

**ZEDUPAD AN EMERGING E-LEARNING TOOL AND ITS IMPACT ON PUPILS' ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE IN ZAMBIAN RURAL SCHOOLS**

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**Abstract**

*The purpose of the study was to establish the impact of e-learning on pupils' academic performance in rural schools, Zambia. The study used the following objectives: 1.To assess the availability of e-learning facilities (ZEDUPAD tablets) in rural schools. 2. To determine the impact of e-learning through the use of ZEDUPAD tablets on pupils' academic performance in mathematics.3.To ascertain sustainable measures to be taken by government and private sector in fostering the use of e-learning facilities (ZEDUPAD tablets) in the teaching and learning of Mathematics in rural schools. The study employed and triangulated correlation and case study research designs in order to compare the academic performance between the treatment group and control group and also to obtain an in-depth understanding of the impact of e-learning through the use of ZEDUPAD on pupils' academic performance in Mathematics. The study followed grade six (6) pupils in Kapiri-Mposhi district of Central province, Zambia for a period of one full academic term. Data were collected using observations of practical mathematics lessons in classrooms which were supplemented by semi-structured interviews. Thematic and SPSS were used to analyse qualitative and quantitative data respectively. The study revealed that there was significant improvement in academic performance at 95% confidence interval ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ) for the pupils who were taught Mathematics using the ZEDUPAD as compared to those who were taught using traditional methods and approaches. The academic improvement recorded was mainly because e-learning through the use of ZEDUPAD tablets provided blended teaching and learning environment, pupil-centred approach, interactive and engaging lessons, and it was the best mode of providing e-learning to rural schools because it did not require internet access. However, the success stories of the good impact were seriously being constrained by non-availability of the ZEDUPAD tablets and lack of trained ICT teachers in rural areas.*

**Key words:** ICT education, interactive education, academic performance

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