



Influence of Devolution of Secondary Education Management on Performance of Students in CSEE in Dodoma, Tanzania

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Abstract: This study investigated the influence of devolution of secondary school education management on students' academic performance in the City Council of Dodoma. The study employed a case study design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. The sample comprised student leaders (N = 24) from six public secondary schools, City Director (N = 1), City Secondary Education Officer (N = 1), heads of schools (N = 6), teachers (N = 120), school board committee members (N = 6), school academic teachers (N = 6), and Ward Executive Officers (N = 6) selected by convenient sampling methods as key informants. Data were collected through interviews, questionnaire survey, documentary analysis, and observation methods. These were analyzed using descriptive statistics with Statistical Package for Social Sciences, content analysis, and thematic analysis. Findings indicated that Certificate of Secondary Education Examination results were dominated by weak performance, with an average of 50.1% Division IV and a failure rate of 10% between 2021 and 2024. This indicated a slight decrease from 92.1% in 2021 to 91.4% in 2024. The study concludes that form four secondary students' academic performance in public schools in the City Council of Dodoma remains low and unsatisfactory. It recommends that the government strategically continue investing in secondary education particularly in teachers' welfare, teaching and learning resources, and school facilities to further strengthen the effectiveness of devolved education management.

Keywords: Devolution, Dodoma, Performance, and Secondary Education.

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1 | INTRODUCTION

Devolution in education has emerged as a significant governance approach worldwide, with various countries implementing decentralization policies to enhance educational governance and outcomes (Mgema, 2023). By transferring decision-making powers from central authorities to local governments and communities, devolution aims to improve educational access, equity, and quality. Countries like Canada, Sweden, and the United Kingdom have adopted varying degrees of decentralization, resulting in diverse experiences and outcomes. In Canada, for instance, provinces have significant control over educational policies, enabling them to tailor their systems to local needs. This localized governance has been credited with fostering innovation and improving educational outcomes in several provinces (Hulme et al., 2024). Similarly, Sweden's school choice policy allows parents to select schools for their children, promoting competition and accountability among educational institutions. In the United Kingdom, devolution has resulted in different educational policies and systems in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, each responding to local needs and priorities. Despite these successes, global experiences also reveal some challenges associated with devolution. In many cases, decentralization has led to disparities in resource allocation, particularly affecting underprivileged regions. For example, studies in developing countries such as Indonesia and India have shown that while decentralization can enhance local decision-making, it can also exacerbate inequalities, particularly in rural areas where resources are limited. A study in Argentina found that quality improved in well-managed local governments and deteriorated in poorly managed ones (Rao et al., 2021; Palacios et al., 2020).

Tanzania's experience with devolution in education is shaped by these global trends (Kapelela et al., 2025). Global movements such as democratic decentralization that has swept the world since the 1980s have propelled the need and recognition of decentralization. Democratic decentralization especially administrative, fiscal, political or others are geared towards bringing the government closer to the people and enhancing their participation and interaction with local government (Shayo, 2022; Gaventa & Valderama, 1999). Through these global dynamics, the Tanzanian government recognized the benefits of decentralized education management to address local needs effectively. Decentralization aims to empower local communities, school administrators, and stakeholders, fostering greater participation in educational governance. The rationale is that localized decision-making can lead to better resource utilization, improved accountability, and ultimately, enhanced student performance (Sherman, 2016). In Tanzania, decentralization by devolution (D-by-D) can be traced back in 1970s whereby the first wave of decentralization occurred between

1972 and 1983. Initially, the government devolved its powers from central government to local authorities (Matete, 2022). The purpose was to increase people's participation in decision making and responsibilities of local representativeness. The management of primary and secondary education was transferred to local governments on matters of immediate concerns at grass root level like enrolments, attendance welfare and discipline (Massoi and Norman, 2010). The second wave (Musoma Resolution) of 1974 demanded the attainment of Universal Primary Education (UPE) by 1978. This made great changes in educational sector including doubling enrolments for primary school pupils from 1,288,866 in 1977 to 3,555,923 by 1984 (URT, 1984). The third wave in 1990s, devolution policy was strengthened by local government reform program (LGRP) in 1999 aiming at decentralizing more powers to the local governments to improve the quality and access of public social service including Education (Matete, 2022). It was further promoted during the economic crisis in the 1990s when the centralized government system was blamed as the source of the problem. The central government was compelled to reduce expenditures on public services including education by allowing communities to contribute and mobilize local resources for education services. Additionally, the pressure on cost sharing policy from International Monetary Fund and WB also played an important role. Therefore, decentralization was viewed as a strategy of choice for rebuilding the country and a remedy for social services challenges including education.

The fourth wave in 2000s whereby decentralization policy in secondary schools was further implemented through enactment of the education Act of 2002 which made partial reforms in practice until February, 2008 when HE. President Jakaya Mrisho Kikwete devolved officially the secondary school educational responsibilities from the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training to the Prime Minister's office, Regional Administration and Local Government (URT, 2008). With this transformation, public Secondary Schools were under Local Government Authorities (LGAs) although all teachers continued to be recruited, posted and paid salaries by Central Government. The education acts were revised and complemented by the laws on fiscal relations. The latter stipulated that the delegation of financial responsibility for a variety of services in the public services sector be moved to the district level, including education. This decentralization reform transformed the country from one of the most centralized systems in the world to one of the most decentralized ones. Within the framework of transference, responsibilities for many essential public services, including education were devolved to local government. According to Bray, (2009), changes on education sector were greater than those in many other periods since Tanzanian independence. Education was no longer fully controlled by the central government.

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The local communities were granted a degree of authority in education through the establishment of an Education Council (EC) at the district level and a school board (SB) at the school level. Furthermore, the governance structure of secondary schools starts with the school board, chaired by an external chairperson, the head of school as the secretary, and members drawn from within the school and some representatives from the community. Then, there is the school management team, headed by the head of school, with members comprising the school staff and the students' representatives. In this framework, the council director is responsible for the employment and supervision of employees. The Ministry of Education and Vocational Training was stipulated as the legal basis for community participation in education through these two governing bodies, the EC and SB (URT, 2008). The importance of local government and community participation in education was also emphasized by both the Education and Training Policy (ETP) of 1995, the ETP 2014 Version 2023, and the Secondary Education Development Programme (SEDP), which empowered the Local Government Authorities, Non-Governmental Organizations, and individuals to get incentives and be encouraged to establish, own, manage, and administer secondary schools. According to the Local Government Reform Paper (URT, 1998), one of the principles of the reforms was to bring public services under the control of the people through their local councils. In general, three components of devolution have been undertaken in Tanzania. These include administrative and human resource management, financial management, and community and school participation. The objectives were to improve academic performance, enhance access and equity in education, increase efficiency and accountability, promote local ownership and participation, diversify financing for education, and promote relevant education.

However, Haki Elimu (2010) noted that community efforts on secondary education development in Tanzania have concentrated more on the construction of school buildings than on other responsibilities like recruitment and retention of qualified teachers, houses for teachers, teaching and learning materials, dormitories, and laboratories. Since the inception of the decentralization policy in the 1960s, debates and experiences on the effects of devolution as a form of decentralization have been mounting and varying. The implementation of decentralization since the 1960s and devolution in the 1990s has yielded varying and contentious results. Secondary school enrolments have increased by 33.9% in five years (2020–2024), and the number of government schools has increased to 4,905 and private schools to 1,364 in the same period (BEST, 2024). Despite these achievements, the effects through which devolution has contributed to students' achievements in the final examinations and access to required infrastructure for learning have remained contentious (Mwemezi, 2018). This study, therefore, aimed to fill this gap by assessing the effects of the devolution of secondary school education management on students' performance in the City Council of Dodoma.

1.1 | Statement of the Problem

Despite over two decades of implementing devolution in Tanzania's Secondary Education Subsector, the anticipated improvements in school governance, resource mobilization and allocation, and students learning outcomes remain uneven. The transfer of secondary education responsibilities from the central government to Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in 2008 was expected to enhance efficiency, accountability, and community participation (URT, 2008; Matete, 2022). However, evidence shows that many public secondary schools in Dodoma City still experience persistent shortages of essential inputs, including qualified teachers, especially in science subjects, as well as inadequate classrooms, laboratories, textbooks, and student accommodations (Akram et al., 2025; HakiElimu, 2010; Alagwa & Ligembe, 2022). These challenges have been compounded by the fee-free education policy introduced in 2016, which increased enrolment while overstressing LGAs that remain heavily dependent on central government funding (Mgema, 2023; Kapelela et al., 2025). Consequently, students' academic outcomes continue to fluctuate, with weak performance recurring in Form Two and Form Four National examinations and dropout rates remaining high. Percentage of weak performance of Division IV increased from 47.42% in 2017 to 51.94% in 2023 in CSEE results. Dropout rates have been high to 146976 (5.3%) in 2023 country-wise and 10004 (8.4%) for Dodoma region (BEST, 2024; URT, 2024). While several studies have examined decentralization on student performance in Tanzania, most have focused on learning competencies or broader policy processes rather than the specific effects of devolution on school-level CSEE results (Elhag et al., 2026; Sherman, 2016; Mwemezi, 2018; Hulme et al., 2024). This gap limits understanding of whether devolution has effectively created the conditions necessary for improved learning outcomes. Therefore, this study examines the effects of devolved secondary school management on students' academic performance in Dodoma City by assessing the CSEE results.

1.2 | Theoretical Underpinning

The paper employs the Participatory Management Theory that is rooted from Elton Mayo's human relations theories and democratic and populist movements. The participatory model is the advancement of the human relations and behavioral theory to democratize administration and management of organization. Babygeya (2002) asserts that the argument of the participatory model is that, once members are fully involved in important matters of their organization, they are motivated to make sure that the aim of the organization is achieved. There is a psychological satisfaction when people are required to set goals, identify strategies of implementation and implement them, and it is argued that participation increases commitment, loyalty and motivate members to work hard towards the organizational goal, therefore, increase productivity. Members at lower levels possess the required knowledge and skills that are crucial in achieving the objectives of the organization, therefore, if they are given the power to decide, they are most likely to respond quickly and appropriately (flexibility), it is easy to be held accountable (accountability), and it reduces costs while increasing production (productivity). In education management, identification and prioritization of goals and needs become no longer the responsibility of the central government (Administrators) but the responsibility of members in the institution (school). All members become responsible with the identification of curriculum and students' needs, their professional development needs, as well as the organization of the teaching-learning process. Teachers and administrators work together to improve the quality of the work environment, creating conditions for more effective teaching and learning, and identifying and changing aspects that may hinder quality performance (Gamesha, 2013).

2 | METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Dodoma City Council in Dodoma Region. The Council has a total of 41 Administrative wards. Dodoma City was chosen based on the following factors: Dodoma City is among the capital cities of Tanzania and one of the areas to implement the devolution reform since inception (URT, 1998), and therefore, that long experience was expected to derive sufficient data on the effects of the devolution of secondary school management on student academic performance in public secondary schools. Second, it has 63 secondary schools, out of which 42 (66.7%) run under City authority and 21 (33.3%) are non-government schools (URT BEST, 2024). This was expected to ensure a rational representation or full enumeration of a defined population since the study employs the case study design (Patton, 2004). Third, Dodoma is among the areas with schools running under a shortage of some essential school facilities, including teaching and learning resources, toilets, a high Student-Classroom Ratio (PCR), and a high shortage of science and vocational subject teachers, where on average 46 students share one pit latrine instead of the standard ratio of 1:25 for boys and 1:20 for girls, and a 22.9% and 21% shortage of students' tables and chairs (URT BEST, 2024).

This study adopted the pragmatism research philosophy, which emphasizes practical problem-solving and the use of research approaches that best address the research question. Pragmatism focuses on the "what works" principle, asserting that knowledge should be judged by its usefulness and applicability to real-world problems (Peirce, 1878; James, 1907). Unlike strictly positivist or interpretivist paradigms, pragmatism allows for methodological flexibility, enabling researchers to employ both qualitative and quantitative methods if doing so provides the most comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon under study (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Morgan, 2007). The study adopted a mixed approach of both quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection and analysis. The qualitative data enabled the gathering of data to address objective two and objective three contents to solve the problem. The quantitative approach enabled the collection of data that are related to objective one, two, and three. The use of the mixed approaches is due to the need to address both the extent and the breadth of the problem. This study used a case study design, which allowed the researcher to involve a wide range of methods of gathering data from respondents in order to investigate the actual effects of secondary education devolution of management on students' performance in public secondary schools. The design involved the ability to describe the problem both broadly and widely. The population of this study included the City Director, City Secondary Education Officer, heads of public secondary schools, Academic Deans, public secondary school students, school board chairpersons, public secondary school teachers, and Ward Education Officers (WEOs).

The study adopted the purposive sampling method to select all secondary school's management respondents. This involved heads of school, School Academic Teachers, Ward Education Officers, School Board Chairpersons, City Secondary Education Officer, City Director and Schools. The school sample for the study comprised of 6 public secondary schools in the study area based on the following criteria: peri-urban, urban, Population size, performance status in CSEE results, boarding and day schools. These

included Dodoma, Makole, Makutopora, Miyuji, Nala and Nzuguni secondary schools. The school sample was considered appropriate to carry out the study on effect of the devolution on students' academic performances.

The school Heads and School Academic Teachers, school Board members, City Director, and City Secondary Education Officer were purposively sampled as the key participants to provide data on the school administration. They were expected to possess vital information about their school's goals, objectives, as well as the success, problems and challenges experienced under devolution management of secondary schools. The Ward Education Coordinators (WECs) were purposively sampled as they were responsible for supervising and monitoring implementation of devolution management in public secondary schools at ward level. They were believed to have rich information on the status of Students academic performance in public secondary schools due to nature of their work. The convenient sampling method involved in the selection of teachers and students in the respective secondary schools. It was appropriate because the target population was large, and the members possessed similar or related qualifications. Therefore, any respondent selected was considered suitable to address the requirements of the research problem. Consequently, the researcher included participants based on their availability for the study.

According to Kothari (2004) the sample size should neither be excessively large, nor too small. It should be an optimum sample which fulfils requirements of efficiency, representativeness, reliability and flexibility. Due to the fact that the target population was too large to work with, the researcher was limited to a sample of 170 respondents. The total sample comprised 1 CD, 1 CSEO, 6 WEOs, 6 heads of schools, 6 School Academic Teachers, 6 school board chairpersons, 120 teachers and 24 students' leaders. Table 3.1 indicates the sample composition and distribution.

The primary data are that information directly collected by the researcher from the field. This study used interviews, observations and questionnaires instruments to collect first-hand information from the field. Cohen et al (2000) assert that primary source has been described as those items that are original to the problem under study. The study adopted the survey data collection method. This method fits because of the need to generate extent-based data and inform the problem from extensive understanding. The study applied questionnaires which consisted both, closed and open-ended questions for gathering quantitative and qualitative information required. They were administered to School Academic Teachers, Teachers and Students. The researcher administered questionnaire to large number of respondents as they were relatively easy to handle (Kothari, 2004). Unstructured interviews are a data collection method that generates data based on interaction with respondents using open-ended questions and without strict guidance on what to respond. This method was chosen because of the need to have a broader view of responses based on participants' experiences. This method applied an interview guide to interact with the key participants of the study, including all education management teams at district, ward, and school levels, such as members of school boards, the City Director, City Secondary Education Officer, and Ward Education Officers. The interview was administered face-to-face. By collecting data using observation method, the researchers used an observation check list to complement and verify the information collected through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and documentary reviews. The researcher observed uncompleted school buildings, classroom sizes, school offices, laboratories, toilets, libraries, teachers' houses, and games and sports facilities. The researcher used the observation list as a guide to analyze school infrastructure and facilities that determine the quality of teaching and learning.

The secondary data were collected through document review on CSEE results for the studied public secondary schools. The method was used to make a critical review and analysis of the literature on the research issue for empirical literature, as well as to collect data for objective one on the status of students' performance and influencing factors after the adoption of devolution of management of secondary education in the study area. Documentary review was conducted on CSEE results and EBM records, which were also good sources of data in many areas of investigation (Best and Khan, 2006). The study used school documents such as CSEE results books, students' admission books, and books for school funds to access information, including the flow of school capitations, school facilities, resources, and student enrolments. Quantitative data gathered through questionnaires and data collected through documentary review, particularly on CSEE results, were categorized and analyzed descriptive statistics employing Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). These were then processed and presented through tables, pie charts, bar charts, and histograms, and interpreted through frequencies and percentages. Demographic information of respondents was also analyzed and presented through tables. This was done to generate numerical (quantitative) data to inform the extent of the solution to the problem. Some data were also statistically analyzed. Results are presented through frequency distribution tables, charts, and explanations.

The researcher used some suggestions made by Creswell (1994) to analyze the qualitative data. The process of qualitative analysis was based on data "reduction" and "interpretation." The volume of data collected from the transcribed interviews and documents was reduced as the researcher used a coding procedure to organize the information into contents, sub-contents, and categories. These categories and codes systematically formed the basis for the emerging story revealed by the researcher. The researcher also marked quotes that were useful in generating the contents and carefully considered information that was contrary to the emerging contents. Based on the literature surveyed, the researcher developed drafts of research instruments with a focus on relevance, coverage of items relative to the research questions, and clarity. Best and Kahn (2006) define validity as the quality of a data-gathering instrument or procedure that enables it to measure what it is supposed to measure. Reliability, on the other hand, is the degree of consistency that the instrument or procedure demonstrates. Reliability refers to the certainty of an instrument to yield similar results over time. Therefore, the researcher relied on making logical inferences from data, being reflexive, being precise in describing phenomena, as well as minimizing researcher biases or subjectivity. The research instruments, such as interviews, questionnaires, documentary review, and an observational checklist, were pre-tested at Mlimwa Secondary School in Dodoma Municipality to improve validity. The pre-test sample size consisted of four Form Three students, a head of school, SBC, WEC, a school academic teacher, and teachers, and was conducted over two days. Finally, the instruments were refined to suit the context of the study and translated into Kiswahili by Kiswahili experts to meet the needs of the respondents.

3 | RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 | Students' CSEE results in Public Secondary Schools

The first research question aimed to examine the performance of secondary school students in CSEE results over the four most recent years (2021–2024) under the fully devolved secondary education management system in Tanzania. To address this objective, teachers, academic staff, heads of schools, Ward Education Officers (WEOs), School Board Committees (SBCs), and the Council Secondary Education Officer (CSEO) were asked to provide their perspectives on the state of students' performance in CSEE results. The study also triangulated these perceptions and experiences by reviewing CSEE results by NECTA for respective years.

3.1.1 | Students Performances in Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE) Results

This sub-section aimed at assessing students' academic performances under evolutionary secondary school education management in public secondary schools. Before introduction of devolution reforms in 2008, students' academic performance rates in CSEE results were dominated by weak performance of division IV and failures. It was assumed that after devolution reforms, student's CSEE results would change significantly due to local resource supply in schools and close supervision by the local authorities. To obtain relevant information, questionnaires were administered to Teachers, School academic teachers and interview was conducted to HoC, WEO, SBC and CSEO. Furthermore, Documentary review was used to solidify the information from interview and questionnaires. In response to the question regarding students' performance in CSEE results over the past four years, 49 teachers (40.8%) indicated that the results were good, 69 teachers (58%) considered the results to be average, and 1 teacher (0.8%) felt that the performance was poor (Figure 1).

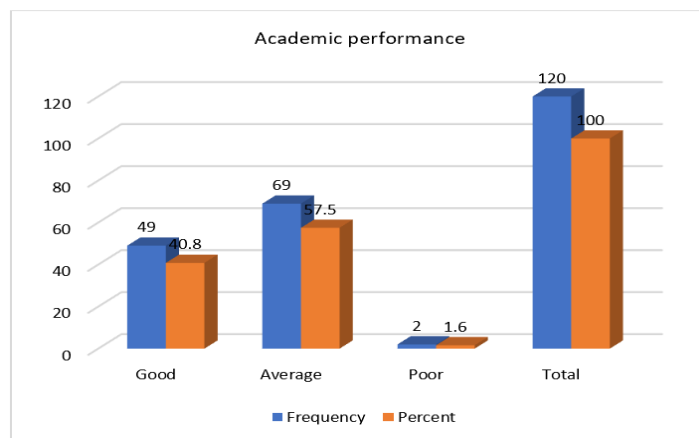


Figure 1: Teachers' perceptions on CSEE results Performance
Source: Field data (2025)

Similar question was asked to school academic teachers and Heads of School, WEO and CSEO. The findings revealed that school academic teacher 3(50%) observed the results to be good and 3(50%) observed the results to be average, 5(83.3%) of heads of schools observed results to be a good and 6 (100%) of WEO mentioned good performance and the CSEO mentioned good Performance, 4 (66.7) of SBC mentioned good performance and 2(33.3%) of SBC mentioned average performance. During interview, the City Secondary Education Officer told the researcher that there were great achievements in terms of student’s performances in CSEE results in Dodoma city councils in general as an outcome of devolved management of public secondary school as stated; *“This was an achievement of devolution management of secondary schools due to joint and close supervision and relevant and local-based measures taken by city council and community leaderships.”*

To triangulate the above responses, researcher reviewed NECTA CSEE results for four consecutive recent years 2021- 2024 for all six studied secondary school.

Table 1: Student Performance in CSEE results in Studied Schools (2021-2024)

School Division Performance Summary	2021					2022					2023					2024				
	I	II	III	IV	o	I	II	III	IV	o	I	II	III	IV	o	I	II	III	IV	o
1 Nzuguni Secondary School	4	18	34	139	38	1	18	35	166	55	2	24	35	167	92	1	34	48	194	34
2 Nala Secondary School	0	5	12	25	0	2	10	15	31	2	1	14	14	42	13	1	6	21	33	7
3 Makutupora Secondary School	8	14	11	76	5	4	23	23	80	5	9	24	23	94	5	1	17	36	104	2
4 Dodoma Secondary School	43	53	55	77	4	39	74	48	75	5	41	101	64	98	1	62	68	46	90	3
5 Makole Secondary School	6	17	35	103	12	9	29	25	133	39	2	18	29	179	56	5	20	32	153	27
6 Miyuji Secondary School	2	29	40	99	11	9	26	30	142	14	4	34	32	163	16	1	23	27	135	36
Total	63	136	187	519	70	64	180	176	627	120	59	215	197	743	183	71	168	210	709	109

Source: NECTA – 2021 -2024

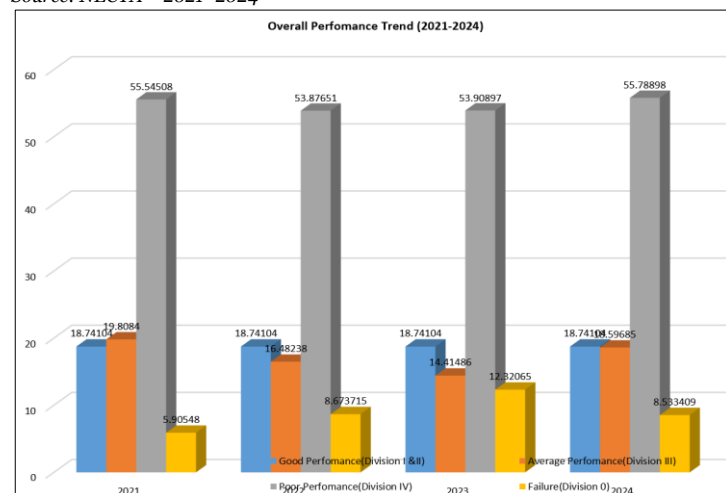


Figure 2: Performance trend in form four examination results (2021-2024)

Source: NECTA, 2021-2024

Despite the interview responses which are dominated by good performance perceptions from different managerial respondents, the critical analysis of the NECTA - CSEE results Table 4.4(a) above opposes the general perception. Findings from NECTA CSEE results between 2021 and 2024, Figure 4.4, shows that in 2021, majority of students (53%) scored division IV, followed by 36% candidates with division III (average performance), while only 20.4 % scored division I and II which is treated as good performance and total failure stood at 7%. In 2022, CSEE results show that 53.7% had division IV, 15% scored division III, 21% had division I and II, and 10% failed. In 2023, there was no significant changes in CSEE results whereby; majority 53.2% scored division IV, 14.1% (average performance) scored division III while 20% scored division I and II (good performance) and 13% failed. In 2024, majority (55.9%) scored division IV (poor performance), 16.6% scored division III (average performance), 18.9% scored division I and II (good performance) and 8.6% of candidates totally failed. These results align to the trend analysis of CSEE mathematics registration and performance from 2015–2022 shows fluctuating pass rates and rising concerns about subject-level failure rates, highlighting that aggregate headline figures can mask important declines in core subjects. This type of trend work demonstrates the need to separate subject trends from overall pass-rate summaries when assessing system performance (Wilson and Laurent, 2023).

3.1.2 | Performance trend in form four examination results (2021-2024)

These field data findings from both, NECTA CSEE results (2021-2024) and from respondents draw two major implications. One, the results show that *“quantitatively”* students are passing their CSEE results though majority got weak performance (division IV). Two, when subjected to qualitative aspects, these results have a slight or minimal contribution to *“quality improvement”*. Total failure (division zero) has depicted a fluctuating trend between 2021 and 2024 with an average of 10%. Good performance which also is important to portray the quality aspect of education has not changed significantly between 2021 and 2024 standing at 18.7%. The NECTA CSEE results have minor differences from the perceptions by school teachers presented in Figure 2 above showing that results are dominated by an average performance by 69 (57.5%).

The results portray the national trend and picture of form four examination results for recent 7 years (BEST, 2024) as presented in Table 4.4 (b). The trend indicates that division four has dominated the results over years, failures are declining from year to year but still high up to 10%, Division one and two are actually increasing but with a very gradual pace. As asserted by most heads of secondary schools that form four examination results are good but not consistent in all years, they improve from year to year.

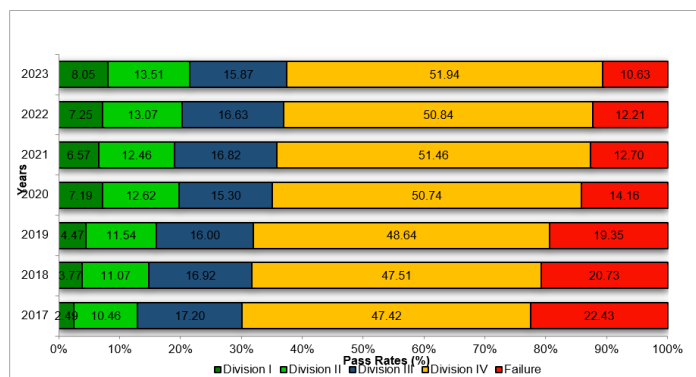


Figure 3: Performance trend in CSEE results (2017-2023) - National Data

Source: BEST -2024

The findings give an impression that despite the devolution Management of Secondary Schools, yet student Academic Performances in CSEE results remain poor and unsatisfactory. The researcher found that teachers were teaching large classes with limited teaching and learning resources and had no offices, despite being close to their employer (devolution management). This situation affected teaching and learning for students in terms of subject matter and syllabus content coverage, as reflected in consistently poor students' performances in CSEE results from 2021–2024. Therefore, local authorities under the devolution management of secondary schools should reconsider improving teaching and learning environments, including remunerations for teachers, to motivate them and enable effective teaching under these challenging conditions in public secondary schools. The findings align with the study by Ayaz (2012), which argues that devolution in education has no significant impact on students' academic achievements. The World Bank's institutional and governance assessment of Tanzania's education sector (2021) highlights these governance pressures on the examination system and recommends strengthening institutional capacity and accountability across levels of government to sustain learning gains (World Bank, 2017).

4 | CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Basing on the findings, several conclusions can be drawn. Majority of respondents found that student's performances in CSEE results were average. Decentralization policy had brought significant changes in the level of collective management of secondary schools. It was found that there are strong cooperation and teamwork between school management, parents and local authorities on fostering school academic through the Union of Teachers and Parents, Ward Education Development Committee, Ward Development Committee and School Boards. Lastly, it can also be concluded that devolution management of secondary schools had made very little on school financing and provision of school infrastructures and facilities. All studied secondary school found under funded and experienced high shortage of essential teaching and learning facilities including laboratories, libraries, textbooks, teacher's office and toilets for both students and staff.

4.1 | Recommendations

First, study found that schools had high shortage of science subjects' teachers and essential teaching and learning resources. Therefore, to improve the qualitative performance of students especially eradication of failures and reduction of division IV in CSEE results, the government must secure Science and Mathematics Teachers, increase school funding and continue investing on teacher's welfare by paying their allowances and increasing salaries for motivation and harnessing their full potentials in classroom teaching and learning.

Second, the Local Government Authorities through Ward Development Committee and Ward Education Development Committees should design and implement a workable financial empowerment strategy to the local communities for economic empowerment enabling them to feed their families and provide substantive contribution to school development projects as expected under devolution management.

Third, given the high shortage of school infrastructure, more strategies such as Public Private Partnership (PPP), project-based and community-led initiatives under LGA should be established and enhanced by engaging the private sector to invest on school infrastructure.

Fourth, given that more than 50% of secondary school graduates are getting weak performances and about 10% completely fails the CSEE, then it is recommended for establishment of free-of-cost vocational and technical education to such children to provide them with better livelihood opportunities after school.

In the course of undertaking this study, two new research areas emerge as potential for further studies. First, the study recommends the need for another study that investigates the socio-cultural skills performance of form IV graduates. In other words, there is a need to study the relevancy, compliance and skill competences students acquire in schools for their socio-cultural endeavor after schools as the findings revealed that majority (more than 50%) division IV and 10% failed totally. There is also a need to examine the pathways of students who fail and their subsequent activities following poor performance in examinations. The current government approach appears to regard these students as "rejects," with limited attention given to their post-school circumstances, particularly for those with weak performance (Division IV) or outright failures. Second, although the study findings revealed the presence of sufficient Social Science teachers with the required qualifications and experience in all the schools studied, student performance in CSEE results remains unsatisfactory, with the majority falling in Division IV and 10% failing entirely. This indicates a need for further research to investigate the factors contributing to poor student performance in CSEE examinations.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript.

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Author Contributions

The author(s) contributed substantially to the conception and design of the study, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants involved in the study.

Use of Generative AI

The author(s) confirm that generative AI tools were used solely for minor language refinement purposes and did not contribute to the intellectual content, analysis, interpretation, or conclusions of the study.

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