

# ACADEMIC PROGRESS ANALYSIS SYSTEM



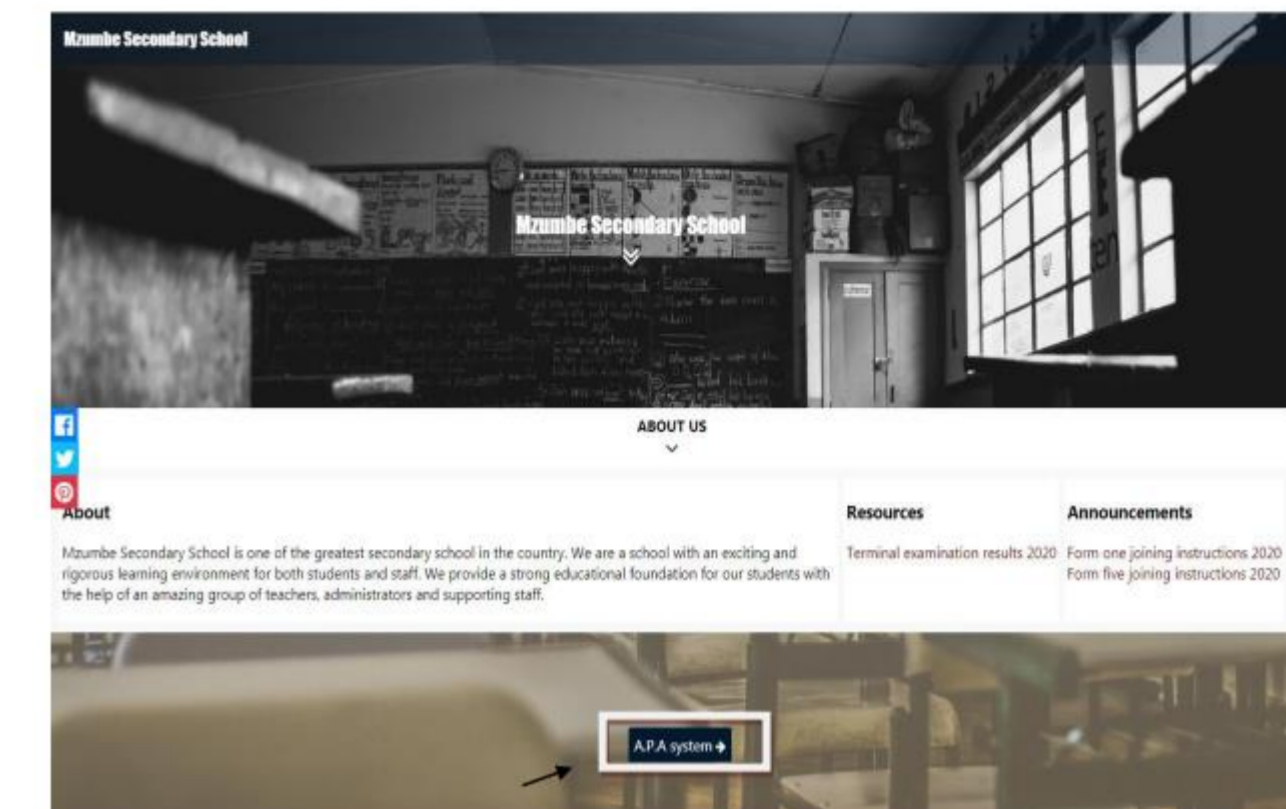
## Mzumbe Secondary School

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### Introduction

In Tanzania, the importance of education began to be emphasized since its independence in 1961. Both the public and private sectors work hand in hand to ensure every child in the country has access to quality basic education. However an estimated 70 percent of children aged 14-17 years are not enrolled in secondary education due to poverty, dropping out of school, early marriages and pregnancy. For those who are enrolled in secondary education some fail to join further education levels due to failure in their final examinations, while some join secondary schools with high grades and leave with relatively low grades. The latter arouse our curiosity and drove us towards the project work. During the project work we focused on factors affecting students' performance in academics, particularly the existing mode of academic data management and analysis, its effect on students' attitude, strategies and efforts. The survey work we conducted enlightened us on the strength and weakness of the existing mode of academic data analysis and led us to a potential solution, **The Academic Progress Analysis System**.

The Academic Progress Analysis System, a product of our research, is a computerized system of academic data management and analysis that provides a general review of a school's academic progress and that of individual students. It also ranks students in order of the average attained in a particular examination and the relative improvement shown by each student in a series of examinations.



### Method

In order to collect information and opinions on the factors that affect student's academic performance we did interviews and issued questionnaires to both students and tutors. We extended our research in the third phase of our research to our neighboring institute, Mzumbe University so as to ensure reliability of the conclusions drawn

#### PHASE 1

In the first phase of our research, questionnaires were issued to students in our school. 60 students from 4 different classes were randomly selected to ensure that the results obtained are not biased. The questionnaires which were distributed contained 5 questions: of which, each that inquired on the students' attitude, strategies and opinions.

### Procedure

#### PHASE 2

In the second phase of the research an interview was done with the Senior Academic Master in our school to get opinions on the side of teachers and test the relevance of the solution and provide for further fabrication.

#### PHASE 3

In the third phase of the research and interview was conducted with a University tutor in our neighborhood, Mzumbe University. Pre-prepared questions and on-spot questions were asked to gather in-depth sight of the project work.



### Results

Question 1: About 66.6% of the students inquired keep a record and make analysis of their performance on the examinations and tests they take while 33.3% do not make a follow-up on their academic performance nor make analysis of their progress.

Question 2: 55% of the students interviewed have a declining performance trend, that is, their performance has not been improving while only 31.6% show improvement in their academic performance. 13.3% of the students have no idea if their performance has either been improving or declining.

Question 3: 85% of the students interviewed confessed to focus on the average and grades they attain while 15% agreed to focus on their position rather than the average

#### PHASE 2 & 3

The two phases of the survey were grouped together as they were basically composed of the same inquiries concerning the common ranking system and the Academic Progress Analysis system. Similarly, the responses offered by the Senior Academic Master (from Mzumbe Secondary School) and the Tutor (from Mzumbe University) were almost congruent; they have been quoted as follows: The Senior Academic Master, Mr. Daudi Maduku says, "This system promises to bear advantageous fruits, as it will foster the students' focus on good averages and grades. Consequently, this will result to a significant improvement in the school's overall performance and Grade Point Average."

The tutor on the other hand had the following to say, "The system's a good practice; it's a common practice in other nations, to rank pupils according to average progress. Even in universities, an almost similar system is applied. It reflects the efforts put by individual students during studies and preparations.

The system enables analysts to determine the level of development in academic progress."

The common ranking system in schools is based on an individual's performance relative to other students in his class in a particular examination. The best student is one who attains the best grades compared to other students and the least performing student is one who attains the lowest grades. This builds a competitive and focused attitude in students to out-perform their fellows by achieving best grades.

The Academic Progress Analysis (A.P.A) System is a computer program aimed at revolutionizing the existing ranking system. Instead of students being ranked in the order of relative performance in a single examination, students are ranked in accordance of their relative improvement in academic performance in a series of examination. The best student is the student with the highest improvement in performance and the lowest performing students is the student who has shown least improvement in his performance. This is intended to create a progress-oriented attitude in students in all levels and prepare them for their final national examinations.

Do you keep a record and make analysis on your academic performance in your examinations and tests?

Yes  
 No

What is your performance trend since you joined secondary school? Has your performance been improving?

Yes  
 No

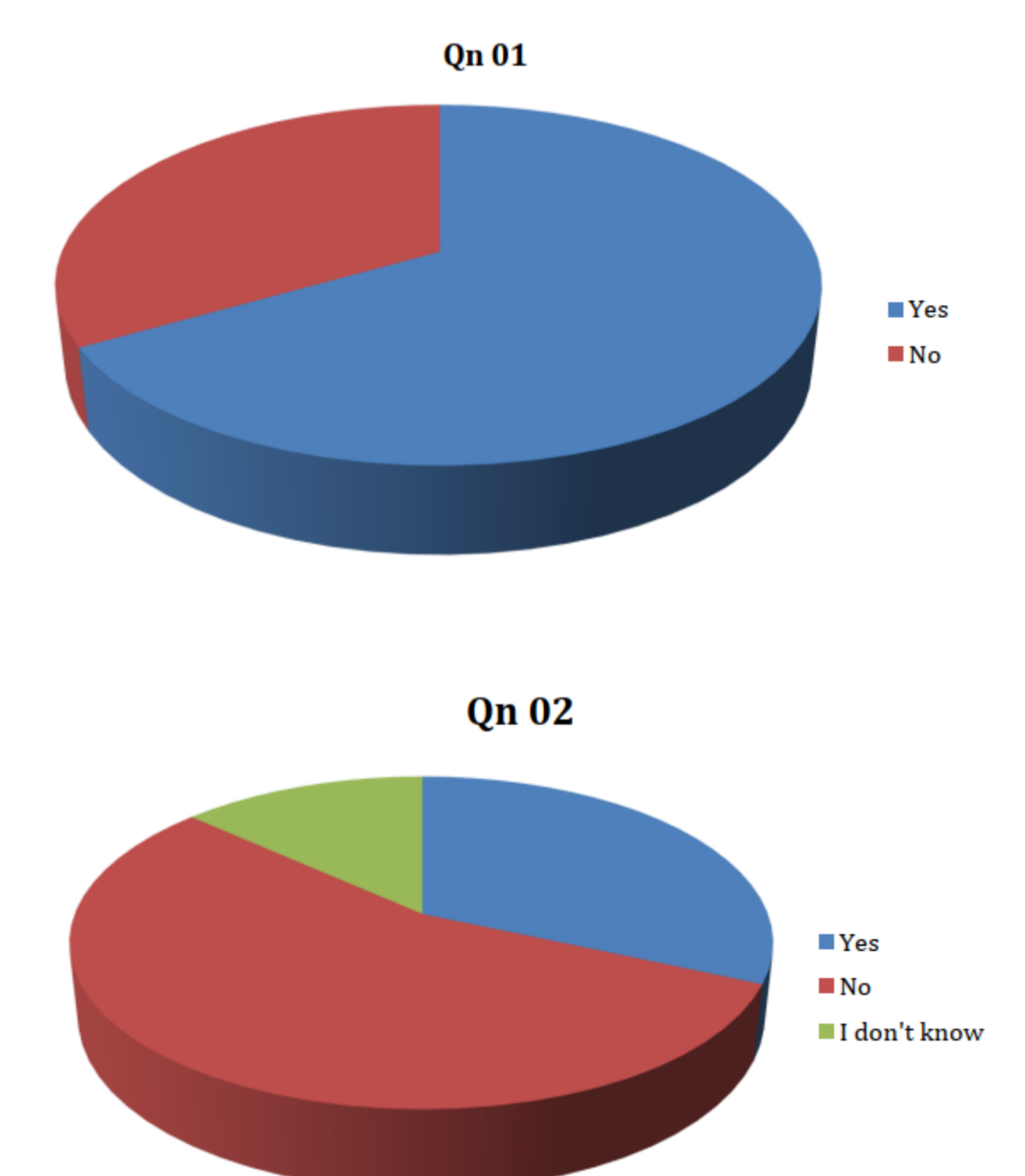
What aspect do you focus on and aim at in the examinations you take?

Position  
 Average and grade

What do you think will help you achieve your academic goals and good grades?

The A.P.A system  
 The common ranking system

Why?



### Conclusions

From the three phases of survey and various researches which were conducted as part of the project, it has been evident that the Academic Progress Analysis system is important to the educational system in Tanzania. The transition from the common ranking system to the Academic Progress Analysis system can bring about the required effects in the academic performance trend all over the nation.

The views of a majority of the respondents involved in the survey expressed the need to bring about a revolution in the Educational field. Rather than sowing a position-oriented attitude in students, it is better to instill an average progress oriented attitude in students, as it will help in aspiring collectively to meet the highest goals and a sustained average performance in examinations.

Though some may begin considering the common ranking system as a backward system, it should still be noted that the system is revered for its role in encouraging the competitive attitude among students and hence contributing to high performance in schools. In each examination, students work hard in order to excel and outperform the rest of the class. In this way, the students gradually heighten their scores and grades to higher levels.