was grounded in dimension model theory and path-goal theory.

### **1.8.1.1 Dimension Model Theory**

The study was guided by Felder and Silverman's (1998) Dimension Model Theory of teaching and learning. According to Felder and Silverman, there are four dimensions of learning styles related to each student's preferred mode of receiving information in class. A learning style is simply the manner in which one learns best. It is based on individual characteristics and preferences. Recognizing individual learning styles is crucial for effectively preparing candidates

for examinations because students exhibit diverse ways of learning. Each student possesses distinct characteristics and consequently inclines towards a particular learning approach that empowers them to excel in examinations (Kariuki et al., 2019). The first dimension distinguishes between an active and a reflective way of processing information. Active learners learn best by working actively with the learning material and by trying things out. They tend to be more interested in communication with others and prefer to learn by working in groups where they can discuss the learned material. Active learners also value a cooperative and competitive learning environment. Such learners are guided by the teacher and then supplied with challenging materials that they can cover on their own (Hamzah & Joarder, 2014). In contrast, reflective learners prefer to think about and reflect on the material. Regarding communication, they prefer to work alone or in a small group together with one good friend. Other learners prefer a sensing learning style and tend to favor learning facts and concrete learning materials. They like to solve problems with standard approaches and also tend to be more patient with details (Nasrullah & Saqib, 2015). Furthermore, sensing learners are considered to be more realistic and sensible; they tend to be more practical than intuitive learners and like to relate the learned material to the real world. In contrast, intuitive learners prefer to learn abstract learning materials, such as theories and their underlying meanings. They are able to discover possibilities and relationships and tend to be more innovative and creative than sensing learners.

Another group of learners is the visual-verbal dimension, which differentiates learners who remember best and therefore prefer to learn from what they have seen ( pictures, diagrams, and flow-charts), and learners who get more out of textual representations, regardless of whether they are written or spoken (Hamzah et al., 2014). In the fourth dimension, the learners are characterized according to their understanding. Sequential learners learn in small incremental

steps and therefore have a linear learning progression. They tend to follow logical, step-by-step paths in finding solutions. In contrast, global learners use a holistic thinking process and learn in large leaps of information. They tend to absorb learning material almost randomly without seeing connections, but after they have learned enough material, they suddenly get the whole picture. Then they are able to solve complex problems, find connections between different areas, and put things together in novel ways, but they have difficulties explaining how they did it. Since the whole picture is important for global learners, they tend to be more interested in broad knowledge, whereas sequential learners are more interested in details.

#### **1.8.1.2 Strengths of the Dimension Model**

Among the key strengths of this theory is that it places the student at the center and insists that the student's academic achievement is the most important outcome in any teaching and learning effort (Ginni, 2022). By creating four possible dimensions of learning, this model is broad enough to be applied at all levels of learning and for all different types of students in class. Further, the theory has considered the different individual learning characteristics of students and accommodated them all. The theory provides specific directions to guide the candidates and investigate their best practices. This has also added an opportunity for teachers to widen their teaching approaches to promote more active learning and engage students. If the schools' head teachers properly integrate revision and motivation as strategies to prepare learners for examinations with different learning styles, then academic performance can greatly be improved.

#### **1.8.1.3 Weaknesses of the Dimension's Theory**

This theory largely ignores the importance of the environment in learning. The theory assumes that all learning environments are the same and that teachers are able to scientifically place and deduce the learning styles of each candidate (Vuoskoski, 2016). By distinctively

classifying learners in the four dimensions, the theory assumes that it will be practical for a school principal or head teacher to know the personality traits of each candidate so as to provide the right learning dimension. This is an extreme assumption since many schools may suffer from a lack of resources to achieve it. Learners tend to be on the continuum between each extreme but may often choose one preference or another depending on the learning situation. Relying too much on a particular preference may cause learners to limit their opportunities to reach outside of their comfort zone and develop new patterns. At this point, the learning personality becomes more of a hindrance than an aid. For purposes of this study, the weaknesses of dimension model theory sought to be filled by catastrophe theory.

#### **1.8.1.4 Application of Dimension Model Theory in this Study**

This study is about the strategies employed by school head teachers in preparing candidates for national examinations in Mozambique. The theory holds that in preparing candidates, a teacher needs to consider the various learning dimensions of the diverse learners in the class. Therefore, the strategy adopted by the school principal needs to consider the reflective learner, the active learner, the visual-verbal learner, and the sequential learner. This theory is highly relevant to the current study as it anchors two of the four independent variables, namely revision strategy and teacher-student relationship strategy.

With regards to revision strategy, the theory shows that reflective learners and active learners need support, guidance, intense revision, and regular testing in order to master the subject contents. Further, the theory holds that for improved performance to be achieved, the candidate preparation strategy used needs to have a mixture of the four learning aspects, as each candidate tends to have a semblance of each. If the leadership of the head teacher in the school encourages the wrong approach to learning, most students in a class may become bored and

inattentive, do poorly on tests, get discouraged about the courses, the curriculum, and themselves, and, in some cases, change to other curricula or drop out of school. When preparing candidates, the most critical thing is to focus on their performance in the national examination. As this theory advocates, it is important for the head teacher of a school to use the right strategies in order to generate the right attitude and reaction among students, keep them engaged and enable them to perform as expected in the national examinations. This means that the head teacher has to take the lead in the school's performance. This is more pronounced in the path-goal theory discussed below.

### **1.8.2. Path-Goal Theory**

The Path-Goal Theory was developed by Robert House (1971). This theory suggests that effective leaders must clarify the path for the success of their followers. Leaders must provide learners with clear expectations and goals and provide the support and resources necessary to achieve those goals. According to the theory, leaders should explain the way to subordinates to let them know which direction to go and remove obstacles that hinder them from attaining a goal. In the current study, head teachers must provide guidance and support to learners in the form of providing guidance in the revision process, assisting in the management of exam anxiety, motivating them, and supporting the student-teacher relationship to enhance performance in examinations.

According to Malik (2012), path-goal theory encompasses four distinct approaches to leadership behavior, such as directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented leadership. When school leaders use a directive style of leadership, they tell their followers what they are supposed to do, giving them objectives, roles, instructions for carrying out those obligations, and methods for planning and organizing their activities. Supportive leadership is an

approach in which the leader is approachable and cares about subordinates' well-being.

Participative leadership happens when the leader engages with subordinates and solicits input before making a decision. Achievement-oriented leadership happens when a leader establishes high objectives for subordinates and has high expectations for their performance. The leader shows trust in subordinates by supporting and encouraging them to achieve the goal (performance in examinations).

### **1.8.2.1 Strengths of Path-Goal Theory**

One of the benefits of path-goal theory is that it inspires head teachers to identify goal attainment paths, remove roadblocks, and assist followers in accomplishing their objectives. It also serves as a reference point for head teachers in understanding the fundamental objective of supporting learners as they strive to achieve their objectives (performance in examinations). It also provides a theoretical framework for understanding how different leadership styles influence teachers' and learners' academic performance.

### **1.8.2.2 Weaknesses of Path-Goal Theory**

According to this theory, the leader is the "knowing person," while the followers are "dependents," which may restrict the subordinate's initiative. The theory is also too broad, encompassing several interrelated sets of assumptions. It is difficult to apply the theory fully when trying to enhance the management process in a specific organizational situation (Mannan, 2019).

### **1.8.2.3 Application of the Path-Goal Theory to the Study**

Path-Goal Theory is relevant to this study because it is the head teachers' responsibility to show teachers and students the best way to achieve their goals and objectives. As stated by the path-goal theory, head teachers should set high goals for the academic success of their students.

They should also provide clear direction and participate in the attainment of the goal. According to Njogu (2020), the head teacher must serve as a role model for the other teachers by demonstrating the best method for lesson presentation so that teachers can imitate and follow in preparing students for the examination.

Head teachers should remove roadblocks that prevent students from accomplishing their objectives. For example, head teachers can encourage teachers to provide a supportive environment for learners as they revise for examinations, put an exam anxiety management system in place to keep learners free from anxiety as they approach exams, ensure learners are motivated, and strengthen the student-teacher relationship to improve academic performance.

Path-goal theory is appropriate for this study since it offers the framework for head teachers' supportive approaches that are vital in enhancing candidates' preparation for examinations and enhancing students' academic achievement. Zuhair (2015) defines effective leadership as the leader appropriately diagnosing the developmental level of subordinates in a task setting and then exhibiting the prescribed leadership style that suits that condition. Head teachers who adhere to a directive approach advise the teachers on the best course of action to take and demonstrate the most effective teaching and candidate preparation strategies.

Head teachers can use a participatory approach to discuss with teachers and students, solicit their thoughts and opinions, and incorporate their proposals into decision-making so as to improve the performance of learners. The discussion with subordinates would help in the identification and removal of performance roadblocks. Comighud (2017) contended that the process of leadership should be participatory. Thus, the head teacher and teachers should collaborate to develop the best possible strategies that can help in the preparation of candidates to effectively perform in examinations. They should set a high level of performance for teachers

and students and establish the best strategies as they strive for continuous improvement.

Supportive leadership allows head teachers to be open-minded with teachers and students and cares about the followers in the strive to achieve success, which is student academic performance.

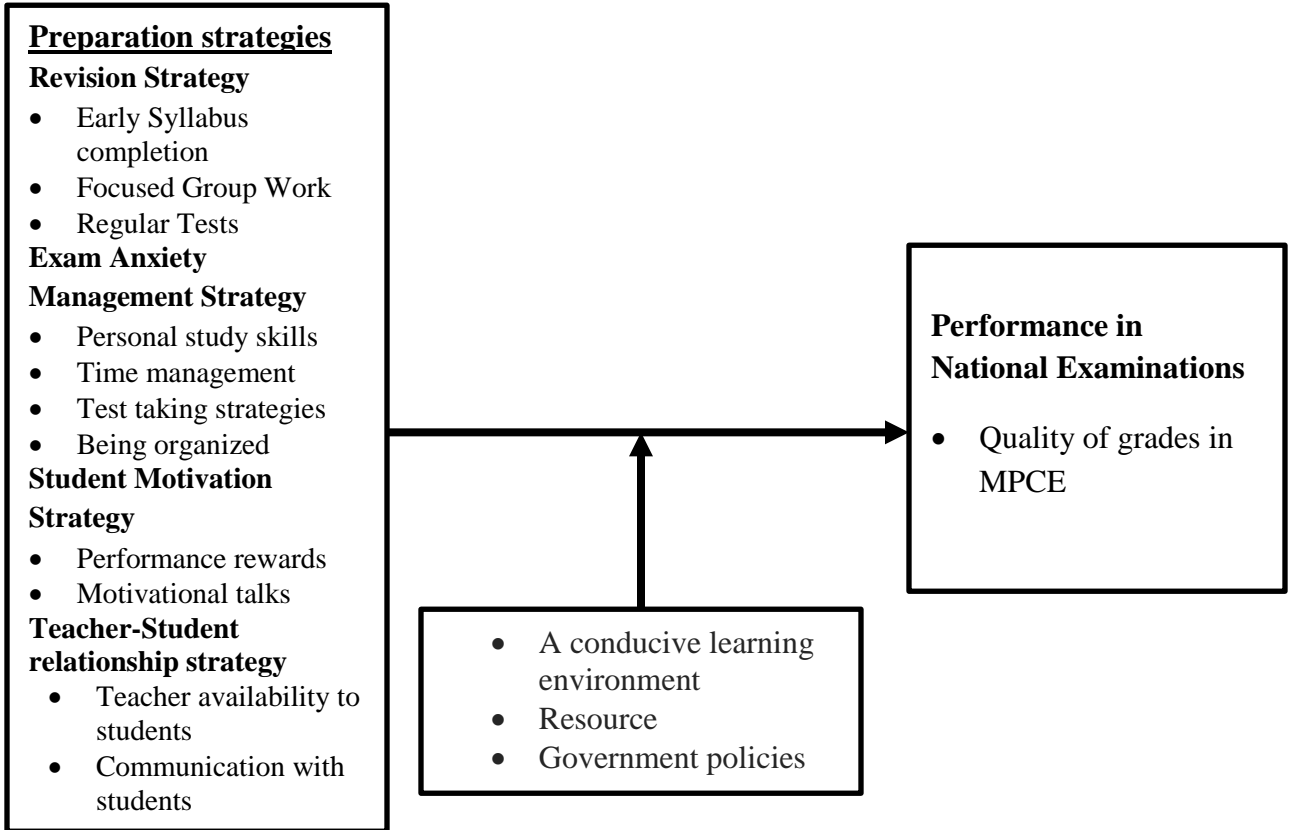
### **1.9 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is a diagrammatic representation of variables used to guide the research study. It illustrates the expected relationship between the variables (Swaen & Tegan, 2022). This study conceptualizes strategies employed by the head teachers to prepare for examinations as independent variables. They include revision strategy, exam anxiety management strategy, student motivation strategy, and teacher-student relationship strategy. The revision strategy was studied in terms of early syllabus completion, focused group work, regular tests, and continuous consultation. Exam Anxiety Management Strategy was examined in light of personal study skills, time management, and learners' organization. Student motivation strategies were conceptualized in terms of performance rewards, motivational talks, and psychological support. A teacher-student relationship strategy was investigated in light of teacher connectedness with students, teacher cooperation, teacher availability to students, and teacher communication with students. These variables were investigated in relation to how they influence students' performance in national examinations. The intervening variables are: a conducive learning environment and the provision of resources for revision. Improved performance as an outcome was measured in terms of quality of grades in MPCE.

**Figure 1**

*Relationships between Independent, Intervening and Dependent Variables*

**Independent Variables      Intervening Variables      Independent Variables**



**1.10 Operational Definitions of Key Terms**

**Examination Anxiety Management Strategies.** These are techniques that the head teacher puts in place to manage the fears that affect the learners as the approach the examination period. In this study, this was measured by personal study skills, time management, test taking strategies and being organized.

**National Examinations:** These are examinations taken by grade seven students (candidates) in Mozambique every year. These exams mark the end of primary education level and allow the students to gain access to secondary education.

**Primary Certificate of Education:** This refers to the academic qualification taken at the completion of primary education in Mozambique.

**Revision strategy:** this is an approach that the head teacher puts in place to enable the learners to strategically study in preparation for the examination.

**Strategies:** these are carefully planned and organized courses of action designed by the head teachers of schools to enable students to excel in examinations.

**Student motivation strategies:** these are the measures put in place by the school head teachers to encourage the learners as they approach the examination period. Such techniques include: performance rewards, motivational talks and psychological support.

**Teacher-student relationship strategies:** these are teacher-students' connectedness that enables effective preparation of the learners for examination.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter is a presentation of reviewed related literature on the influence of head teachers' candidates' preparation strategies on students' academic performance. The review of the related literature was guided by the research objectives and was conducted in terms of global, continental, and local contexts. While reviewing the relevant literature, gaps were identified which the current study sought to fill.

#### **2.2 Influence of Head teachers' Supportive revision Strategies and Students' Academic Performance**

The revision strategies employed in a school in the preparation of students for examinations are important in their performance in national examinations (Zhang, 2022). A study conducted by Svanteson (2022) investigated how small-group and whole-class discussions in preparation for examinations contributed to students' learning and performance in examinations in China. The study included 33 video-recorded small-group discussions in four mathematics lessons on enlarging and reducing two-dimensional geometric figures in Grade 8. The results showed that in the majority of the small-group discussions, the students did not have the possibility to learn what was intended since critical aspects were not explored. The results further indicated that small-group discussions without subsequent whole-class discussions had less effect on students' learning and performance. This study, however, was only focused on mathematics and was not focused on preparing students for the summative exams such as national examinations, which is the gap that the current study sought to fill by investigating the

influence of head teachers' candidates' preparation strategies on grade seven students' academic performance in primary schools in the Chimoio District, Mozambique.

In New Zealand, one of the strategies employed to prepare students for national examinations involves utilizing revision and providing regular feedback based on their prior examination tests. In line with this, Lipnevich (2009) conducted a correlation study focusing on the effects of distinct types of feedback on students' performance in examinations. The study revealed that providing detailed feedback specifically tailored to an individual's essay had a significant positive correlation with improvements in essay scores. The impact of grades and praise, however, exhibited a more intricate relationship. Generally, the study found that descriptive feedback proved most effective when delivered independently, without the accompaniment of grades or praise. Interestingly, the study noted that the perceived source of the feedback, whether it originated from a computer or an instructor, exerted minimal influence on the outcomes. Notably, this study, carried out in New Zealand, highlighted a geographic limitation. To address this gap, the current research aimed to explore the impact of head teachers' and candidates' preparation strategies on the academic performance of grade seven students in primary schools within the Chimoio District of Mozambique.

In Pakistan, head teachers promote the implementation of continuous assessment to better prepare elementary-level students for effective performance. A study conducted by Mohammad (2017) investigated the impact of continuous assessment on student performance. The study selected a sample of sixty eighth-grade students from a public-sector girls' secondary school for the experiment. These students were enrolled in Social Studies as a mandatory subject. The research employed a post-test design with both control and experimental groups. Data were gathered using an achievement test, and the significance of the results was determined through

an independent sample t-test. The findings indicated a positive correlation between continuous assessment and students' academic achievement. Additionally, the study recommended the encouragement and utilization of experienced educators proficient in evaluation and assessment techniques to enhance elementary-level students' performance. Notably, Mohammad's study lacked specificity regarding the type of examinations intended for implementation, a gap that the present study aimed to address.

A related study was conducted by Sakirudeen (2022) to examine the habits and academic performance of secondary school students in mathematics in Akwalbom State, Nigeria. The study selected a population of 1128 Senior Secondary School Two (SS2) students, with a sample size of 200 respondents drawn from five public secondary schools using a simple random sampling technique. The findings revealed a significant relationship between note-taking, students' use of the library, time allocation for study, and their academic performance in mathematics. The study recommended that educators organize group guidance sessions in schools to enhance students' awareness of how to develop effective study habits, which could consequently improve academic performance in mathematics examinations. While Sakirudeen's study focused exclusively on mathematics, the current study encompassed all subjects studied at the primary school level in Mozambique.

Nakhanu (2017) conducted a study aimed at finding out the effect of syllabus coverage on secondary school students' performance in Kenya. A descriptive survey design was adopted for the study, and data was collected using three questionnaires. The correlation coefficient between syllabus coverage and student performance was 0.8343, established using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient formula. The study established that inability to finish the syllabus has negative effects on the level of performance in KCSE examinations. While the

study focused on KCSE exams in Kenya, the current study looked at how syllabus coverage affects grade seven performances in national exams in Mozambique.

The study by Holvio (2021) was done to determine the extent to which teacher subject-matter expertise and the students' preparation affected achievement in Mozambican primary schools. The study revealed a significant relationship between teaching effectiveness, students' preparation, and students' exam readiness. Though the study was done in Mozambique, it did not provide sufficient information concerning how head teachers' candidates preparation strategies influence grade seven students' academic performance in primary schools in the Chimoio District, Mozambique, hence the gap to be filled by the current study.

### **2.3 Examination Anxiety Management and Students' Academic Performance**

Test anxiety has become a universal issue in contemporary society. Test anxiety refers to the specific issue of anxiety related to achieving high-test scores in educational careers (Miller & Bichsel, 2004). Since test scores are crucial for student evaluation at school, empirical evidence has shown an inverse relationship between test anxiety and school achievement. Spagnolo and Schirripa (2022) conducted a review focusing on the connection between student test anxiety and their academic achievements in the USA. The researchers explored how anxiety influences students' performance in math, literature, and science, looking at the entire range of scores. Their objective was to investigate whether setting higher goals leads to increased test anxiety. The findings from their study indicated a clear and significant negative relationship between test anxiety and overall school performance. However, the study did not provide details about the specific aspects of student performance, prompting the need for the current study to address this gap.

Yusefzade (2022) conducted a quasi-experimental study aiming to determine how study preparation affects the performance of public health students at Urmia University of Medical Sciences in Iran during the academic year 2016–2017. The study focused on second- and third-year bachelor's students majoring in public health, who were divided into intervention and control groups using study preparation criteria and a defined benchmark. To measure the impact, the study gathered data on general stress and test anxiety through self-assessment surveys administered via paper and pencil. These surveys were conducted in the first week of the semester and just before the final examinations. The findings indicated that, initially, there was no significant distinction in the general stress level between the two groups based on the study preparation items. The level of test anxiety in the intervention group was lower than that in the control group at the conclusion of the semester. Additionally, the intervention group exhibited a higher mean score on the exams. This study's findings lead to the conclusion that interventions effectively reduced test anxiety and enhanced student performance. Consequently, it is recommended that faculty members and department heads provide support to students in acquiring effective study preparation strategies to bolster academic achievement. Although conducted in Iran, this study establishes a foundational basis for the ongoing research that investigated the influence of preparation strategies employed by head teachers on the academic performance of grade seven students in primary schools within the Chimoio District of Mozambique.

Examinations are the only common way of evaluating the academic outcomes of learners. As such, emphasis is put on learners by their parents and teachers to perform well in examinations. This eventually brings about anxiety and stress, particularly for learners as they approach examination periods. Hence, such examination-related anxieties may affect their

performance in one way or another. In Kenya, a study was conducted by Asakhulu (2016) about the effects of examination anxiety on the academic performance of students in secondary schools in Khwisero District, Kakamega County, Kenya. A sample size of 275 students, who sat for the 2012 Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education (KCSE) exams, participated in the study by responding to the exam anxiety 5-point likert scale. Their scores from the 5-point Likert scale were then compared with their KCSE aggregate scores. The results indicated that there was a significant negative correlation between exam anxiety and academic performance in KCSE. This study did not provide any information concerning how anxiety management strategies by the head teacher affected the performance of students, hence the need for the current study.

Stress and coping in schoolchildren can have negative effects such as health-related outcomes, poor academic performance, and maladaptive behavior if not well managed. Namakando (2017) conducted a study in Zambia aimed at exploring stress and coping strategies among grade 12 pupils in selected secondary schools. A total of eighty (80) grade twelve pupils (girls and boys) from Highland and New Northmead Secondary Schools in Lusaka filled out a questionnaire on stress and coping. The results indicated that the pupils in this study experienced high stress levels. The study further revealed that if stress and coping issues are not managed in Zambia, they might continue contributing to negative effects in schoolchildren in several ways, such as health and behavior problems and poor academic performance. The cited study, however, did not discuss who should manage the stress levels of learners, which necessitated the current study to cover the gap.

Pires (2022) conducted a quantitative study on the prevalence of anxiety and depression among medical students in Mozambique. The study aimed at investigating anxiety and depression prevalence and determinants in health sciences students during the COVID-19

pandemic. Results were analyzed with the Statistic Package for Social Science with a confidence interval of 95% and an error margin of 5%, using the Q2 test to determine statistically significant associations. The results revealed that anxiety and depression affect 25.9% of medical students, and the effects are expressed in substance abuse, interpersonal problems, and academic failure. With high rates of anxiety and depression among students, mental disorders limit not only academic performance but also students' overall life quality. The Pires study was short on how the anxiety could be managed to improve student performance, which was investigated in the current study to fill the gap.

#### **2.4 Head teachers' Motivation Strategies and Students' Academic Performance**

Motivation is a fundamental ingredient for academic success. It involves internal and external factors that stimulate desire and energy in people to be continually interested in and committed to a job, role, or subject, or to make an effort to attain a goal. Motivation explains why people decide to do something, how hard they are going to pursue it, and how long they are willing to sustain the activity. Motivation is what gets people going, keeps them going, and determines where one is going. The students who have optimum motivation have an edge because they have adaptive attitudes and strategies, such as maintaining intrinsic interest, goal setting, and self-monitoring.

Moorehouse and ching (2022) conducted a study in china aimed at investigating teacher support and student motivation to learn with artificial intelligence. This study used self-determination theory as the underpinning framework to investigate how head teachers and teacher support moderate the effects of student expertise on needs satisfaction and intrinsic motivation to learn with AI technologies. The study involved 123 Grade 10 students and used chatbots as AI-based technologies in the experiment. The analyses revealed that intrinsic

motivation and competence to learn and perform with the chatbot depended on the support of the head teacher, teachers, and student expertise. Different from this study by Moorehouse and Ching, the current study used Dimension Model Theory to investigate how motivational strategies employed by the head teachers influence the performance of learners in primary schools in the Chimoio District, Mozambique.

Pearl (2016) established that the nature of motivation and learning strategies used are vital to improving student learning outcomes in Liberia. This study was intended to explore the motivational beliefs and learning strategies used by Liberian junior and senior high school students in connection with their academic performance. It also solicited students' self-reports about presumed factors hindering their learning. Utilizing a cross-sectional research design, 323 participants took part in the study. The study showed that motivation is vital for the academic success of students. The result further showed that students' help-seeking strategies were the least utilized as they insignificantly reported seeking help from peers or instructors when needed, not focusing much on the use of others in learning. The study, however, did not show how the head teachers are involve in the motivation of students for successful performance in the examinations, hence the need for the current study.

In Nigeria, Okoro (2021) conducted a study aimed at ascertaining the influence of motivation on students' academic achievement in the teaching of JSS III Social Studies in Jalingo Metropolis, Taraba State. The target population was 3150 students, covering all the 17 public secondary schools across Jalingo metropolitan. Test-rest was used to ascertain the reliability of the research instrument using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique, which yielded a coefficient of 0.67. It was established that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation in a proper blend has the potency to improve students' academic achievement in social studies. The

study recommended that students be empowered to realize that they play the most important role in motivating themselves first, before anyone else; and that social studies, alongside other teaching subject areas, be made interesting so as to arouse and sustain students' interests and enhance learners' achievement. This study focused only on social studies, which is the gap that the current study intended fill in its endeavor to establish how the head teachers' candidates preparation strategies influence grade seven students' academic performance in primary schools in the Chimoio District, Mozambique.

The idea of student motivation is not new in Mozambique. Schools come up with strategies to inspire learners to perform better on exams. At a secondary school in Nampula, Mozambique, Carlino (2022) conducted a study to examine the motivating elements for students to participate in physical education lessons. The study had 150 students, both sexes, in grades 8 through 12, who ranged in age from 13 to 17. The intrinsic and extrinsic motivation questionnaire, which evaluates the identification of intrinsic and extrinsic motives in physical education classes, was utilized for data collection. The findings demonstrate that students' attendance in physical education classes is driven by external factors. The results of the study by Carlino cannot be extrapolated to cover primary school learners because it concentrated on secondary school students, making it necessary for the current study that sought to find out how motivational strategies employed by the head teachers influence the academic performance of grade seven students in primary schools in the Chimoio District, Mozambique.

A quantitative study was conducted in a Mozambican university by Ndapulo (2013) about teacher and student motivation, beliefs, and expectations about English language teaching and learning. The study established that teacher and learner beliefs about second language instruction have a significant influence on the language teaching and learning process and,

consequently, on students' achievements. It was clear from the study that students who are more motivated to learn persist longer, produce higher-quality effort, learn more deeply, and perform better in classes and on standardized tests. It is important to note, however, that the cited study only looked at general English and not English for academic purposes. Contrary to the study by Ndapulo (2013), the current study sought to establish how motivation strategies employed by the school head teachers influence grade seven students' academic performance in primary schools in the Chimoio District, Mozambique.

## **2.5 Head teachers' Support of the Teacher-student Relationship on Students' Academic Performance**

Creating positive teacher-student relationships is essential for students to achieve academic success. Positive teacher-student relationships lead to increased cooperation and engagement in the classroom. They also contribute to a welcoming, inclusive school climate that promotes equity, social and emotional learning, and improved student outcomes. The significant role of the teacher in the academic and lifetime success of students has also been demonstrated by research (Blazar, 2015; Friedman & Rockoff, 2014).

A qualitative study conducted at the University of Missouri in Columbia by Consiglio (2022) found that students who reported having more positive relationships with their teachers also reported that their teachers used more high-impact teaching practices linked with student academic achievement. The study explained that high-impact teaching practices are often hard to implement as they take a lot of effort and do not happen frequently in classrooms. The study provided evidence that one way to activate high-impact teaching practices is to promote caring teacher-student relationships. The study elaborated on the importance of having a caring relationship between teachers and students, and thus acted as a foundation for the current study

that sought to establish how the head teacher's support of the teacher-student relationship influences students' academic performance.

Although many studies in Europe have addressed the relationship between teacher-student relationships and academic achievement, the reciprocal relationships between these two constructs have not been sufficiently explored. As a result, Kosi (2013) conducted a study aimed at testing three competing models that hypothesized directionality of influence in relations between teacher acceptance, student-perceived teacher support, and academic achievement. Eight hundred sixteen students from three different grade levels in Slovenian elementary and secondary schools, covering the age range from late childhood through early-to-middle adolescence, participated in the study at the beginning and at the end of the school year. Structural equation modeling was used. Different models of relations between teacher acceptance, student-perceived teacher support, and academic achievement were analyzed using the cross-lagged panel correlation technique. The results supported the hypothesized reciprocal model, indicating the relationship between teacher acceptance and academic achievement in both directions. Student-perceived teacher personal support partially mediates the relationship between teacher acceptance and achievement in both directions in the whole sample but not in specific age groups. Finally, the study found some age-specific differences in the relations between teacher acceptance, teacher personal support, and achievement. This study was done in Europe, which creates a geographical gap that the current study sought to fill by focusing on Mozambique.

Michael (2011) conducted a qualitative study to understand teacher perceptions of the relationships between teachers and students and how those relationships affect student academic performance and behavior in a small town elementary school in Kansas City, Missouri. The data

from this study showed that teachers believed that there was value in forming and maintaining positive and supportive relationships with their students in providing for their academic achievement and behavioral success. The data also showed that teachers feel the classroom and school culture influence academics and behavior and believe it is important to understand and respond to individual student cultures. This study elaborates on the effect of the positive relationship on the achievement of students. As such, it provided a basis for the current study that sought to assess how student teacher reality influences the performance of students in Mozambique primary schools.

The influence of teacher-student relationships on student outcomes in Ghanaian public senior high schools has dominated education discourse in the recent past. Kwabena (2020) conducted a study aimed at establishing the perception of teachers concerning their relationship with students and how this perception influences student learning outcomes. The study established that teachers with a minimally conflicting relationship with students experienced positive learning outcomes. The study further found that teachers who are professionally close with their students and have made their students professionally dependent on them experienced an increase in their level of student behavioral and instructional engagement. This study recommends that teachers must inculcate a positive teacher-student relationship, which improves the school and classroom learning environment as well as student academic achievement. The study, however, did not discuss the role of the principle in creating a good relationship between the teachers and students, which leads to effective student performance. This raised the gap that the current study sought to fill.

In a school setting where head teachers encourage teachers to build strong relationships with students, the possibilities of students' success tend to be high. In line with this argument, Armando (2014) conducted a qualitative study about building warm relationships between teachers and students in order to increase students' participation in the classroom in secondary schools in Mozambique. The results of the study showed that students learn better, when they feel respected, understood, loved, safe, and trusted. A warm classroom environment, freedom of expression, and good relations and communication between teachers and students are foundations for helping students learn better and participate actively in the classroom. This study by Armando, though it did not discuss the performance of students in terms of examination grades, acted as a basis for the current study to establish how the head teachers' candidates preparation strategies influence grade seven students' academic performance in primary schools in the Chimoio District, Mozambique.

## **2.6 Research Gaps**

This chapter presented the reviewed literature related to the influence of head teachers' candidate preparation strategies on students' academic performance. Most of the empirical literature reviewed on the influence of revision strategies on students' academic performance shows that the revision strategies employed in a school in the preparation of learners for examinations are important in influencing their performance in examinations. For example, Sakirudeen (2022) conducted a study in Akwa-Ibom State in Nigeria about the examination of habits and academic performance of secondary school students in mathematics. The study found that there is a significant relationship between note-taking, students' use of the library, time allocation for study, and students' academic performance. In Pakistan, Mohammad (2017) found out that the effects of continuous assessment techniques are seen as a strategy for preparing

students for effective performance at the elementary level. Nakhanu\_(2017) conducted a study aimed at finding out the effect of syllabus coverage on secondary school performance and established that effective revisions and syllabus coverage affect grade seven performances in national exams in Mozambique.

Studies (Pires, 2022; Namakando, 2017; Namakando, 2017) revealed that effective management of exam anxiety among learners is important for improving their academic performance. It was further discovered from the reviewed literature that the motivation strategies employed in a school under the influence of the head teacher affect the performance of learners in examinations. Motivation stimulates desire and energy among the learners to continually work hard and be interested in and committed to attaining their academic goals (Okoro, 2021). The literature reviewed further showed that a quality relationship between teachers and students allows effective academic achievement for learners (Kosi, 2013; Michael, 2011; Kwabena, 2020).

It must be noted, however, that several of the studies reviewed revealed some gaps. For example, most of the related studies were not conducted in Mozambique. For example, Kitai (2022) conducted a study in China, and Mohammad (2017) conducted a study in Pakistan. Such studies expressed geographical gaps that the current study sought to fill by concentrating on Mozambique. Certain studies revealed gaps in knowledge as they emphasized factors impacting learners' performance beyond the specific variable under examination. For example, Pearl (2016) delved into student academic performance but primarily concentrated on the teaching and learning strategies adopted by teachers to enhance performance in Liberian secondary schools. The present study aims to address this gap by examining revision strategies, exam anxiety management strategies, student motivation strategies, and student-teacher relationship strategies.

The study investigated how the implementation of these strategies by the head teachers influences students' academic performance in the Chimoio district of Mozambique.

Methodological gaps were evident in studies such as Michael's (2011) research and Consiglio's (2022) study at the University of Missouri in Columbia, both of which were solely qualitative in nature. The present study aimed to address these gaps by employing a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches, leveraging the unique strengths of each methodology.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This particular chapter presents the research design, location of the study, target population, sampling techniques, sample size, data collection instruments, and the validity of research instruments. The chapter also discussed the pilot testing of study instruments, the reliability of study instruments, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and lastly, ethical considerations for the study.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

Wanwyke (2012) defines research design as the overall plan for connecting the conceptual research problems to the pertinent empirical research. The research design articulates what data is required and what methods are to be used to collect and analyze that data. The current study adopted a convergent parallel mixed methods design. This design involved the collection of quantitative and qualitative data at the same time and having it analyzed separately. After both analyses are complete, the study compared the results to draw overall conclusions. The study adopted this design because it allows the researcher to use different methodological techniques for addressing quantitative and qualitative data within a study (Besir&Pismek, 2018).

The current study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design for quantitative data and a phenomenological research design for qualitative data. Cross-Sectional Survey is considered to be the most appropriate for the study because it collects data from a large target population at one point in time and saves time and cost (Creswell, 2014). The Cross sectional survey seeks to obtain information that describes the phenomenon through the inquiries made to participants asking their views and experiences of the phenomenon under study (Oso, 2016). In

this study, cross sectional survey design was used to collect views on the influence of head teachers' candidate preparation strategies on students' performance from various participants including teachers, head teachers and the ministry of education officer.

The qualitative approach on the other hand used a phenomenological design. Phenomenological design is qualitative in nature; it is a design of inquiry in which the researcher describes the lived experience of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants (Oso, 2016). The description ends in the essence of the experience for individuals who have experienced the phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). The phenomenological design being qualitative in nature, involves the use of interviews as instruments for data collection.

### **3.3 Location of the Study**

This study was conducted in Chimoio, the capital of Manica, which is the fifth-largest city in Mozambique. The town lies on the railway line from Beira to Bulawayo, near the Cabeça do Velho rock, located about 95 km from the Zimbabwean border. Students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in the area has been an issue of concern, and the exact cause has not been established. Perhaps the declining performance of students is linked to the strategies used to prepare them for examinations (Director of Education and Youth Affairs, 2021). It is from this perspective that the current study was conducted to establish whether head teachers' candidate preparation strategies have any influence on students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.

### **3.4. Target Population**

The target population is the large group from which the sample is taken (Kombo & Tromp, 2018). The target population for the current study included 23 public primary schools, 23 head teachers, 312 teachers, 1500 students, and one Ministry of Education officer in Chimoio

District, Mozambique. The head teachers were involved in the current study because they are the leaders of the schools and are involved in all aspects related to the preparation of candidates for examinations as well as the academic progress of learners. They also play a central role in providing instructional guidance and the necessary materials to effectively prepare students for their examinations. Teachers are charged with the responsibility of implementing practices meant to enhance learners' performance. For instance, they take part in preparing students for examinations. Thus, they were able to provide relevant information for the study. The ministry of education officer is in charge of the head teachers and teacher training programs that equip them with the necessary knowledge on how to prepare students for examinations. Thus, they provided useful data for the study.

### **3.5. Description of Sample and Sampling Procedures**

The current study adopted both probability and non-probability sampling techniques. The study used probability sampling techniques, particularly simple random sampling to select 18 out of 23 primary schools. The teachers were stratified into males and females, after which simple random sampling was used to select 125 out of 312 teachers from the 18 sampled schools. Stratified random sampling helped to ensure that the sample was representative of the entire population. By dividing the population into males and females and selecting samples from each subgroup, the sample reflected the diversity and distribution of characteristics present in the population. Proportionate sampling was used to select 316 out of 1500 grade seven students from the 18 sampled schools. This sampling technique helped to ensure that the ratio of students in each school was reflected in the sample. Non-probability sampling included the use of criteria-purposive sampling to include 18 head teachers and one ministry of education officer. Criteria-purposive sampling was used for the selection of head teachers and the ministry of education

officer, following the recommendation of Kombo and Tromp (2018) that it is appropriate when selecting cases that are rich in information regarding the study at hand.

### **3.5.1 Sampling of Schools**

The study obtained a list of schools from the Ministry of Education office in Chimoio District. The names of the schools were written on pieces of paper, which was then folded and placed in a box. The researcher randomly selected papers until the desired number of 18 schools is reached, which was appropriate based on the argument of Mugenda and Mugenda (2013) that when the study population is less than 10, 000, a sample size of between 10 and 30% is a good representation of the target population and hence 10 % is adequate for analysis.

### **3.5.2 Sampling of Head-Teachers**

Vijayamohan (2022) defined purposive sampling as a technique in which researchers select sample components based on the research purpose. The study purposively included the head teachers of all the selected 18 public primary schools because of their centrality in providing instructional guidance and materials needed to effectively prepare students for examinations.

### **3.5.3 Sampling of the Ministry of Education Officer**

Through Criteria-purposive sampling, the study included the ministry's education officer as a participant. The inclusion of a ministry of education officer was critical because they are in charge of the head teachers and teacher training programs that equip head teachers and teachers with the necessary knowledge on how to prepare students for examinations. Thus, they can provide useful data for the study.

### 3.5.4 Sampling of Students

The researcher used proportionate sampling to select the students to take part in the study. The sampling technique was appropriate because it enabled the study to select students from each school based on the number of students. This was achieved by using the Yamane (1967) formula to calculate the sample size of the students. The researcher further multiplied the number of students from each school by 10% of students per school.

$$n = N \div (1 + Ne^2).$$

n= the sample size

N= population size

e= the level of confidence

The sample size of 316 was selected from the 18 schools and in all grade seven classes. The study participants were chosen at random by the researcher from a list of grade seven students. The study achieved this through the use of the score cards. The score cards were labeled with yes/no labels, folded, and placed in a bowl. The researcher picked at random, and those who represented by “yes” were included in the study. Students were included in the study because they are directly affected by the preparation strategies employed by the head teachers in preparation for examinations, which makes them able to provide the data needed for the study.

### 3.5.5 Sampling of Teachers

The teachers that took part in the study were stratified into male and female groups. This was done to ensure fair representation for both genders. The researcher then used simple random sampling to select 125 out of 312 teachers. The study did this by assigning numbers to the names teachers written on papers (ONE and TWO). The papers with names was folded and placed in a box. The researcher then picked names at random, and the teachers whose names signed with the

number ONE were chosen for the study. Teachers were included in this study because they take part in preparing students for examinations. As a result, they are able to provide relevant information for the study.

**Table 1**

***Target Population, Sample Size and Sampling Techniques***

<b>Category</b>	<b>Target population</b>	<b>Sample Size</b>	<b>Sampling Techniques</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Teachers	312	125	Simple Random Sampling	40
Students	1500	316	Proportionate and simple random sampling	21
Head teachers	23	18	Criteria-purposive sampling	78
Ministry of Education Officer	1	1	Criteria-purposive sampling	100

**3.6 Description of the Research Instruments**

Abawi (2014) defined a research instrument as a tool that can be used to collect, measure, and analyze research data. The researcher used interview guides to collect data from the ministry of education officer and the head teachers of the selected public primary schools. The researcher used questionnaires to collect data from teachers and candidates. The use of both the questionnaires and an interview guide enabled the researcher to gather adequate data to answer research questions.

### **3.6.1 Questionnaire for Teachers**

The study used questionnaires with both open-ended and closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was comprised of five sections: A, B, C, D, and E. Section A sought to find out information about the demographic data of the participants. Section B sought information on the influence of revision strategies on students' academic performance; section C looked for information about the influence of examination anxiety management on students' academic performance; section D sought information about the influence of motivation strategies on students' academic performance and section E looked for information about the influence of the teacher-student relationship on students' academic performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.

### **3.6.2 Questionnaire for Students**

The questionnaire for students also had both open-ended and closed-ended questions. It was divided into five sections: A, B, C, D, and E. Section A sought information about the demographic data of the participants. Section B sought information on the influence of revision strategies on students' academic performance; section C looked for information about the influence of examination anxiety management on students' academic performance; section D sought information about the influence of motivation strategies on students' academic performance; and section E looked for information about the influence of the teacher-student relationship on students' academic performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.

### **3.6.3 Interview Guide for the Head Teachers**

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), interviews provide in-depth data that a questionnaire cannot provide. Thus, the current study collected data from head teachers using a

structured interview guide in order to obtain detailed data to answer the research questions. The interview guide was divided into five sections: A, B, C, D, and E. Section A sought information about the demographic data of the participants. Section B sought information on the influence of revision strategies on students' academic performance; section C looked for information about the influence of examination anxiety management on students' academic performance; section D sought information about the influence of motivation strategies on students' academic performance; and section E looked for information about the influence of the teacher-student relationship on students' academic performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.

#### **3.6.4 Interview Guide for the Ministry of Education Officer**

The researcher also used interview guide to obtain data from the ministry of education officer. The interview guide was divided into five sections: A, B, C, D, and E. Section A sought information about the demographic data of the participants. Section B sought information on the influence of revision strategies on students' academic performance; section C looked for information about the influence of examination anxiety management on students' academic performance; section D sought information about the influence of motivation strategies on students' academic performance; and section E looked for information about the influence of the teacher-student relationship on students' academic performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.

#### **3.6.5 Validity of the Instruments**

Validity refers to the extent to which an instrument measures what it is designed to measure and performs as it is designed to perform (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2013). The validity of the study instruments was discussed with the research experts at Tangaza University to ensure

that they are suitable for data collection. All the questionnaire items were reviewed to establish whether they can effectively collect data for all the research questions. Aspects such as consistency, completeness, and readability were also be checked and discussed, and feedback was incorporated into the final draft of the instruments.

### **3.6.6 Pilot Testing of the Research Instruments**

A pilot study is a small-scale preliminary study conducted before any large-scale quantitative research in order to evaluate the potential for a future, full-scale project (Mvumbi & Ngumbi, 2015). Pilot testing of the research instruments aided in identifying and correcting issues that the researcher and participants were likely to encounter when responding to the items, such as question clarity and ambiguity. The researcher selected two public primary schools to be used for pilot testing of the research instruments. These schools were not part of the actual study despite having the same characteristics as the schools that participated in the actual study. The researcher distributed the questionnaires to 18 teachers and 17 students. The instruments were revised where necessary before administering the final copy to respondents.

### **3.6.7 Reliability of the Study Instruments**

Reliability of research instruments is the measure of the stability and consistency of a research instrument (Kothari, 2019). This implies that if the study yields similar results after repeated trials, then the instruments are reliable; but if the results are contradictory, the reliability is questionable. Gall, Gall, and Borg (2010) argued that four different methods can be used to estimate the reliability of a research instrument. These are the test-retest technique, equivalent form technique, split-half technique, and internal consistency technique. In the current study, the researcher used the test-retest technique. Test-retest reliability refers to the test's consistency among different administrations (Wambiya, 2014).

Shenton (2004) argued that, in order to avoid the memory effect, it is worth observing a length of time, at least one week, between the two administrations of the tests. Thus, after one week from the first administration of the test, the researcher re-administered questionnaires to the same teachers and learners in the same schools used during the pilot test and correlate the scores obtained by the same teachers on the two administrations. The researcher conducted a Spearman's correlation to determine the reliability coefficient because it is mostly designed for ranked rather than continuous data.

According to Nitko and Brookhart (2011), reliability coefficients have a range of 0 to 1. A reliability index of 0 represents no relationship between two sets of scores, and a reliability index of 1 is a perfect positive relationship. A value of 0.7 to 0.9 is an acceptable value for test-retest reliability. A reliability coefficient score of 0.82 was realized which enabled the researcher to conclude that questionnaires were reliable and therefore used them in the collection of data.

### **3.6.8 Reliability of Qualitative Instruments**

The reliability of qualitative data was observed by ensuring the credibility and dependability of interview guides for head teachers and the Ministry of Education officer. Credibility, as noted by MacMillan and Schumacher (2010), ensures that the study reflects the experiences of those being studied and that the results can be trusted. Thus, the researcher took time during interviews to ensure that participants get enough time to explain what they have to say. The researcher further endeavored to seek confirmation from the interviewees, which allowed for the recording of accurate data. Regarding consistency, the researcher reviewed the raw data and the summary of the findings to check for and address any inconsistencies that could have been present.

### **3.7 Description of Data Collection Procedure**

The study sought a recommendation letter from the Directorate of Postgraduate Studies and Research at Tangaza University. The letter, together with the signed research proposal, was used to seek a research permit from the Mozambique Ministry of Education in the Chimoio District. After obtaining the research permit, the researcher sought permission from the head teachers to conduct research in primary schools. The researcher explained the purpose of the study to the respondents and requested that they sign the consent form to show that they were willing to participate in the study.

### **3.8 Description of Data Analysis Procedures**

Jankielewicz and Whiting (2022) defined data analysis as process in which the researcher systematically applies techniques to describe, draw conclusions from, or evaluate data. It is the method by which data is collected and organized so that the researcher is able to look at the data and determine relationships. According to Creswell (2014), data analysis is a way of sorting, coding, cleaning, processing, and interpreting data. The researcher in the current study analyzed the quantitative data obtained through closed-ended questionnaires using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were used in the analysis of the quantitative data. After the analysis, the researcher used tables and graphs to present the data. The qualitative data from interviews and open ended questions was analyzed in themes according to the research questions and reported in narratives and direct quotations.

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Creswell (2014) pointed out that a researcher is expected to follow research ethical guidelines when conducting a study. To this effect, the researcher sought a recommendation

letter from the Department of Postgraduate Studies at Tangaza University. The researcher also sought a letter from the Mozambique ministry of education in the Chimoio district, to be allowed to carry out the study in the area. The target population was contacted with the authority of the school's head teachers.

The researcher ensured that the purpose of the study was clearly explained to the participants. They were also informed that taking part in the study was voluntary and that they could decline to participate if they so wished at any time. The respondents were requested to acknowledge their acceptance to freely take part in research and their right to withdraw from the study by freely signing the consent form. The researcher informed the study participants that their identities were to be kept strictly confidential. Thus, anonymity was ensured by not asking respondents to write their names on the research questionnaires. The researcher referenced sources of information using APA 7th edition. This enabled the researcher to avoid plagiarism.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data analysis, interpretation and discussion of the study findings. The chapter is divided into sections, including the response rate of the study participants, demographic data, and the presentation, interpretation and discussion of the findings, which are done based on the study questions.

#### 4.2 The Response Rate of the Study Participants

The researcher distributed research instruments to different study participants; questionnaires were distributed to teachers and students. This was beneficial in the collection of quantitative data. Interview guides were used to collect qualitative data from the sampled head teachers and the ministry of education officer in Chimoio District, Mozambique. Table 2 shows the response rates of the study participants.

**Table 2**

*The Response Rate of the Study Participants*

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Sampled Participants</b>	<b>Actual Participants</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
Teachers	125	123	98.4%
Students	316	306	97%
Head teachers	18	14	77.8%
Ministry of Education	1	1	100%

To collect data from respondents, the researcher distributed 125 questionnaires to the teachers in primary schools in Chimoio District, Mozambique. Out of the 125 questionnaires that were distributed, 123 were duly completed and returned. This yielded a response rate of 98.4%. There were 316 students who were given questionnaires, and 306 of them completed and returned them, yielding a response rate of 97%. Regarding head teachers, 14 out of 18 were available for interviews, which yielded a response rate of 77.8%. The Ministry of Education Officer was available for interviews, which yielded a 100% response rate. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2013), a response rate of 50% is adequate enough for analysis and reporting while a response rate of more than 60%-69% is considered to be good and that of above 70% is excellent. This was achieved after the researcher made a rigorous explanation to the respondents on how to fill the questionnaires. This shows that the response rates achieved in this study were excellent for data analysis and reporting. The high response rate was attributed to the researcher's effort to follow up and effectively explain the purpose of the study to the study participants. Even though the response rate was high, some of the teachers and students did not return the questionnaires. Also, four of the head teachers were not available for interviews. The teachers who did not return the questionnaires reported being too busy to complete them. The head teachers who were unavailable for interviews reported having meetings that prevented them from being available.

#### **4.3 Demographic Information of the Participants**

The study sought to establish participants' personal characteristics, such as gender, age, professional qualification levels, and years of experience. In doing this, the researcher sought to

find out how the personal characteristics of the participants are related to how head teachers' candidate preparation strategies influence students' performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.

#### 4.3.1 Distribution of Head teachers and Teachers by Gender

The study sought to find out the gender of the participants in order to establish whether there was a difference between male and female participation in rating how head teachers' candidate preparation strategies influence students' performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. The findings are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2**

*Distribution of Gender of the Head Teachers and Teachers*

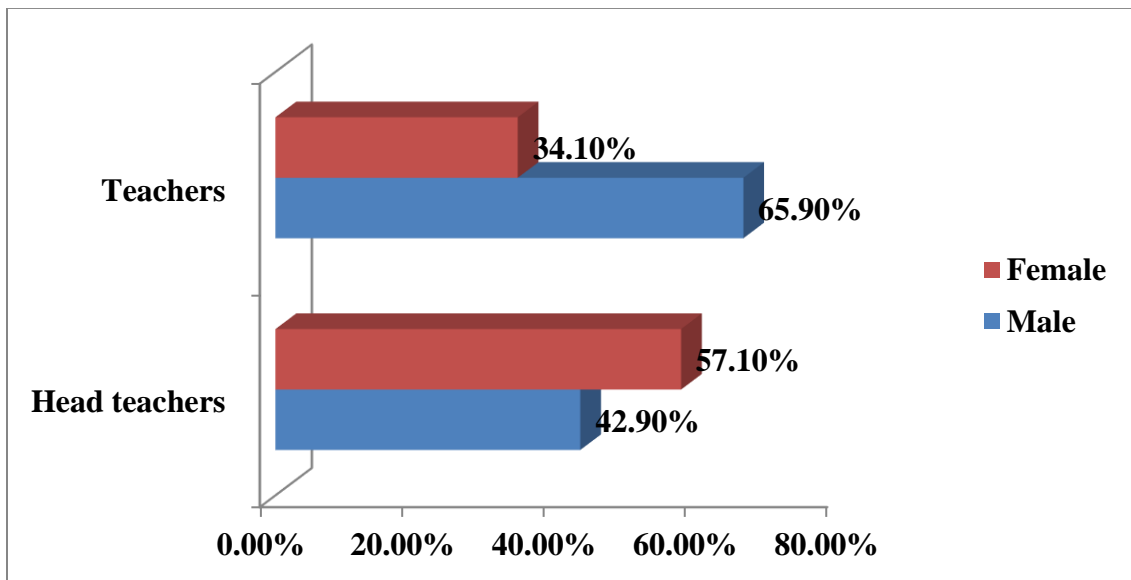


Figure 2 shows that the majority of the teachers (65.9%) were males, and most of the head teachers (57.1%) were females. This implies that both genders were represented in the study. The findings reveal gender balance, which fosters a fair and just society. Gender balance can also

highlight potential gender-specific challenges and successes, informing policies and interventions aimed at improving educational outcomes for all students, regardless of gender.

#### 4.3.2 Distribution of Head teachers and Teachers by Age

The study sought to find out the age range of the head teachers and teachers to establish whether age had any influence on strategies employed by the head teachers to prepare candidates and students performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District. The study findings are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3**

*Distribution of the Head teachers and Teachers by Age*

Age	Head teachers		Teachers	
	F	%	F	%
25-35 years	3	21.4	85	69.1
36-46 years	6	42.90	20	16.30
47-57 years	3	21.40	11	8.90
58 and above	2	14.30	7	5.70

Table 3 shows that the majority of the teachers (69.1%) were in the age bracket between 25 and 35 years of age. The study also shows that most of the head teachers (42.90%) were in the age bracket of 36–46 years. This is an indication that most of the teachers in primary schools in Chimoio District are young and most head teachers are slightly older than the teachers. Having head teachers older than teachers can be advantageous in a school in that older head teachers tend to have extensive teaching and administrative backgrounds, allowing them to draw from a broad range of experiences to make informed decisions and mentor younger teachers into

effective teaching practices. Soerjo (2022) argued that the long-term perspective of old head teachers can provide stability and continuity in school policies and practices, fostering a supportive environment for both teachers and students to excel.

A study by Pianta (2020) revealed that young teachers tend to have the ability to bring fresh perspectives, energy, and enthusiasm to the classroom. They often come equipped with the latest pedagogical techniques and are more likely to be proficient with modern technology, which can enhance the learning experience and make lessons more engaging. Moreover, as noted by Kerlberg (2020) young teachers may more easily relate to their students, fostering a positive and motivating classroom environment that encourages active participation and a deeper understanding of the material, ultimately contributing to improved academic performance.

#### **4.3.3 Distribution of Head teachers and Teachers according to Academic Qualifications**

In the current study, the researcher sought to find out the professional qualifications of the head teachers and the teachers. The researcher did this to establish whether head teachers and the teachers had the required qualifications that would enable them to improve learning and enable learners to excel in their examinations. The researcher also hoped that qualified head teachers would provide guidance to teachers and students, ensuring success in examinations. Qualified teachers are expected to be equipped with techniques that would allow learners to effectively prepare for examinations and thus perform well. Table 4 shows the findings.

**Table 4***Distribution of Head teachers and Teachers according to Academic Qualifications*

<b>Academic</b>				
<b>Qualifications</b>	<b>Head teachers(n=14)</b>		<b>Teachers (n=123)</b>	
	Frequencies	Percentages	Frequencies	Percentages
Diplomas	2	14.3	81	65.9
Bachelor's degree	10	71.4	42	34.2
Master's degree	2	14.3	00	00

Table 4 shows that 14.3% of the head teachers had diploma qualifications, the majority (71.4%) had bachelor's degree qualifications, and 14.3% had a master's degree qualification. The results of the study further revealed that most of the teachers (65.9%) had diploma qualifications. The teachers with bachelor's degree qualifications were 34.2%. A report from the Ministry of Education and Human Development of Mozambique (2018) indicates that the minimum qualification to teach in a primary school in Mozambique is a Diploma in Basic Education, which can be obtained from teacher training colleges. These programs are designed to equip prospective teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach primary school students. Based on the cited report, it can be said that the majority of the teachers and head teachers in Chimoio District, Mozambique, have attained the qualifications that allow them to teach in primary schools. Antera (2023) contended that qualified teachers tend to possess the

necessary knowledge, skills, and pedagogical expertise to effectively deliver curriculum content and develop students' understanding.

It must be noted that qualified teachers are adept at employing diverse teaching strategies tailored to different learning styles, ensuring that all students grasp essential concepts. They can identify and address individual student weaknesses, provide targeted interventions, and create a supportive learning environment that fosters academic confidence. They also tend to be familiar with examination formats and requirements, enabling them to guide students in effective study techniques, time management, and stress reduction strategies. Their proficiency in these areas ensures that students are well-prepared, increasing their chances of performing well in examinations and achieving academic success.

#### **4.3.4 Distribution of Head teachers and Teachers according to Experience**

The researcher sought to determine the head teachers' and teachers years of experience in order to find out whether they had acquired more knowledge and skills based on the period of their service, which could have helped them apply various effective techniques in preparing candidates for examinations. Figure 3 show the findings.

**Figure 3**

*Distribution of Head teachers and Teachers according to Experience*

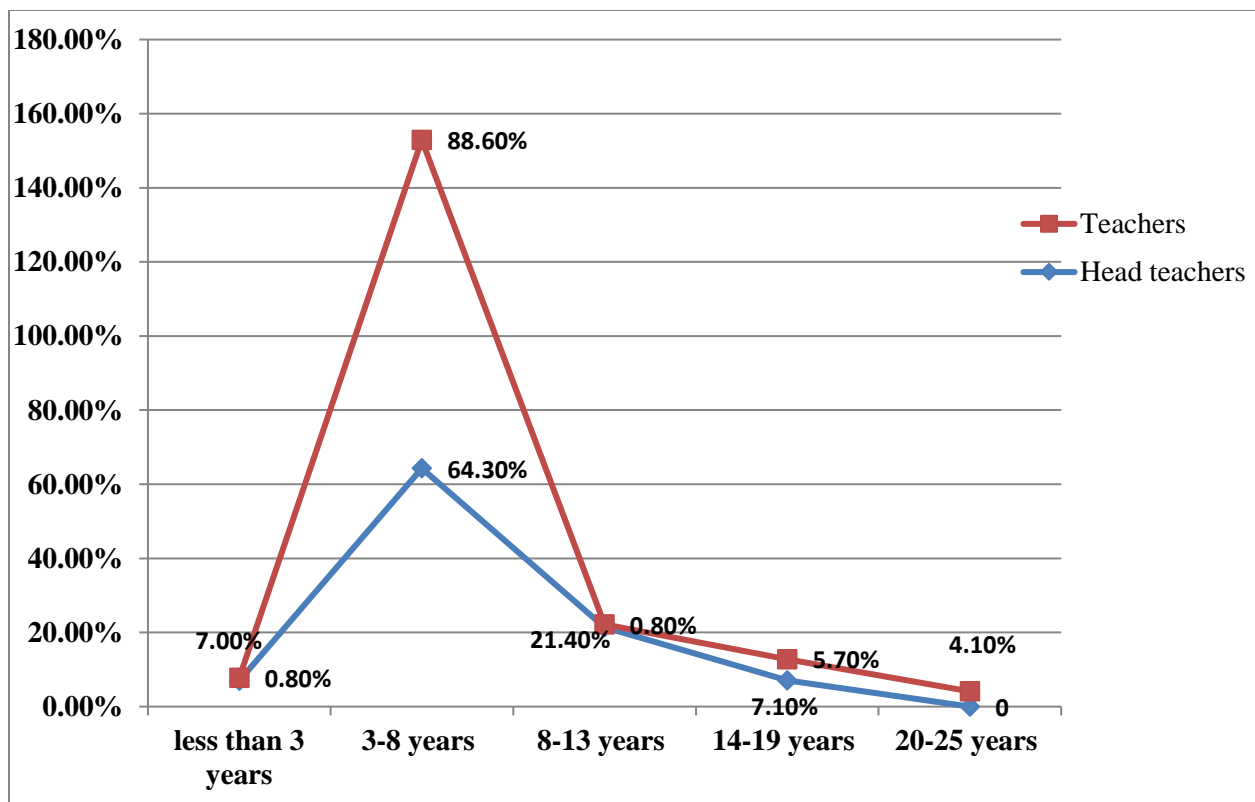


Figure 3 indicates that the majority of the head teachers (64.3%) have been in the leadership position for 3–8 years. The percentage of head teachers who have been in the leadership position for 8–13 years was 21.4%. The head teachers who had worked longer, that is, 14–19 years, were 7.1%. These findings could suggest that most teachers in primary schools in Chimoio District have attained sufficient experience to have acquired the skills and expertise needed to effectively prepare candidates for examinations. Further, having head teachers in

primary schools with a lot of experience is important for preparing candidates well for examinations because experienced head teachers bring a wealth of knowledge and proven strategies to the educational environment. Their extensive background allows them to provide strong leadership and mentorship to both teachers and students, ensuring that the school's instructional practices are aligned with best practices. As emphasized by Maxmudjon (2023), experienced head teachers can effectively oversee curriculum implementation, identify and address gaps in teaching and learning, and introduce targeted interventions to boost student performance.

#### **4.4 Head teachers' Supportive Revision Strategies and the Academic Performance of Students**

The first question of this study was to find out the extent to which head teachers' supportive revision strategies influence the academic performance of students in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. The teachers and students were requested to choose the response that best represented their opinions on a five-point scale. The scale of rating as presented on Table 5 was: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The findings are presented in the Table 5.

**Table 5**

*Influence of Head teachers' Supportive Revision Strategies on students' Academic Performance*

<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>		<b>A</b>		<b>UD</b>		<b>D</b>		<b>SD</b>	
	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
The head teacher encourages group work among students as they prepare for examinations.	101	82.1	14	11.4	2	1.6	5	4.1	1	0.8

Regular feedback from teachers is important for learners as they prepare for examinations.	0	0	68	55.3	18	14.6	33	26.8	4	3.3
Our head teacher encourages learners to review past papers as a strategy to pass examinations.	111	90.2	4	3.3	4	3.3	3	2.4	1	0.8
Our head teacher emphasizes timely syllabus coverage in order for students to perform well in examinations.	88	71.5	6	4.9	19	15.4	7	5.7	3	2.4
<b>Statement (n=306)</b>										
The head teacher encourages class discussions as a strategy for learners to excel in examinations.	8	2.6	161	52.6	99	32.4	17	5.6	21	6.9
Regular feedback from teachers is important for learners as they prepare for examinations.	213	69.6	46	15.0	19	6.2	18	5.9	10	3.3
Our head teacher encourages learners to review past papers as a strategy to pass examinations.	8	2.6	25	8.2	55	18.0	197	64.4	21	6.9
Our head teacher emphasizes timely syllabus coverage in order for students to perform well in examinations.	192	62.7	8	2.6	10	3.3	39	12.7	57	18.6

Table 5 shows, that the majority of the teachers (82.1%) agreed that that the head teachers encourage group work among students as they prepare for examinations. Only 0.8% of the teachers strongly disagreed with statement. In line with these findings, a head teacher in an interview argued that encouraging learners to engage in group discussions fosters a collaborative learning environment where students can share knowledge, clarify doubts, and develop a deeper understanding of the subject matter that allows them to excel in their examinations. Another head teacher had this to say:

I encourage learners in my school to work in groups. Working in groups allows learners to leverage each other's strengths, receive diverse perspectives, and engage in active discussions, which can enhance critical thinking and problem-solving skills. This collaborative approach also helps students to develop important social and communication skills, build confidence, and manage time effectively, all of which contribute to better preparation and improved performance in examinations (Head teacher A, 18/06/2024).

The study further revealed that slightly more than half of the teachers (55.3%) agreed that regular feedback from teachers is important for learners as they prepare for examinations. There were 14.6% of the teachers who were undecided on whether feedback from teachers is important for learners as they prepare for examinations. Teachers who were undecided about the importance of providing feedback to learners as they prepare for examinations may be uncertain about its impact on student performance and motivation. While they might recognize that feedback can help identify strengths and areas for improvement, they could be unsure about how to deliver it effectively or may fear that excessive feedback could overwhelm students. This ambivalence might stem from a lack of training in providing constructive feedback or a belief that students should independently assess their own progress. The significance of feedback in learning performance is underscored in a study by Lipnevich (2009), who revealed that providing detailed feedback specifically tailored to an individual's essay had a significant positive correlation with improvements in essay scores. Regarding whether head teachers encourage learners to review past papers as a strategy to pass examinations, most of the teachers (90.2%) agreed, while 4.1% of the teachers disagreed with the statement. When commenting on the use of past papers, one of the head teachers had this to say:

In my school, I encourage learners to revise past papers in preparation for examinations. I know that by engaging with past papers, students become familiar with the format and style of questions they are likely to encounter, which helps reduce anxiety and build confidence (Head teacher B, 22/06/2024).

These findings from the head teacher relate to what the education officer said:

The practice of revising papers in preparation for examinations allows learners to identify recurring themes and key topics, improving their understanding of the subject matter. Reviewing past papers also helps learners to develop time management skills by simulating exam conditions, and it provides an opportunity to practice answering questions concisely and accurately, which enhances their chances of excelling in examinations (Education officer, 19/06/2024).

There were 71.5% of the teachers who agreed with the statement that head teachers in their schools emphasize timely syllabus coverage in order for students to perform well in examinations. This idea was strongly disagreed with by 2.4% of the teachers. These findings seem to suggest that timely syllabus coverage is closely connected to students' academic performance in examinations. When the syllabus is covered on schedule, students have ample time to thoroughly understand and assimilate the material, engage in revision, and seek clarification on complex topics. This systematic approach reduces last-minute cramming, minimizes stress, and allows for the integration of various learning strategies such as practice tests and group discussions. Furthermore, timely coverage ensures that all essential topics are addressed, providing students with a comprehensive foundation to tackle exam questions confidently and effectively. As a result, students are better prepared, leading to improved

academic performance in examinations. A study by Mbaraka (2016) found that there is a positive and significant relationship between timely syllabus coverage and learners' performance.

There were slightly more than average students (52.6%) who agreed that their head teachers encourage class discussions as a strategy for learners to excel in examinations. It's likely that these students knew that their head teachers encouraged discussions through various direct and indirect means. Direct communication, such as announcements during assemblies or in-class visits, clearly demonstrates the head teacher's support for this strategy. Additionally, the implementation of policies or structured programs that promote and facilitate class discussions, along with teachers' reinforcement of these practices in their classrooms, signals the head teacher's endorsement. While commenting about classroom discussion as a strategy to improve academic performance, the head teacher had this to say:

I encourage students to embrace classroom discussions. These discussions enhance students' academic performance by promoting active learning, enhancing critical thinking, and improving understanding of the subject matter. Through discussions, students can clarify doubts, gain diverse perspectives, and reinforce their knowledge. This interactive approach encourages deeper engagement with the content, leading to better retention and application of concepts, ultimately resulting in improved academic performance (Head Teacher C, 17/06/2024).

The study further found that most of the students were in agreement that regular feedback from teachers is important for learners as they prepare for examinations. One of the head teachers commented that:

Every time I talk to teachers, I encourage them to give regular feedback to students regarding their performance. I know that feedback provides them with clear insights into

their strengths and areas for improvement, helping them to focus their study efforts more effectively. It guides them on how to correct mistakes and improve their understanding of complex concepts, enhancing their overall grasp of the subject matter (Head teacher D, 18/06/2024).

The education officer also had this to say:

Regular feedback to students boosts their motivation and confidence, as students can see their progress and are encouraged to keep improving. This continuous cycle of assessment and improvement ensures that students are better prepared and more confident when facing their examinations, leading to higher academic achievement (Education officer, 13/06/2024).

These findings clearly show that giving timely feedback to students regarding their performance is crucial in their preparation for examinations. When students are given feedback, they get to know their strengths and weaknesses and are thus better able to improve in their weak areas. Regarding whether head teachers encourage learners to review past papers as a strategy to pass examinations, most of the students (64.4%) disagreed. These findings contradict the assertion of one of the head teachers who argued that in their school, students are encouraged to revise past papers as a strategy to help them prepare well for examinations. It should be noted that revising past papers is essential for students preparing for examinations, as it familiarizes them with the exam format, question styles, and time management required during the actual examination. This practice helps learners understand the examiner's expectations and recognize their strengths and weaknesses. When learners work through past papers, they can practice applying their knowledge in a timed setting, which can help reduce their exam anxiety. It also provides them with an opportunity for self-assessment, enabling them to focus their revision on

areas that need immediate improvement as they approach the examination, ultimately enhancing their performance.

Furthermore, most of the students (62.7%) agreed that their head teachers emphasize timely syllabus coverage to ensure students perform well in examinations. A head teacher in one of the interviews emphasized the importance of timely syllabus coverage, asserting that:

Timely syllabus coverage is crucial for students' success in examinations because it ensures that all necessary material is thoroughly taught and understood before the examinations. This systematic approach allows students to engage with the content at a manageable pace, providing ample time for revision and practice. It helps prevent last-minute preparation and reduces stress that comes with the pressure of preparing at the last minute as students are approaching examinations (Head teacher E, May 20, 2024).

These findings show that when students have timely completion of the syllabus, they tend to have more time for revision, allowing them to focus on areas that need improvement. This agrees with the study by Nakhanu (2017) conducted in Kenya, which found that timely syllabus coverage in schools enhances students' performance in national examinations.

#### **4.5 Examination Anxiety Management Strategies and Students' Academic Performance**

The second question of the current study sought to examine the influence of head teachers' candidate examination anxiety management and academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District Mozambique. The teachers and students were requested to choose the response that best represented their opinions on a five-point scale. The scale of rating as presented on Table 5 was: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The findings are presented in the Table 6.

**Table 6*****Examination Anxiety Management Strategies and Students' Academic***

Statement	SA		A		UD		D		SD	
	F	%	F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
<b>Teachers (n=123)</b>										
Our students are adequately prepared to reduce anxiety for exams.	68	55.3	27	22.0	7	5.7	1	0.8	20	16.3
Learners are given ample time to read for exams, which reduces exam anxiety and leads to effective performance.	28	22.8	6	4.9	3	2.4	77	62.6	9	7.3
Our head teacher encourages learners to have a study plan, which helps them stay focused in preparation for examinations.	109	88.6	3	2.4	3	2.4	6	4.9	1	1.6
Positive thinking about exams is encouraged among the learners, which reduces exam anxiety and improves the students' grades.	67	54.5	47	38.3	1	0.8	1	0.8	7	5.7
Timely syllabus coverage provides learners with enough content to feel confident in their exam preparation.	85	69.1	21	17.1	3	2.4	4	3.3	10	8.1
<b>Students (n=306)</b>										
As learners we always given ample time to read for exams, which reduces exam anxiety and leads to effective performance.	152	49.7	124	40.5	13	4.2	11	3.6	6	2.0
Our head teacher encourages us to have a study plan, which helps them stay focused in preparation for examinations.	192	62.7	26	8.5	48	15.7	29	9.5	11	3.6
Positive thinking about exams is encouraged which reduces exam anxiety and improves the students' grades.	192	62.7	60	19.6	21	6.9	11	3.6	22	7.2
Timely syllabus coverage provides learners with time to cover enough content which improves confidence among the learners.	203	66.3	88	28.8	2	0.7	7	2.3	6	2.0

Table 6 shows, that the slightly more than the average number of the teachers (55.3%) agreed that their students are adequately prepared to reduce anxiety for exams. This finding was also affirmed by one of the head teachers who asserted that:

I'm aware of how preparation is vital to reducing exam anxiety, and so we do our best to prepare our students well. I know that when students are well-prepared for examinations, their anxiety levels tend to decrease because thorough preparation instills confidence and a sense of control over the material. Familiarity with the subject matter, gained through consistent study and practice, reduces the fear of the unknown, which is a common source of anxiety among students (Head teacher C, 18/06/2024).

This finding was reinforced by the argument of the ministry of education officer who contended that:

I'm aware of how much effort our schools put into preparing candidates well for examinations, and as such, most of the students tend to be well prepared, which has often reduced their anxiety as they approach examinations. We encourage teachers and head teachers of schools to ensure candidates are well prepared, and effective preparation often includes developing test-taking strategies and time management skills, all of which contribute to a more composed and focused mindset. This combination of knowledge, skills, and confidence helps students approach exams with a calmer and more positive attitude, significantly reducing their anxiety levels (Ministry of education officer, 19/06/2024).

These findings reveal that head teachers are making efforts to prepare candidates well for examinations, as this helps to reduce their anxiety levels and improves their performance. As Spagnolo and Schirripa (2022) found in their study, well-prepared students tend to be less anxious about examinations, which increase their chances of excelling.

There was a disagreement from most of the teachers (62.6%) that learners are given ample time to read for exams, which reduces exam anxiety and leads to effective performance.

There were also 2.4% of the teachers were undecided regarding whether learners are given ample time to read for exams. This could be attributed to inconsistencies in how different teachers allocate study time, leading to varied perceptions among teachers. Additionally, some teachers may feel uncertain due to a lack of clear policies or guidelines on providing dedicated reading time for students. Differences in classroom management and individual teaching styles might also play a role, with some teachers potentially struggling to balance curriculum requirements and exam preparation. Lastly, external pressures such as standardized testing schedules and extracurricular activities can create conflicting priorities, making it difficult for teachers to definitively state whether students have sufficient reading time. It must be noted that when learners are given ample time to prepare for examinations, their academic performance tends to improve. As noted by Moreau (2022), extended preparation allows students to engage more thoroughly with the material, leading to a deeper understanding and better retention of content studied. In addition, Goldsmith (2021) argued that when learners are given ample time to prepare for examinations, they can allocate time to review and practice extensively, address areas of weakness, and develop effective study strategies. This increased preparation time also reduces stress and anxiety, which often negatively impact performance.

One of the head teachers narrated that in their school students are given enough time to prepare for examination arguing that adequate preparation time allows them to thoroughly understand and internalize the material, leading to better retention and comprehension. The head teacher further argued that when students are given time to prepare for examinations, it reduces stress and anxiety, as students feel more confident and less rushed, allowing for more effective study.

Regarding giving students enough time to prepare, the Education officer had this to say:

Sufficient preparation time enables students to engage in various study techniques, such as spaced repetition and active learning, which have been proven to enhance learning outcomes. It allows students to identify and address any gaps in their knowledge, seek help if needed, and develop effective test-taking strategies. Overall, ample preparation time leads to improved academic performance and a more positive educational experience (Education officer, 28/08/2024).

It is clear from the findings that students tend to prepare well for examinations when they are given ample time, which enhances their chances of performing well. A study by Obiekwe and Elizabeth (2019) found that students' performance tends to be high when they effectively manage the ample time given to prepare for examinations.

Regarding whether head teachers encourage learners to have a study plan, which helps them stay focused in preparation for examinations, 88.6% of the teachers agreed with this statement. This aligns with the findings from one of the head teachers, who said that learners in their schools are highly encouraged to plan well for their time and seek help from teachers in planning when needed, so they can prepare well for examinations. A study by Yusefzade (2022) revealed a correlation between study habits, study planning time, and the performance of students. Yusefzade further argued that when students plan well for their examinations, they increase their chances of performing well.

There were 54.5% of the teachers who consented that positive thinking about exams is encouraged among the learners, which reduces exam anxiety and improves the students' grades. In relation to this finding, one of the head teachers commented:

As a head teacher I encourage positive thinking about examinations among learners by fostering a supportive and encouraging school environment. I do this by having regular

motivational talks, emphasizing the importance of a positive and growth mindset, and highlighting that exams are opportunities for learning and personal growth rather than just assessments. I also ensure there are resources and workshops on effective study strategies and stress management techniques to help students feel more prepared and confident (Head teacher E, 21/06/2024).

In addition to the assertion of the head teacher, the education officer also argued that, “Celebrating small achievements boosts students' self-esteem and resilience. A positive atmosphere created by head teachers fosters a constructive attitude towards exams, ultimately enhancing students' performance.” These result shows that head teachers in Chimoio District Mozambique are making efforts to nature a positive attitude among leaners towards examinations which enhances their academic performance.

Majority of the teachers (69.1%) agreed that timely syllabus coverage provides learners with enough content to feel confident in their exam preparation. In addition one of the head teachers narrated, “Timely syllabus coverage gives students the opportunity to understand the material. It also allows teachers to identify areas where learners need improvement to minimize knowledge gaps.” The education officer of Chimoio District also had this to say:

Timely syllabus coverage helps to reduce need for last-minute cramming, which often leads to superficial learning and higher stress levels. By pacing the learning process effectively, students can engage more deeply with the content, participate actively in discussions, and complete assignments and assessments with a thorough understanding. This systematic progression enhances retention and overall academic achievement (Education officer, 24/06/2024).

In relation to the findings of the study about syllabus coverage and learners' performance, a study by Kiprono (2018) revealed that there exists a positive and statistically significant relationship between syllabus coverage and the academic performance of students.

The findings from students revealed that 90.2% of the students agreed with the statement that learners are always given ample time to read for exams, which reduces exam anxiety and leads to effective performance. These findings concurs with what one of the head teachers said, “I encourage teachers to have the syllabus covered in time so that we allow the students to revise in preparation of examination and this has always helped our students to perform well in examination.” The study further found out that most of the students agreed with the idea that head teacher encourage them to have a study plan, which helps them stay focused in preparation for examinations. It is important to acknowledge that having a study plan is crucial for students as it provides structure, organization, and direction to their academic pursuits. A well-designed study plan helps students prioritize their tasks, allocate sufficient time for each subject or topic, and set realistic goals. By outlining specific study sessions, students can manage their time effectively, ensuring they cover all necessary material in a timely manner.

Additionally, a study plan promotes consistency in learning, reduces procrastination, and enhances retention of information through regular review and practice. A study by Brunton (2020) argued that study plan fosters self-discipline and accountability, empowering students to track their progress and make necessary adjustments to achieve academic success. As noted in an interview with one of the head teacher, a study plan serves as a roadmap that supports academic achievement by optimizing learning efficiency and minimizing stress.

Further, most of the student (62.2%) agreed with the idea that positive thinking about exams is encouraged which reduces exam anxiety and improves the students' grades. In line with these findings, the education officer of Chimoio District had to say:

Every time I talk to head teachers, I encourage them to actively promote positive thinking about academics and examinations among students because a positive mindset significantly influences academic performance and overall well-being. When students approach studies with optimism, they are more likely to engage actively in learning activities, persevere through challenges, and maintain motivation even during stressful periods such as examinations (Education officer, 24/06/2024).

In addition to this finding, a head teacher asserted:

Positive thinking enhances students' self-confidence, I encourage them to set ambitious but achievable goals and strive for continuous improvement. Moreover, fostering a positive academic environment cultivates a supportive culture where students feel empowered to seek help, collaborate with peers, and view mistakes as opportunities for growth rather than setbacks. Encouraging positive thinking about academics and examinations has not only enhanced academic outcomes but also nurtured resilience, emotional well-being among our students (Head teacher A, 26/06/2024).

The findings on Table 6 also revealed that most of the students (66.3%) agreed that timely syllabus coverage allows them to cover enough material, which improves confidence among the learners. This finding agrees with what the education officer said in an interview that timely syllabus coverage plays a crucial role in enhancing learners' confidence for examinations by ensuring sufficient exposure to the required content. The education officer further argued that when students have ample time to cover the syllabus in a structured manner, they can engage

deeply with each topic, clarify doubts, and reinforce understanding through practice and revision. One of the principals also asserted, “timely syllabus coverage instills confidence among the learners as they tend to feel adequately prepared to tackle diverse questions and challenges that may arise in examinations.” These findings seem to show that when the syllabus is covered in time, learners tend to cover enough content, which is important for them as they revise in preparation for examinations. These findings also concur with the findings of the study by Nakhanu (2017), who found that timely syllabus coverage allows learners ample time to prepare for examinations and reduces anxiety, which normally affects learners' academic achievements.

#### 4.6 Influence of Motivation Strategies and Students’ Academic Performance

The third question of this study sought to evaluate the influence of head teachers’ motivation strategies on students’ academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District Mozambique. The teachers and students were requested to choose the response that best represented their opinions on a five-point scale. The rating scale as presented on Table 7 was: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). The findings are presented in the Table 7.

**Table 7**

##### *Influence of Motivation Strategies and Students’ Academic Performance*

Statement	SA		A		UD		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	f	%
Motivation is essential for learners' academic performance.	98	79.7	10	8.1	7	5.7	3	3.4	5	4.1
Students who are motivated to learn persist longer and perform better.	61	49.6	50	40.7	6	4.9	5	4.1	1	0.8
The head teacher provides gifts to motivate learners in their studies.	1	0.8	1	0.8	4	3.3	2	1.6	115	93.5
The principal encourages teachers to take time and work with students	53	43.1	40	32.5	2	1.6	8	6.5	20	16.2

individually to motivate them. Learners are given timely feedback about their performance, which motivates them to work harder.	5	4.1	41	33.3	70	56.9	7	5.7	0	0
<b>Students (n=123)</b>										
14Motivation is essential for learners' academic performance.	186	60.8	21	6.9	27	8.8	62	20.3	10	3.3
15Students who are motivated to learn persist longer and perform better.	165	53.9	123	40.2	5	1.6	4	1.3	9	2.9
16The head teacher provides gifts to motivate learners in their studies.	12	3.9	163	53.3	8	2.6	5	1.6	118	38.6
19Learners are given timely feedback about their performance, which motivates them to work harder.	91	29.7	21	6.9	28	9.2	21	6.9	145	47.4

The results from Table 7 highlight a strong consensus among teachers regarding the significance of motivation in learners' academic performance, with a substantial majority (79.7%) affirming its importance. However, a minimal proportion (4.1%) of teachers expressed strong disagreement with this statement. This dissenting view, though a minority, suggests that there may be varying perspectives among educators on the extent to which motivation directly impacts academic outcomes. Such divergence could stem from differing interpretations of motivational factors or varying experiences in educational contexts. Nonetheless, the overwhelming agreement underscores the widely recognized belief among teachers in the pivotal role of motivation in fostering successful learning outcomes among students. Regarding motivation of students, one of the head teachers had this to say:

Motivating students before exams is crucial because it enhances their psychological readiness and academic performance. When students feel motivated, they are more likely to approach exams with confidence, enthusiasm, and a positive mindset. This motivation

serves as a catalyst for effective study habits, encouraging them to engage actively in revision, practice, and preparation. Moreover, motivation helps alleviate anxiety and stress commonly associated with examinations, allowing students to focus more clearly and perform to the best of their abilities (Head teacher E, 29/06/2024).

The education officer also asserted:

I normally encourage head teachers and the teachers in schools to encourage and motivate learners especially towards examinations. I do this because I know that by fostering a motivated mindset, educators empower students to persist through challenges, maintain concentration during exams, and approach questions with critical thinking and problem-solving skills honed through their preparation (Education officer, 23/06/2024)..

The findings highlight that motivating students before exams not only boosts their morale and self-esteem but also contributes significantly to their overall academic success and long-term learning outcomes. Related findings were established by Safiyeh (2015), whose study findings revealed a correlation between students' motivation and their academic performance.

The findings further indicate a near-unanimous consensus among teachers, with 90.3% agreeing that motivated students persist longer and achieve better performance. This strong agreement underscores the critical role of motivation in sustaining student engagement and enhancing academic outcomes. The minimal 4.1% of teachers who were undecided suggests that only a tiny fraction may have reservations or require further evidence to fully endorse this perspective. The overwhelming majority supports the idea that motivation is a key driver of student perseverance and success, highlighting its importance in educational strategies and interventions aimed at improving learner achievements.

The findings of the study revealed a significant consensus among teachers, with 93.5% strongly disagreeing that the head teacher provides gifts to motivate learners in their studies, and only 0.8% agreeing with the statement. This overwhelming disagreement suggests that the practice of offering material incentives is not a common or endorsed strategy within the primary schools in Chimoio District. It indicates that teachers may believe in or adhere to other forms of motivation, such as intrinsic motivation, encouragement, and recognition, rather than relying on extrinsic rewards.

Table 7 further indicates that most of the teachers (75.6%) agreed that the principal encourages teachers to take time and work with students individually to motivate them. Only 1.6% were undecided on the matters. The results of this study indicate that a substantial majority of teachers (75.6%) agree that the principal encourages them to spend time working individually with students to provide motivation. This strong agreement reflects recognition of the importance of personalized attention in fostering student motivation and engagement. The encouragement of the head teachers regarding such practices likely promotes a supportive and nurturing educational environment, where students receive tailored guidance and support. The very low percentage of undecided responses (1.6%) further underscores the clarity and general acceptance of this approach among the teaching staff. This finding emphasizes the value placed on individual student-teacher interactions as a key strategy for enhancing student motivation and academic success.

In relation to these findings, the education officer asserted:

As a head teacher, I often encourage teachers to take time and work individually with students to motivate them because personalized attention significantly enhances student engagement, understanding, and motivation. When teachers provide one-on-one support,

they can address specific learning needs, clarify doubts, and tailor their teaching strategies to each student's unique strengths and weaknesses (Head teacher, 02/07/2024). The education officer also commented that, “one-on-one approach to assisting students fosters a stronger teacher-student relationship, making students feel understood. As a result, their confidence in their studies and academic performance improve.”

It is important to acknowledge that personalized interactions allow teachers to identify and nurture each student's intrinsic motivations, setting personalized goals that align with their interests and aspirations. By encouraging such practices, the head teacher promotes a supportive and inclusive learning environment that can lead to improved academic outcomes and a more positive attitude towards education.

The findings reveal that slightly more than half of the teachers (56.9%) were undecided on whether learners receive timely feedback about their performance to motivate them to work harder. This significant level of indecision suggests a potential inconsistency or lack of clarity in the implementation of feedback practices within the primary schools in Chimoio District. Timely feedback is crucial for student motivation as it helps learners understand their progress, identify areas for improvement, and feel supported in their efforts. In a study by Mohammad (2021), it was highlighted that Lack of proper communication inform of feedback was found as main barriers affecting students’ academic performance.

Table 7 further shows that most of the students (60.8%) agreed that motivation is essential for learners' academic performance. These findings highlight the recognized importance of motivational factors among the learners themselves. This consensus among students underscores the direct impact of motivation on their engagement, persistence, and success in their studies. When students understand and acknowledge the value of motivation, they are more likely to seek out and

respond positively to motivational strategies implemented by educators. This alignment between student perception and educational practices is crucial for creating an effective learning environment. The findings suggest that fostering a motivational culture within schools can significantly enhance academic outcomes, as students who feel motivated are more inclined to put in the necessary effort, overcome challenges, and achieve their academic goals. As one of the head teachers noted, "when students are encouraged and motivated, they tend to perform beyond the mean minimum."

The findings indicate that slightly more than half of the students (53.9%) agree that motivated students persist longer and perform better, suggesting a moderate recognition among students of the link between motivation and academic success. This majority viewpoint reinforces the notion that motivation plays a critical role in sustaining student engagement and enhancing performance. However, the fact that a significant portion of students either disagreed or were undecided highlights a potential gap in understanding or experiencing effective motivational strategies within the primary schools in Chimoio District.

The findings show that slightly more than half of the students (53.3%) agreed that the head teacher provides gifts to motivate learners in their studies. This suggests that students see this practice as relatively common and visible within the school. This perception among students highlights the use of extrinsic rewards as a motivational tool, which can be effective in the short term by providing tangible incentives for academic effort and achievement. However, as noted by Safiyeh (2015), while gifts can boost motivation and engagement temporarily, reliance on extrinsic rewards may not foster long-term intrinsic motivation, which is crucial for sustained academic success and personal growth.

The head teacher in an interview argued:

I normally give gifts to students when they perform well, and I have realized that they work hard to earn them. However, I also ensure that they are intrinsically motivated by encouraging teachers to talk to them and sometimes inviting external speakers to communicate, inspire, and motivate them. By combining extrinsic rewards with efforts to cultivate intrinsic motivation, I have observed that students are encouraged to value learning and develop a deeper, self-sustained commitment to their studies (Head teacher E 2/7/2024).

The findings reveal a contrast in perceptions between students and teachers regarding the head teacher providing gifts to motivate learners. While slightly more than half of the students (53.3%) believe that gifts are used for motivation, an overwhelming majority of teachers (93.5%) strongly disagree with this practice. This discrepancy suggests a significant divergence in understanding or awareness between the two groups regarding motivational strategies employed within the educational setting. Teachers' strong disagreement likely reflects a preference for fostering intrinsic motivation and academic engagement through other means, such as personalized encouragement and recognition of effort.

The study revealed a disagreement among the students (54.3%) regarding whether they are given timely feedback about their performance to motivate them. These findings contradict the findings from one of the head teachers regarding feedback who commented:

We ensure that learners receive timely feedback regarding their performance in school. Effective feedback not only supports academic growth but also enhances student confidence and motivation by providing clear pathways for improvement. I encourage teachers to enhance communication channels and ensure that feedback is timely, specific,

and actionable. This approach has been instrumental in improving students' academic performance in our school (Head teacher F, 01/07/2024).

The findings from students point to concerns about the effectiveness of feedback as a motivational tool in primary schools in Chimoio District. Timely and constructive feedback is essential not only for improving learning outcomes but also for fostering motivation by helping students understand their strengths and areas needing improvement. The disagreement among students suggests that there may be inconsistencies or perceived shortcomings in how feedback is currently delivered or perceived.

#### **4.7 Influence of Head teachers' Support of the Teacher-student Relationship on the Academic Performance of Students**

The fourth question of the current study sought to find out the extent to which head teachers' support of the teacher-student relationship influences the academic performance of students in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. The teachers and students were requested to choose the response that best represented their opinions on a five-point scale. The rating scale as presented on Table 8 was: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). Table 8 presents the findings.

**Table 8**

***Head teachers' Support of the Teacher-student Relationship and Academic performance of Students***

<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>		<b>A</b>		<b>UD</b>		<b>D</b>		<b>SD</b>	
	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>f</b>	<b>%</b>
The head teacher encourages student-teacher relationships to improve students' performance.	67	54.5	47	38.2	1	0.8	1	0.8	7	5.7
Students in our school perform better because of their good relationships with their teachers.	70	56.9	5	4.1	41	33.3	0	0	7	5.7
The student-teacher	65	52.8	47	38.2	1	0.8	1	0.8	9	7.3

relationship enables learners to express their learning needs and ask for help.										
Learning is enhanced when teachers are supportive of the learners.	113	91.9	2	1.6	2	1.6	5	4.1	9	7.3
<b>Students(n=306)</b>										
The head teacher in our school encourages student-teacher relationships to improve students' performance.	192	62.7	60	19.6	21	6.9	11	3.6	22	7.2
Students in our school perform better because of their good relationships with their teachers.	210	68.6	14	4.6	62	20.3	3	1.0	17	5.6
The student-teacher relationship enables learners to express their learning needs and ask for help.	165	53.9	123	40.2	5	1.6	4	1.3	9	2.9
Learning is enhanced when teachers are supportive of the learners.	190	62.1	20	6.5	26	8.5	61	19.9	9	2.9

Table 8 shows a moderate level of agreement among teachers (54.3%) regarding the head teacher's role in encouraging student-teacher relationships to enhance students' performance, with a minority (5.7%) strongly disagreeing with this assertion. This majority agreement underscores the recognized importance of fostering positive relationships between students and teachers as a means to support academic success. Teacher students' relationships can facilitate personalized learning experiences, effective communication, and a supportive environment where students feel valued and motivated to excel. The small percentage of strong disagreement may suggest varying perspectives on the impact of teacher-student relationships or differing opinions on how best to prioritize educational strategies.

Similar findings were revealed by one of the head teachers who asserted, "I foster cooperation between students and teachers through open communication and mutual respect. I

also encourage celebration of shared successes to reinforce the importance of unity within the school community."

Regarding whether Students in school perform better because of their good relationships with their teachers, more than half of the teachers (56.9%) agreed. This indicates that positive teacher-student relationships correlate with improved academic outcomes. Further, slightly more than the average number of teacher (52.8%) agreed that student-teacher relationship enables learners to express their learning needs and ask for help. This agreement likely reflects a broader acknowledgment among teachers that strong relationships foster a supportive environment where students feel comfortable articulating their academic challenges and seeking assistance. Such relationships can enhance communication, trust, and mutual respect, which are fundamental to effective teaching and learning. This alignment with the value of teacher-student relationships in facilitating open communication highlights teachers' awareness of their role in creating conducive learning environments where students can thrive academically. In line with these findings, one of the head teachers noted, "students in our schools are encouraged to be open with their teachers to enhance communication. This openness allows students to consult their teachers whenever they face challenges, which has significantly improved their academic performance in examinations." Consiglio (2022) contended that a strong relationship between students and teachers creates a supportive and motivating learning environment. This positive rapport fosters open communication, allowing teachers to tailor their instruction to individual needs and provide targeted feedback.

The findings of the study highlight a strong consensus among teachers, with 91.9% agreeing that supportive teacher attitudes enhance learning outcomes for students. This overwhelming agreement underscores the widely recognized importance of educators fostering a

supportive environment in classrooms. The minimal percentage of teachers (1.6%) who were undecided suggests a high level of confidence among the majority regarding the positive impact of teacher support on student learning. Such findings emphasize the critical role of teacher attitudes and behaviors in shaping educational experiences and outcomes, reinforcing the notion that supportive teacher-student relationships are fundamental to effective teaching and academic success. In a study by Consiglio (2022), it was found out that students who reported having more positive relationships with their teachers also reported high academic achievements.

Most of the students (62.7%) agreed with the opinion that the head teacher in our school encourages student-teacher relationships to improve students' performance. These findings suggest a strong awareness among students of administrative efforts to foster supportive educational environments. This perception indicates that students recognize and value the leadership's role in promoting positive interactions between teachers and students, possibly influencing their own attitudes and behaviors towards learning. Such encouragement from school leadership likely contributes to a conducive atmosphere where students feel empowered to engage more actively with their teachers, thereby boosting their academic achievements and overall educational experience.

Most of the students (68.6%) were in agreement that they perform better because of their good relationships with their teachers. This high level of agreement suggests that students recognize the importance of supportive teacher-student relationships in fostering a conducive learning environment. Such relationships likely contribute to increased motivation, engagement in class activities, and a greater willingness to seek help when needed. These findings highlight the crucial role that teachers play not only in delivering academic content but also in building rapport and trust with their students, ultimately enhancing overall learning outcomes.

There were slightly more than the average number of students (53.9) who agreed that student-teacher relationship enables learners to express their learning needs and ask for help. Education officer revealed similar finding asserting that, “we promote school environments that foster strong relationships between teachers and students. As a result, students feel comfortable consulting their teachers, which improves their performance." These findings clearly show that students recognize that student teacher relationship is crucial for their academic performance.

Regarding whether learning is enhanced when teachers are supportive of the learners, the majority of the students (62.1%) agreed, while a small number of students (8.5%) were undecided about the idea. The findings reflect widespread recognition among students of the positive impact of teacher support on their educational experience. The students who were undecided on the idea show the different ideas among students regarding support given by their teachers. These findings align with that of a study by Kosi (2013) which found out that students are able to perform well in academic envelopment where the relationship between them and their teachers is favorable.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the study presented a summary of the findings and the conclusion of the research study. The study in this chapter further presents recommendations based on the findings of the study as well as suggestions for further studies.

#### 5.2 Summary of the Findings

The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of head teachers' candidate preparation strategies on students' performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. Under this section, all four objectives were used to make a summary of the findings.

Regarding the first objective of the study, it was revealed that the majority of the teachers agreed that the head teachers encourage group work among students as they prepare for examinations. There were few teachers who were undecided on whether feedback from teachers is important for learners as they prepare for examinations. There were slightly more than average number of the students who agreed that their head teachers encourage class discussions as a strategy for learners to excel in examinations. Regarding whether head teachers encourage learners to review past papers as a strategy to pass examinations, most of the students disagreed, which contradicted the assertion of one of the head teachers, who argued that in their school, students are encouraged to revise past papers as a strategy to help them prepare well for examinations.

The second objective of the study was to examine the influence of head teachers' candidate examination anxiety management and academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. Regarding this objective, it was revealed that slightly more than the average number of teachers agreed that their students were adequately prepared to reduce anxiety for exams. There was a disagreement among most of the teachers that learners should be given ample time to read for exams. Regarding whether head teachers encourage learners to have a study plan, which helps them stay focused in preparation for examinations, the majority of the teachers agreed with this statement. Most of the study participants agreed that positive thinking about exams is encouraged among the learners, which reduces exam anxiety and improves the students' grades. The majority of the participants agreed that timely syllabus coverage provides learners with enough content to feel confident in their exam preparation. Further, most of the students agreed with the idea that positive thinking about exams is encouraged, which reduces exam anxiety and improves the students' grades. Most of the students agreed that timely syllabus coverage allows them to cover enough material, which improves confidence among the learners.

Regarding the third objective about the influence of head teachers' motivation strategies on students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique, the study revealed a strong consensus among teachers regarding the significance of motivation for learners' academic performance. The findings further indicated a near-unanimous consensus among teachers, with 90.3% agreeing that motivated students persist longer and achieve better performance. The study further revealed that most of the teachers agreed that the principal encourages teachers to take time and work with students individually to motivate them. Results also indicated that most of the study participants agreed that motivation is

essential for learners' academic performance. Slightly more than half of the students agreed that the head teacher provides gifts to motivate learners in their studies. Slightly more than half of the students believed that gifts are used for motivation; an overwhelming majority of teachers strongly disagree with this practice.

Regarding whether head teachers' support of the teacher-student relationship influences students' performance, the findings revealed a moderate level of agreement among teachers. A significant majority acknowledged the head teacher's role in fostering student-teacher relationships to enhance students' performance, with a minority strongly disagreeing with this assertion. Regarding whether students perform better in school due to their positive relationships with their teachers, slightly more than half of the teachers agreed. The findings of the study highlighted a strong consensus among teachers agreeing that supportive teacher attitudes enhance learning outcomes for students. Most of the students agreed with the opinion that the head teacher in their schools encourages student-teacher relationships to improve students' performance. Majority of the study participants were in agreement that they perform better because of their good relationships with their teachers. There were slightly more than the average number of students who agreed that the student-teacher relationship enables learners to express their learning needs and ask for help. Regarding whether learning is enhanced when teachers are supportive of the learners, the majority of the students agreed, while a small number of students were undecided about the idea.

### **5.3 Conclusions of the Study**

The current study aimed to find out the influence of head teachers' candidate preparation strategies on students' performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District, Mozambique. Based on the findings of the study, several conclusions were drawn. Regarding the

first objective, it was concluded that head teachers in schools within Chimoio District make efforts to prepare students for examinations by encouraging group work and class discussions as strategies for enhancing learners' performance in exams. Furthermore, the study found that timely syllabus coverage is crucial for achieving effective academic performance in examinations.

Regarding the second objective, the study concluded that head teachers play a crucial role in managing candidates' examination anxiety, thereby impacting students' academic performance. Specifically, head teachers encourage students to develop study plans to enhance their preparation for examinations. The study further concluded that effective student preparation not only reduces anxiety but also significantly improves their chances of performing well in examinations. The study concluded that encouraging positive thinking about exams is encouraged, which reduces exam anxiety and improves the students' performance in examinations.

Regarding the third objective about the influence of head teachers' motivation strategies on students' academic performance, the study concluded that teachers play a crucial role in motivating students as they prepare for examinations, thereby enhancing students' academic performance. Furthermore, the study concluded that the use of gifts is not an effective strategy for head teachers to employ in preparing candidates to excel in examinations.

Regarding whether head teachers' support of the teacher-student relationship influences students' performance, the study concluded that head teachers' strategy of encouraging a positive teacher-student relationship fosters an environment where students can effectively prepare for examinations. An effective student-teacher relationship enables learners to express their learning needs and seek assistance, which significantly improves their performance in examinations.

## **5.4 Recommendations of the Study**

The recommendations in the current study were based on the study findings. They include recommendations for practice, recommendations for theory, and recommendations for further research.

### **5.4.1 Recommendations for Practice**

Based on the study findings that head teachers use gifts and other extrinsic motivations to encourage students to perform well in examinations, which were found to be ineffective, the study recommended that the head teachers of primary schools in Mozambique should prioritize and promote intrinsic motivation strategies in schools. Intrinsic motivation, such as fostering a supportive learning environment, encouraging student autonomy, and emphasizing the value of learning itself, can have a more sustainable and positive impact on student engagement and academic performance.

Based on the findings that the head teacher does not encourage students to read past papers as a strategy for exam preparation, it is recommended that the schools implement a structured program to integrate past paper reviews into the school program. This program should include training for both teachers and students on the benefits of using past papers to understand exam formats, question types, and key topics. The head teacher should actively promote this practice by setting up regular review sessions, providing access to past papers, and encouraging teachers to incorporate them into their lesson plans. By doing so, students will gain valuable practice and insight into exam expectations, ultimately enhancing their preparation and performance.

### **5.4.2 Recommendations for policy**

Given that the study reveals the use of gifts is not an effective strategy for preparing candidates to excel in examinations, it is recommended that schools shift focus to more impactful methods of motivation and support. The governments' policy should advocate for the implementation of evidence-based practices such as targeted academic workshops, regular formative assessments, and personalized feedback to enhance student learning. Additionally, the policy should emphasize the importance of creating a supportive learning environment through professional development for teachers, fostering strong teacher-student relationships, and providing academic resources. By prioritizing these strategies, schools can better address students' needs and improve their examination performance more effectively than through the use of gifts.

### **5.4.3 Recommendations for Further Research**

The current study recommends that a similar investigation on the influence of head teachers' candidate preparation strategies on students' performance in the primary certificate of education be conducted in other districts of Mozambique for several compelling reasons. Firstly, educational contexts can vary across districts, influenced by factors such as infrastructure, socioeconomic conditions, and local educational policies. Understanding how different districts implement and benefit from various preparation strategies will provide a more comprehensive picture of effective practices that can be tailored to specific regional needs. Further, replicating the study in diverse districts allows for a broader generalization of findings and validation of trends observed, ensuring that educational interventions are grounded in strong evidence and applicable across the educational landscape of Mozambique. Additionally, by expanding the scope of the study, policymakers and educators can identify common challenges and successful

strategies that may inform targeted interventions aimed at improving overall educational outcomes nationwide.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: Cover Letter

TANGAZA UNIVERSITY  
P.O. BOX 15055.  
NAIROBI, KENYA  
Dear participant,

#### RE: COLLECTION OF SURVEY DATA

I am a student currently pursuing a degree of master's of education in educational Leadership and administration at Tangaza University, a constituency college of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa. My research is entitled "*The influence of head teachers' preparation strategies on students' academic performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Chimoio District, Mozambique.*" I kindly request that you participate in this study. The information you provide will be treated with confidentiality.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully,

**Sr. Victoria Tito**

### STUDY PROCEDURES AND PRIVACY OF INFORMATION

The questionnaire is expected to take about ten minutes of your time. No risk is associated with this study since it's purely for academic purposes. You may decline to answer any or all questions, and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose to. The information you provide will be used purely for academic purposes. There will be no direct monetary benefit to you for your participation in this study. To preserve confidentiality, you will not be asked to fill out the form with your name or the name of your school. The information given shall not be used for any other purpose other than for academic purposes. There shall be no disclosure of the identities of schools or participants to any authority, in whatever circumstances. None of the information will be published in a manner that would enable any individual, school, teacher, or principal to be identified.

Further, to ensure the confidentiality and anonymity of participants in this study, rigorous data coding and anonymization procedures will be implemented. Each participant's data will be assigned a unique identifier code that is unrelated to their personal information. All identifying

information, such as names, addresses, and any other potentially identifiable details, will be removed or replaced with generic terms during data collection and transcription. Additionally, any direct quotations or references to participants will be anonymized by using pseudonyms or generic descriptors. Furthermore, data will be stored securely, and access will be restricted to authorized personnel only. These measures will safeguard the privacy of the participants and uphold ethical standards throughout the research process.

**APPENDIX 2: Consent Form**

I'm Sr. Victoria Tito, a Master's student at Tangaza University. I humbly invite you to participate in a research study entitled, "The influence of head teachers' candidate's preparation strategies and students' academic performance in the primary certificate of education in Chimoio District, Mozambique." Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you can decide to withdraw from it. The information you provide will be used for academic purposes and will be treated with the utmost confidentiality. If you have any concerns regarding this research, kindly reach out to Sr.Victoria Tito at millicenttito@gmail.com.

**Statement of Consent**

I have read the information provided above and have had the opportunity to ask any questions. By signing below I am indicating my consent to participate in the research. I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used primarily for a Master's thesis, and will also be used in summary form for journal publication, and I consent for it to be used in that manner.

I have received satisfactory answers to the questions I have asked. I therefore consent to participate in this research.

Name.....Signature.....Date.....

**APPENDIX 3: Assent Form**

Dear Parent/Guardian:

I'm Sr. Victoria Tito, a Master's student at Tangaza University College, a *constituent* college of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa (CUEA). I am carrying out a study about: *Headteachers' Candidate Preparation Strategies and Students' Performance in the Primary Certificate of Education in Cchimoio District, Mozambique.*

I am conducting an investigation in to the mentioned study with the approval of the school principal. Students will be requested to complete questionnaires within the school premises. Once the questionnaire has been submitted, it becomes anonymous. The questionnaires do not include any identifying information about your child. There are no questions that require the naming of individual children. The researcher will neither use your child's name nor any other identifying information in oral or written reports.

Kindly sign below to grant your child consent to participate in the filling of the questionnaire, and ensure that your child returns this form to the school.

Students' Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Parent's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX 4: Questionnaire for Teachers**

Please read the following questions and tick (✓) your appropriate response.

**Section A: Demographic Information**

- 1) What is your gender: male [ ] female [ ]
- 2) What is your age bracket? 25 – 35 [ ] 36 – 46 [ ] 47 – 57 [ ] 58 and above [ ]
- 3) What is your highest level of education? Diploma [ ] Bachelor's degree [ ] Master's Degree [ ]  
 PhD [ ] any other (specify).....
- 4) How long have you served as a teacher? Less than three years [ ] 3-8 years [ ] 8-13 years [ ]  
 14-19 years [ ] 20-25 years [ ] above 25 years

**Section B: Influence of Revision Strategies on Students' Academic Performance**

5. Please indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement to the following statements. Tick (✓) appropriately: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD) Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
a)	The head teacher encourages group work among students as they prepare for examinations.					
b)	The head teacher encourages class discussions as a strategy for learnersto excel in examinations.					
c)	Class discussion has an influence on students' performance.					

d)	Regular feedback from teachers is important for learners as they prepare for examinations.					
e)	Our head teacher encourages learners to review past papers as a strategy to pass examinations.					
f)	Learners are always encouraged to revise their class notes in preparation for the examination.					
g)	Our head teacher emphasizes timely syllabus coverage in order for students to perform well in examinations.					

1. State how your school's head teacher prepares learners for excellency in examinations.

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**Section C: Examination Anxiety Management Strategies and Students' Academic**

**Performance**

7. Please indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement to the following statements. Tick (✓)

appropriately: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD) Disagree (DA), and Strongly

Disagree (SD).

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
a)	Our students are adequately prepared to reduce anxiety for exams.					
b)	Learners are given ample time to read for exams, which reduces exam anxiety and leads to effective performance.					
c)	Our head teacher encourages learners to have a study plan, which helps them stay focused in preparation for examinations.					
d)	Positive thinking about exams is encouraged among the learners, which reduces exam anxiety and improves the					

	students' grades.					
e)	Timely syllabus coverage provides learners with enough content to feel confident in their exam preparation.					

8. State how exam anxiety among learners is managed in your school.

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**Section D: Motivation Strategies and Students' Academic Performance**

9. Please indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement to the following statements. Tick (✓) appropriately: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD) Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

	Statement	SA	A	UD	D	SD
a)	Motivation is essential for learners' academic performance.					
b)	Students who are motivated to learn persist longer and perform better.					
c)	The head teacher provides gifts to motivate learners in their studies.					
d)	Learners are allowed to make decisions concerning assessment, which is a motivating factor.					
e)	The principal encourages teachers to take time and work with students individually to motivate them.					
f)	Learners are given timely feedback about their performance, which motivates them to work harder.					

10. Explain how your head teacher motivates learners to perform better in examinations.

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**Section E: Teacher-student Relationship and Students’ Academic Performance**

11. Please indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement to the following statements. Tick (✓)

appropriately: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD) Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
a)	The head teacher in our school encourages student-teacher relationships to improve students' performance.					
b)	Teachers who are close to their students increase their academic performance.					
c)	Students in our school perform better because of their good relationships with their teachers.					
d)	The student-teacher relationship enables learners to express their learning needs and ask for help.					
e)	Learning is enhanced when teachers are supportive of the learners.					

12. State how teacher-student relationships are enhanced to improve students’ academic performance in your school.

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**APPENDIX 5: Questionnaire for Students**

Please read and tick your most appropriate response.

**Section A: Demographic Information**

1. What is your gender: male [ ] female [ ]
2. Your age bracket: below 12 year [ ], 12-17 years [ ], 18 and above [ ]

**Section B: Influence of Revision Strategies on Students’ Academic Performance**

3. Please indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement to the following statements. Tick (✓) appropriately: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD) Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
h)	The head teacher encourages group work among students as they prepare for examinations.					
i)	The head teacher encourages class discussions as a strategy for learners to excel in examinations.					
j)	Class discussion has an influence on students' performance.					
k)	Regular feedback from teachers is important for learners as they prepare for examinations.					
l)	Our head teacher encourages learners to review past papers as a strategy to pass examinations.					
m)	Learners are always encouraged to revise their class notes in preparation for the examination.					
n)	Our head teacher emphasizes timely syllabus coverage in order for students to perform well in examinations.					

5. State how your school's head teacher prepares learners for Excellency in examinations.

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**Section C: Examination Anxiety Management and Students' Academic Performance**

1. Please indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement to the following statements. Tick (✓) appropriately: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD) Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
a)	As learners we always given ample time to read for exams, which reduces exam anxiety and leads to effective performance.					
b)	Our head teacher encourages us to have a study plan, which helps them stay focused in preparation for examinations.					
c)	Positive thinking about exams is encouraged which reduces exam anxiety and improves the students' grades.					
d)	Timely syllabus coverage provides learners with time to cover enough content which improves confidence among the learners.					

7. State how exam anxiety among learners is managed in your school.

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**Section D: Motivation Strategies and Students' Academic Performance**

8. Please indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement to the following statements. Tick (✓) appropriately: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD) Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

	<b>Statement</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>UD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
g)	Motivation is essential for learners' academic performance.					
h)	Students who are motivated to learn persist longer and perform better.					
i)	The head teacher provides gifts to motivate learners in their studies.					
j)	Learners are allowed to make decisions concerning assessment, which is a motivating factor.					

k)	The principal encourages teachers to take time and work with students individually to motivate them.					
l)	Learners are given timely feedback about their performance, which motivates them to work harder.					

9. Explain how your head teacher motivates learners to perform better in examinations.

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**Section E: Influence of the Teacher-student Relationship on Students’ Academic Performance**

10. Please indicate the extent of agreement or disagreement to the following statements. Tick (✓) appropriately: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UD) Disagree (DA), and Strongly Disagree (SD).

	Statement	SA	A	UD	D	SD
a)	The head teacher in our school encourages student-teacher relationships to improve students' performance.					
b)	Teachers who are close to their students increase their academic performance.					
c)	Students in our school perform better because of their good relationships with their teachers.					
d)	The student-teacher relationship enables learners to express their learning needs and ask for help.					
e)	Learning is enhanced when teachers are supportive of the learners.					

11. State how teacher-student relationships are enhanced to improve students’ academic performance in your school.

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**APPENDIX 6: Interview Guide for Head teachers**

1. What is your gender: male [ ] female [ ]
2. What is your age bracket? 25 – 35 [ ] 36 – 46 [ ] 47 – 57 [ ] 58 and above[ ]
3. What is your highest level of education? Diploma [ ] Bachelor’s degree [ ] Master’s Degree [ ] PhD [ ] any other (specify).....
4. How long have you worked as a Head Teacher in this school? Less than three years [ ] 3-8 years [ ] 8-13 years [ ] 14-19 years[ ] 20 and above years
5. What are your academic qualifications?
6. Describe how your school prepares students to excel in exams.
7. Describe how you use revision as a strategy to improve students’ performance.
8. How do you ensure exam anxiety among learners is managed in your school?
9. Explain how you motivate learners to perform better in examinations.
10. State how teacher-student relationships are enhanced to improve students’ academic performance in your school.

**APPENDIX 7: Interview Guide for Education Officer**

1. For how long have you worked as Education Officer in this area?
2. What are your academic qualifications?
3. State how you ensure that in your schools, learners are well prepared for examinations.
4. Describe how schools in your area use revision as a strategy to improve students’ performance.

5. How do head teachers ensure exam anxiety among learners is managed?
6. What is the relationship between exam anxiety and learners' performance?
7. Explain how learners in your schools are motivated to excel in exams and how you motivate them to perform better in exams.
8. State how head teachers ensure there are effective teacher-student relationships.
9. Explain how teacher-student relationships enhance students' academic performance in your school.

# APPENDIX 8: Turnitin Originality Report

5/23, 3:19 PM

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HEAD TEACHERS&#39; CANDIDATES  
PREPARATION STRATEGIES AND  
STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN THE  
PRIMARY CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION  
IN CHIMOIO DISTRICT, MOZAMBIQUE  
By Victoria Tito

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HEAD TEACHERS' CANDIDATES PREPARATION STRATEGIES AND STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN THE PRIMARY CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION IN CHIMOIO DISTRICT, MOZAMBIQUE SR. VICTORIA TITO CMLA 1904 A Reserch Proosal Submitted in Patial Fulfilment of the Requirement for the Aard of the Degree of Msters of Eduation in Leaership and Administration SCHOOL OF EDUCATION TANGZA UNIVERSITY COLEGE THE CATHOIC UNIVESITY OF EASTRN AFICA NAIROBI-KENYA APRIL, 2023

CHAPTER ONE 1.1 Introduction Tis chater discsses the background to the stdy, staement of the prblem, purpose of he sudy, objectives of te stdy, reserch questons, signifiacnce of the stdy, sope and deliitations, theretical rameork, conptual fraewrk, ad th operaional definition of key terms. 1.2 Bakground to the Stdy he strategies employed by a school principal in preparing students for the national examination determines their success or failure in the exams. Taking and passing national examinations is a pointer to effective preparation strategies (Syokwaa, Aloka, & Ndunge, 2014; Mitana, Muwagga, & Ssempala, 2019). In many jurisdictions, national examinations are used as tools for assessing the school system's achievement, a learner's achievement, and the effectiveness of strategies used to prepare the candidate (Whittle, Telford, & Benson, 2018). In preparing candidates for national examinations, there are many factors that come into play and include the school environment; the teacher's revision strategy; the teaching and learning resources available; personal study habits; motivation; and test-taking anxiety (Kober, 2015; Sayari, Revenio, & Dalluay, 2017). The ability of the school head teachers to choose strategies for the candidate class that combines all these positive characteristics is necessary for candidates to garner the highest possible score (Elmurabet, 2015; Walters, Smith, Leinwand, Surr, Stein, & Bailey, 2014). Research by Hambleton (2018) and Walters et al. (2018) showed that a good candidate preparation strategy should include effective time management, sureying ll questons befre rrsponding, deling wth difficult questons, dealing wth mutile-choce questns, andnderlig kword uecions. Diecty, tese strategies hlp stuentz increase teir scoes on tets thrgh th efetive ue of ter tie, efort, ad tst contions (Okogu, Osah & Umodjere, 2016). In teaching, a (Stronge, 2017; Whittle et al., 2018). Mix (2019) and Wollscheid (2019) argued that the of the school principal to shine often drive the intensity of efforts expended. However, all teaching strategies for a candidate class need to be innovative and accommodative, no matter the learning ability of the student. ibogo (2016) argues that strategy chsen is basedon wht te teacher wises to improve in te canddate. Teaching strateies an lso incude th ue of nw educaional technology, audio clis, vieos, a wel as oter featres to encourage studnts t py beter attention. A teachr can lso chose a strategy to motivate te studnts to sk questons ad investgate or do classroom experiments. When applied correctly, these teaching straegies cn crate a positve lerning envionment and imprve a studen's performance in eamintions. The stuy by Amalag, Shaira, nd Dolv (201) sows tat whn preping studens or national examnations, a shoool pincipal s requird to tae ino accunt te stdents' metacognitive atributes (Roers,2010). Additionally, Amalag et al. (2021) shoed tht inadeqate preparaion, lck f eam strateies, nd hih anxiety leels hae neative effets n tst performance nd need to be addressed before the exam. Literature so far suggests that there is a positive link between the strategies used in preparing candidates for examinations and improved performance. Harris and Orth (2019) studied the relationship between candidate confidence and exam scores and found out that where school principal employed clear strategies in preparing candidates, performance was better. Moreira (2015) and Mohamed, Hamal and Mohamed (2018) argued that the most important aspect of a candidte preparaion stratgy is to enable stdents totransfr clasroom leaningto tsting, nd his cn especially be

1.com/newreport\_printview.asp?eq=1&eb=1&esm=5&oid=2090320144&sid=0&n=0&m=2&svr=49&r=24.277238079317165&la...-1/10



Appendix 10: Research permit

*1. visto  
2. A. PEG  
maia n de-  
nich efeitos.  
Trabalho (Plant  
16.07.2024)*

  
REPÚBLICA DE MOÇAMBIQUE  
PROVINCIA DE MANICA  
CONSELHO EXECUTIVO PROVINCIAL  
DIRECÇÃO PROVINCIAL DE EDUCAÇÃO  
REPARTIÇÃO DE GESTÃO DOCUMENTAL

Nota n.º 37 /PM/CEP/DPE-M/RGD/200/2024

Ref. V/Nota n.º. \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ de \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

AO:  
**SDEJT-Chimoio**

Chimoio 13/05/2024

**ASSUNTO: Envio do despacho da solicitação de autorização de recolha de dados.**

A Direcção Provincial de Educação de Manica recebeu da **CONGREGAÇÃO DAS IRMÃS DO DIVINO SALVADOR MOÇAMBIQUE** um pedido de solicitação de autorização de recolha de dados, em anexo, com o tema Estratégias utilizados por Directores das Escolas na preparação de candidatos aos exames nacionais e o seu desempenho dos alunos do ensino primário, a favor da senhora Victória Tito, que está fazendo Mestrado em Educação, na Universidade Católica da África Oriental Tangaza, no Kenya, face ao assunto o substituto do excelentíssimo senhor Director Provincial de Educação de Manica exarou o seguinte despacho:

**"Visto"**

**1. SDEJT-Chimoio para os devidos efeitos**

Ass: ilegível

**Fernando Richadi**  
(Docente N1)

13/05/2024

  
A CHEFE DA RGD  
*Calaco*  
(Victória Francisco Colaço)  
// Inst. Téc. Ped. N1 //

  
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JUVENTUDE E TECNOLOGIA  
DE CHIMOIO  
Entrada N.º 845/REG/20  
Em 14/05/2024  
Ass Lidia Jose

C/C  
DDPGGQ

MJU-13-05-2024

Avenida 25 de Setembro n.º554, Prédio do Governo, Caixa Postal 312; Tele fone 869892222/866376222, 5.º Andar

## APPENDIX 11: Research Authorization Letter



# TANGAZA UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

The Catholic University of Eastern Africa

**DIRECTORATE OF RESEARCH, INNOVATION & EXTENSION**

E-mail: [dj\\_r.rie@tangaza.ac.ke](mailto:djr.rie@tangaza.ac.ke) Website: [www.tangaza.ac.ke](http://www.tangaza.ac.ke)

**OUR Ref:** DRIE/ISERC2024/01/0013

**Date:** 20<sup>th</sup> March 2024

To Whom it may concern

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Recommendation for Research Permit – Victoria Tito**

This is to confirm that **Victoria Tito** is a PI in a researcher protocol which was submitted to TUC-ISERC for review. The protocol was reviewed and approved for research permit.

Tito wishes to carry out research under the title "*HEAD TEACHERS' CANDIDATE PREPARATION STRATEGIES AND STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN THE PRIMARY CERTIFICATE OF EDUCATION IN CHIMOIO DISTRICT*". The findings of the proposed research will contribute vital knowledge on the subject and the field of Organizational Management and Leadership.

I strongly recommend Victoria Tito to any National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation for issuance of a research permit. The permit will enable her to proceed to data collection for her study. Thanking you in advance for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

**Dr. Daniel M. Kitonga (Ph.D.)**  
*Director, Research, Innovation & Extension*  
*Chairperson, TUC-ISERC*

**TANGAZA COLLEGE**  
Catholic University of Eastern Africa  
P. O. Box 15055 - 00509  
NAIROBI