

Late Entry In Primary Education: Implications On Learning Achievement Evidenced at Dodoma, Tanzania

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<p>Abstract</p> <p><i>This study examined the late entry in primary education, Implications on learning achievement evidenced at Dodoma, Tanzania. The study employed a cross-sectional survey design to capture and collect data from 128 respondents, mainly; seven heads of schools, fourteen ordinary teachers, and thirty-five for late entry and on time pupils respectively (Five from each school). Other respondents involved thirty-five parents/guardians including two Ward Executive Officers (WEO). The selection of respondents were guided by both probability and non-probability technique while descriptive and non-descriptive data were collected through questionnaire and review of various literatures to produce such a clear overview and presentation using computation of percentage and tabulation. The findings revealed that strong relationship of late entry in primary education and poor academic performance as a results of learning achievement. This is mainly due to high level of absenteeism among late entrants to keep up with teaching lessons, prevailing indiscipline records including drop outs. The overall review indicated the need of consorted efforts among parents, teachers, government and other stakeholders to table and enforce earlier or mandatory on time enrolment of pupils.</i></p>	<p>Journal of Policy and Development Studies (JPDS)</p> <hr/> <p>Vol. 18 Issue 1 (2025) ISSN(p) 1597-9385 ISSN (e) 2814-1091 Home page: https://www.ajol.info/index.php/jpds</p> <p>ARTICLE INFO:</p> <p>Keyword Late entry pupils, primary education, cognitive development, on -time entry pupils</p> <p>Received: 25th November 2024</p> <p>Accepted: 9th January, 2025</p> <p>DOI: https://dx.doi.org/10.4314/jpds.v18i1.1</p>
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1. Introduction

Enrollment in primary education on time has a considerable benefits in transformation and development of children's future prospects as well as the nation at large. Pupils who join earlier in school have better academic success such as earning higher grade and test score and are more likely to attend school smoothly (Daiji, 2011). This is true because it's crucial stage in preparing children for self-reliance. Primary education is fundamental in strengthening of higher levels of education, laying strong foundations in scientific and cognitive literacy and in learning achievement (John Pasha, 2016). This education sub sector enables every child to understand and appreciate his or her human person and enrich the common cultural background and values, social customs and traditions as well as national unity, identity and pride (URT 1995). It enables children to acquire basic skills of literacy, communication and problem solving as well as basic learning content of integrated relevant knowledge and attitudes needed for survival and development (Msoke, 2013). The Universal Declaration on Human Rights of 1948 (article 26) recognizes education along with other basic needs as vital to human development but it was also emphasized that education is right of every human being. However, based on the understanding attached to the above conception, there is still a substantial concern to research about potential effects of late entry in primary education on learning achievement but also to what extent the learning performance differs with that of on-time entrants. To this end, Hombolo Division in Dodoma City Council was used as a case study to explain the magnitude of late entry in primary education and contribute on how to address this challenge in Tanzania education context and to the rest of the world with similar understanding.

2. Review of Related Literature

Conceptual Framework

Late Entry in this context refers to an entry occurring outside the acceptable time limits set by an authority or power (Galabawa, 2003). While on-time entry occurs at the expected time in a given period (Daiji, 2011). According to Tanzania Education and Training policy of 1995, practically pinpoints the mandatory 2 years of pre-primary education for children aged 5 to 6 years old, and subsequent seven years of primary education for children aged 7 years old at start. In the context of this study, children who adhere the age mentioned above are termed as on-time entry. In contrary those children who are enrolled in primary education with more than seven years old are termed as late entry pupils.

Primary Education is the second stage of compulsory formal education coming soon after pre-primary. It provides learning and educational activities which enable children understand fundamental skills in reading, writing and arithmetic. It establishes a solid foundation for learning and understanding core area of knowledge and personal development preparing for lower secondary education (URT, 2014). Moreover, the concept of Cognitive Development refers to the development of the ability to think and reason. The children aged seven years and above usually think in concrete way (Wadsworth, 1996). This can include things like how to combine, separate, order and transform objects and actions (Ogletree, 1997). In this study Cognitive Development term is used to cement the facts and understanding of the right age for primary education and its impact on the overall learning achievement.

Empirical Literature Review

Late Entry in Primary Education (henceforth, LEIPE) is a one of world's recently recognized education issues especially in many developing countries including Tanzania (Bommier &

Lambert, 2000). However, this case is different in developed countries which have recorded to have a well-established and functioning primary school system that majority of children attend (Sharp, 2002). For example in Europe, several countries allow individual children to start schooling before the compulsory age of five or six years, or even late enrolment in accordance to pre-school assessment. It is in this assertion that world-wide, according to the National Foundation for Educational Research report in 2017, children would start primary education between the age of 5 and 7. Moreover, the problem of LEIPE is still prominent among children and the likelihood of early drop out is high (Lennox, 2014). This situation requires a concerted effort and initiatives among various education stakeholders, including parents and or guardians.

LEIPE has been prevalent in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) since the 1960s (Caldwell, 1967). He documented that in most SSA countries, at least 50% of the students enrolled in grade one were older than the legal enrolment age. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) report in 2013 illustrated that entering school on-time is very important for achieving Universal Primary Education (UPE) and reduce drop outs. According to Education for All, Global Monitoring Report in Rwanda alone, 63% of new entrants to primary school start three or more years late. However, it has been noted that, the challenge of late entry is mainly attributed by limited understanding of the effects of LEIPE in pupils' learning achievement and this experience has been linked as a barrier in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Six Key Educational Goals of Education For All, EFA (UNESCO, 2013).

Moreover, late entry in primary education is more common among the underprivileged children and the school enrolment varies widely in responses to economic status and institutional changes. For example, in Madagascar 62% of pupils from poor households in 2008 enrolled in primary school were at least two years late compared to 32% of pupils from richest families (UNESCO, 2013). Furthermore, the review of existing studies revealed that there is a potential efforts and achievements in dealing with LEIPE among African countries. Talking about Uganda, the overall enrollment rate has been increased following the elimination of school fees (Deininger, 2003). The introduction of Free Primary Education (FPE) and School-Based Food Micro-nutrient Supplementation Program in Kenya have increased the enrollment rate in primary school on-time among the children from poor families (Sharp, 2002). Including the introduction of Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) where pupils are given free food at school, both have contributed to reduce child labour and significantly increased school enrolment in Kenya.

In Tanzanian the actual age of school enrollment is mainly governed by three laws including, the Education Act (Cap.353 R.E 2002), the Primary School (Compulsory Enrollment and Attendance) Rules, 2002 and the Education (Admission to Government Schools) Regulations, 2002 which prescribes seven years as the compulsory age for enrollment of a child for primary education and in ensuring the child's right to education. This milestone was then backed up by the development and implementation of Primary Education Curriculum which solely emphasizes the provision of inclusive education that meet the current needs of all Tanzanians and which provides equal learning opportunities to all pupils (URT, 2014). Also in order to make it more practical, the curriculum reflects the policy statements, national and international strategies, and the National Curriculum Framework for Basic and Teacher Education where pupils are expected to achieve the basic literacy skills particularly the ability to read, write and solve simple

arithmetic problems (Mussa, 2016). Along that, the massive attention was also noted on the provision of Free Primary Education and to make schools facilities closer to their homes through the Complementary Basic Education program in Tanzania (Mweigo & Mlekwa, 2001).

Tanzania government has shown strong commitment in providing primary education for all of its children by investing much in education including the introduction of Primary Education Development Programme (PEDP) in 2005 which resulted into a significant increase in pupils' enrollment in primary schools. Despite this increase in enrolment; many pupils have been graduating from primary schools without literacy skills (MoEVT, 2011). In the same practice, the status of late entry in primary education in Tanzania is one of the reasons for poor learning achievement among children. About 9(49%) out of 19 teachers (respondents) in the study regarding this subject, reported that the problem was existing and may eventually promotes poor literacy (Mussa, 2016). The study insisted that the majority of parents or guardians especially in remote areas are not aware of their children's education and may decide whether to enroll them or not.

The review on the extent of late entry in primary school is also attached to the separation among parents where children lack mutual encouragement to attend to school. The absence of pre-primary education is another contributing factor; attending school at pre-school age is of great importance in students' reading literacy (Lehmann, 1996). Also, studies show that families with poor socio-economic status largely contribute to pupil's late entry in school (Lyon, 2001). But also how far the child travels to school (Bommier & Lambert, 2000). In addition, research has shown that delayed exposure to educational stimuli may impact a child's ability to grasp fundamental concepts, face challenges in catching up with academic performance, high dropout rates especially when they feel discouraged due to being older than their classmates. Overall, the striking fact about the effects of late entry in primary education on learning achievement calls for thought of this study in Hombolo Division, Dodoma City and the findings will significantly contribute to a few empirical studies following the review of Tanzania education system.

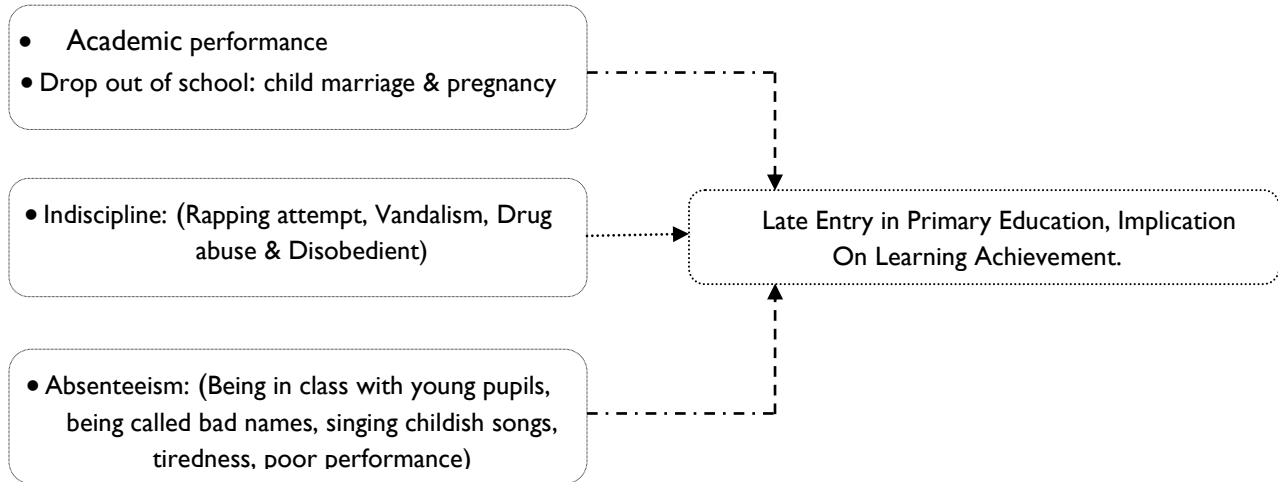
Theoretical Framework; Theory of Child Cognitive Development

Child Cognitive Development theory was developed by a Swiss psychologist and pioneer in the field of developmental psychology, Jean Piaget in 1936. His theory has had a profound impact on systemic understanding of how children develop their thinking abilities (Wadsworth, 1996). Piaget proposed that children progress through distinct four stages of cognitive development, each characterized by specific cognitive structures and ways of understanding the world. These stages includes sensorimotor (Birth to two years), pre-operational (Two to seven years), concrete stage (Seven to eleven years), and formal operational stage from eleven years and above (Wood, Smith & Grossniklaus, 2001). The core difference is reflected through age and child's ability to comprehend his or her surrounding environment.

Therefore, it comes with no surprise that, the theory was used in this study based on the central assumption and belief that child's capacity in understanding his or her environment depends on one's developmental stages, and each stage represents a qualitative changes in thinking (Woolfolk, 2004). It is in this assertion that at the age of seven, children are expected to develop logical thinking from different perspectives. Also, in teaching and learning process, pupils who

enroll on time are expected to gain valuable head start in cognitive development (Lincove & Painter, 2006). In contrary, they would miss out the education benefits experience.

Conceptual framework



Source: Researcher’s Conceptualization from the field discussions and literatures (2022).

3. Hypothesis

In an attempt to research the subject matter, the research statement (objective) will be tested Only under the following assumption;

- There is strong relationship or significant correlation between the late entry in primary education and poor performance on learning achievement compared to on-time entry.

4. Methodology

Study Design and Sampling Strategy

This study adopted a cross-sectional design by capturing a snapshot of the practices and allow the collection of data at a given point in time in Hombolo division, Dodoma region. The target population for this study comprised of seven public primary schools mainly from two wards. The selected schools were Sogeambele, Chihanga, Nzasa, Gawaye, Zepisa, Ipala and Chahwa. The study area were selected due to its historical late entrants and geographical location while the respondents especially the head teachers were due to their experience, both in leadership and location. Overall, the study involved 128 total respondents namely; seven heads of schools, fourteen ordinary teachers, and thirty-five for late entry pupils and thirty five for on time entrants respectively (Five from each school). Other respondents involved thirty-five parents/guardians including two Ward Executive Officers (WEO) because of their virtue of managerial position and experience in the selected division.

5. Data Collection

The study employed both probability and non-probability sampling in obtaining sample. As such the cluster sampling was used under the assumptions that the chosen wards and schools match or have a significant number of late entrants. However, simple random sampling was involved in the selection of late entrants, on time and ordinary teachers while the purposive sampling was also applied to Ward Executive Officers (WEO), head teachers and parents/guardians of the late entrants. Yet, in order to ensure quality and reliable data in this study, a questionnaire was structured and administered as the data collection instrument mainly from the primary sources whilst secondary data involved the review of various relevant publications and literatures in the same capacity. In effort to draw valid conclusion, the collected data were edited, verified and inserted into a computer by using Microsoft excel mainly to compute analysis, percentages and tabulations.

6. Result and Discussion

The results on the late entry pupils in primary education, implication on learning achievements were effectively presented using hypothesis testing and tables for clear overview and representation of the study findings and eventually see if there is statistically significant difference with on-time entrants on academic success. The overall test of scores involved the following subjects; Mathematics, English, Swahili, Social studies, and Civic and Moral subjects and were obtained from the cumulative performance files for each pupil, mainly in the grade 4 annual examination considering good number of sample mix in both on-time and late entrants pupils. These scores were assumed to be indicators of learning achievement. The T-test analysis were run to determine if there was a significant difference between the two entry statuses.

5.1 Academic Performance

Table1: Grade 4 annual examination results performance in 2021

Schools (Overall Average Score)	Average Score(%)-on-time entry/control (n-35)	Average Score(%)-late entry (n-35)
A	70	40
B	88	28
C	75	37
D	64	25
E	90	45
F	81	30
G	60	24
Total Score	528	255
Overall Mean Performance	15.09	7.29
Overall Standard Deviation	4.91	3.41
Degree of freedom/df= (N ₁ +N ₂ -2)	(35+35-2)=68	

Grade score: A= (41-50 or 82% - 100%), B= (31-40 or 62% - 80%), C= (21-30 or 42% -60%), D= (11-20 or 22%-40%), E (1-10 or 2%-20%)

(The minimum performance score is D)

Whereby;

$$t = \frac{X_1 - X_2}{\sqrt{\frac{s_1^2}{n_1} + \frac{s_2^2}{n_2}}}$$

T-test summary

X₁ represents mean performance (on-time entry pupils)
 X₂ represents mean performance score (late entrants)
 S₁ represents standard deviation (on-time entrants/pupils)
 S₂ represents standard deviation (late entrants/pupils)
 n₁ represent sample size (on-time entrants/pupils)
 n₂ represent sample size (late entrants/pupils), whereby
 X₁=15.09, X₂=7.29, S₁=4.91, S₂=3.41, n₁=35, n₂=35, df=68, t=7.69. The critical value is 1.996 obtained from the table at significance level alpha (0.05) and degree of freedom 68

The result suggests that since the t-value (7.69) is greater than the critical value (1.996) at a Significance level (0.05) and the degree of freedom (68); the on-time entrants or sample status appeared to have a significant positive association with higher mean pass marks in all subjects compared to late entry pupils on learning achievement or academic success, but also adds value to the question as whether it is academically advantageous to delay or join school on-time.

In this study, it was assumed that the annual examination performance score at the fourth grade were a measurement of academic achievement. The analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the early entry pupils and late entry children and their academic achievement, with the on-time entrants scoring significantly higher than late entry. This result is consistent with the research by Pagani et al, (2010) which suggests that early entry is a more powerful predictor of academic achievement of pupils than delayed entry in school.

5.2 Other Background Variables

Indiscipline

It is an empirical evidence that, schools are the preferred environment for shaping children who are both productive and disciplined. The study focused in understanding the dominant children' indiscipline behaviours that would affects their learning achievements as follows;

Table 2: Respondents (Both ordinary Teachers and Head teachers) on indiscipline behaviours.

Indiscipline variables	Teachers' Responses on indiscipline (n-21)				% Late entry		%On-time entry	
	Late Entrants		On-time entrants					
	Agree	Not agree	Agree	Not agree	Agree	Not agree	Agree	Not Agree
Rapping Attempt	14	7	1	20	66.7	33.3	4.8	95.2
Vandalism	20	1	2	19	95.2	4.8	9.5	90.5
Drug Abuse & Alcohol intake	16	5	1	20	76.2	23.8	4.8	95.2
Disobedient	19	2	4	17	90.5	9.5	19.0	81.0

Source: Filed data (March, 2022)

Findings from structured interview and discussion with respondents around the comparative differences among late entrants and on-time pupils on indiscipline behaviours were prominent

among late entry children. Both head and ordinary teachers were thought to provide unbiased data in this category. Nevertheless, these behaviours were tested under the following aspects;

- *Rapping Attempt*

14(66.3%) of all respondents (21 teachers) agreed that, late entrants since they appear to be older, and eventually prone to peer group, they are accustomed to watch pornography as result of rapping practices or sexual violence attempts experience in schools where live cases have been experienced and reported as compared to 4.8 percent from on-time entry in the same category. While, 33.3% of all respondents on late entry pupils' behaviour and 95.2 percent on-time entrants reported to have no such observed behaviour experience. Nevertheless, according to the study conducted by Haki Elimu in 2020 reported that the most common form of sexual violence mainly experienced are sexual connotation, watching pornography and an attempt to sex. Additional, teachers indicated that, there are few cases among late entry pupils in standard six and seven who had attempted to bully and rap their fellow classmates in the toilet during break time. In the same vein, another teacher described this situation as follows;

".....wanafunzi waliochelewa kuanza shule ni wakubwa kuliko wenzao, wakifika darasa la nne hadi la tano wanafanya vituko sana, tumekutana na kesi nyingi za kuwalawiti wenzao hasa wale wadogo wa darasa la kwanza na la pili huko chooni na wakati wa kurudi nyumbani....." (Usaili na walimu wa shule C tarehe 25.3.2022)

Translated

"... Late entry pupils are older than their peers, and on their fourth to fifth grade they do a lot of strange things, we have come across many cases of sexually assaulting their peers in the toilet and on their way home, especially to the younger ones in standard one and two" (Teachers in school C interviewed on 25th March, 2022).

- *Vandalism and Stealing the School Properties*

Again, 95.2 percent shows that vandalism and stealing the school properties were common in late entrants compared to 9.5% from on-time entrants. However, teachers' findings reported that only 4.8 %(late entrants) and 90.5 %(on-time entry) have no such behaviour. Second to that, both head teachers and ordinary teachers unveiled that majority of late-entrants with other youth from nearby streets or villages reported to engage in the theft of crops such as groundnuts, millets, maize and sunflower from the school farms. Following the fact that, the selected sample schools in Hombolo are in rural area, whereby the major economic activities are agriculture and animal husbandry. Ultimately, the head teacher of school (A) witnesses that;

".....wanafunzi wetu wanashirikiana na vijana wa mtaani kuiba na kuuza mazao ya shule. Walivuna alizeti usiku wakaenda kuuza mjini....." (Usaili na mwalimu mkuu wa shule (A) tarehe 03.4.2022)

Translated

"..Our pupils collaborate with the street youth to steal and sell school produce. They harvested sunflowers at night and went to sell them in town....." (Head teacher in school (A) interviewed on 3rd April, 2022)

He added, these pupils also stole broken desks as a firewood for cooking purpose and as a means to earn money since their peers (street children) have no significant economic activities. Furthermore, poverty among the community is another force that bring pupils closer to indiscipline or abusive attempts (Evans & Miguel, 2004). Also, it was noted that students may be involved in theft and prostitution in order to meet the basic needs (Kagama & Kagoiya, 2018).

- *Drug Abuse and Alcohol Consumptions.*

The findings indicated that 76% of the sampled respondents agreed that late entry pupils engage in drug abuse and alcohol consumption, as compared to only 4.8 percent for on-time children. However, it may also be explained that, the impacts of drugs and alcohol consumption on academic performance is universal among children, but very common to late entrant's pupils who are older and more exposed to peer pressure and sometimes attend classes while drunk. This assertion is linked to inability to keep up with their studies and eventually low score (Kagama & Kagoiya, 2018). The finding is consistent with the fact and feedbacks from parents who added that late entry pupils engage in drug abuse and intake of alcohol. Briefly explained as;

"..... baadhi ya vijana waliochelewa kuanza shule wakishirikiana na vijana waliomaliza shule, wanatusumbua sana hapa kijijini, ikifika jumamosi na jumapili wanajificha kule vichakani wakivuta bangi na kunywa pombe (Kangara na Choya). Wakati mwingine wanacheza kamari wakidhulumiana wanaanza kupigana na wale vijana wanaopakia mchanga kwenye malori.... " (Usaili na mzazi wa mwanafunzi kutoka shule B tarehe 10. 4.2022)

Translated

"....some late entrants in collaboration with other young people who have finished school, are bothering us a lot here in the village. On Saturday and Sunday they hide in the bushes smoking marijuana and drinking alcohol (Kangara and Choya). Sometimes they play gambling, scam each other and start fighting with the young men who load sand into the trucks..." (Pupil's parent in school B interviewed on 10th April, 2022).

- *Disobedient, Confronting and Stabbing Teachers and Prefects, and even Outside the School.*

Based on the analysis, 90.5 percent revealed that late entry pupils had disobedient records, confronting and stabbing teachers and prefects even outside the school compared to 19% from on-time entrants. Teachers added that, due to age gaps there were a stage where late entry children especially in class seven confront and disturb teachers and prefects. This is simply, refusing to clean school compounds and secretly fight with teachers in village in collaboration with their peers. Despite of all these remarks, the head teacher from school F lamented that;

".... tuna wanafunzi wakorofi hapa wanatishia kuwapiga walimu huko mtaani. Wanafunzi watatu walipewa adhabu kali ya kukaa nyumbani waje tu kufanya mtihani wa mwisho ili iwe fundisho kwa wengine..... " (Usaili na mwalimu mkuu wa shule F tarehe 17.4 2022)

Translated

"...we have wild children here, threatening to beat teachers in the street. Three students were given a severe punishment of staying at home until the final exam, so that it would be a lesson to

others about the consequences of such behavior...” Head teacher in school (F) interviewed on 17th April, 2022).

These findings are consistent to that of the study done by Agbenyega (2006) on disobedience to school authority in Ghana; who reported that majority of late entrants appear to be aged and they feel ashamed to be punished in front of other pupils as the results, they become resistant, initiate violence and insubordination to administrative staff, teachers and school prefects.

4.2.2 School Drop Out

It is anticipated that, one of the objectives of primary education is to provide students with knowledge and equip them relevant vocational skills as well as moral ethics. However, the number of significant drop out among the primary school pupils are slowing down this academic move (Amalu & Abang, 2015). It is also important to note that, the study findings in Hombolo division indicated the following results;

- *Patterns of Pregnancy and Early Marriage*

The patterns of child marriage and pregnancy during discussion with parents, WEO and teachers were in the fact that it influences school dropout. The late entrants are older and the majority begin adolescence prior or while in primary schools. But also, the reflection of financial difficulties and poverty among families or societies in Hombolo whereby parents encourage early marriage for their children, if they believe that the marital union may offer economic stability and alleviate financial burdens through dowry. The same believe among the community was rooted and connected to cultural expectation especially to child girls as a means to prevent premarital relationship, lack of education and awareness regarding the importance of formal education and health issues. Poor performance among the late entrants is another concern where they would choose marriage and raise kids than staying in school at early age (Ngwokabuenui, 2015). Some responses from one of the former late entrant interviewed on 27th April, 2022 confirmed that;

“..... I got into marriage at the age of 14 years when I was in standard six....”

- *Absenteeism*

The tendency of absenteeism was reported to happen almost all year around and it affects pupil’s academic performance. In regards and interest of this study, thirty five late entrants were interviewed mainly on what they dislike about being at school;

Table 3: What late entry pupils dislike about being at school as a result of absenteeism

Absenteeism Variables	Respondents (n-35)	Percentage (%)
Being in class with young pupils or on-time	9	26%
Being called bad names or jokes/bullied	4	11%
Singing childish song	8	23%
Tiredness due to multiple responsibilities	3	9%
Repetitive poor performance	11	31%
Total	35	100%

This study has found that 26% of respondents (late entry pupils) sees the condition of being in class with young pupils create discomfort and practically more concentrations during the class teaching is on early or on-time entrants who appear to be fast learners, while 11% indicated a boredom due to being called bad names or being oppressed. The act of being mocked especially in classroom have significant psychological and emotional effects on children, and would potentially influences their absenteeism (Tunfunde, 2009). Only, 23% reported about singing childish songs is another boring moment in school. 9% indicated the tiredness due to multiple responsibilities both at home and working on school farms, for example the teacher in school E demonstrated that during agricultural season, a lot of late entrants stay home to help their parents in farming. Other absenteeism aspect revealed was about 31percent due to repetitive poor performance where, the majority feel unsecure or unequal treatment in classroom especially when they score or get wrong answers.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

7.1 Conclusion

The findings highlight the effects of late entry in primary education on learning achievement in Hombolo division, Dodoma region. Relative to this study, it is important to pay attention and note that, there is strong relationship between late entry pupils in primary education and poor performance as a result of learning achievement. Mainly due to age difference and perception or poor learning commitment since they feel matured or older enough to learn the basics i.e basic counting like 1,2,3,4,5...or things like a,e,i,o,u, singing childish songs including feeling discomfort in classroom as result of being mixed up with on-time entry. This implication, results into practice of indiscipline behaviours and lack of concentration during teaching sessions among late entry pupils, observed significant drop out records and absenteeism which in total contribute to their overall learning outcomes. Implicitly, without proper approach, the tendency would as well affect the on-time entrants since they can just copy bad behaviours from their mates or simply copying mechanism among themselves.

6.2 Recommendations

Meanwhile, these results would suggest that, there is a need of the consorted efforts between teachers, parents or guardians, government and other stakeholders in following matters;

1. Joint assessment of the situation is crucial and still achievable. Schools administrations, and parents or guardians are supposed to come together and table the action plan regarding poor performance among late entrants which is largely influenced by indiscipline level, drop out records and high level of absenteeism. In summary, both parties should stick to proper parenting guidance and adherence to by-laws.
2. Schools administrations or teachers are supposed to adhere to the teaching guidance, circulars and curriculum for smooth and inclusive learning among on-time and late entrants to avoid un-equal treatment or they are supposed to create favourable learning atmosphere. This approach is in line with primary education teaching guidance in

Tanzania (Curriculum for primary education, 2019), where teachers are expected to facilitate pupils to the level that he/she can learn and understand (Learning-assessment).

3. Regular strategic meetings or sensitization of parents or guardians and even late entrants on the importance of formal education, children' rights and the benefits of early enrollment and when. This can be achieved through regular follow-ups and control mechanisms by teachers, ministry of education including Ward Executive Officer (WEO) and Village Executive Officer (VEO) next to them.
4. Offering free education is good but not enough. The government of Tanzania and other stakeholders should support late entrants from poor families with basic needs such as uniform, pen, books, free food at school and encourage early enrollment through enforcement of compulsory education laws and policies. Also, provision of teaching aids and enough facilities are inevitable. Findings indicated that, majority late entry pupils from poor families avoid schools to support their families' economy.

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