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**A cross sectional analysis of 19 case studies of students who obtained 0 to 5 marks
at the grade five scholarship examination in 2009**

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The problem that necessitated the present research was that as many as 1400 students who sat the Grade 5 Scholarship Examination (GFSE), scored zero marks. The main objective of the research was to identify the factors affecting the compulsory education needs of children who exhibited low achievement levels at the GFSE. The sample for the study included 19 students who had scored (0-5) marks at the 2009 GFSE selected from 19 schools representing all school types (1AB, 1C, Type 2 and Type 3) in 14 educational zones in 11 districts in 7 provinces. In-depth case studies of these students were conducted and a cross sectional analysis of these 19 case studies was performed. The students' home profiles revealed that most (16/19) did not have a conducive home environment for education and security and had less parental support. The majority of students (16/19) were admitted to schools when they were 5½ years or above and most of them (17/19) were healthy and had no deficiencies related to their health. The students' annual attendance for the three years prior to the GFSE (2007, 2008 and 2009) was above 80 percent. The majority of the low achievers (13/19) had shown above average level performance in extracurricular activities. The school principals and teachers had neglected these low achievers. Majority of the subjects were from Type 2 and 1C schools (16/19), and 15/19 of these schools are located in semi urban and rural areas. The majority of the schools in the sample (10/19) possessed sufficient physical and human resources. Despite these resources, the majority of students (16/19) did not reach the expected achievement level in mathematics and in the first language. Therefore, it is suggested that teachers should take responsibility to uplift the students to at least the minimum level of competence according to their level of development. The school should identify the low achievers and suitable remedial education programs must be implemented. Strategies such as peer learning and self learning in the classroom must be encouraged. School-based assessment systems should be revitalized and internal supervision must be strengthened. Educational officers should look in to these aspects and the supervision of schools should be strengthened.

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