



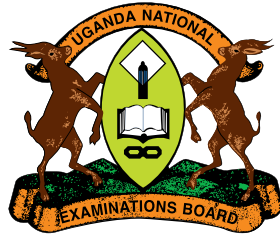
# LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT

**IN MATHEMATICS, BIOLOGY AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE  
AT THE LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL IN UGANDA**



**2025 NAPE REPORT**





UGANDA NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS BOARD

# **LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS, BIOLOGY AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE AT THE LOWER SECONDARY LEVEL IN UGANDA**

2025 NAPE REPORT

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Our heartfelt gratitude goes to the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), Directorate of Education Standards (DES), and Special Needs Education (SNE) department of Kyambogo University for invaluable insights and support. We thank the Chief Administrative Officers (CAOs), District/Municipality/City Education officials, headteachers, teachers, learners and parents, who participated in the survey. We also commend the monitors, team leaders and test administrators for their resilience, commitment and invaluable expertise during the field administration, which ensured the successful collection of the data. Our gratitude further extends to the item writers, moderators, scorers, transcribers, reviewers, data entrants and other individuals for their dedication and hard work.

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UNEB welcomes feedback on this report that can be communicated through [unebsecretariat@gmail.com](mailto:unebsecretariat@gmail.com) and [uneb@uneb.ac.ug](mailto:uneb@uneb.ac.ug)

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# ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

|                |                                                      |
|----------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Aol</b>     | Activity of Integration                              |
| <b>CA</b>      | Continuous Assessment                                |
| <b>CBC</b>     | Competency Based Curriculum                          |
| <b>CBS</b>     | Conveyor Belt System                                 |
| <b>DES</b>     | Directorate of Education Standards                   |
| <b>EPRC</b>    | Education Policy Review Commission                   |
| <b>ERC</b>     | Examinations Research Committee                      |
| <b>FGD</b>     | Focus Group Discussion                               |
| <b>ICT</b>     | Information and Communications Technology            |
| <b>IRT</b>     | Item Response Theory                                 |
| <b>LSC</b>     | Lower Secondary Curriculum                           |
| <b>MoES</b>    | Ministry of Education and Sports                     |
| <b>NAPE</b>    | National Assessment of Progress in Education         |
| <b>NCDC</b>    | National Curriculum Development Centre               |
| <b>NGO</b>     | Non-Government Organisation                          |
| <b>NUDIPU</b>  | National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda         |
| <b>S 2</b>     | Senior Two                                           |
| <b>SEN</b>     | Special Education Needs                              |
| <b>SESEMAT</b> | Secondary Science and Mathematics Teachers programme |
| <b>SNE</b>     | Special Needs Education                              |
| <b>TETD</b>    | Teacher Education, Training and Development          |
| <b>UNEb</b>    | Uganda National Examinations Board                   |
| <b>USE</b>     | Universal Secondary Education                        |

# LIST OF DEFINITIONS

**Conveyor Belt System (CBS)** of scoring is a method in which a learners' answer script is scored by a team of scorers with each member scoring only a specific part of the test instead of an entire test script.

**Inter-rater reliability** refers to the degree of agreement or consistency between independent scorers judging the same learner's test responses.

**National-Level Achievement** refers to the overall proportion of learners in Uganda who are rated proficient in a given subject.

**Schooling status** refers to the learner's residential status while attending school. It distinguishes between learners who reside on the school campus as boarders and those who commute from home as day scholars.

# FOREWORD



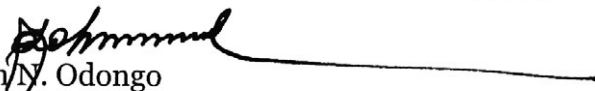
Uganda National Examinations Board (UNEB) is mandated by the UNEB Act Cap 259 to carry out assessment of the performance of the education system based on standards set by the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). Since 1996, the Board has been carrying out assessments at Primary 3, Primary 6, and Senior 2 levels through the National Assessment of Progress in Education (NAPE).

Following the rollout of the Competency Based Curriculum (CBC) at the lower secondary school level in 2020, the Board found it necessary in 2025 to conduct a national assessment at S 2 to determine the learners' levels of achievement and to obtain information regarding the implementation of the reformed curriculum.

I wish to sincerely thank the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES), National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC), Directorate of Education Standards (DES), teachers and other stakeholders in education for their invaluable support which enabled the Board to conduct a successful 2025 NAPE survey.

This report contains survey findings on the achievement of learners in Mathematics, Biology and English Language at the lower secondary school level. By generating reliable and nationally representative data on learning outcomes, NAPE supports evidence-based policy formulation, curriculum review and improvement in classroom instruction. This role is particularly critical in assessing whether increased access to education together with the reformed curriculum is translating into improved learning achievement across different learner groups and school contexts.

It is my sincere hope that the findings will provide vital information that will enable MoES and other stakeholders in education to understand the implementation of the Lower Secondary Curriculum (LSC) and improve the quality and relevance of education in Uganda.

  
Dan N. Odongo

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNEB conducted this NAPE survey in August 2025 in order to: determine the level of S 2 learners' achievement in Mathematics, Biology and English Language; determine the levels of achievement of learners with Special Education Needs (SEN) in both inclusive and special schools; identify the contextual factors that determine the S 2 learners' achievement; and assess stakeholders' adherence to the Lower Secondary Curriculum guidelines in the implementation of Continuous Assessment (CA).

The instruments used were oral and written tests, focus group discussions and interview guides. These instruments were adapted by SEN specialists to ensure that learners with SEN could be effectively assessed. Focus group discussions (FGDs) were held with S 2 learners, while interviews were held with headteachers, teachers and parents' representatives to assess adherence to the Lower Secondary Curriculum guidelines in the implementation of CA.

A stratified two-stage cluster sampling design was used. Stratified by 136 districts, two secondary schools were randomly selected through probability proportional to class size. A random sample of 30 learners was obtained from each of the selected schools. The national sample size for secondary schools consisted of 275 schools and 8,234 learners. The sample included four purposively selected Special Needs Education (SNE) schools with 60 learners who are deaf and 31 learners who are blind.

Test scores were analysed based on Item Response Theory (IRT), and a binary logistic regression model was used to identify the contextual factors that determine the S 2 learners' achievement.

## NATIONAL LEVEL ACHIEVEMENT

The national level achievement for S 2 learners in Mathematics was 61.6%, Biology (45.6%), Writing sub-skill (80.7%), Listening sub-skill (26.0%) and Speaking sub-skill (73.6%). In the Listening and Speaking sub-skills, the proportion of learners who are blind and rated proficient exceeded the national level achievement. However, the proportion of learners who are deaf and rated proficient was lower than the national level achievement in Mathematics, Biology, Writing sub-skill and Observation (Listening) sub-skill.

Over the years 2014 and 2025, the percentages of S 2 learners rated proficient in Mathematics, Biology and Writing sub-skill increased by a large percentage margin. These findings suggest that more learners have become proficient under the Competency Based Lower Secondary Curriculum.

## ACHIEVEMENT BY GENDER

More boys than girls were rated proficient in Mathematics (Boys: 72.0% and Girls: 51.6%,  $p = 0.000$ ) and Biology (Boys: 53.3% and Girls: 38.1%,  $p = 0.000$ ). However, there were no significant gender differences in the; Writing sub-skill (Boys: 79.0% and Girls: 82.3%,  $p = 0.106$ ), Listening sub-skill (Boys: 26.0% and Girls: 27.0%,  $p = 0.834$ ), and Speaking sub-skill (Boys: 73.6% and Girls: 73.6%,  $p = 0.991$ ).

## ACHIEVEMENT BY SCHOOL OWNERSHIP, LOCATION, USE AND SCHOOLING STATUS

A significantly higher proportion of S 2 learners from urban, non-USE schools, and those who are boarders were rated proficient in Mathematics, Biology, Writing and Listening sub-skills. In the Speaking sub-skill, significantly more learners from urban schools and those who are boarders were rated proficient. In terms of ownership, significantly more learners from privately owned schools were rated proficient in only the Writing sub-skill.

## GAP IN LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT BETWEEN 2014 AND 2025, BY CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

**Gender:** The achievement gap in Mathematics, Biology, and English Language among S 2 learners widened between boys and girls between 2014 and 2025, with more boys than girls rated proficient in Mathematics and Biology. In contrast, more girls than boys were rated proficient in English Language in 2025.

**School Ownership:** The gap in learners' achievement in English Language widened between 2014 and 2025, with more learners in private schools rated proficient. The gap in learners' achievement in Mathematics and Biology widened between 2014 and 2025, with more learners in government schools rated proficient in 2014. In contrast, more learners from private schools were rated proficient in 2025.

**School Location:** The gap in S 2 learners' achievement in Mathematics widened between 2014 and 2025, with more learners in urban schools rated proficient in 2025, while the achievement gap in Biology remained the same over the same period. The achievement gap in English language between 2014 and 2025 reduced, much as more learners in urban schools were still rated proficient.

**USE Status:** The gap in S 2 learners' achievement in Mathematics, Biology and English language between Non-USE and USE schools narrowed between 2014 and 2025, much as more learners in Non-USE schools were still rated proficient. This trend suggests that government interventions in the USE schools have contributed to the increase in the proportion of learners rated proficient.

## DETERMINANTS OF S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT

Schooling status and school location had significant effect on S 2 learners' achievement of the required minimum proficiency level in Mathematics, Biology and English Language. Gender had a significant effect on a learner's ability to achieve the required minimum proficiency level in Mathematics and Biology, while age of the learner had a significant effect on Mathematics, the Writing sub-skill and the Listening sub skill.

In regard to school ownership, learners in both government and private schools had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency levels in Mathematics, Biology and English Language. Similarly, learners in both USE and Non-USE schools had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency levels.

## STAKEHOLDERS' ADHERENCE TO THE LOWER SECONDARY CURRICULUM GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CA

Majority of the schools have implemented the curriculum guidelines regarding; sitting arrangement during lessons, administration of activities of integration and provision of feedback to learners, integration of generic skills in assessment, involvement of parents in continuous assessment activities, and learners' access to reading materials.

Conversely, some of the schools have not followed the curriculum guidelines regarding; instruction time, development of activities of integration - that is, most teachers do not develop their own activities of integration, limited integration of ICT in research work at school, and conduct of project work at S 2 class.

## AREAS OF DIFFICULTY FOR LEARNERS

Even the highly proficient learners had difficulty in the following learning areas.

**Mathematics:** Reflection/translation of an object (including identification of lines of reflection e.g., the axes y-axis ( $x=0$ ), x-axis ( $y=0$ ) and line  $y=x$ ); and drawing bars/representing data in form of a line graph.

**Biology:** Application of scientific process skills in conducting experiments on soil; using structural differences to classify organisms; and explaining functional differences using structures of organisms.

**Writing sub-skill:** Using appropriate vocabulary and register when writing informal letters; using apt vocabulary and stylistic devices when writing a story.

**Listening sub-skill:** Analysing a text and describing the relationship between characters with justification.

**Speaking sub-skill:** Engaging and relating with the audience when speaking.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The report recommends;

| Specific Actions                                                                                                                                                                             | Responsible institutions                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| Embrace the use of graph boards and books to solve the challenges of plotting points, drawing bars and representing data in form of a line graph, including identifying lines of reflection. | Schools                                                      |
| Integrate scientific investigation skills in the teaching and learning process (e.g., laboratory experiments, fieldwork, community projects).                                                | Schools, MoES, NGOs                                          |
| Affirmative action should be taken to support girls in Mathematics and Sciences.                                                                                                             | MoES                                                         |
| Train teachers on effective strategies for teaching and assessing listening comprehension and speaking.                                                                                      | Teacher Training Institutions, TETD, UNEB                    |
| Train more teachers on the integration of generic skills and values in assessment.                                                                                                           | TETD, NCDC, UNEB                                             |
| Design creative tasks that ensure learners develop their listening and speaking skills through classroom presentations and clubs e.g., debates, drama and dialogues.                         | Schools, NCDC, UNEB, DES, Teacher Training Institutions      |
| Develop and adapt instructional materials for SEN learners into accessible formats (e.g., braille, large print, audio, simplified texts, sign language dictionary).                          | NCDC, MoES, NUDIPU                                           |
| Standardisation and mandatory inclusion of sign language in the teacher training curriculum.                                                                                                 | MoES, Teacher Training Institutions                          |
| Integrate the use of ICT tools (e.g., computers, tablets, internet access) into research activities.                                                                                         | Schools, MoES, Ministry of ICT and National Guidance         |
| Develop a policy to regulate the instruction time and enhance the implementation of the curriculum guidelines.                                                                               | MoES                                                         |
| Establish a school program to continuously sensitize parents on the interpretation of school reports and their roles.                                                                        | School, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA)                    |
| Ensure that learners start project work in S 1 class                                                                                                                                         | DES, UNEB                                                    |
| Conduct comprehensive research studies on learners' achievement gaps.                                                                                                                        | MoES, NCDC, DES, UNEB, Universities, Independent researchers |

# CHAPTER 1

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The education system in Uganda comprises four main levels: pre-primary education for children aged 3-5 years, seven years of primary education, secondary education level comprising four years of lower secondary and two years of advanced secondary education, and two to five years of tertiary education<sup>1</sup>. Over the past three decades, this system has undergone significant reforms aimed at expanding access to education and improving equity across regions and social groups.

Globally, the shift from access to quality education has been emphasized under UNESCO's Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 4.1.1), which prioritises not only enrolment but also learning outcomes, measured through indicators such as completion rates and minimum proficiency levels<sup>2</sup>. In Uganda, this agenda is reinforced by the Constitution (1995), which guarantees the right to education and mandates the state to ensure its provision. Consequently, the Ministry of Education and Sports (MoES) has implemented several system-wide reforms to expand educational opportunities.

Historically, these reforms have focused primarily on increasing access. Following the 1990 Education for All (EFA) initiative, Uganda introduced Universal Primary Education (UPE) in 1997 and Universal Secondary Education (USE) in 2007. These policies significantly reduced financial barriers to access and led to a rapid increase in student enrolment<sup>3</sup>. Recently, infrastructure expansion through programmes such as the Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers Programme (UGIFT) has further improved physical access by establishing secondary schools in under served sub-counties<sup>4</sup>. As a result, enrolment in seed secondary schools more than doubled between 2022 and 2024<sup>5</sup>.

However, while these reforms have been successful in improving access to education, they have simultaneously generated new challenges related to the quality of education. Increased enrolment has placed pressure on existing resources, particularly teachers, instructional materials, and classroom space<sup>6</sup>. This has created critical tension within the education system: the expansion of access has not always translated into improved learning outcomes nor expected completion rates. Many learners complete schooling cycles without attaining the expected levels of proficiency, raising concerns about the effectiveness of the education system. To address this imbalance, the government has introduced complementary reforms aimed at improving teaching quality and learning outcomes. For instance, the Education Service Commission (ESC) has recruited more teachers to reduce Teacher-Learner ratio<sup>7</sup>. In addition, professional development initiatives have been implemented by Teacher Education, Training and Development (TETD) department of the MoES.

In 2005, the government with the support of Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) initiated the Secondary Science and Mathematics Teachers (SESEMAT) programme to improve secondary learners' performance in Science and Mathematics. However, learners still attain lower grades in the Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, and Biology) and Mathematics at national examinations (UCE Results: 2020-2025).

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1 GoU. (2008). *Education (Pre-Primary, Primary and Post-Primary) Act, 2008*.

2 UNESCO Institute for Statistics. (2025). *World Education Statistics*. UNESCO.

3 MoES. (2017). *Education and Sports Sector Strategic Plan 2017/18 - 2019/20*.

4 World Bank. (2017). *International Development Association Restructuring Paper on a Proposed Program Restructuring of Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers Program Approved on June 27, 2017 to the Republic of Uganda*.

5 UGIFT. (2024). *Uganda Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers (UGIFT) Program For Results P160250; Annual Performance Report FY2023/24*. Kampala: Ministry of Finance, Planning, and Economic Development. Retrieved from [budget.finance.go.ug](http://budget.finance.go.ug).

6 Lewin, K. M. (2015). *Educational Access, Equity, and Development: Planning to make rights realities*. Paris: UNESCO: International Institute of Educational Planning.

7 MoES. (2017). *Education And Sports Sector Strategic Plan 2017/18 - 2019/20*.

In addition, to improve quality and relevance of education MoES through NCDC reformed the curriculum and introduced the Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC) at the lower secondary level in 2020. The CBC departs from the previous content-based curriculum by emphasizing the development of competencies to enhance learners' ability to apply knowledge, skills, values, and attitudes in real-life situations. It promotes learner-centered approaches, critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving, while reducing content overload and encouraging active participation of learners in the learning process<sup>8</sup>.

A central component of the CBC is the use of Continuous Assessment (CA) as an integral part of evaluating learning. Unlike the traditional system, which relied heavily on final examinations, CA involves ongoing evaluation through classwork, projects, group discussions, presentations, and practical tasks. This approach, implemented by schools in collaboration with UNEB, aims to provide a more comprehensive and accurate measure of learners' progress over time. Importantly, it also supports learning by providing timely feedback, thereby strengthening the connection between teaching practices and learning outcomes. The CBC has been implemented for over five years with no national assessment of progress conducted to find out whether the implementation is on track.

To guide the reader, the remaining part of this report is structured as follows. The remaining section of Chapter 1 presents overview of NAPE, historical background and rationale, and objectives of the survey. Chapter 2 outlines the survey procedures. Chapter 3 presents distribution of schools and learners. Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 present Learners' achievement in Mathematics, Biology, English Language (Writing, Listening and Speaking Sub-skills), respectively. Chapter 9 presents findings on stakeholders' adherence to the Lower Secondary Curriculum guidelines on the implementation of CA. Finally, Chapter 10 presents the conclusion and recommendations.

## 1.1 OVERVIEW OF THE NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS IN EDUCATION (NAPE)

NAPE was started in 1996 at primary level and later introduced at secondary level in 2008. It was created in the education system as a result of realisation by the Education Policy Review Commission (EPRC), 1989, of the lack of reliable and up-to-date data on education indicators. NAPE serves as a primary indicator of the performance of Uganda's education system, as reflected in learners' achievements in Literacy and Numeracy at primary three (P 3) and primary six (P 6), as well as in Mathematics, Biology and English Language at senior two (S 2) class.

The objectives of NAPE are to:

- a) Determine and monitor the level of achievement of learners over time.
- a) Generate information on what learners know and can do in different areas of the curriculum.
- b) Evaluate the effectiveness of reforms in the education system.
- c) Provide information on variables which affect learning achievement.
- d) Suggest measures for the improvement of teaching and learning in schools.
- e) Provide data for planning and research.

## 1.2 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE FOR ASSESSMENT

At the secondary level, the national assessment for Senior Two (S 2) learners began in 2008 to monitor learning outcomes and guide education policy. The assessment continued until 2014. However, financial constraints hindered further surveys until 2025, leaving a significant gap in data on learners' achievement.

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<sup>8</sup> NCDC. (2019). *Curriculum Framework*. Kampala: National Curriculum Development Centre. Retrieved from [www.ncdc.go.ug](http://www.ncdc.go.ug).

Assessing learners at S 2 is strategic because it provides indicators of academic progress within the secondary cycle early enough to enable timely interventions to improve learning outcomes. The 2014 survey revealed declining proficiency rates in Mathematics, Biology, and English Language, as well as persistent gender disparities, highlighting systemic challenges in teaching, curriculum delivery, and assessment practices.

To address the challenges, Uganda implemented major reforms, including the 2020 lower secondary Competency-Based Curriculum (CBC). The CBC emphasises learner-centered pedagogy, skills development, and Continuous Assessment (CA) to strengthen classroom learning and monitor progress. However, limited research exists on whether these reforms have translated into improved learning outcomes, particularly regarding CA implementation.

In response, NAPE conducted a national survey in 2025 to; assess S 2 learners' proficiency in Mathematics, Biology, and English Language, examine the effects of contextual factors on learners' achievement, and examine curriculum implementation, focusing on stakeholders' adherence to the Lower Secondary Curriculum guidelines on the implementation of CA.

### **1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE 2025 NAPE SURVEY**

The objectives of the 2025 NAPE survey were to:

1. Determine the levels of learners' achievement in Mathematics, Biology and English Language at S 2 in Uganda.
2. Determine the levels of achievement of S 2 learners with Special Education Needs in Uganda.
3. Identify the contextual factors that determine the S 2 learners' achievement.
4. Assess stakeholders' adherence to the Lower Secondary Curriculum guidelines on the implementation of Continuous Assessment in Uganda.

# CHAPTER 2

## SURVEY PROCEDURES

This chapter outlines the survey instruments, survey design, scoring and coding scripts, data capture, validation and analysis.

### 2.1 SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

The instruments used were written, audio and oral tests, Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and interview guides. The survey used different categories of instruments: The written tests were in Mathematics, Biology, and English Language, the writing sub-skill. The English Language written test comprised reading comprehension and writing. The audio and oral tests were designed to test the English Language Listening and Speaking sub-skills, respectively. The tests consisted of items covering syllabus content from Senior One, Term One to S 2, Term One.

The assessment instruments were adapted by SEN specialists to ensure that learners with SEN could be effectively assessed. The written test papers were brailled for learners who are blind and printed in large font for learners with low vision. For learners who are deaf, the listening comprehension test and the FGD guides were signed at the time of administration of the instruments.

Focus Group Discussions were conducted with S 2 learners, while interviews were held with headteachers, teachers, and parents' representatives to assess stakeholders' adherence to Continuous Assessment implementation guidelines.

#### 2.1.1 DEVELOPMENT OF SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

The development of assessment instruments was based on the LSC, and the use of pre-prepared assessment frameworks. Item writers for Mathematics, Biology and English Language were recruited from different regions of the country. These were qualified practising teachers holding at least a Diploma in Education, with a minimum of three years' teaching experience. They underwent a two-day training on the development of content frameworks, test frameworks, item specifications and subsequently, scenario-based items. Six parallel sets of test papers were produced for each of the three subjects.

Subject specialists from NCDC and the SNE department of MoES were also involved in this process. The establishment of the theme and the development of eight contextual instruments, along with the validation of their relevance and overall quality, involved officials from DES, NCDC, TETD, the Basic Education Department and UNEB.

#### 2.1.2 PRE-TESTING OF ASSESSMENT INSTRUMENTS

The assessment instruments were pretested in 66 randomly sampled secondary schools from the four regions of the country. The schools sampled shared similar characteristics with the targeted school population.

The tests were printed, packed, distributed, and administered to the S 2 learners. On average, 374 learners sat for each of the six test papers pretested in each subject. The scripts were scored by practising teachers. Item response analysis was done in order to evaluate item characteristics such as discrimination, difficulty and fairness. Items which did not function well based on set criteria were revised or dropped, depending on their functionality. Items that functioned well were compiled into standardised tests.

## 2.2 SURVEY DESIGN

This section presents the population, sampling design, sampling frame, field administration, sample size and sampling weights.

### 2.2.1 POPULATION

The target population comprised S 2 learners, teachers of Mathematics, Biology and English Language at S 2 level, headteachers as well as parents' representatives of S 2 learners in the sampled secondary schools.

### 2.2.2 SAMPLING DESIGN

A stratified two-stage cluster random sampling design was used. At the first stage, stratification was conducted across 136 districts, with 2-4 secondary schools selected from each district using probability proportional to class size. However, only one school was selected from the districts of Karenga, Napak and Obongi since each had one school that met the sampling criteria.

At the second stage, a random sample of 30 learners was drawn from those present at the school on the day of the survey. Where fewer than 30 learners were available in a school, oversampling from another school in the district (where possible) was done to realise the required minimum sample in the district. Special Needs Education (SNE) schools were purposively selected. FGDs and interviews were held with respondents in the sampled schools.

### 2.2.3 SAMPLING FRAME

The sampling frame consisted of secondary schools that had submitted Continuous Assessment scores for UCE 2024 candidates. This dataset was the most recent official data accessible by UNEB. The sampling frame consisted of 2,927 schools with a minimum enrolment of 40 learners at S 4 level.

### 2.2.4 FIELD ADMINISTRATION

#### Administration of written, audio and oral tests

The field administration was conducted in August 2025. A total of 465 field officers were appointed, among these some served as scorers of the Speaking test, transcribers, test administrators, team leaders, and monitors. The field team included officials from MoES, NCDC, DES and UNEB as well as in-service teachers and retired educationists.

The team leaders and scorers of the Speaking test were trained for two days on the procedures of administering the assessment tools. In each sampled school, a Team Leader worked with a scorer for the Speaking test and one Test Administrator selected from among secondary school teachers. Team Leaders facilitated a one-day training for Test Administrators at the district. SEN teachers were deployed to schools with learners who are blind and those who are deaf.

The sampled learners in the country sat for the same standardised tests of; Mathematics in the morning, Biology in the afternoon on the first day, followed by English Language on the subsequent day. For English Language, all the sampled learners present on the day of assessment sat for Writing and Listening tests, while 10 of them were randomly selected for the Speaking test.

#### Administration of contextual instruments

A one-day training of the 139 Team Leaders (interviewers) facilitated by NAPE staff was conducted on how to administer contextual instruments. Upon arrival at each school, Team Leaders obtained consent from the headteacher for the S 2 learners to participate in the FGDs.

Headteacher's and teachers' tools were administered on the first day, while the tools for learners' and parents' representative were administered on the second day.

The FGDs for S 2 learners consisted of between 8 and 12 learners inclusive, and the groups comprised both boys and girls, as well as learners with SEN (where applicable). Group interviews were held with teachers of Mathematics, Biology, and English Language at S 2 level.

Each FGD and group interview lasted for about 30-40 minutes. The headteacher's interview took 25-30 minutes, while that of the parents' representative took 20-25 minutes.

During the FGDs, the Team Leaders ensured that there was privacy during the session and no one else other than the required learners participated in the discussion. Team Leaders probed to gain a better understanding in case of unclear or incomplete responses and ensured that all learners were given an opportunity to speak.

### 2.2.5 SAMPLE SIZE

At national level, the school sample comprised 275 secondary schools. Among these, three were purely SNE schools, while one was an inclusive school with learners who are blind. Among the three purely SNE schools, two were for the deaf and one for the blind. A total of 4 SNE schools were purposively selected: 2 for learners who are blind and 2 for learners who are deaf. Table 2.1 presents the number of secondary schools where FGDs and interviews were conducted.

**Table 2.1 Number of Schools and Response Rates for FGDs and Interviews**

| Category of respondents | Method of Data Collection  | Number of schools |        |                   |
|-------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|
|                         |                            | Target            | Actual | Response rate (%) |
| S 2 learners            | FGDs                       | 275               | 274    | 99.6              |
| Teachers                | Structured Interview guide | 275               | 272    | 98.9              |
| Headteachers            | Structured Interview guide | 275               | 274    | 99.6              |
| Parents                 | Structured Interview guide | 275               | 272    | 98.9              |

Each team leader was required to administer the instruments in two schools, except in Karenga, Napak, and Obongi districts. In each school, a Team Leader conducted three interviews and one FGD. Three tools for teachers and three for parents' representatives were not returned. In addition, one tool for headteachers and one for learners was also not returned.

Table 2.2 presents the number of S 2 learners and response rates for the tests.

**Table 2.2 Number of S 2 Learners and Response Rates for the Tests**

| Method of Data Collection | Number of S 2 learners |        |                   |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--------|-------------------|
|                           | Target                 | Actual | Response rate (%) |
| Mathematics Test          | 8,250                  | 8,234  | 99.8              |
| Biology Test              | 8,250                  | 8,208  | 99.5              |
| English Language Test:    |                        |        |                   |
| • Writing sub-skill       | 8,250                  | 8,179  | 99.1              |
| • Listening sub-skill     | 8,250                  | 8,179  | 99.1              |
| • Speaking sub-skill      | 2,750                  | 2,704  | 98.3              |

The same number of learners were expected to sit for the Mathematics, Biology, and English Language tests. However, twenty six (26) learners did not turn up for the Biology test in the afternoon, and fifty five (55) learners were absent from the English Language test the following day.

## 2.2.6 SAMPLING WEIGHTS

Sampling weights were computed to adjust for selection probability and non-response, ensuring unbiased estimates of the percentage of learners rated proficient.

## 2.3 THE SCORING AND CODING OF SCRIPTS

This section describes the activities of scoring and coding of scripts.

### 2.3.1 THE SCORING EXERCISE

Scoring of learners' scripts was conducted at a central venue in Kampala by qualified practising secondary school teachers, using the Conveyor Belt System (CBS). Before the commencement of the scoring exercise, the scorers underwent rigorous training; marking guides were exhaustively discussed, and dummy scripts were scored to ensure inter-rater reliability and uniform application of the scoring criteria.

Team Leaders re-scored 10% of the scored scripts to monitor consistency and adherence to the score guides. Furthermore, a comprehensive checking process was undertaken to verify whether all items in each script had been scored, scores accurately awarded and recorded.

### 2.3.2 CODING OF CONTEXTUAL INSTRUMENTS

The coding of contextual instruments was conducted to ensure thematic analysis and interpretation of the qualitative data collected.

The process involved a careful review of each instrument, where themes were generated to capture the underlying patterns and meanings within the responses. The scripts were coded by applying consistent codes to each response in the script. This approach allowed for the organisation of qualitative data into thematic categories, thereby facilitating deeper insights into the perspectives of S 2 learners, headteachers, teachers and parents.

## 2.4 DATA CAPTURE, VALIDATION AND ANALYSIS

### 2.4.1 QUANTITATIVE DATA

Test scores were captured using EpiData (Version 3.1), while data validation and analysis were conducted using STATA (Version 16) and R (Version 4.5.1) statistical packages. Validation checks were embedded within the data entry screens to minimize input errors. Data validation involved checking for duplicates and observations with missing or wrong information.

An Item Response Theory (IRT) analysis was conducted to determine item quality and learners' ability using the Generalized Partial Credit Model (GPCM). This model was selected because of its flexibility in accounting for item discrimination and its capability to handle polytomous responses compared to the Partial Credit Model (PCM).

The achievement of both ordinary and SEN learners was categorised into four proficiency levels based on the Bookmark method of standard setting of cut-scores which combines item response analysis outputs and the expert panel judgment. The four proficiency levels are shown in Table 2.3.

**Table 2.3** Description of Levels of Knowledge and Skills Demonstrated by Proficiency Levels (Bands)

| Band   | Proficiency Level     | Levels of knowledge and skills                                                      |
|--------|-----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Band 1 | Lowly proficient      | Limited understanding of concepts and use of relevant skills                        |
| Band 2 | Moderately proficient | Basic understanding of concepts and use of relevant skills                          |
| Band 3 | Proficient            | High level of understanding of concepts and use of relevant skills                  |
| Band 4 | Highly Proficient     | An exceptionally high level of understanding of concepts and use of relevant skills |

**Note:** A learner is considered proficient if he/she is in band 3 or 4. Band 3 is the desired minimum level of proficiency.

Sampling weights were embedded in the computation so as to get unbiased estimates of the percentages of learners rated proficient. Data analysis was conducted at two levels. First, the estimation of the overall percentage of learners rated proficient by; gender, age, school location, school ownership, schooling status and USE status. Secondly, a binary logistic regression model was used to establish the determinants of learners' achievement levels.

Binary logistic regression was preferred for this study since the dependent variable (learners' achievement level) is dichotomous, coded as 0 (not proficient) and 1 (proficient).

The logistic regression model is specified as;

$$\text{logit}(p_i) = \ln\left(\frac{p_i}{1-p_i}\right) = \beta_0 + \beta_i X_i$$

Where;

$p_i$  = the probability of success (learner is rated proficient)

$X_i$  = the contextual factor (predictor)

$\beta_0$  = the intercept (the log-odds when all predictors are zero)

$\beta_i$  = the coefficient of the contextual factor

Model diagnostics were carried out to test for multicollinearity and model specification errors. The results from the logistic regression analysis were presented in terms of odds ratios (OR), p-values and 95% confidence intervals.

Comparison of the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in Mathematics, Biology and the Writing sub-skill in 2014 and 2025 was done based on selected contextual factors that were considered in both years.

#### 2.4.2 QUALITATIVE DATA

Data were captured using EpiData (Version 3.1), while data validation and analysis were conducted using STATA (Version 16). Frequency tables were generated based on the developed themes. Percentages of occurrences of some events, narratives and voices of respondents were also reported in support of the findings.

### 2.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- 1) The regional or district level analysis was not possible due to inadequate sample size of schools and learners at those levels. This is attributed to the financial constraints.
- 2) The 2014 and 2025 assessment data have less comparability because;
  - (a) Syllabus of 2014 was content based while that of 2025 is competency based.
  - (b) Teaching methods in 2014 were predominantly teacher centered while in 2025 learner centered approaches are emphasised.
  - (c) Standard setting method for determining cut-scores (proficiency levels) in 2014 was based on classical analysis and expert judgement while in 2025, it was based on IRT analysis and expert judgement using the Bookmark method.
  - (d) Schooling status was one of the contextual factors considered in 2025 while in 2014 it was not considered.

## CHAPTER 3

### 3.0 DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLS AND LEARNERS

This section presents the distribution of schools and learners. Of the 275 schools sampled, 191 were government-aided and 84 were private. Additionally, 102 schools were situated in urban areas, while 173 were located in rural areas.

The distribution of S 2 learners who participated in the survey is presented by gender, age, subject, school location, ownership, schooling status and USE status.

#### 3.1 DISTRIBUTION OF LEARNERS BY GENDER AND SUBJECT

Table 3.1 presents the number of S 2 learners that participated in the survey by gender and subject.

**Table 3.1** Distribution of Learners, by Gender and Subject

| Gender       | Mathematics  |            | Biology      |            | English Language                 |            |                    |            |
|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|----------------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------|
|              |              |            |              |            | Writing and Listening sub-skills |            | Speaking sub-skill |            |
|              | n            | %          | n            | %          | n                                | %          | n                  | %          |
| Boy          | 3,962        | 48.1       | 3,951        | 48.1       | 3,931                            | 48.1       | 1,234              | 45.6       |
| Girl         | 4,272        | 51.9       | 4,257        | 51.9       | 4,248                            | 51.9       | 1,470              | 54.4       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>8,234</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>8,208</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>8,179</b>                     | <b>100</b> | <b>2,704</b>       | <b>100</b> |

**Note.** n=sample size, %=percentage

A total of 8,234 learners (3,962 boys and 4,272 girls) sat for the Mathematics test; 8,208 learners (3,951 boys and 4,257 girls) sat for the Biology test; and 8,179 learners (3,931 boys and 4,248 girls) sat for the Writing and Listening sub-skills. In addition, 2,704 learners (1,234 boys and 1,470 girls) sat for the Speaking test, against a target of 2,750.

#### 3.2 DISTRIBUTION OF S 2 LEARNERS BY SCHOOL LOCATION, SCHOOL OWNERSHIP AND SCHOOLING STATUS

The distribution of the S 2 learners that participated in the survey by school location, school ownership and schooling status is shown in Table 3.2.

**Table 3.2** Distribution of S 2 Learners Categorised by School location, Ownership and Schooling status

| School location |      |       |      | School ownership |      |         |      | Schooling status |      |         |      |
|-----------------|------|-------|------|------------------|------|---------|------|------------------|------|---------|------|
| Urban           |      | Rural |      | Government       |      | Private |      | Day scholar      |      | Boarder |      |
| n               | %    | n     | %    | n                | %    | n       | %    | n                | %    | n       | %    |
| 3,094           | 37.6 | 5,140 | 62.4 | 5,842            | 70.9 | 2,392   | 29.1 | 4,033            | 49.0 | 4,201   | 51.0 |

**Note.** n=sample size, %=percentage

Of the S 2 learners that participated in the survey, 38% were from schools located in urban areas, while 62% were from schools in rural areas. Similarly, 71% of the learners were from government schools, with 29% of them from private schools. Furthermore, 49% of the learners were day scholars, while 51% were learners who are boarders.

### 3.3 DISTRIBUTION OF S 2 LEARNERS BY GENDER AND AGE

Table 3.3 presents the number of S 2 learners who participated in the survey by gender and age.

**Table 3.3** Distribution of S 2 Learners, by Gender and Age

| Age (Years)  | Boy          |            | Girl         |            | Total        |            |
|--------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
|              | n            | %          | n            | %          | n            | %          |
| 13           | 6            | 0.2        | 22           | 0.5        | 28           | 0.3        |
| 14           | 107          | 2.7        | 184          | 4.3        | 291          | 3.5        |
| 15           | 488          | 12.3       | 788          | 18.4       | 1,276        | 15.5       |
| 16           | 836          | 21.1       | 1,339        | 31.3       | 2,175        | 26.4       |
| 17           | 1,064        | 26.9       | 1,093        | 25.6       | 2,157        | 26.2       |
| 18           | 787          | 19.9       | 569          | 13.3       | 1,356        | 16.5       |
| 19+          | 674          | 17.0       | 277          | 6.5        | 951          | 11.5       |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>3,962</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>4,272</b> | <b>100</b> | <b>8,234</b> | <b>100</b> |

**Note.** n = sample size, % = percentage

Only 4 % of the S 2 learners were of the appropriate age of 14 years while 12% of the learners were aged 19 years and above.

### 3.4 DISTRIBUTION OF LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

Table 3.4 presents the number of S 2 learners who are deaf and those who are blind that participated in the survey by gender and age.

**Table 3.4** Distribution of S 2 Learners with Special Education Needs in the Sample, by gender and age

| Variable      | Category | Learners who are Deaf |      | Learners who are Blind |      |
|---------------|----------|-----------------------|------|------------------------|------|
|               |          | n                     | %    | n                      | %    |
| <b>Gender</b> | Boy      | 25                    | 41.7 | 15                     | 48.4 |
|               | Girl     | 35                    | 58.3 | 16                     | 51.6 |
| Total         |          | 60                    | 100  | 31                     | 100  |
| <b>Age</b>    | 15       | 3                     | 5.0  | 2                      | 6.5  |
|               | 16       | 8                     | 13.3 | 6                      | 19.4 |
|               | 17       | 21                    | 35.0 | 9                      | 29.0 |
|               | 18       | 6                     | 10.0 | 2                      | 6.5  |
|               | 19       | 9                     | 15.0 | 4                      | 12.9 |
|               | 20       | 6                     | 10.0 | 5                      | 16.1 |
|               | 21       | 3                     | 5.0  | 1                      | 3.2  |
|               | 22       | 1                     | 1.7  | 2                      | 6.5  |
|               | 23       | 3                     | 5.0  | 0                      | 0.0  |
| Total         |          | 60                    | 100  | 31                     | 100  |

**Note.** n=sample size, %=percentage

A total of 60 learners who are deaf (25 boys and 35 girls) and 31 learners who are blind (15 boys and 16 girls) were assessed. The majority of the learners who are deaf (35.0%) and those who are blind (29.0%) were aged 17 years. The mean age of learners with SEN was 18 years which is higher than the national average of 16 years.

## CHAPTER 4

# ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN MATHEMATICS



### KEY FINDINGS

- 61.6% of S 2 learners were rated proficient in Mathematics.
- Proportion of boys rated proficient (72.0%) was significantly higher than that of girls (51.6%) ( $p = 0.000$ ).
- 16.7% of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in Mathematics.
- 48.4% of S 2 learners who are blind were rated proficient in Mathematics
- Gender, age, schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in Mathematics.
- Even the highly proficient learners experienced difficulties in; reflection/translation of an object (including identification of lines of reflection e.g., the axes y-axis ( $x=0$ ), x-axis ( $y=0$ ) and line  $y=x$ ) and drawing bars/representing data in form of a line graph.

This chapter presents the achievement of S 2 learners in Mathematics in detail. The achievements are categorised into four proficiency levels; lowly proficient, moderately proficient, proficient and highly proficient. The competences for S 2 learners in a given proficiency level are shown in Table 4.1.

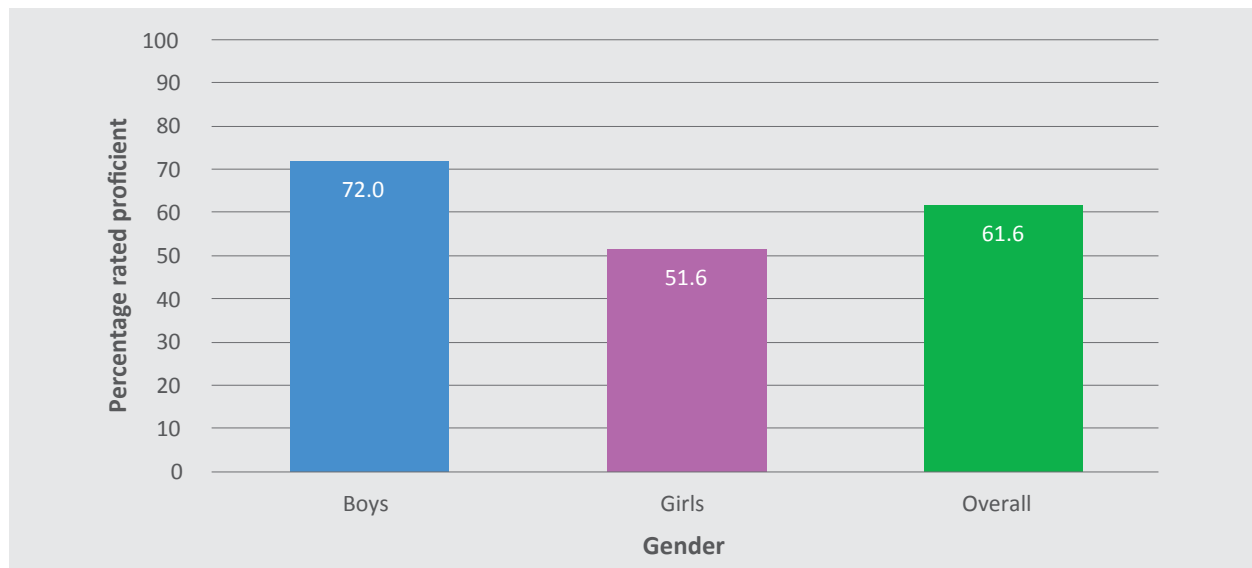
**Table 4.1** Description of Competences Assessed in Mathematics at S 2, by Proficiency Levels

| Proficiency level            | Competences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lowly proficient</b>      | The learners in this category can: use appropriate symbols for currency; label axes of the graph/chart.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Moderately proficient</b> | In addition to having the skills in the above proficiency level, learners in this category can: apply an appropriate scale correctly to represent data on graphs/charts; work out real life problems involving percentages/fractions/decimals; use arithmetic operations to solve real life problems.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Proficient</b>            | In addition to exhibiting the above skills, typical learners in this category can: identify the shortest distance in bearings; measure correctly distances from drawn bearing illustrations made and indicate units; measure correctly any one angle; draw a sketch indicating some relevant details, i.e., any one angle/distance; extract required information from the graph/chart; use scale to obtain a correct distance (scale drawing) in bearing; manipulate ratios; understand number patterns; make correct conclusions based on calculations. |
| <b>Highly proficient</b>     | In addition to demonstrating the above skills, typical learners in this category can: reflect/translate an object; identify lines of reflection, e.g the axes y-axis ( $x = 0$ ), x-axis ( $y = 0$ ) and line $y = x$ ; organise raw data in ascending or descending order; write the correct title of the graph/chart; represent data in form of tallies/frequencies; manipulate variations, ratios and proportions; formulate algebraic expressions/equations; draw a correct sketch with all details indicated.                                       |

#### 4.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN MATHEMATICS, BY GENDER

This section describes the national level achievement of S 2 learners in Mathematics. The percentages of learners rated proficient in Mathematics are shown in Figure 4.1.

**Figure 4.1** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Mathematics, by Gender

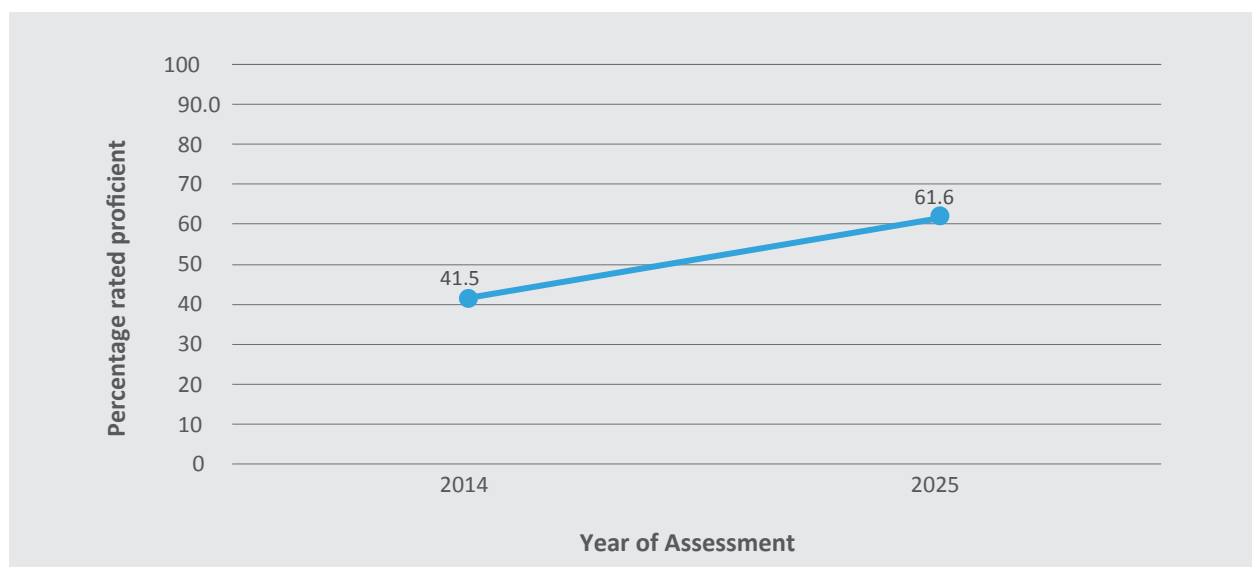


Slightly more than 3 in 5 (61.6%) of S 2 learners were rated proficient in Mathematics. The proportion of boys rated proficient (72.0%) was significantly higher than that of girls (51.6%) ( $p = 0.000$ ).

#### 4.2 COMPARISON OF S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS, BY YEAR OF ASSESSMENT (2014 AND 2025)

This section presents the comparison of S 2 learners' achievement in Mathematics, by year of assessment (2014 and 2025). In 2014, the assessment was based on the old lower secondary curriculum while in 2025, the assessment was based on the new lower secondary curriculum which is competency based. The percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient by year of assessment is shown in Figure 4.2.

**Figure 4.2** Percentages of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Mathematics, by year of Assessment (2014 and 2025)

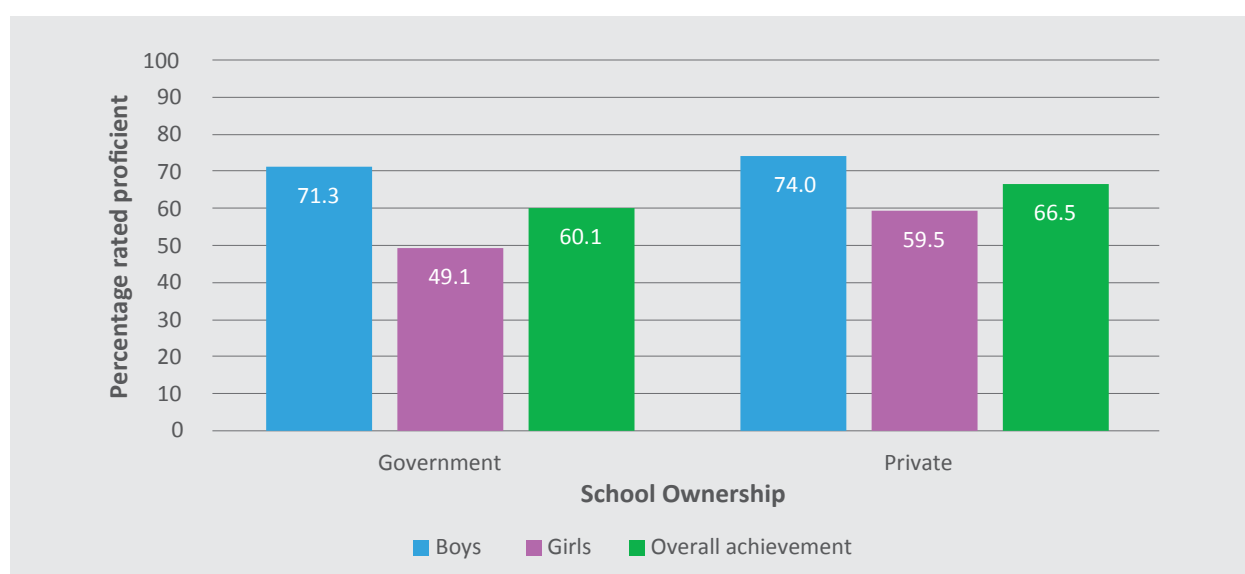


Results show that the percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient in Mathematics in the Competency Based Curriculum (61.6%) is higher than that of the old curriculum (41.5%). This finding suggests that the recent government interventions such as deployment of more teachers, expansion of school infrastructure and educational reforms like the rollout of the CBC seem to have contributed to improved learners' achievement.

### 4.3 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN MATHEMATICS, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL OWNERSHIP

The achievement of S 2 learners in Mathematics, by gender and school ownership is presented in Figure 4.3.

**Figure 4.3** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Mathematics, by Gender and School Ownership



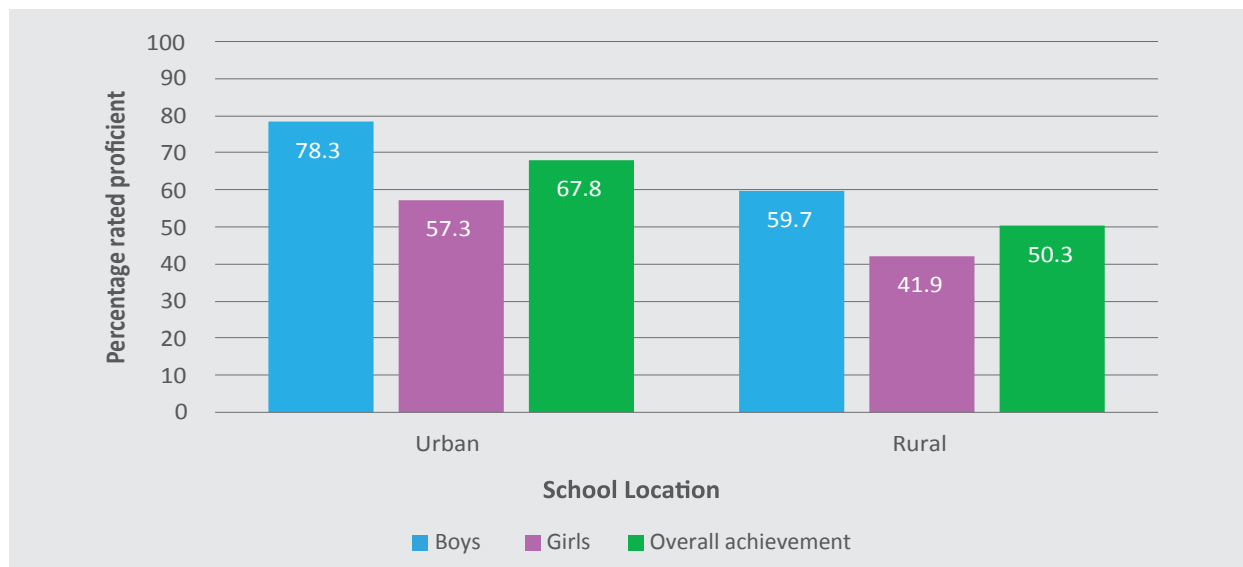
There was no significant difference in the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in Mathematics between private schools (66.5%) and government schools (60.1%) ( $p = 0.360$ ). The proportion of boys rated proficient in Mathematics was significantly higher than that of girls in both government and private schools ( $p = 0.000$ ;  $p = 0.005$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in government schools rated proficient in Mathematics (60.1%) was slightly below the national level achievement in Mathematics (61.6%) (Ref. Figure 4.1).

### 4.4 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN MATHEMATICS, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL LOCATION

This section shows the percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient in Mathematics by gender and school location. The percentages are presented in Figure 4.4.

**Figure 4. 4 Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Mathematics, by Gender and School Location**



The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in Mathematics in urban schools (67.8%) was significantly higher than that of learners in rural schools (50.3%) ( $p = 0.000$ ). The proportion of boys rated proficient in Mathematics was also significantly higher than that of girls in both urban and rural schools ( $p = 0.000$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in rural schools rated proficient in Mathematics (50.3%) was below the national level achievement in Mathematics (61.6%) (Ref. Figure 4.1).

#### 4.5 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN MATHEMATICS, BY AGE AND YEARS OF ASSESSMENT

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners' Mathematics, by age and years of assessment. The percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient is shown in Figure 4.5.

**Figure 4.5 Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Mathematics, by Age and Years of Assessment**

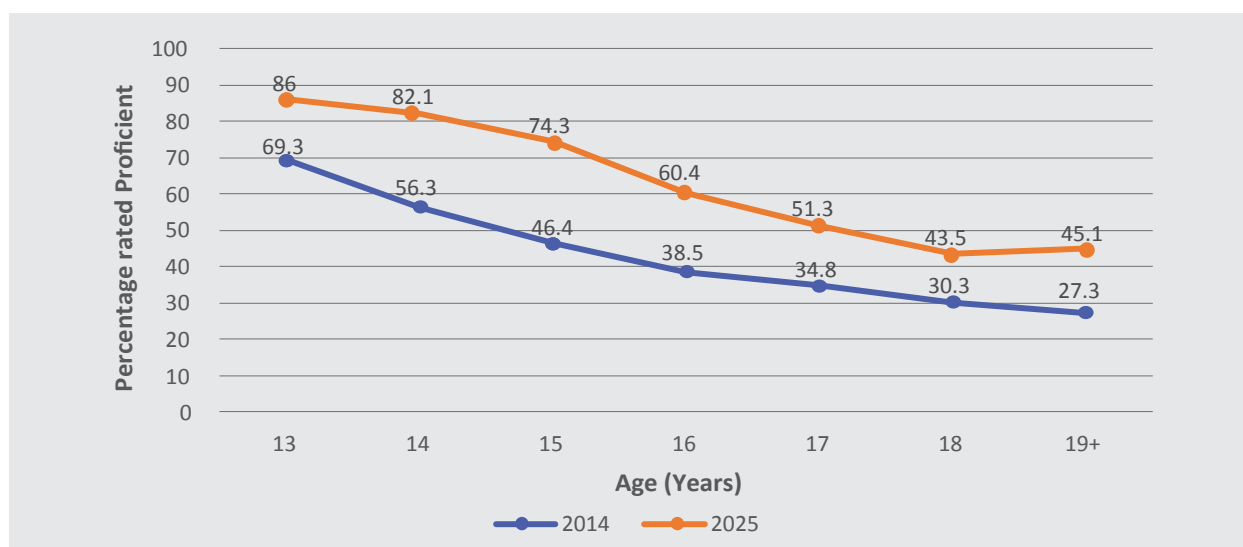
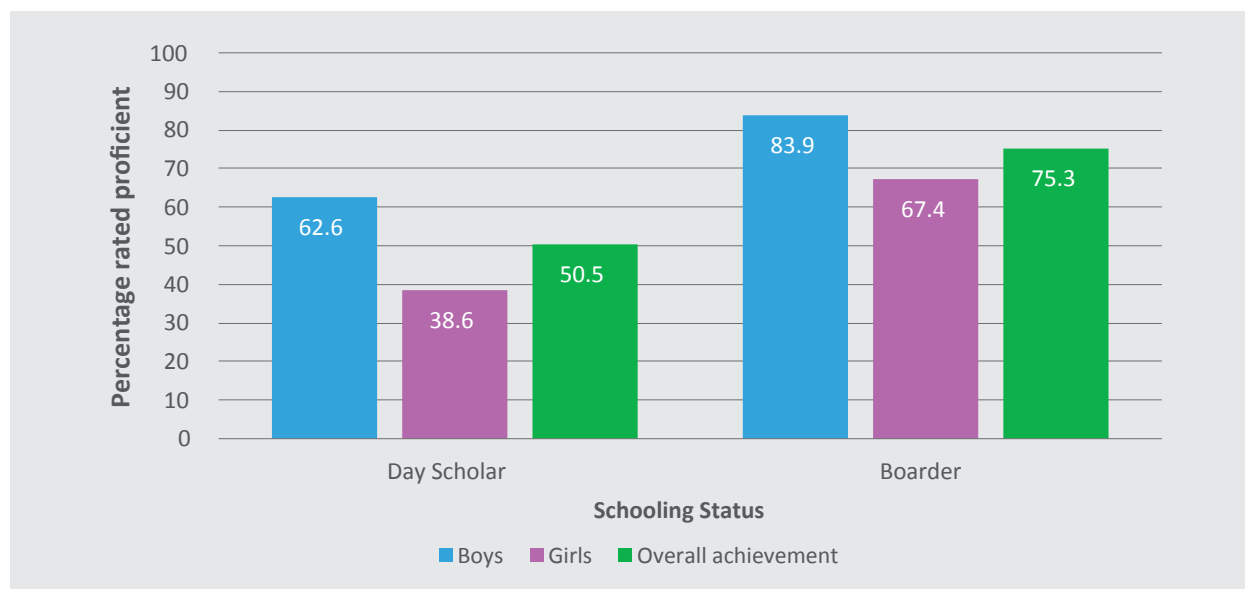


Figure 4.5 shows that the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in Mathematics declined with increasing age in 2014 and 2025 in a consistent pattern. In the 2025 assessment year, the lowest proportion of learners rated proficient was observed among those aged 18 years or more.

## 4.6 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN MATHEMATICS, BY GENDER AND SCHOOLING STATUS

The achievement of S 2 learners in Mathematics, by gender and schooling status is shown in Figure 4.6.

**Figure 4.6** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Mathematics, by Gender and Schooling Status



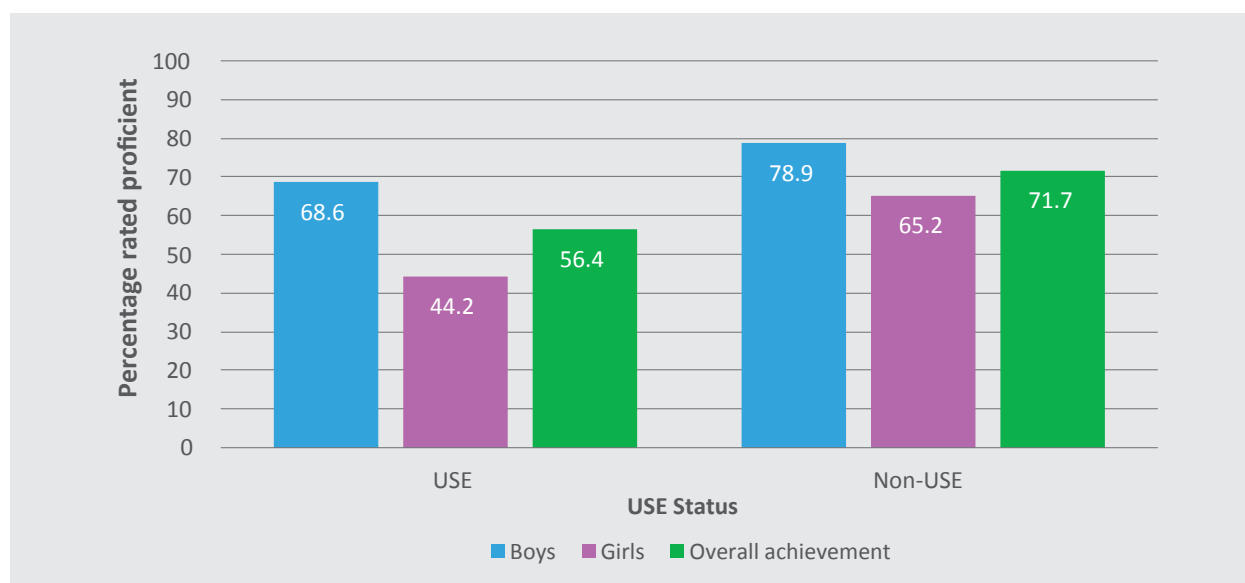
The proportion of S 2 learners who are boarders and rated proficient in Mathematics (75.3%) was significantly higher than that of day scholars (50.5%) ( $p = 0.000$ ). The proportion of boys rated proficient in Mathematics was significantly higher than that of girls in both categories ( $p = 0.000$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 day scholars rated proficient in Mathematics (50.5%) was much lower than the national level achievement in Mathematics (61.6%) (Ref. Figure 4.1).

## 4.7 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN MATHEMATICS, BY GENDER AND USE STATUS

The achievement of S 2 learners in Mathematics, by gender and USE status is shown in Figure 4.7.

**Figure 4.7** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Mathematics, by Gender and USE Status



The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in Mathematics in non-USE schools (71.7%) was significantly higher than that of learners in USE schools (56.4%) ( $p = 0.005$ ). The proportion of boys rated proficient in Mathematics was significantly higher than that of girls in both USE and non-USE schools ( $p = 0.000$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in USE schools rated proficient in Mathematics (56.4%) was much lower than the national level achievement in Mathematics (61.6%) (Ref. Figure 4.1).

#### 4.8 GAP IN S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS IN 2014 AND 2025, BY SELECTED CONTEXTUAL FACTORS

This section presents the gap in S 2 learners' achievement in Mathematics in 2014 and 2025, by gender, school ownership, location and USE status. The gaps in learners' achievement are shown in Table 4.2.

**Table 4.2** The gap in S 2 Learners' Achievement in Mathematics in 2014 and 2025, by Gender, School Ownership, Location and USE status

|                         | Gap in 2014 (%) | Gap in 2025 (%) | Gap widening or narrowing |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>           |                 |                 |                           |
| Boys vs Girls           | 15.0            | 20.4            | ↑                         |
| <b>School Ownership</b> |                 |                 |                           |
| Government vs Private   | 3.2             | - 6.4           | ↑                         |
| <b>School location</b>  |                 |                 |                           |
| Urban vs Rural          | 11.1            | 17.5            | ↑                         |
| <b>USE status</b>       |                 |                 |                           |
| Non-USE vs USE          | 27.7            | 15.3            | ↓                         |

Table 4.2 shows that the achievement gap in Mathematics among S 2 learners between boys and girls, government and private schools, and urban and rural schools widened between 2014 and 2025. In contrast, the achievement gap between Non-USE and USE schools narrowed over the same period.

The gap between the proportion of boys and girls in 2014 and 2025 widened with more boys rated proficient than girls. In 2014 the proportion of learners rated proficient was higher in government schools than that of private schools. Conversely, in 2025 the proportion of learners in private schools rated proficient exceeded that of government schools and the gap widened.

The gap in achievement between the learners in urban and rural schools widened between 2014 and 2025, with a higher proportion of learners in urban schools rated proficient. The gap in achievement between the learners in non-USE and USE schools narrowed between 2014 and 2025, much as more learners in Non-USE schools were still rated proficient.

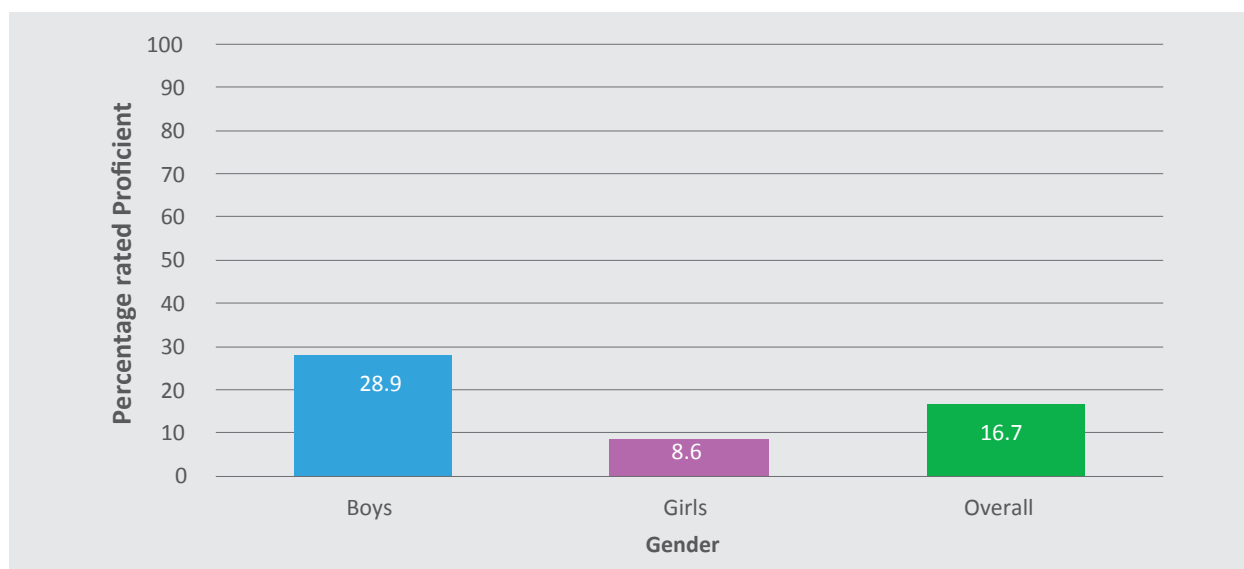
#### 4.9 ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners who are deaf and those who are blind. The results for achievement of learners with SEN were disaggregated by gender only, because of the small numbers.

#### 4.9.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS FOR S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE DEAF, BY GENDER

This sub-section describes the achievement in Mathematics for S 2 learners who are deaf. The percentage of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient is shown in Figure 4.8.

**Figure 4.8** Percentage of S 2 Learners who are Deaf that are Rated Proficient in Mathematics, by Gender



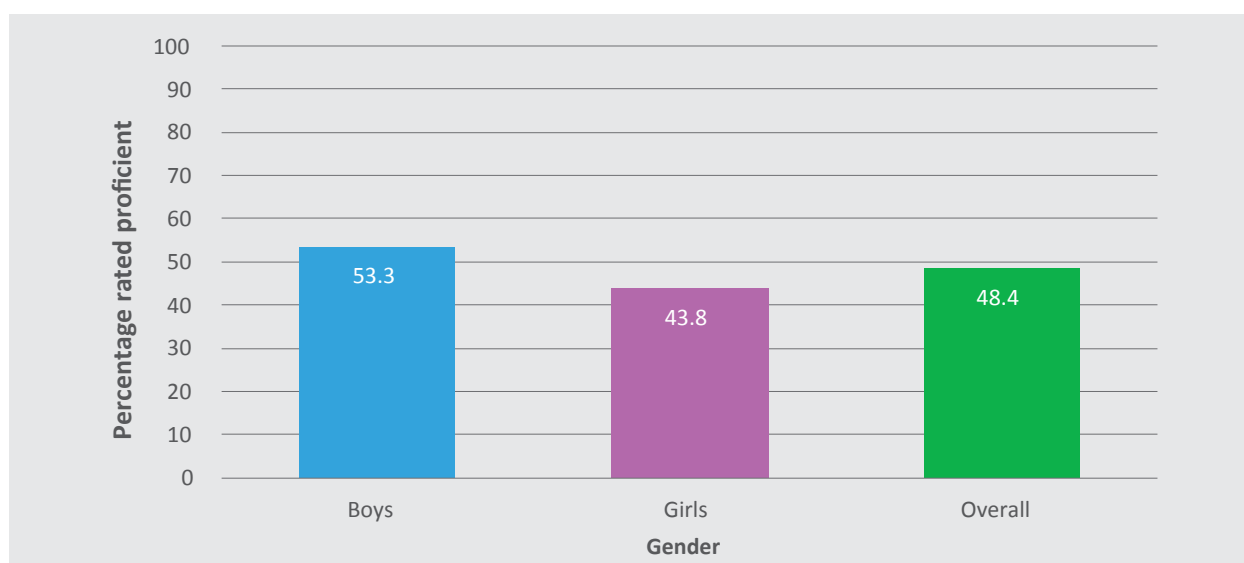
Overall, 16.7% of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in Mathematics. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient ( $p = 0.061$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient in Mathematics (16.7%) was far below the national level achievement in Mathematics (61.6%) (Ref. Figure 4.1).

#### 4.9.2 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE BLIND, BY GENDER

This sub-section describes the achievement in Mathematics for S 2 learners who are blind. The percentage of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient are shown in Figure 4.9.

**Figure 4.9** Percentage of S 2 Learners who are Blind that are Rated Proficient in Mathematics, by Gender



Results of the analysis indicated that the proportion of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient in Mathematics was almost half (48.4%). There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient ( $p = 0.596$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are blind that were rated proficient in Mathematics (48.4%) was lower than the national level achievement in Mathematics (61.6%) (Ref. Figure 4.1).

#### 4.10 DETERMINANTS OF S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN MATHEMATICS

This section presents the findings of the binary logistic regression analysis on the determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in Mathematics. The determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in Mathematics are presented in Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3** Determinants of S 2 Learners' Achievement in Mathematics

| Variable                 | Category      | OR   | p            | [95% Conf. Interval] |
|--------------------------|---------------|------|--------------|----------------------|
| <b>Gender*</b>           | Boy           | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Girl          | 0.31 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.250 - 0.374        |
| <b>Age*</b>              | 13            | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | 14            | 0.60 | 0.488        | 0.142 - 2.552        |
|                          | 15            | 0.40 | 0.174        | 0.103 - 1.514        |
|                          | 16            | 0.22 | <b>0.024</b> | 0.057 - 0.814        |
|                          | 17            | 0.15 | <b>0.004</b> | 0.042 - 0.545        |
|                          | 18            | 0.10 | <b>0.002</b> | 0.025 - 0.411        |
|                          | 19+           | 0.11 | <b>0.001</b> | 0.029 - 0.410        |
| <b>Schooling Status*</b> | Day scholar   | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Boarder       | 3.02 | <b>0.000</b> | 2.340 - 3.892        |
| <b>School Location*</b>  | Urban         | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Rural         | 0.51 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.392 - 0.673        |
| <b>School Ownership</b>  | Government    | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Aided Private | 0.99 | 0.976        | 0.684 - 1.445        |

**Note.** OR-Odds Ratio,  $p$ =p-value, \* Significant at  $p < 0.05$ , – Reference Category

Results in Table 4.3 indicate that gender, age, schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in Mathematics.

##### Findings showed that:

**Gender:** Girls had a significantly lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in Mathematics than boys (OR = 0.31, 95% CI [0.250, 0.374]).

**Age:** Learners aged 16 years and above had lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in Mathematics than those aged 13-15 years (OR = 0.22, 95% CI [0.057, 0.814]).

**Schooling Status:** Learners who are boarders had a significantly higher chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in Mathematics than day scholars (OR = 3.02, 95% CI [2.340, 3.892]).

**School Location:** Learners in schools in rural areas had a significantly lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in Mathematics than those in schools in urban areas (OR = 0.51, 95% CI [0.392, 0.673]).

**School Ownership:** Learners in both private and government schools had equal chances of achieving the

required minimum proficiency level in Mathematics (OR = 0.99, 95% CI [0.684, 1.445]).

#### 4.11 AREAS OF DIFFICULTY FOR LEARNERS

In Mathematics, even the highly proficient learners exhibited difficulties in the learning areas shown in Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4** Areas of Difficulty for Learners

| S/N | AREAS OF DIFFICULTY                                                                                                                                      |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Reflection/translation of an object (including identification of lines of reflection e.g., the axes y-axis ( $x=0$ ), x-axis ( $y=0$ ) and line $y=x$ ). |
| 2.  | Drawing bars/representing data in form of a line graph.                                                                                                  |

## CHAPTER 5

# ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN BIOLOGY



### KEY FINDINGS

- 45.6% of S 2 learners were rated proficient in Biology.
- The proportion of boys rated proficient (53.3%) was significantly higher than that of girls (38.1%) ( $p = 0.000$ ).
- Only 16.7% of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in General Science.
- 48.4% of the S 2 learners who are blind were rated proficient in General Science.
- Gender, schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in Biology.
- Even the highly proficient learners experienced difficulties in; application of scientific process skills in conducting experiments on soil, using structural differences to classify organisms, and explaining functional differences using structures of organisms.

This chapter presents the achievement of S 2 learners in Biology in detail. Learners' achievement was categorised into four proficiency levels: lowly proficient, moderately proficient, proficient and highly proficient. The competences for S 2 learners in each proficiency level are shown in Table 5.1.

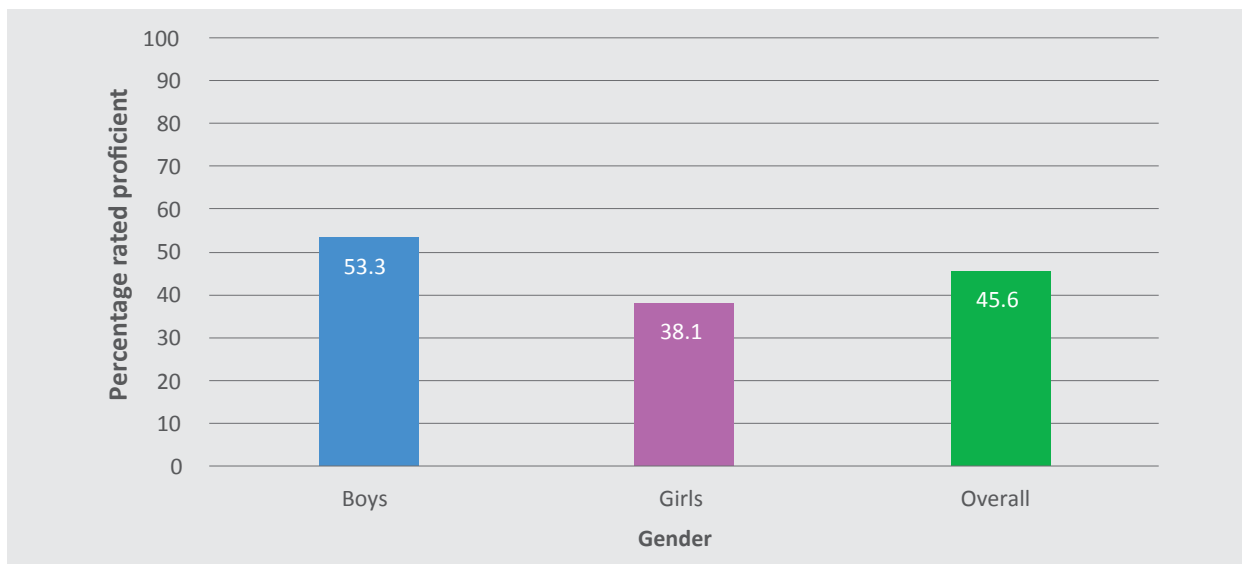
**Table 5.1** Description of Competences Assessed in Biology at S 2, by Proficiency Levels

| Proficiency level            | Competences                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lowly proficient</b>      | Learners in this category can: suggest at most, one approach/method of controlling different harmful organisms in the environment; identify life processes; suggest at most, one appropriate method of improving soil properties.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Moderately proficient</b> | The learners in this proficiency level can: in addition to the above, identify at most, one structure used for classifying organisms; describe a few ways by which organisms affect the environment; describe how some life processes manifest in organisms; identify at most, one organism that affects the environment.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Proficient</b>            | In addition to the above, learners in this category can: describe various ways by which organisms affect the environment; describe how the life processes manifest in organisms; relate some structures of plants and animals to their functions; partially apply science process skills to investigate properties of soil; use adequate external features to classify organisms; suggest a few appropriate methods of improving soil properties; suggest a few approaches/methods of controlling different organisms in the environment; explain how a few control methods affect harmful organisms.                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Highly proficient</b>     | In addition to the competences listed above, learners in this category can: suggest a variety of appropriate methods of improving soil properties; apply science process skills to investigate properties of soil; use a wide range of external features to classify organisms; suggest a variety of approaches/methods of controlling different harmful organisms in the environment; relate a wide range of structures of plants and animals to their functions; identify a variety of organisms, that affect the environment; explain how various control methods affect harmful organisms; demonstrate understanding of the concept of classification of living things; identify a wide range of structures used for classifying organisms. |

## 5.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN BIOLOGY, BY GENDER

This section describes the national level achievement of S 2 learners in Biology. The percentages of learners rated proficient in Biology are shown in Figure 5.1.

**Figure 5.1** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Biology, by Gender

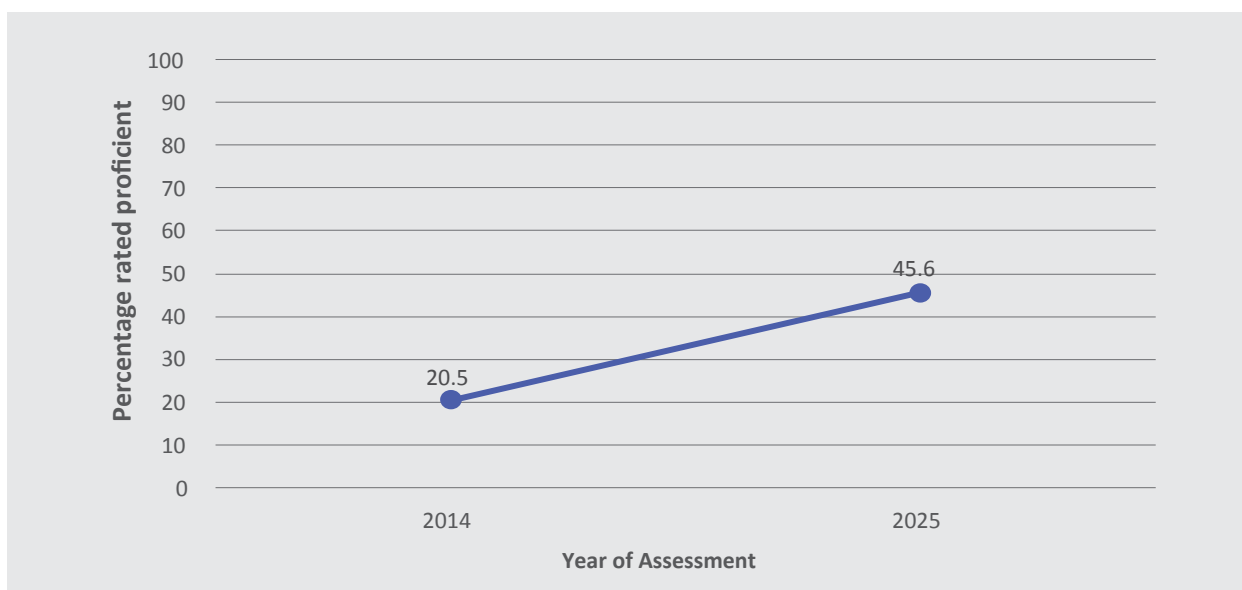


Less than half of the S 2 learners (45.6%) were rated proficient in Biology. The proportion of boys rated proficient (53.3%) was significantly higher than that of girls (38.1%) ( $p = 0.000$ ).

## 5.2 COMPARISON OF S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN BIOLOGY, BY YEAR OF ASSESSMENT (2014 AND 2025)

This section presents the comparison of S 2 learners' achievement in Biology, by year of assessment (2014 and 2025). In 2014, the assessment was based on the old lower secondary curriculum while in 2025, the assessment was based on the new lower secondary curriculum which is competency based. The percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient by year of assessment is shown in Figure 5.2.

**Figure 5.2** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Biology, by year of Assessment (2014 and 2025)

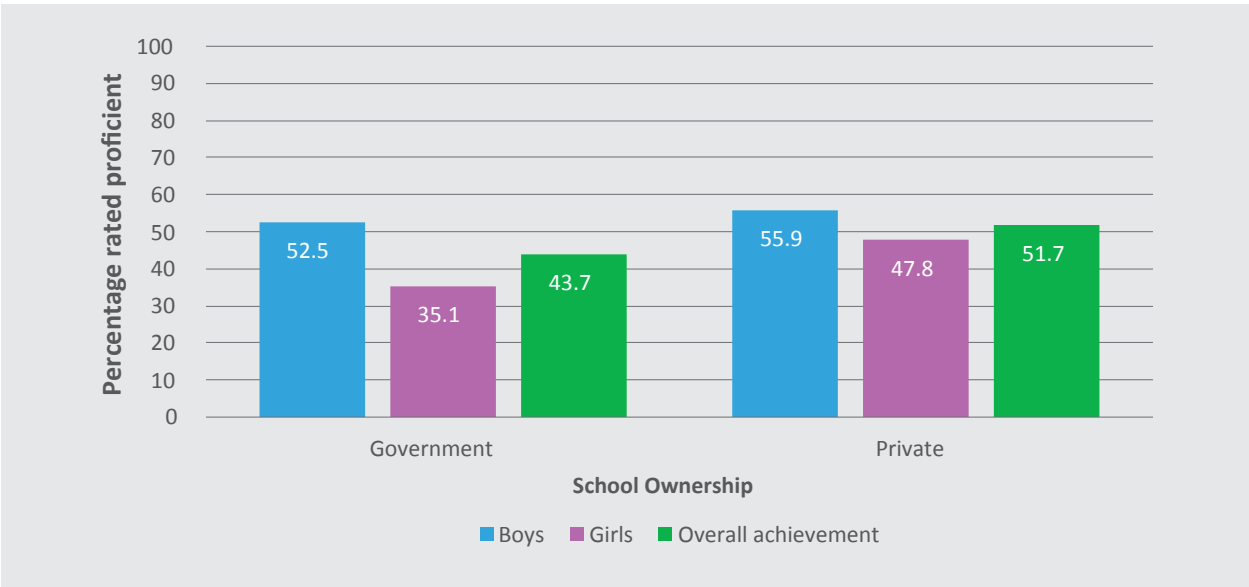


Results show that the percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient in Biology more than doubled, rising from (20.5%) in 2014 under the old curriculum to (45.6%) in 2025, under the Competency based curriculum. This finding suggests that the recent government interventions such as deployment of more teachers, expansion of school infrastructure and educational reforms like the rollout of the CBC seem to have contributed to improved learners' understanding and application of biological concepts.

### 5.3 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN BIOLOGY, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL OWNERSHIP

This section shows the percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient in Biology by gender and school ownership. The percentages are presented in Figure 5.3.

**Figure 5.3** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Biology, by Gender and School Ownership



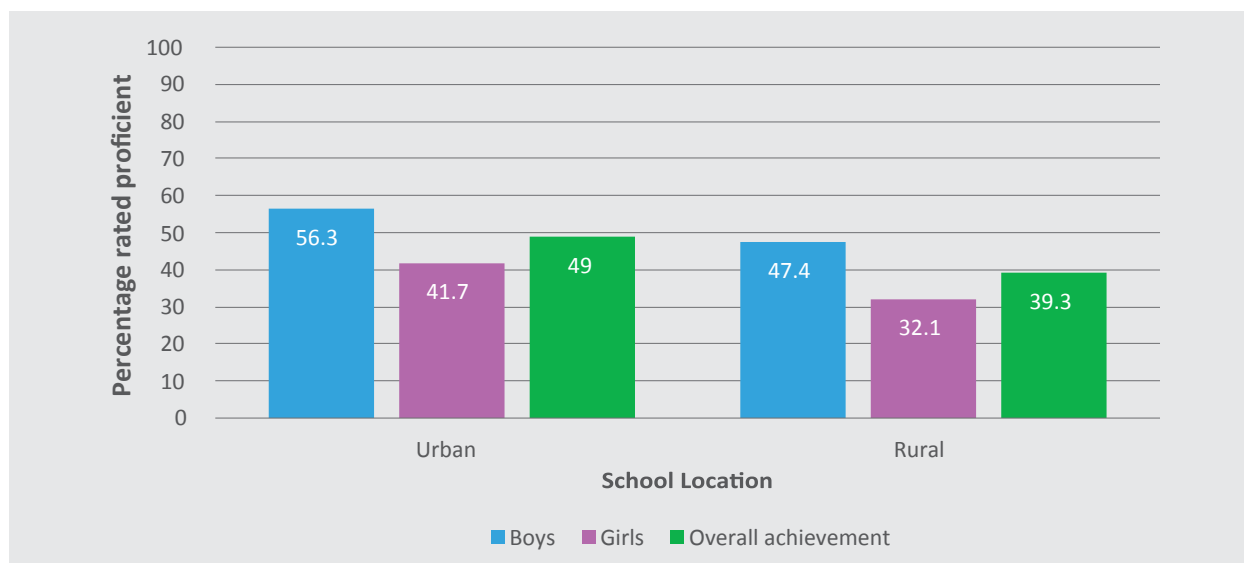
There was no significant difference in the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in Biology between private schools (51.7%) and government schools (43.7%) ( $p = 0.264$ ). The proportion of boys rated proficient in Biology was significantly higher than that of girls in both government and private schools ( $p = 0.000$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in government schools rated proficient in Biology (43.7%) was lower than the national level achievement in Biology (45.6%) (Ref. Figure 5.1).

### 5.4 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN BIOLOGY, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL LOCATION

This section shows the percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient in Biology by gender and school location. The percentages are presented in Figure 5.4.

**Figure 5.4** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Biology, by Gender and School Location



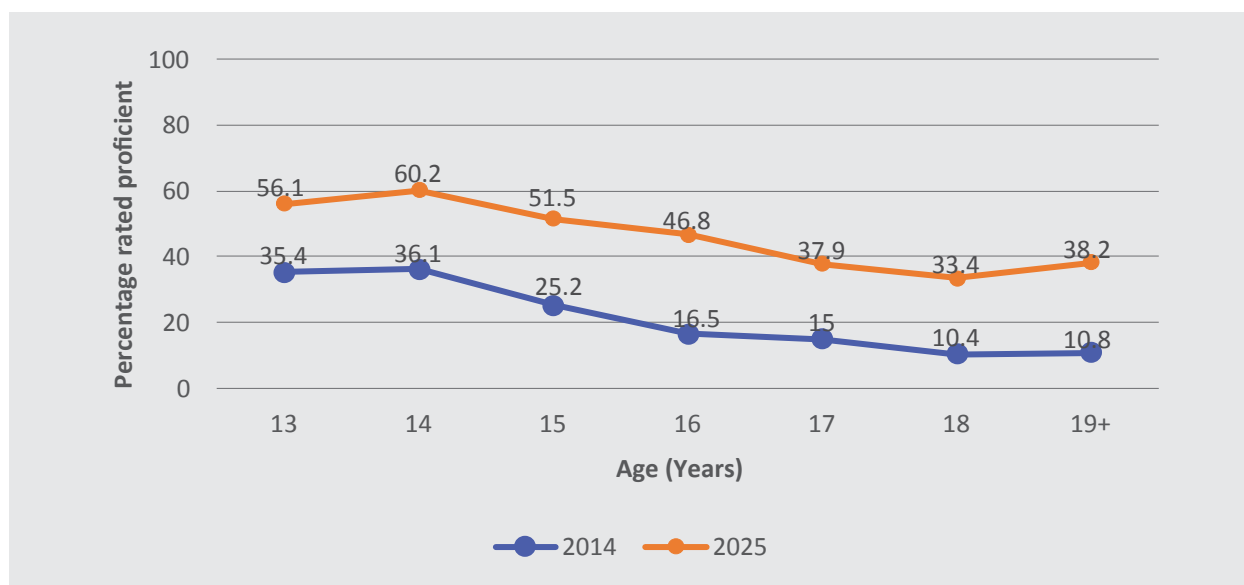
The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in Biology in urban schools (49.0%) was significantly higher than that of learners in rural schools (39.3%) ( $p = 0.000$ ). The proportion of boys rated proficient in Biology was significantly higher than that of girls in both urban and rural schools ( $p = 0.000$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in rural schools rated proficient in Biology (39.3%) was lower than the national level achievement in Biology (45.6%) (Ref. Figure 5.1).

## 5.5 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN BIOLOGY, BY AGE AND YEARS OF ASSESSMENT

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners' Biology, by age and years of assessment. The percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient is shown in Figure 5.5.

**Figure 5.5** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Biology, by Age and Years of Assessments



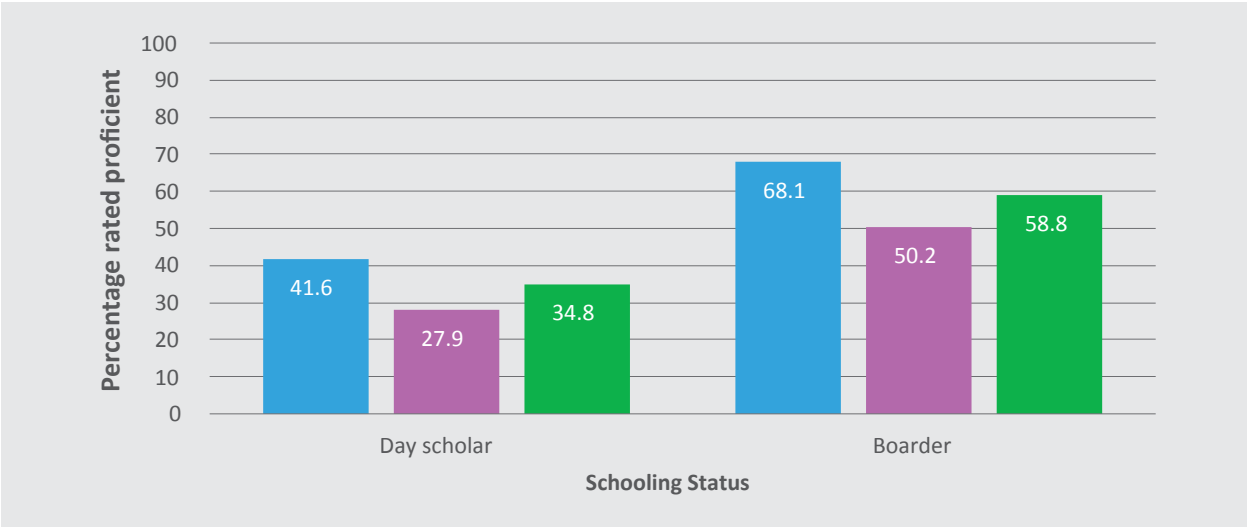
In the 2014 and 2025 assessment years, the highest proportions of learners rated proficient 36.1% and 60.2%, respectively were observed among those aged 14 years.

Generally, the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in Biology declined with increasing age in 2014 and 2025 in a consistent pattern.

### 5.6 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN BIOLOGY, BY GENDER AND SCHOOLING STATUS

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners in Biology, by gender and schooling status. The percentages are presented in Figure 5.6.

**Figure 5.6** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Biology, by Gender and Schooling Status



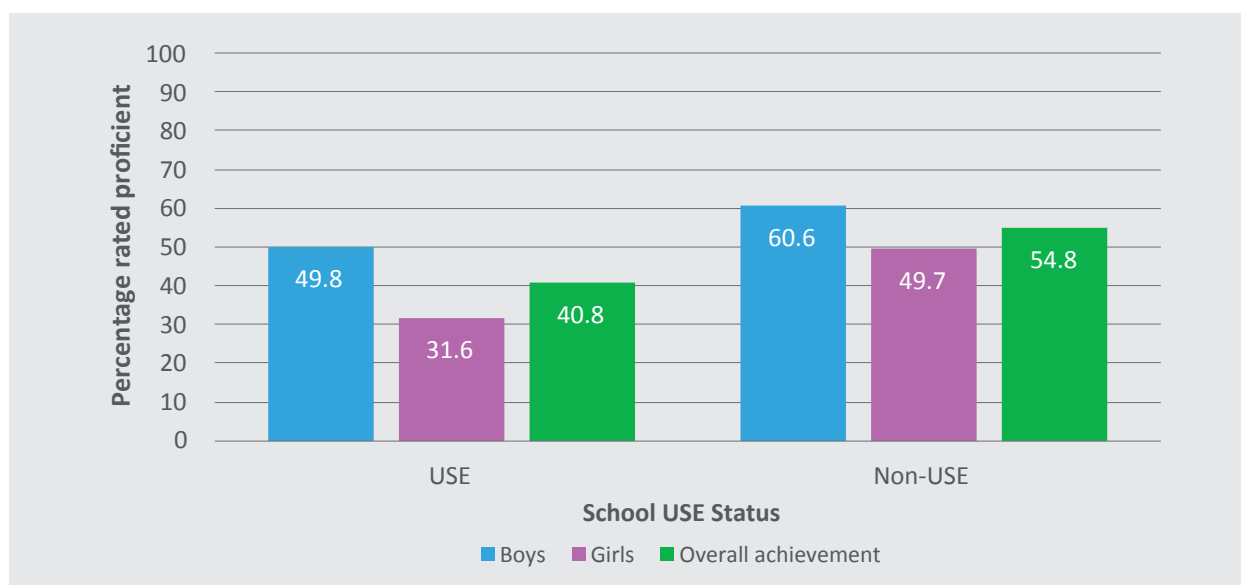
The proportion of S 2 learners who are boarders rated proficient in Biology (58.8%) was significantly higher than that of day scholars (34.8%) ( $p = 0.000$ ). The proportion of boys rated proficient in Biology was significantly higher than that of girls regardless of the schooling status (Day scholar,  $p = 0.000$ ; Boarder,  $p=0.000$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 day scholars rated proficient in Biology (34.8%) was lower than the national level achievement in Biology (45.6%) (Ref. Figure 5.1).

### 5.7 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN BIOLOGY, BY GENDER AND USE STATUS

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners in Biology, by gender and USE status. The percentages are presented in Figure 5.7.

**Figure 5.7** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in Biology, by Gender and USE Status



The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in Biology in non-USE schools (54.8%) was significantly higher than that of learners in USE schools (40.8%) ( $p = 0.000$ ). The proportion of boys rated proficient in Biology was significantly higher than that of girls in both USE and non-USE schools ( $p = 0.000$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in USE schools rated proficient in Biology (40.8%) was lower than the national level achievement in Biology (45.6%) (Ref. Figure 5.1).

## 5.8 THE GAP IN S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN BIOLOGY IN 2014 AND 2025, BY GENDER, SCHOOL OWNERSHIP, LOCATION AND USE STATUS

This section presents the gap in S 2 learners' achievement in Biology in 2014 and 2025, by gender, school ownership, location and USE status. The gaps in achievement are shown in Table 5.2.

**Table 5.2** The Gap in S 2 Learners' Achievement in Biology in 2014 and 2025, by Gender, School Ownership, Location and USE status

|                         | Gap in 2014 | Gap in 2025 | Gap widening or reduced |
|-------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>           |             |             |                         |
| Boys vs Girls           | 13.5        | 15.2        | ↑                       |
| <b>School Ownership</b> |             |             |                         |
| Government vs Private   | 3.1         | - 8.0       | ↑                       |
| <b>School location</b>  |             |             |                         |
| Urban vs Rural          | 9.7         | 9.7         | ↔                       |
| <b>USE status</b>       |             |             |                         |
| Non-USE vs USE          | 28.7        | 14.0        | ↓                       |

Table 5.2 shows that the achievement gap in Biology among S 2 learners between boys and girls, and government and private schools widened between 2014 and 2025 while the achievement gap between urban and rural schools remained the same. In contrast, the achievement gap between Non-USE and USE schools narrowed over the same period.

The gap between the proportion of boys and girls in 2014 and 2025 widened with more boys rated proficient than girls. In 2014, the proportion of learners rated proficient was higher in government schools than that of private schools. In contrast, in 2025 the proportion of learners in private schools rated proficient exceeded that of government schools and the gap widened.

The achievement gap between the learners in urban and rural schools remained the same between 2014 and 2025. The gap in achievement between the learners in non-USE and USE schools narrowed between 2014 and 2025, much as more learners in non-USE schools were still rated proficient.

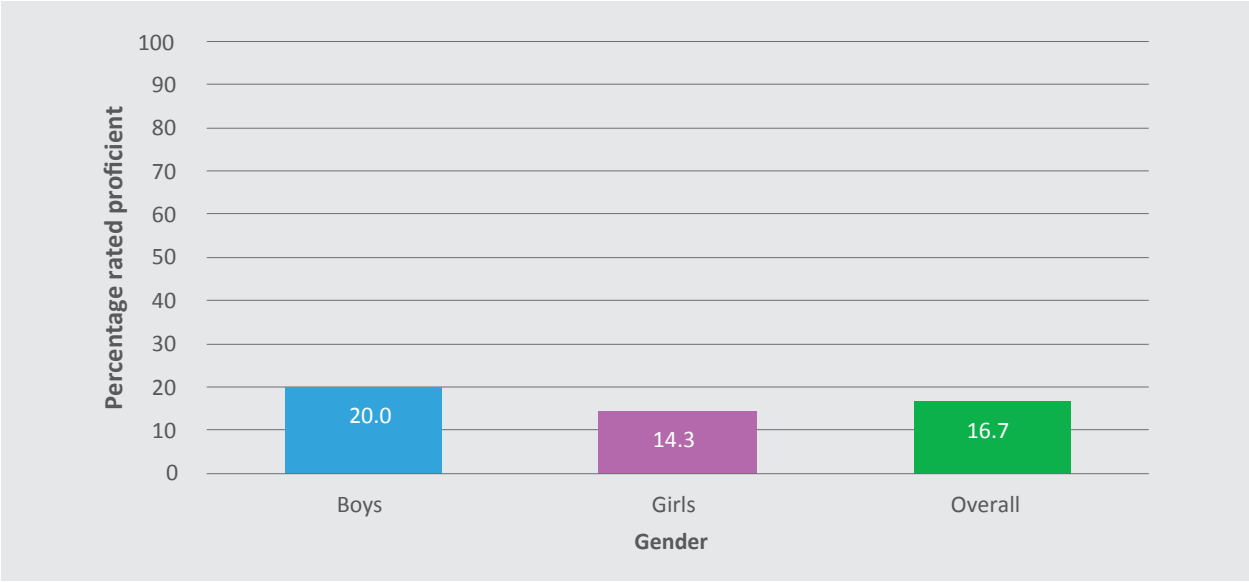
### 5.9 ACHIEVEMENT IN GENERAL SCIENCE (BIOLOGY) FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners who are deaf and those who are blind, in General Science (Biology). The results for achievement of learners with Special Education Needs were disaggregated by gender only, because of the small number of learners.

#### 5.9.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN GENERAL SCIENCE (BIOLOGY) FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE DEAF, BY GENDER

This sub-section describes the achievement in General Science for S 2 learners who are deaf. The percentages of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient are shown in Figure 5.8.

**Figure 5.8** Percentage of S 2 Learners who are Deaf that are Rated Proficient in General Science, by Gender



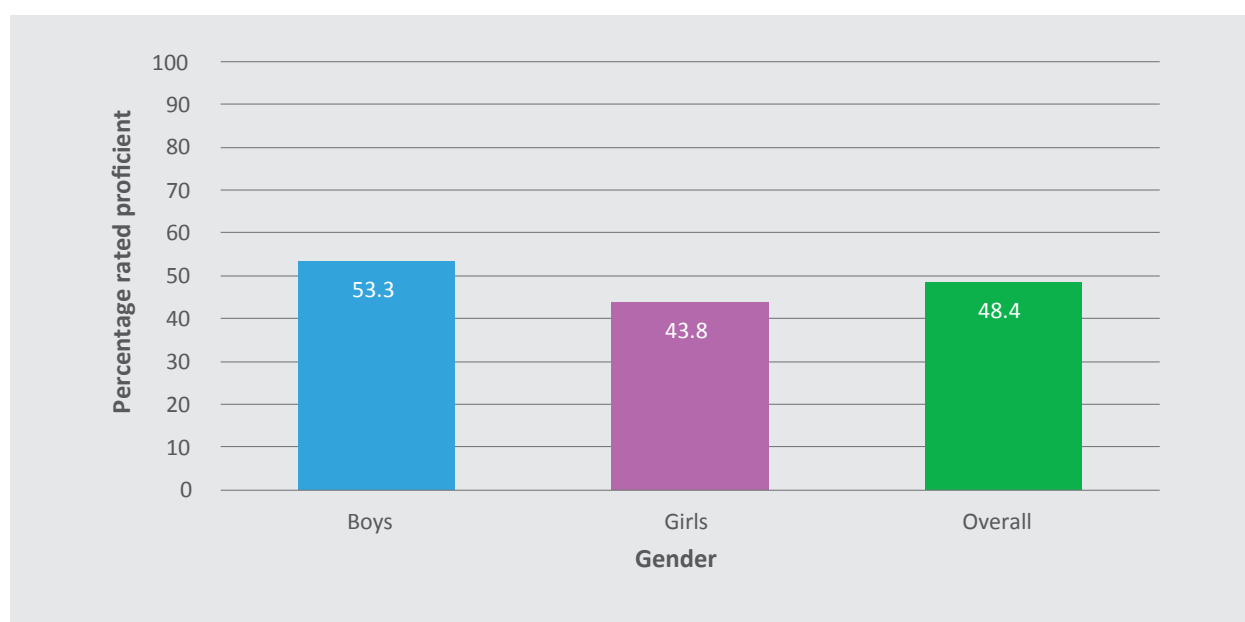
Overall, only 16.7% of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in General Science. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners who are deaf that are rated proficient in General Science ( $p = 0.288$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient in General Science (16.7%) was much lower than the national level achievement in Biology (45.6%) (Ref. Figure 5.1).

### 5.9.2 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN GENERAL SCIENCE (BIOLOGY) FOR S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE BLIND, BY GENDER

This sub-section describes the achievement in General Science for S 2 learners who are blind. The percentages of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient are shown in Figure 5.9.

**Figure 5.9** Percentage of S 2 Learners who are Blind that are Rated Proficient in General Science, by Gender



Results indicated that almost half (48.4%) of the S 2 learners who are blind were rated proficient in General Science. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient ( $p = 0.304$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient in General Science (48.4%) was higher than the national level achievement in Biology (45.6%) (Ref. Figure 5.1).

### 5.10 DETERMINANTS OF S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN BIOLOGY

This section presents the findings of the binary logistic regression analysis on the determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in Biology. The determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in Biology are presented in Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3** Determinants of S 2 Learners' achievement in Biology

| Variable                 | Category         | OR   | p            | [95% Conf. Interval] |
|--------------------------|------------------|------|--------------|----------------------|
| <b>Gender*</b>           | Boy              | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Girl             | 0.47 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.367 - 0.608        |
| <b>Age</b>               | 13               | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | 14               | 1.16 | 0.830        | 0.298 - 4.511        |
|                          | 15               | 0.87 | 0.842        | 0.209 - 3.598        |
|                          | 16               | 0.78 | 0.736        | 0.177 - 3.405        |
|                          | 17               | 0.55 | 0.429        | 0.128 - 2.407        |
|                          | 18               | 0.44 | 0.273        | 0.100 - 1.924        |
|                          | 19+              | 0.54 | 0.425        | 0.119 - 2.471        |
| <b>Schooling Status*</b> | Day scholar      | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Boarder          | 2.60 | <b>0.000</b> | 1.843 - 3.667        |
| <b>School Location*</b>  | Urban            | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Rural            | 0.71 | <b>0.027</b> | 0.520 - 0.961        |
| <b>School Ownership</b>  | Government Aided | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Private          | 1.07 | 0.706        | 0.748 - 1.534        |

**Note.** OR-Odds Ratio, p=p-value, \* Significant at  $p < 0.05$ , – Reference Category

Results in Table 5.3 indicate that gender, schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in Biology.

#### Findings showed that:

**Gender:** Girls had a significantly lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in Biology than boys (OR = 0.47, 95% CI [0.367, 0.608]).

**Schooling Status:** Learners who are boarders had a significantly higher chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in Biology than day scholars (OR = 2.60, 95% CI [1.843, 3.667]).

**School Location:** Learners in schools in rural areas had a significantly lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in Biology than those in schools in urban areas (OR = 0.71, 95% CI [0.520, 0.961]).

**School Ownership:** Learners in both private and government schools had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in Biology (OR = 1.07, 95% CI [0.748, 1.534]).

## 5.11 AREAS OF DIFFICULTY FOR LEARNERS

In Biology, even the highly proficient learners exhibited difficulties in the learning areas shown in Table 5.4.

**Table 5.4** Areas of Difficulty for Learners

| S/N | AREAS OF DIFFICULTY                                                         |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Application of scientific process skills in conducting experiments on soil. |
| 2.  | Using structural differences to classify organisms.                         |
| 3.  | Explaining functional differences using structures of organisms.            |

## CHAPTER 6

# ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE, THE WRITING SUB-SKILL



### KEY FINDINGS

- 80.7% of S 2 learners were rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill with no significant gender difference.
- 46.7% of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill with no significant gender difference ( $p = 0.862$ ).
- 77.4% of S 2 learners who are blind were rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill with no significant gender difference.
- Age, schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in the Writing sub-skill.
- Even the highly proficient learners experienced difficulties in; using appropriate vocabulary and register when writing informal letters, and using apt vocabulary and stylistic devices when writing a story.

This chapter presents the achievement of S 2 learners in English Language, the Writing sub-skill in detail. The achievement is categorised into four proficiency levels: lowly proficient, moderately proficient, proficient, and highly proficient. The competences expected of S 2 learners at each proficiency level are outlined in Table 6.1.

**Table 6.1 Description of Competences Assessed in the Writing Sub-Skill at S 2, by Proficiency Levels**

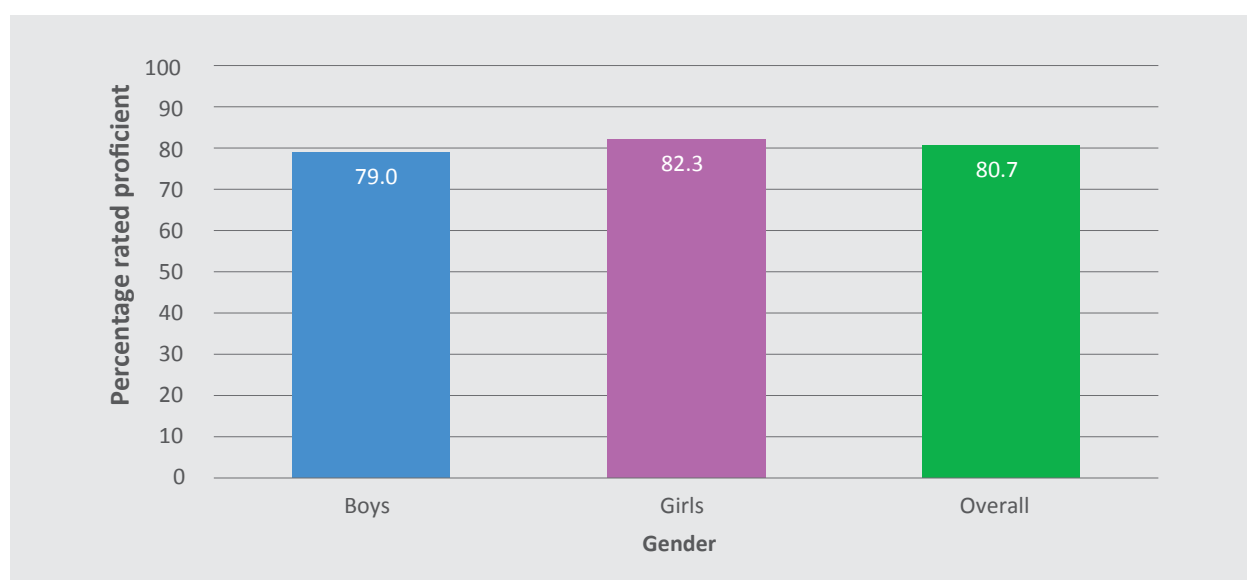
| PROFICIENCY LEVEL            | COMPETENCES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lowly proficient</b>      | Learners in this category can: extract information correctly from a continuous text; give realistic and practical guidance according to scenarios in functional writing; write addresses correctly; correctly interpret information in a non-continuous text; write appropriate salutations in letters; demonstrate understanding of the non-continuous text; use appropriate tenses when writing informal letters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Moderately proficient</b> | In addition to having the skills in the above proficiency level, learners in this category can: use correct spellings when writing informal letters; paragraph their stories appropriately; assume a role in a story and create a relevant character; progressively develop the story; use appropriate tense when writing a story; create an appropriate physical and time setting in relation to the creative writing scenario; evaluate information in a non-continuous text and give appropriate guidance; use paragraphs appropriately when writing informal letters.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Proficient</b>            | In addition to having the skills in the above proficiency levels, learners in this category can: use meaningful and grammatically correct sentences when writing informal letters; make reference to and elaborate the challenge in a functional writing scenario; use an appropriate complementary close/closing tag and sign off informal letters correctly; analyse character with justification in non-continuous texts; punctuate their written stories appropriately; demonstrate understanding of words/ phrases used in a given context in a continuous text; punctuate informal letters appropriately; write a correct date in a letter; accurately manipulate grammatical structures and apply correct punctuation; use correct spellings when writing stories; organise ideas logically when writing stories; evaluate information in continuous texts and give a realistic /moral opinion; conclude and resolve a story when writing; use correct grammatical sentences to propose appropriate solutions in non-continuous texts. |

| PROFICIENCY LEVEL        | COMPETENCES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Highly proficient</b> | In addition to having all the skills in the above proficiency levels, learners in this category can: use appropriate vocabulary and register when writing informal letters; use apt vocabulary and stylistic devices when writing a story; apply knowledge acquired from the non-continuous text in a new situation; evaluate information in a continuous text; state an appropriate feeling and justify it; use meaningful and grammatically correct sentences when writing a story; apply knowledge acquired from a continuous text in a new situation; write relevant and suitable titles for stories. |

## 6.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE WRITING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER

This section describes the national level achievement of S 2 learners in the Writing sub-skill. The percentages of learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill are shown in Figure 6.1.

**Figure 6.1** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Writing Sub-Skill, by Gender

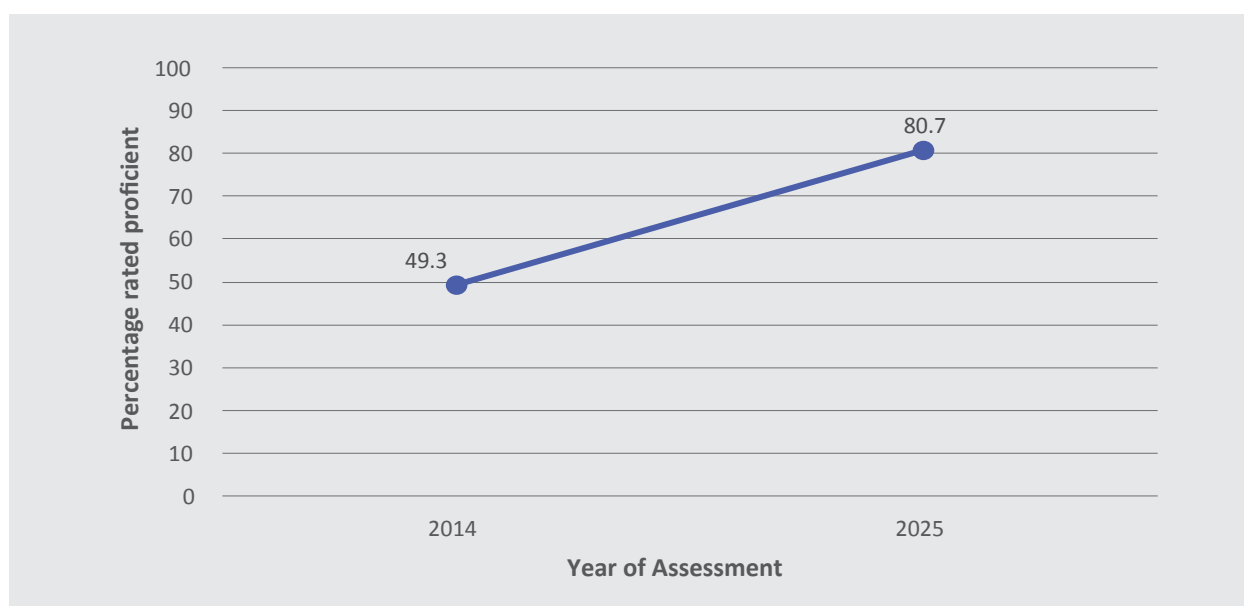


Results show that 81% of S 2 learners were rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill with no significant gender difference (79.0%) ( $p = 0.106$ ).

## 6.2 COMPARISON OF S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE, BY YEAR OF ASSESSMENT (2014 AND 2025)

This section presents the comparison of S 2 learners' achievement in English Language, by year of assessment (2014 and 2025). In 2014, the assessment was based on the old lower secondary curriculum while in 2025, the assessment was based on the new lower secondary curriculum which is competency based. The percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient by year of assessment is shown in Figure 6.2.

**Figure 6.2** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in English Language, by year of Assessment (2014 and 2025)

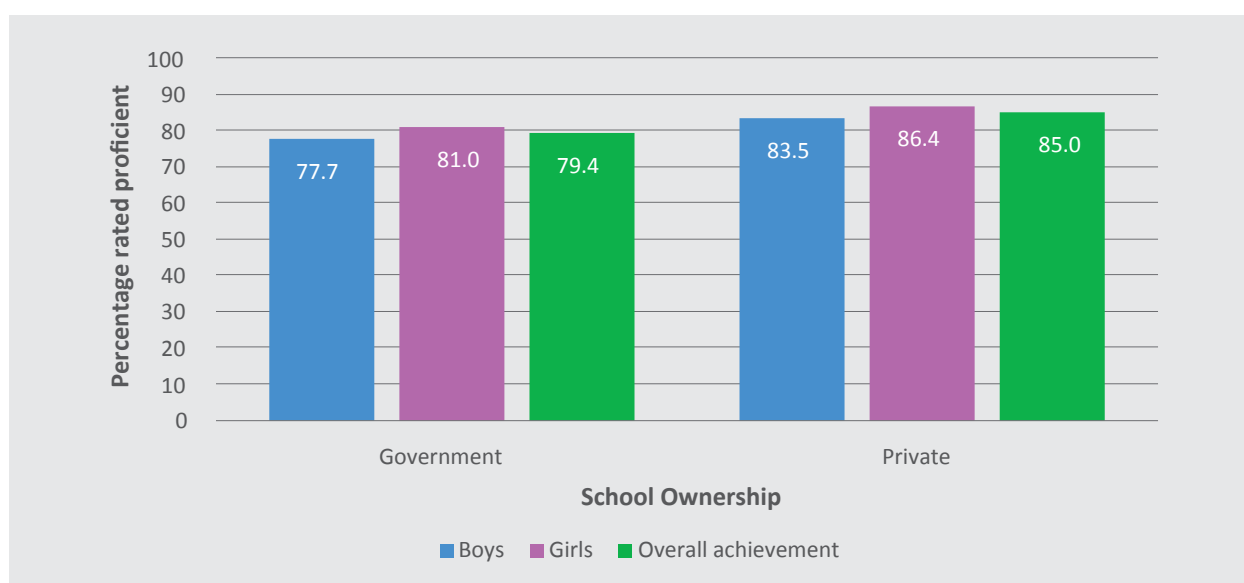


Results show that the percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient in English Language (Writing sub skill) in the Competency based curriculum (80.7%) is higher than that of the old curriculum (49.3%). This finding suggests that the recent government interventions such as deployment of more teachers, expansion of school infrastructure and educational reforms like the rollout of the CBC seem to have contributed to improved learners' achievement.

### 6.3 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE WRITING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL OWNERSHIP

The achievement of S 2 learners in the Writing sub-skill, by gender and school ownership is presented in Figure 6.3.

**Figure 6.3** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Writing Sub-Skill, by Gender and School Ownership



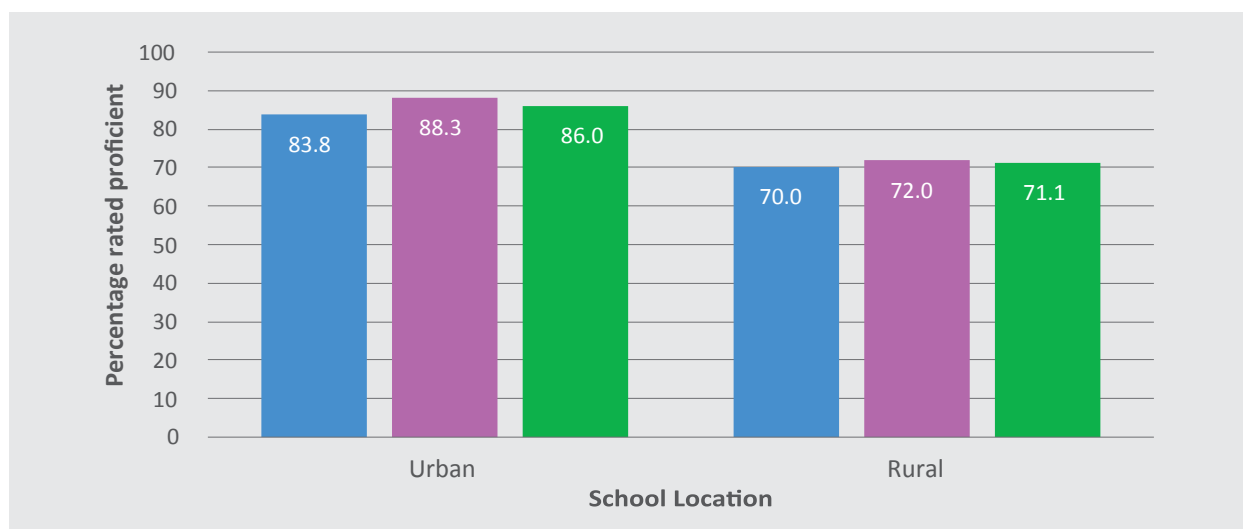
The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill in private schools (85.0%) was significantly higher than that of learners in government schools (79.4%) ( $p = 0.028$ ). There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill regardless of school ownership (Government,  $p = 0.160$ ; Private,  $p = 0.155$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in government schools rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill (79.4%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Writing sub-skill (80.7%) (Ref. Figure 6.1).

## 6.4 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE WRITING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL LOCATION

This section shows the percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill by gender and school location. The percentages are presented in Figure 6.4.

**Figure 6.4** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Writing Sub-Skill, by Gender and School Location



The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill in urban schools (86.0%) was significantly higher than that of learners in rural schools (71.1%) ( $p = 0.000$ ). There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill regardless of school location (Urban,  $p = 0.062$ ; Rural,  $p = 0.216$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in rural schools rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill (71.1%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Writing sub-skill (80.7%) (Ref. Figure 6.1).

## 6.5 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE (WRITING SUB-SKILL), BY AGE AND YEARS OF ASSESSMENT

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners' achievement in English language (writing sub-skill), by age and years of assessment. The percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient is shown in Figure 6.5.

**Figure 6.5** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in English Language (Writing Sub -skill), by Age and Years of Assessments

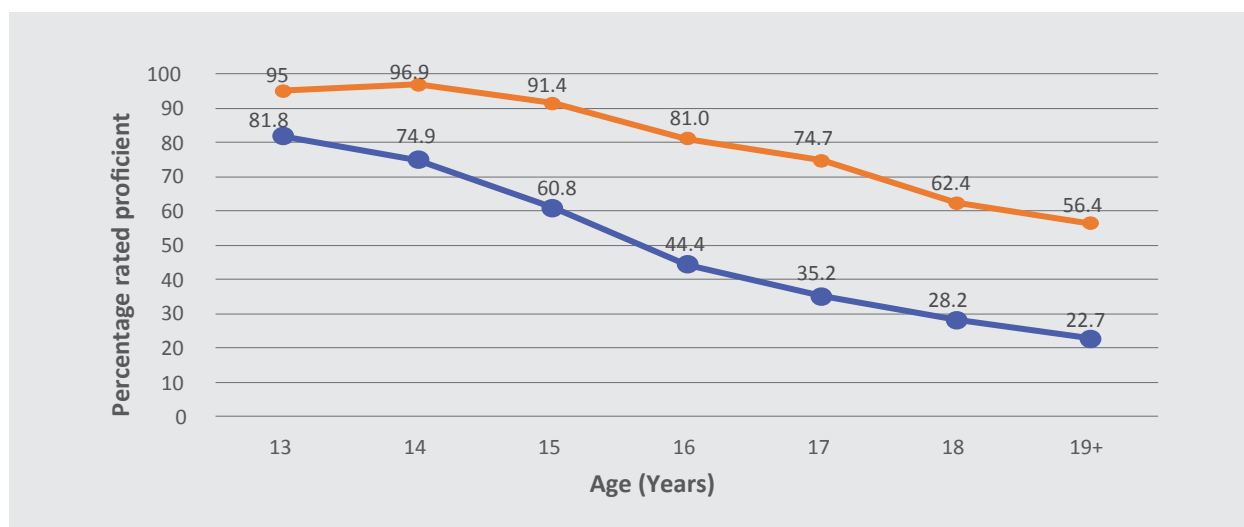
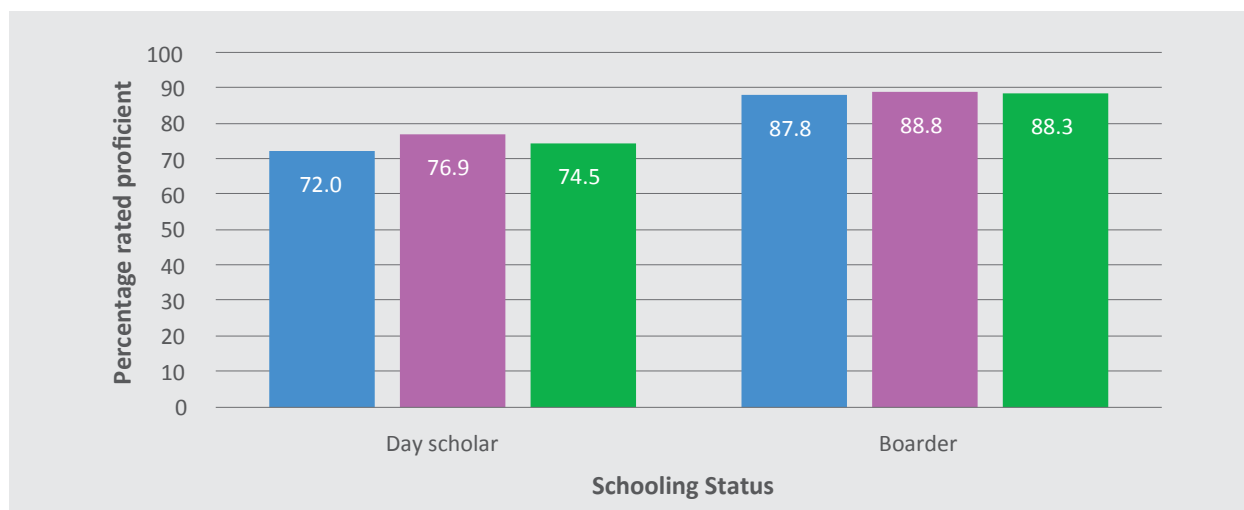


Figure 6.5 shows that the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in English (Writing sub- skill) declined with increasing age in 2014 and 2025 in a consistent pattern.

## 6.6 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE WRITING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND SCHOOLING STATUS

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners in the Writing sub-skill, by gender and schooling status. The percentages are presented in Figure 6.6.

**Figure 6.6** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Writing Sub-Skill, by Gender and Schooling Status



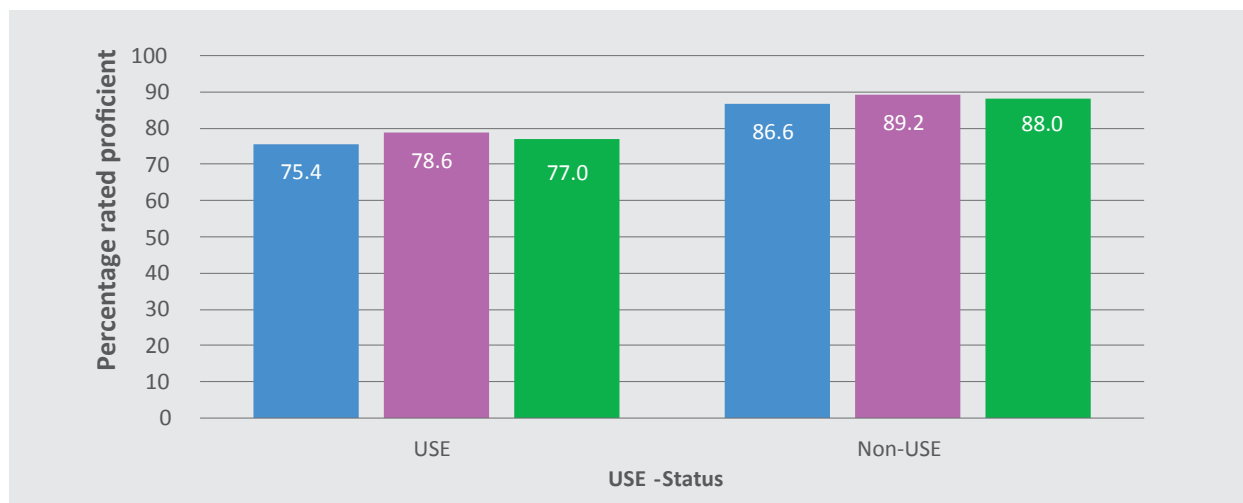
The proportion of S 2 learners who were boarders and rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill (88.3%) was significantly higher than that of day scholars (74.5%) ( $p = 0.000$ ). However, there was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill regardless of the schooling status (Day scholar,  $p = 0.055$ ; Boarder,  $p = 0.717$ ).

Overall, the proportion of learners who are day scholars and rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill (74.5%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Writing sub-skill (80.7%) (Ref. Figure 6.1).

## 6.7 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE WRITING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND USE STATUS

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners in the Writing sub-skill, by gender and USE status. The percentages are presented in Figure 6.7.

**Figure 6.7** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Writing Sub-Skill, by Gender and USE Status



The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill in non-USE schools (88.0%) was significantly higher than that of learners in USE schools (77.0%) ( $p = 0.000$ ). However, there was no significant gender difference in proportion of learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill regardless of the USE status ( $p = 0.212$ ;  $p = 0.089$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill in USE schools (77.0%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Writing sub-skill (80.7%) (Ref. Figure 6.1).

## 6.8 THE GAP IN S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE (WRITING SUB-SKILL) IN 2014 AND 2025, BY GENDER, SCHOOL OWNERSHIP, LOCATION AND USE STATUS

This section presents the gap in S 2 learners' achievement in English Language (Writing sub-skill) in 2014 and 2025, by gender, school ownership, location and USE status. The gaps in achievement are shown in Table 6.2.

**Table 6.2** The Gap in S 2 Learners' Achievement in English Language (Writing sub-skill) in 2014 and 2025, by Gender, School Ownership, Location and USE status

|                         | Gap in 2014 (%) | Gap in 2025 (%) | Gap widening or narrowing |
|-------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>           |                 |                 |                           |
| Boys vs Girls           | 1.3             | - 3.3           | ↑                         |
| <b>School Ownership</b> |                 |                 |                           |
| Private vs Government   | 1.2             | 5.6             | ↑                         |
| <b>School location</b>  |                 |                 |                           |
| Urban vs Rural          | 19.8            | 14.9            | ↓                         |
| <b>USE status</b>       |                 |                 |                           |
| Non-USE vs USE          | 35.0            | 11.0            | ↓                         |

Table 6.2 show that the achievement gap in the Writing sub-skill among S 2 learners between boys and girls, government and private schools widened between 2014 and 2025. In contrast, the achievement gap between urban and rural schools, as well as between non-USE and USE schools, narrowed over the same period.

In 2014, the proportion of boys rated proficient was higher than that of girls. Conversely, in 2025 the proportion of girls rated proficient exceeded that of boys and the gap widened.

The gap in achievement between the learners in government and private schools widened between 2014 and 2025, with a higher proportion of learners in private schools rated proficient. The gap in achievement between the learners in urban and rural schools, non-USE and USE schools narrowed between 2014 and 2025, much as more learners in urban and non-USE schools were still rated proficient.

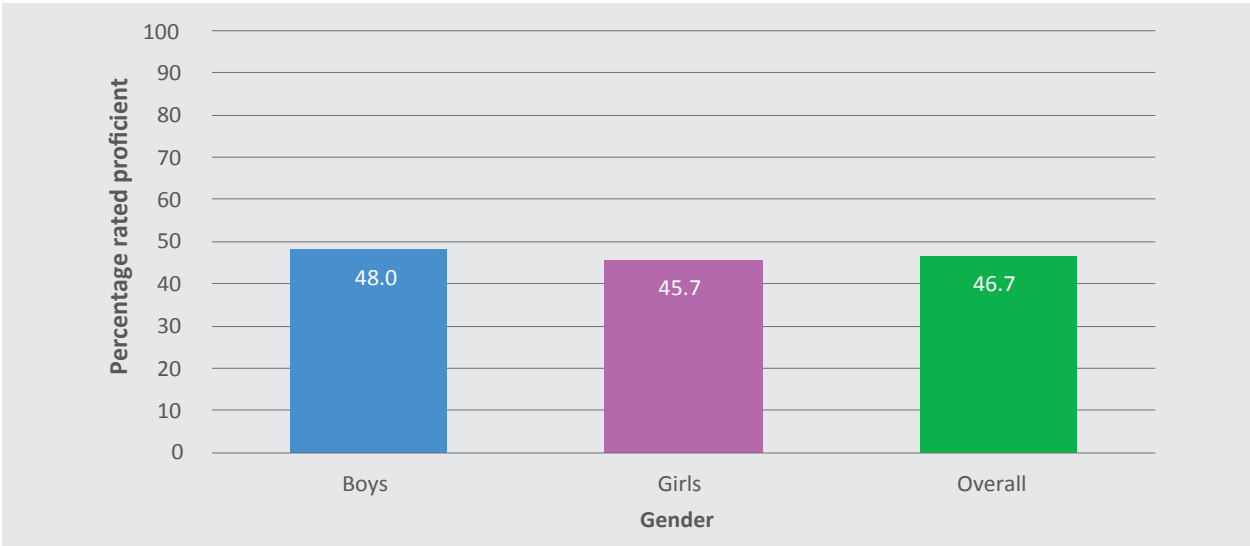
**6.9 ACHIEVEMENT IN THE WRITING SUB-SKILL, FOR S 2 LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS**

This section presents the achievement in the Writing sub-skill, for S 2 learners who are deaf and those who are blind. The results for achievement of learners with Special Education Needs were disaggregated by gender only, because of the small numbers.

**6.9.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE WRITING SUB-SKILL, FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE DEAF, BY GENDER**

This sub-section describes the achievement in the Writing sub-skill for S 2 learners who are deaf. The percentage of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient is shown in Figure 6.8.

**Figure 6.8** Percentage of S 2 Learners Who are Deaf that are Rated Proficient in the Writing Sub-Skill, by Gender



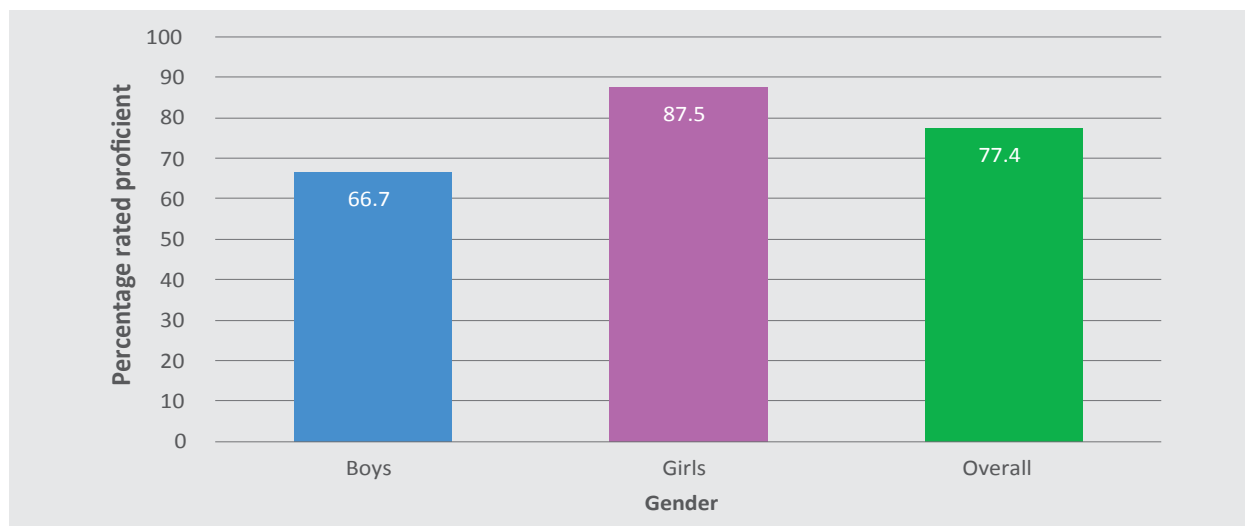
Less than half (46.7%) of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners who are deaf that were rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill ( $p = 0.862$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill (46.7%) was much lower than the national level achievement in the Writing sub-skill (80.7%) (Ref. Figure 6.1).

### 6.9.2 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE WRITING SUB-SKILL FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE BLIND, BY GENDER

This sub-section describes the achievement in the Writing sub-skill for S 2 learners who are blind. The percentage of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient is shown in Figure 6.9.

**Figure 6.9** Percentage of S 2 Learners Who are Blind that are Rated Proficient in the Writing Sub-Skill, by Gender



Results indicated that more than three quarters (77.4%) of S 2 learners who are blind were rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient ( $p= 0.167$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient in the Writing sub-skill (77.4%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Writing sub-skill (80.7%) (Ref. Figure 6.1).

### 6.10 DETERMINANTS OF S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN THE WRITING SUB-SKILL

This section presents the findings of the binary logistic regression analysis on the determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in the Writing Sub-skill. The determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in the Writing sub-skill are presented in Table 6.3.

**Table 6.3** Determinants of S 2 Learners' achievement in the Writing Sub-skill

| Variable                 | Category         | OR   | p            | [95% Conf. Interval] |
|--------------------------|------------------|------|--------------|----------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>            | Boy              | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Girl             | 1.06 | 0.688        | 0.800 -1.400         |
| <b>Age*</b>              | 13               | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | 14               | 1.58 | 0.588        | 0.297 - 8.443        |
|                          | 15               | 0.58 | 0.444        | 0.144 - 2.346        |
|                          | 16               | 0.26 | 0.063        | 0.063 - 1.078        |
|                          | 17               | 0.20 | <b>0.027</b> | 0.050 - 0.834        |
|                          | 18               | 0.12 | <b>0.003</b> | 0.030 - 0.485        |
|                          | 19+              | 0.10 | <b>0.001</b> | 0.027 - 0.396        |
| <b>Schooling status*</b> | Day scholar      | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Boarder          | 2.16 | <b>0.001</b> | 1.384 - 3.384        |
| <b>School location*</b>  | Urban            | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Rural            | 0.46 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.359 - 0.590        |
| <b>School Ownership</b>  | Government Aided | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Private          | 1.22 | 0.137        | 0.938 - 1.591        |

**Note.** OR-Odds Ratio, p=p-value, \* Significant at  $p < 0.05$ , – Reference Category

Results in Table 6.3 indicate that age, schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in the Writing sub-skill.

#### Findings showed that:

**Gender:** Boys and Girls had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Writing sub-skill (OR = 1.06, 95% CI [0.800, 1.400]).

**Age:** Learners aged 16 years and above had lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Writing sub-skill than those aged 13-15 years (OR = 0.10, 95% CI [0.027, 0.396]).

**Schooling Status:** Learners who are boarders had a significantly higher chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Writing sub-skill than day scholars (OR = 2.16, 95% CI [1.384, 3.384]).

**School Location:** Learners in schools in rural areas had a significantly lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Writing sub-skill than those in schools in urban areas (OR = 0.46, 95% CI [0.359, 0.590]).

**School Ownership:** Learners in both private and government schools had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Writing sub-skill (OR = 1.22, 95% CI [0.938, 1.591]).

## 6.11 AREAS OF DIFFICULTY FOR LEARNERS

In the Writing sub-skill, even the highly proficient learners exhibited difficulties in the learning areas shown in Table 6.4.

**Table 6.4** Areas of Difficulty for Learners

| S/N | AREAS OF DIFFICULTY                                                      |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1.  | Using appropriate vocabulary and register when writing informal letters. |
| 2.  | Using apt vocabulary and stylistic devices when writing a story.         |

## CHAPTER 7

# ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE, THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL



### KEY FINDINGS

- 26% of the S 2 learners were rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill with no significant gender difference.
- Only 5.1% of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in the Observation sub-skill with no significant gender difference.
- 38.7% of the S 2 learners who are blind were rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill with no significant gender difference.
- Age, schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in the Listening sub-skill.
- Even the highly proficient learners experienced difficulties in analysing texts and describing the relationship between characters with justification.

This chapter presents the national achievement of S 2 learners in English Language, the Listening sub-skill in detail. The achievement is categorised into four proficiency levels: lowly proficient, moderately proficient, proficient, and highly proficient. The competences expected of S 2 learner at each proficiency level are outlined in Table 7.1.

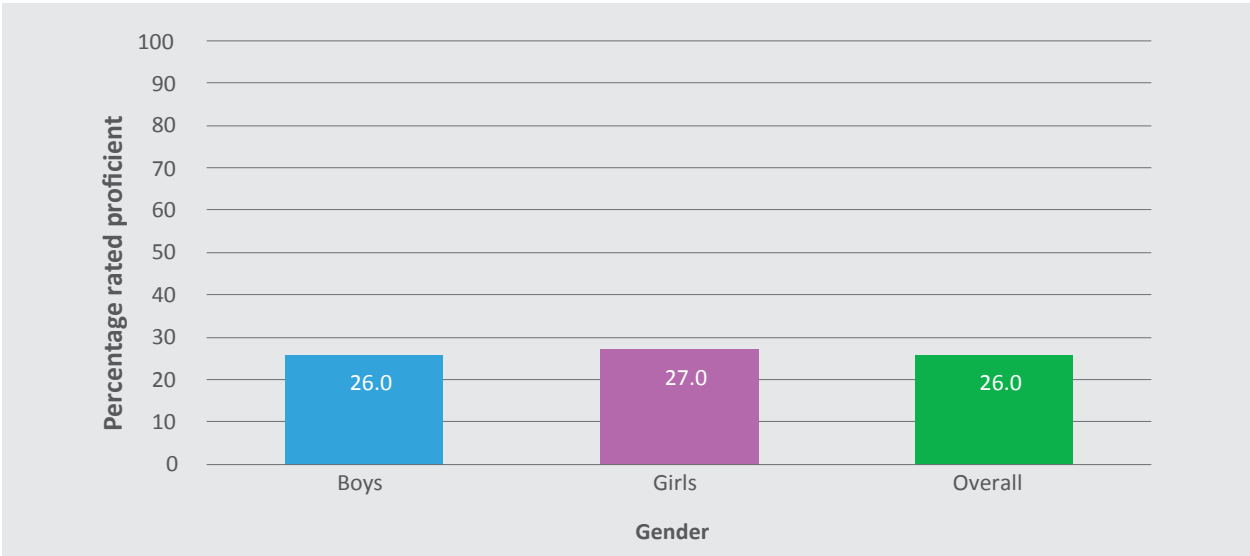
**Table 7. 1** Description of Competencies Assessed in the Listening Sub-Skill at S 2, by Proficiency Levels

| PROFICIENCY LEVELS           | COMPETENCES                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lowly proficient</b>      | Learners in this category can extract basic information from an audio text.                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Moderately proficient</b> | In addition to exhibiting the competences in the above proficiency level, learners in this category can interpret information presented in an audio text.                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Proficient</b>            | In addition to the above competences, learners in this category can apply knowledge acquired from an audio text in a new situation.                                                                                                                                             |
| <b>Highly proficient</b>     | Learners in this category not only exhibit competences in the earlier mentioned proficiency levels, but can also analyse an audio text and describe the relationship between characters with justification; evaluate information and make correct judgement with justification. |

### 7.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER

This section presents the national level achievement of S 2 learners in the Listening sub-skill. The percentages of learners rated proficient are presented in Figure 7.1.

**Figure 7.1** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Listening Sub-Skill, by Gender

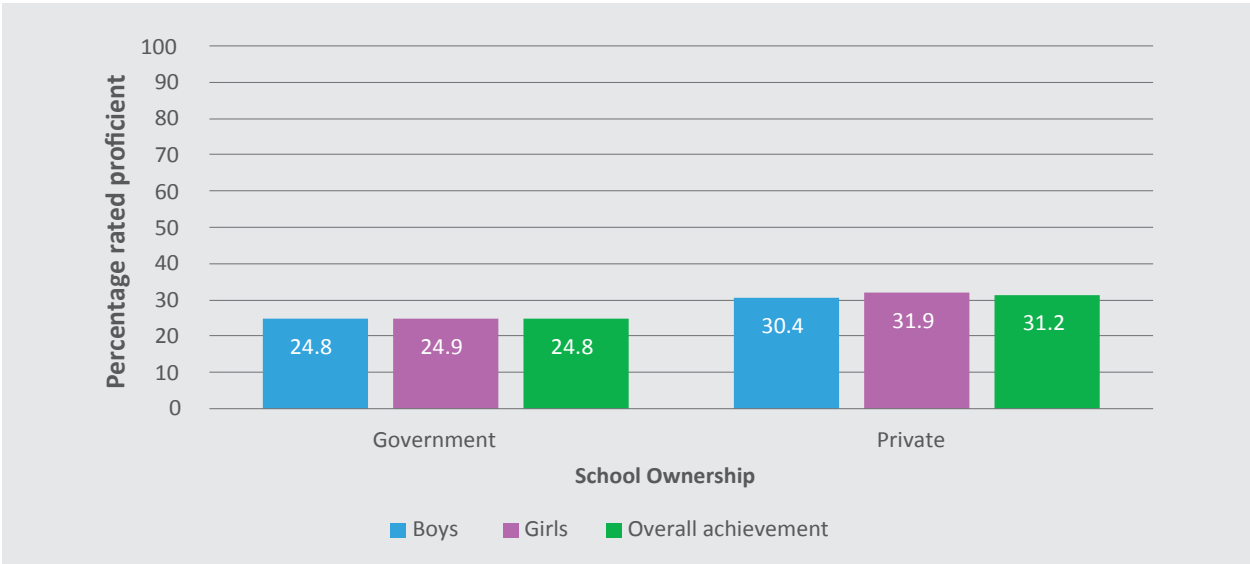


Overall, 26% of the S 2 learners were rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill ( $p = 0.834$ ). These results point to instructional gaps in the Listening sub-skill nationwide.

**7.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL OWNERSHIP**

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners in the Listening sub-skill, by gender and school ownership. The percentages are presented in Figure 7.2.

**Figure 7.2** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Listening Sub-Skill, by Gender and School Ownership



There was no significant difference in the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill between private schools (31.2%) and government schools (24.8%) ( $p = 0.489$ ).

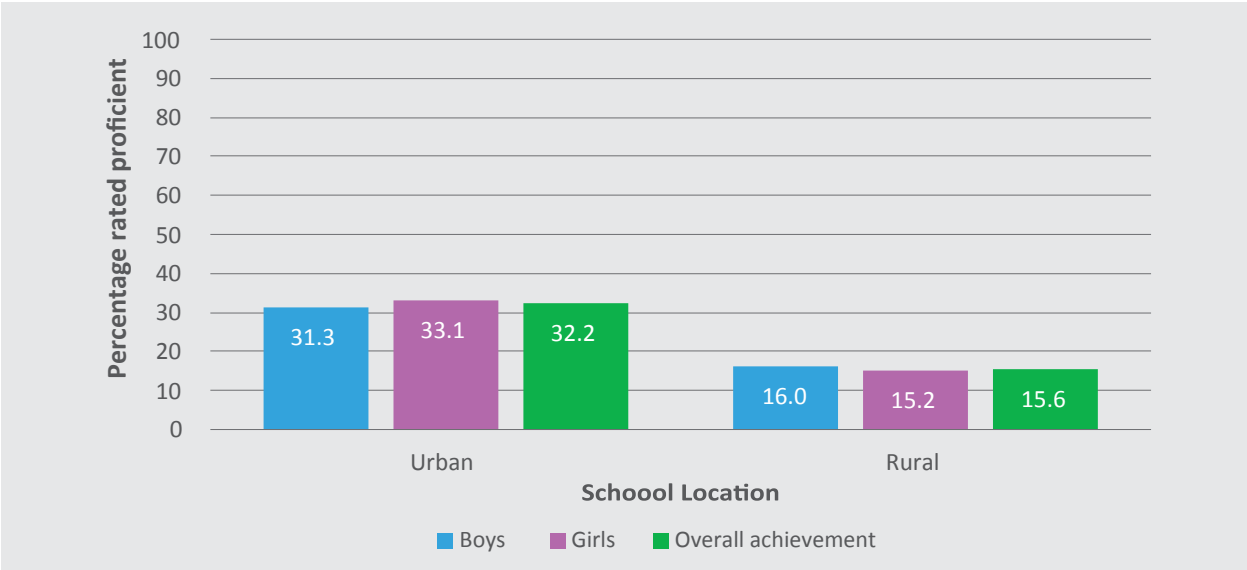
The proportion of girls in private schools (31.9%) rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill was significantly higher than that of boys (30.4%) ( $p = 0.020$ ). However, there was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners in government schools rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill ( $p=0.974$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in government schools rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill (24.8%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Listening sub-skill (26.0%) (Ref. Figure 7.1).

### 7.3 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL LOCATION

This section presents the percentage of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill, by school location and gender, as shown in Figure 7.3.

**Figure 7.3** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Listening Sub-Skill, by Gender and School Location



The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill in urban schools (32.2%) was significantly higher than that of learners in rural schools (15.6%) ( $p = 0.001$ ). There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners rated proficient in listening sub-skill in both categories (Urban,  $p = 0.514$ ; Rural,  $p = 0.628$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in rural schools rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill (15.6%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Listening sub-skill (26.0%) (Ref. Figure 7.1).

### 7.4 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL, BY AGE

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners in the Listening sub-skill by age. The percentage of learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill is shown in Figure 7.4.

**Figure 7.4** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Listening Sub-Skill, by Age

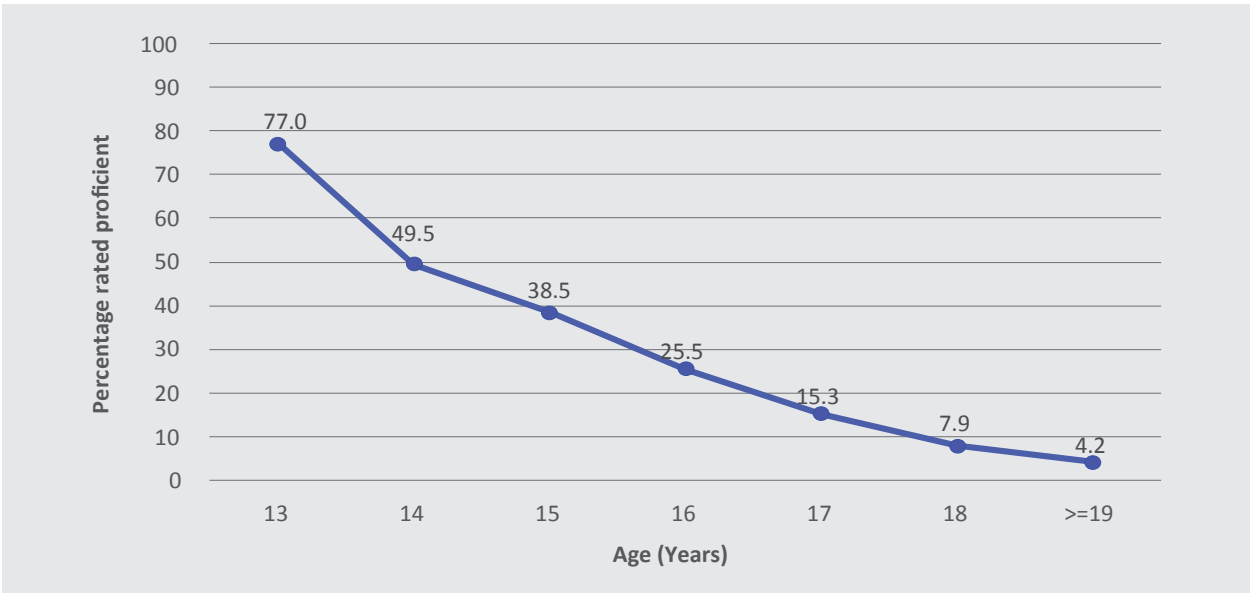
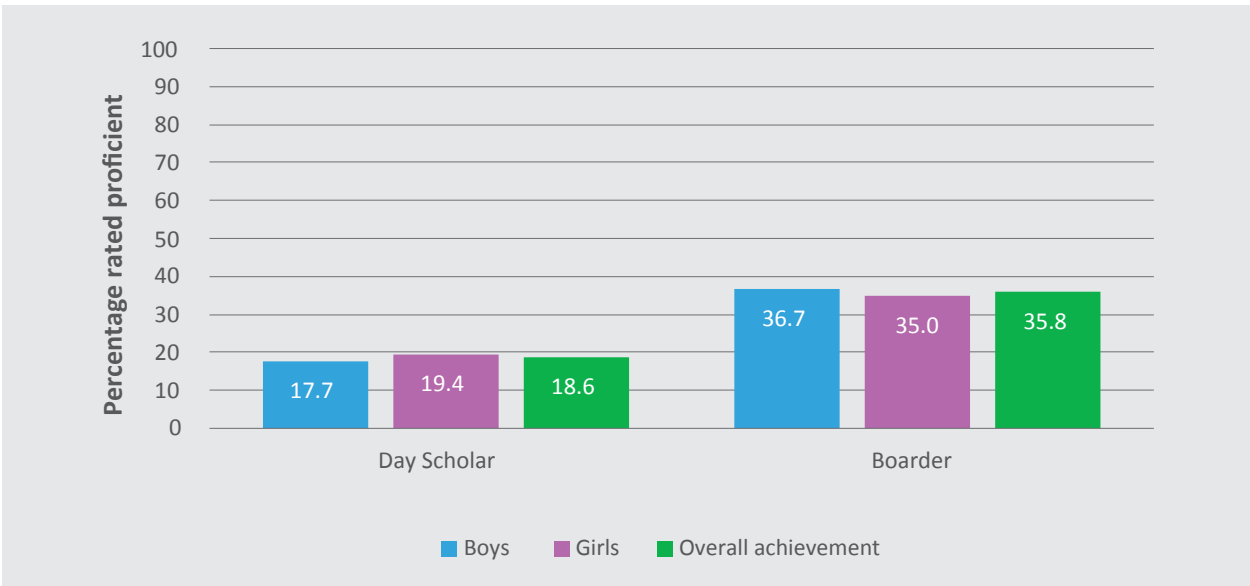


Figure 7.4 illustrates a sharp decline in the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill. At age 13, 77.0% of the learners were rated proficient, but this proportion dropped drastically to 4.2% among learners aged 19 and above. This trend indicates that proficiency in the Listening sub-skill decreases significantly with increasing age.

**7.5 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND SCHOOLING STATUS**

The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill, by gender and schooling status is presented in Figure 7.5.

**Figure 7.5** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Listening Sub-Skill, by Gender and Schooling Status



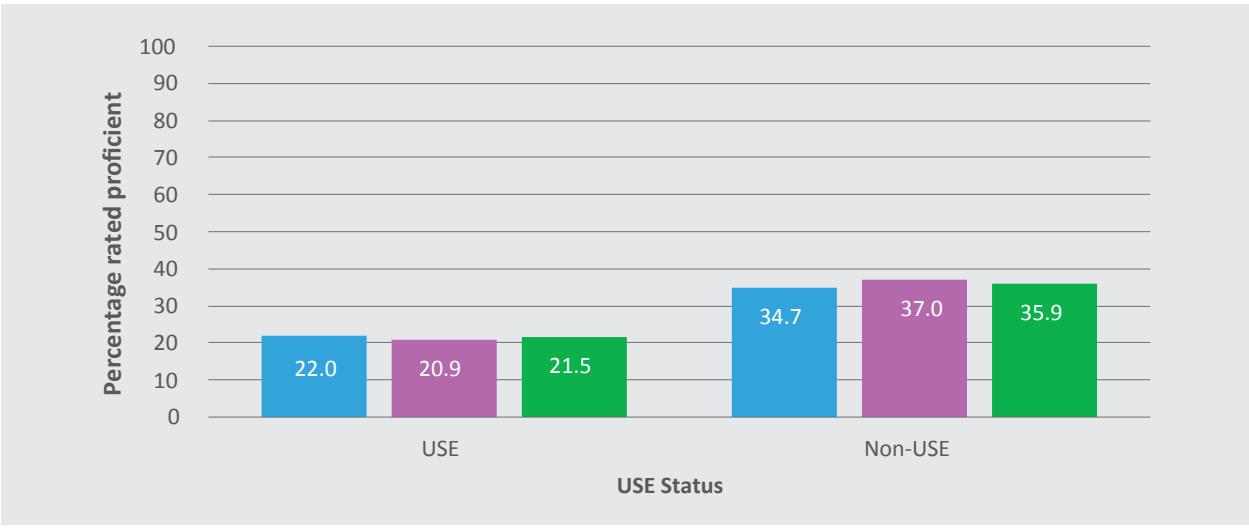
The proportion of S 2 learners who are boarders and rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill (35.8%) was significantly higher than that of the day scholars (18.6%) ( $p = 0.002$ ). However, there was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill in the two categories (Day scholar,  $p = 0.370$ ; Boarder,  $p = 0.633$ ).

Overall, the proportion of day scholars rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill (18.6%) was much lower than the national level achievement in the Listening sub-skill (26.0%) (Ref. Figure 7.1).

## 7.6 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND USE STATUS

The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill, by gender and USE status, is presented in Figure 7.6.

**Figure 7.6** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Listening Sub-Skill, by Gender and USE Status



The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill in non-USE schools (35.9%) was significantly higher than that of learners in USE schools (21.5%) ( $p = 0.041$ ). However, there was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill in the two categories (USE,  $p = 0.421$ ; Non-USE,  $p = 0.144$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill in USE schools (21.5%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Listening sub-skill (26.0%) (Ref. Figure 7.1).

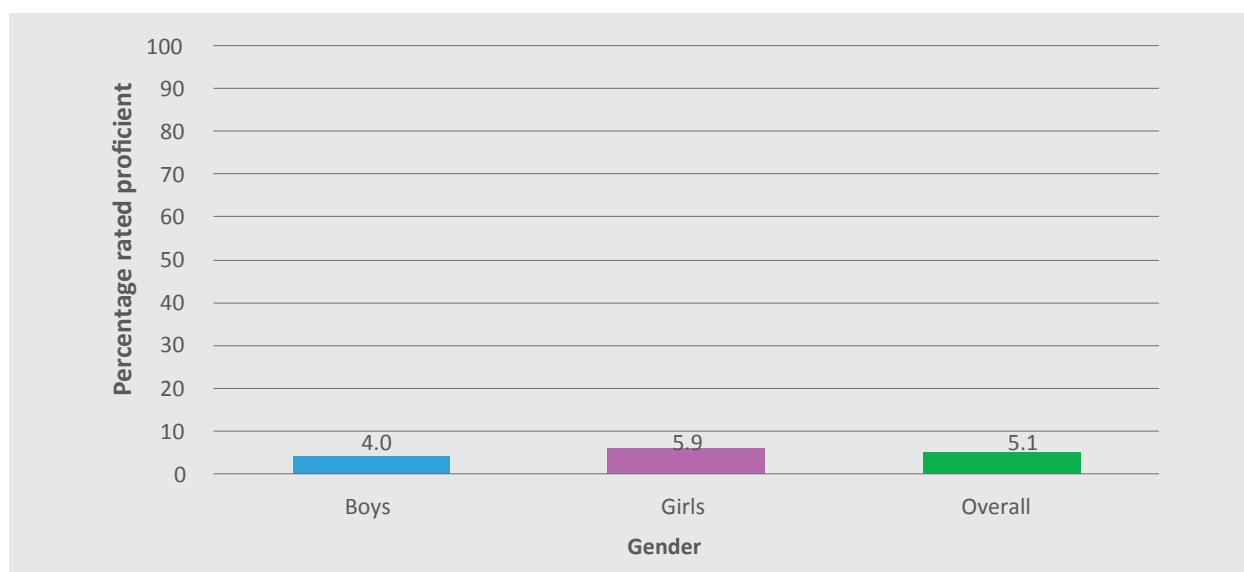
## 7.7 ACHIEVEMENT IN THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL, FOR S 2 LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners who are deaf and those who are blind. The results for achievement of learners with Special Education Needs were disaggregated by gender only, because of the small numbers.

### 7.7.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE OBSERVATION SUB-SKILL (LISTENING SUB-SKILL) FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE DEAF, BY GENDER

This sub-section describes the achievement in the observation sub-skill for S 2 learners who are deaf. The percentage of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient are shown in Figure 7.7.

**Figure 7.7** Percentage of S 2 Learners who are Deaf that are Rated Proficient in the Observation Sub-Skill, by Gender



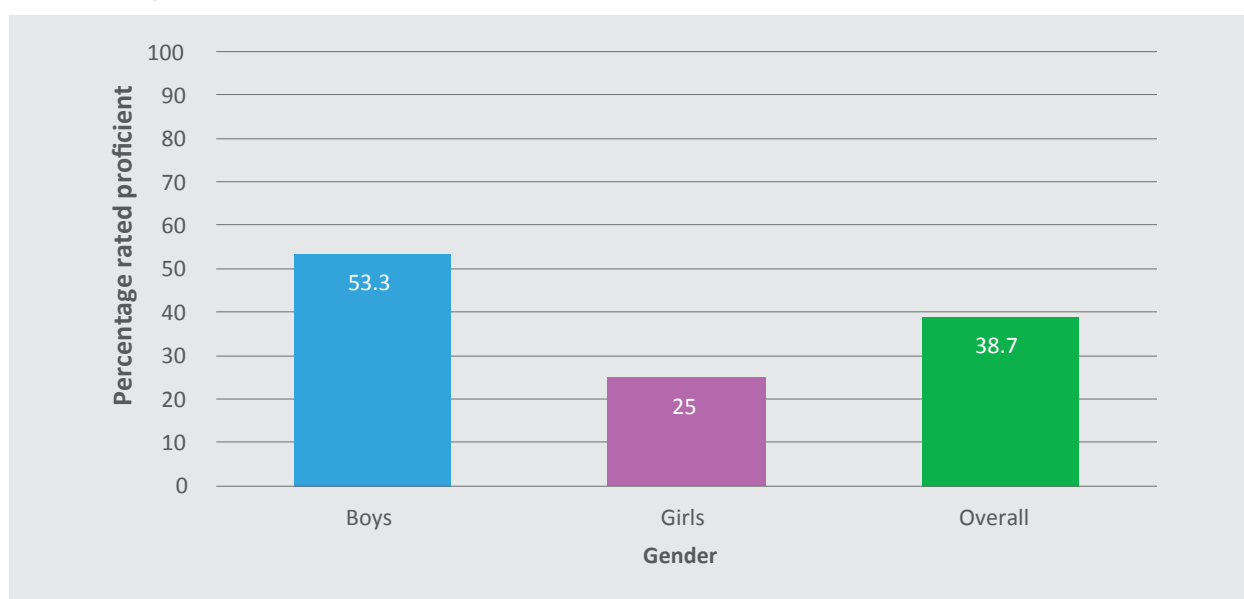
Results indicated that only 5% of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in the Observation sub-skill. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners who are deaf that are rated proficient in the Observation sub-skill ( $p = 0.739$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient in the Observation sub-skill (5.1%) was much lower than the national level achievement in the Listening sub-skill (26.0%) (Ref. Figure 7.1).

#### 7.7.2 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE BLIND, BY GENDER

This sub-section describes the achievement in the Listening sub-skill for S 2 learners who are blind. The percentage of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient is shown in Figure 7.8.

**Figure 7.8** Percentage of S 2 Learners who are Blind that are Rated Proficient in the Listening Sub-Skill, by Gender



Results indicated that almost 4 in 10 (38.7%) of the S 2 learners who are blind were rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners who are blind that are rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill ( $p = 0.103$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient in the Listening sub-skill (38.7%) was higher than the national achievement in the Listening sub-skill (26.0%) (Ref. Figure 7.1).

## 7.8 DETERMINANTS OF S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN THE LISTENING SUB-SKILL

This section presents the findings of the binary logistic regression analysis on the determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in the Listening sub-skill. The determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in the Listening sub-skill are presented in Table 7.2.

**Table 7.2** Determinants of S 2 Learners' achievement in the Listening Sub-skill

| Variable                 | Category         | OR   | p            | [95% Conf. Interval] |
|--------------------------|------------------|------|--------------|----------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>            | Boy              | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Girl             | 0.88 | 0.167        | 0.724 - 1.058        |
| <b>Age*</b>              | 13               | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | 14               | 0.25 | <b>0.001</b> | 0.109 - 0.576        |
|                          | 15               | 0.17 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.067 - 0.427        |
|                          | 16               | 0.10 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.040 - 0.257        |
|                          | 17               | 0.06 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.022 - 0.160        |
|                          | 18               | 0.03 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.009 - 0.092        |
|                          | 19+              | 0.02 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.006 - 0.044        |
| <b>Schooling status*</b> | Day scholar      | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Boarder          | 2.15 | <b>0.000</b> | 1.505 - 3.066        |
| <b>School location*</b>  | Urban            | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Rural            | 0.42 | <b>0.000</b> | 0.281 - 0.636        |
| <b>School Ownership</b>  | Government Aided | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Private          | 1.12 | 0.695        | 0.629 - 2.000        |

**Note.** OR-Odds Ratio,  $p=p$ -value, \* Significant at  $p < 0.05$ , – Reference Category

Results in Table 7.2 indicate that age, schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in the Listening sub-skill.

### Findings showed that:

**Gender:** Boys and girls had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Listening sub-skill (OR = 0.88, 95% CI [0.724, 1.058]).

**Age:** Learners aged 14 years and above had lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Listening sub-skill than those aged 13 years (OR = 0.02, 95% CI [0.006, 0.044]).

**Schooling Status:** Learners who are boarders had a significantly higher chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Listening sub-skill than day scholars (OR = 2.15, 95% CI [1.505, 3.066]).

**School Location:** Learners in schools in rural areas had a significantly lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Listening sub-skill than those in schools in urban areas (OR = 0.42, 95% CI [0.281, 0.636]).

**School Ownership:** Learners in both private and government schools had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Listening sub-skill (OR = 1.12, 95% CI [0.629, 2.000]).

7.9 AREA OF DIFFICULTY FOR LEARNERS

In the Listening sub-skill, even the highly proficient learners exhibited difficulty in the learning area shown in Table 7.3.

Table 7. 3 Area of Difficulty for Learners

| AREA OF DIFFICULTY                                                                     |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Analysing texts and describing the relationship between characters with justification. |

## CHAPTER 8

# ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE, THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL



### KEY FINDINGS

- 73.6% of S 2 learners were rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill with no significant gender difference.
- 55.0% of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in the Signing sub-skill with no significant gender difference.
- 86.4% of the S 2 learners who are blind were rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill with no significant gender difference.
- Schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in the Speaking sub-skill.
- Even the highly proficient learners experienced difficulties in engaging and relating with the audience when speaking.

This chapter presents the achievement of S 2 learners in the Speaking sub-skill. Learners' achievement is categorised into four proficiency levels: lowly proficient, moderately proficient, proficient, and highly proficient. The competences associated with each proficiency level for S 2 learners are outlined in Table 8.1

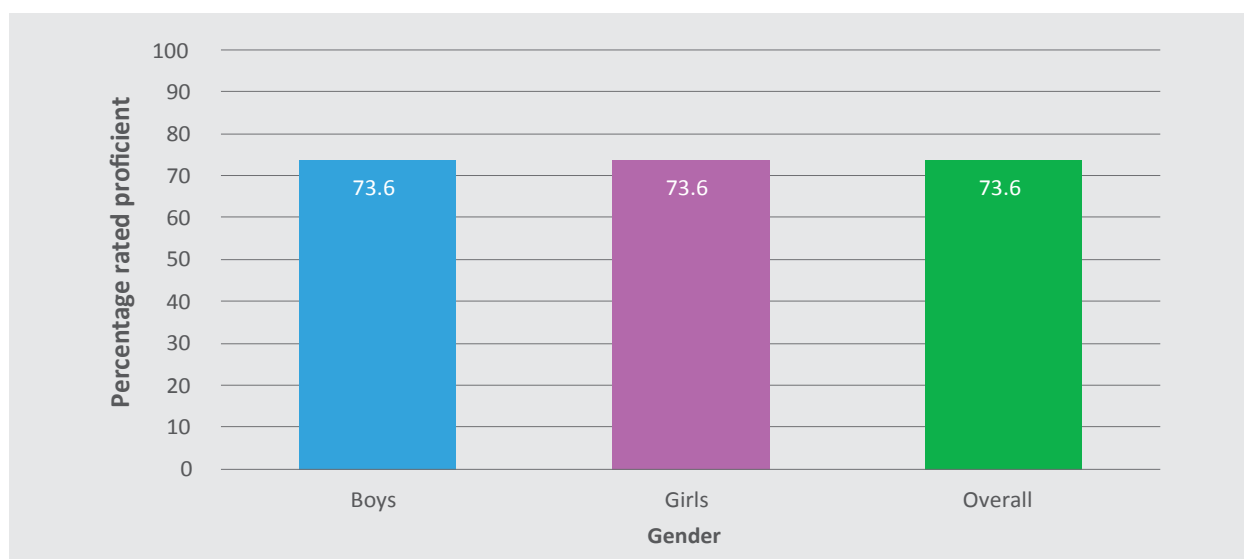
**Table 8.1 Description of Competencies Assessed in the Speaking Sub-Skill at S 2, by Proficiency Levels**

| PROFICIENCY LEVELS           | COMPETENCES                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Lowly proficient</b>      | Learners in this category can: speak audibly and articulate words clearly; state only one idea; greet/ introduce self.                                                                                               |
| <b>Moderately proficient</b> | In addition to exhibiting the competences in the above proficiency level, learners in this category can: state and explain an idea when speaking; manage allotted time; conclude and resolve the speech.             |
| <b>Proficient</b>            | In addition to the above competences, learners in this category can: organise ideas logically; use appropriate vocabulary; use appropriate body language.                                                            |
| <b>Highly proficient</b>     | Learners in this category not only exhibit competences in the earlier mentioned proficiency levels, but can: also engage and relate with the audience; state, explain and illustrate an idea clearly, when speaking. |

### 8.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER

This section presents the national level achievement level of S 2 learners in the Speaking sub-skill, as shown in Figure 8.1.

**Figure 8.1** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Speaking Sub-Skill, by Gender

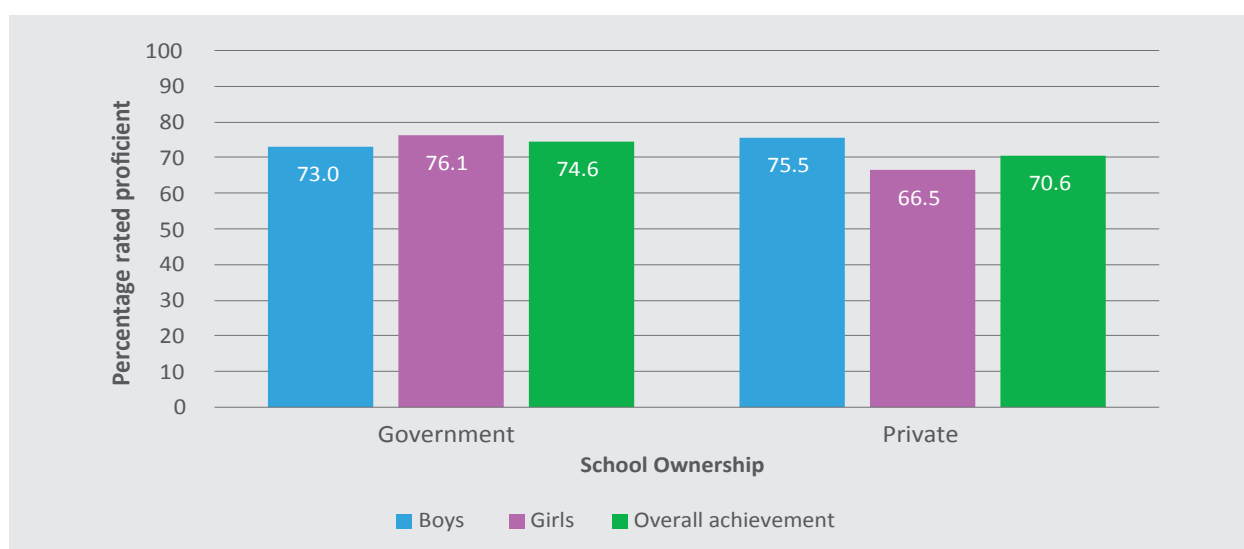


Results show that 74% of S 2 learners were rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill. The proportion of girls rated proficient (73.6%) was not significantly higher than that of boys (73.6%) ( $p = 0.991$ ). These findings suggest that the CBC enhances the ability of learners to express their ideas through learner-led presentations and group discussions.

## 8.2 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL OWNERSHIP

The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill, by gender and school ownership, is presented in Figure 8.2.

**Figure 8.2** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Speaking Sub-Skill, by Gender and School Ownership



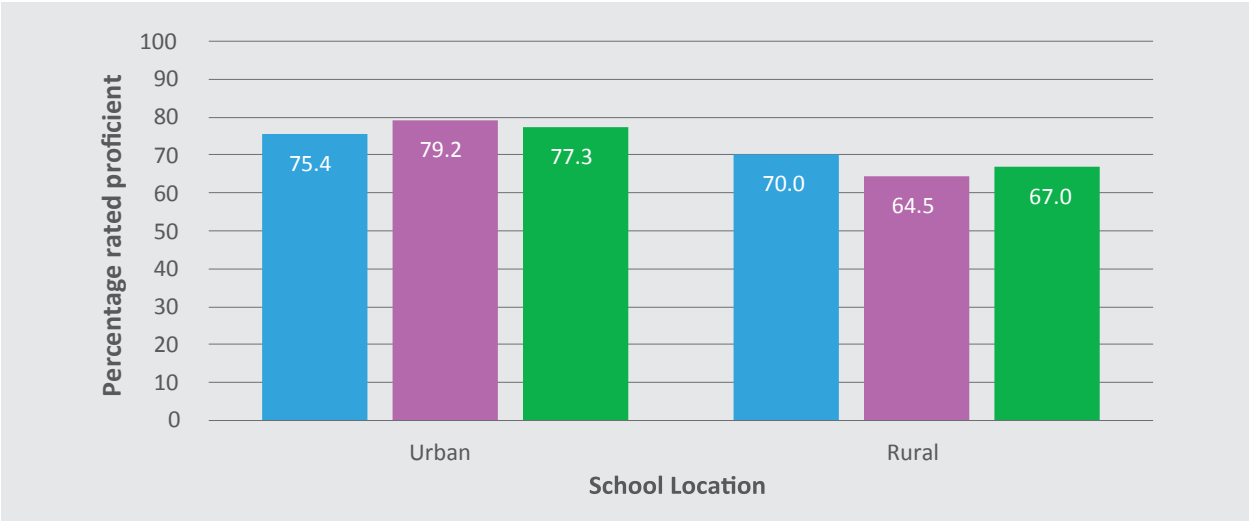
There was no significant difference in the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill between private schools (70.6%) and government schools (74.6%) ( $p = 0.326$ ). The proportion of boys in private schools (75.5%) rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill was significantly higher than that of the girls (66.5%) in the same category ( $p = 0.036$ ). However, there was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners in government schools rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill ( $p=0.439$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in private schools rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill (70.6%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Speaking sub-skill (73.6%) (Ref. Figure 8.1).

### 8.3 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND SCHOOL LOCATION

This section presents the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill, by gender and school location, as shown in Figure 8.3.

**Figure 8.3** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Speaking Sub-Skill, by Gender and School Location



The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill in urban schools (77.3%) was significantly higher than that of learners in rural schools (67.0%) ( $p = 0.003$ ). The proportion of boys in rural schools (70.0%) rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill was significantly higher than that of girls (64.5%) ( $p = 0.022$ ). However, there was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners in urban schools rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill ( $p=0.365$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners in rural schools rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill (67.0%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Speaking sub-skill (73.6%) (Ref. Figure 8.1).

### 8.4 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL, BY AGE

This section presents the achievement of S 2 learners in the Speaking sub-skill by age. The percentage of learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill is shown in Figure 8.4.

**Figure 8.4** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Speaking Sub-Skill, by Age

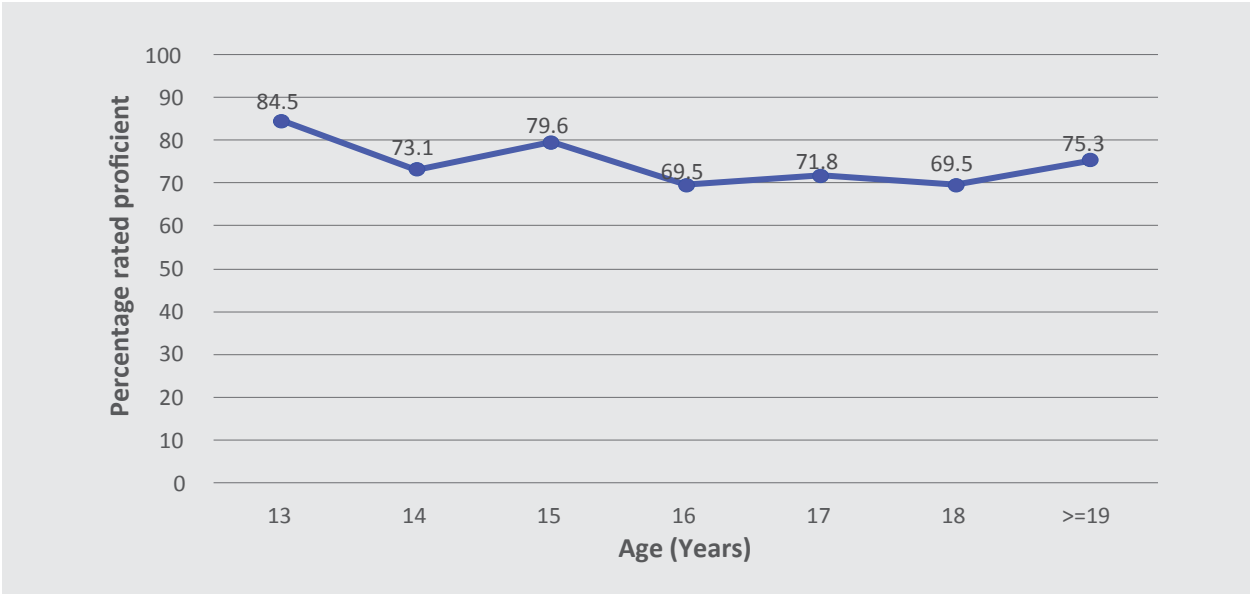
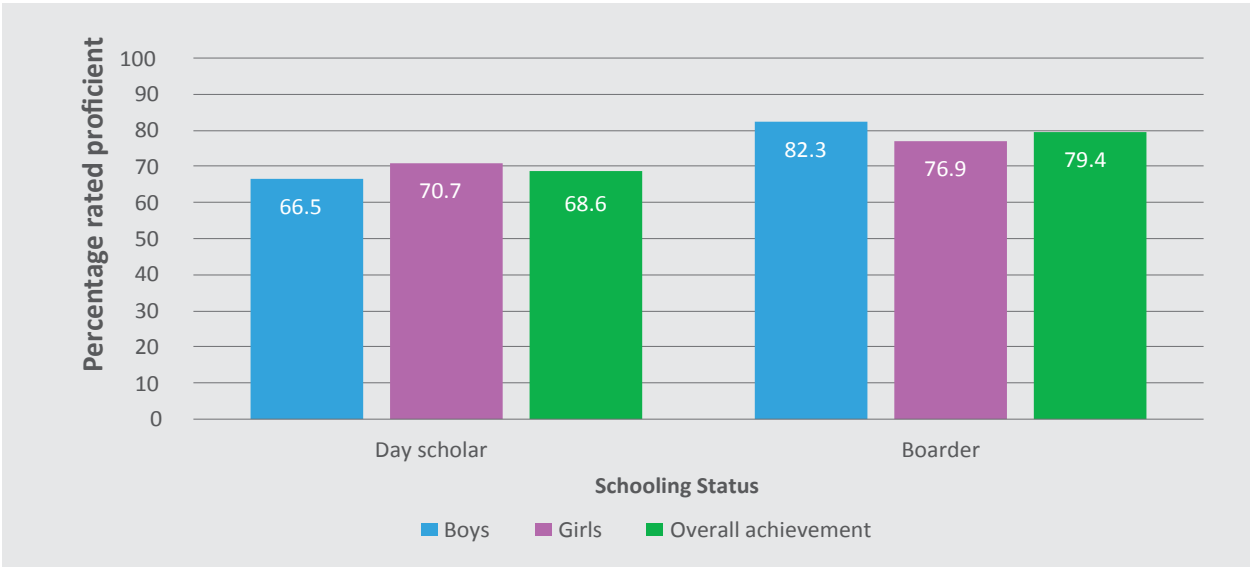


Figure 8.4 shows that the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill fluctuates with age. The highest proportion of learners rated proficient (84.5%) was observed at age 13.

**8.5 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL, BY GENDER AND SCHOOLING STATUS**

The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill, by gender and schooling status, is shown in Figure 8.5.

**Figure 8.5** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Speaking Sub-Skill, by Gender and Schooling Status



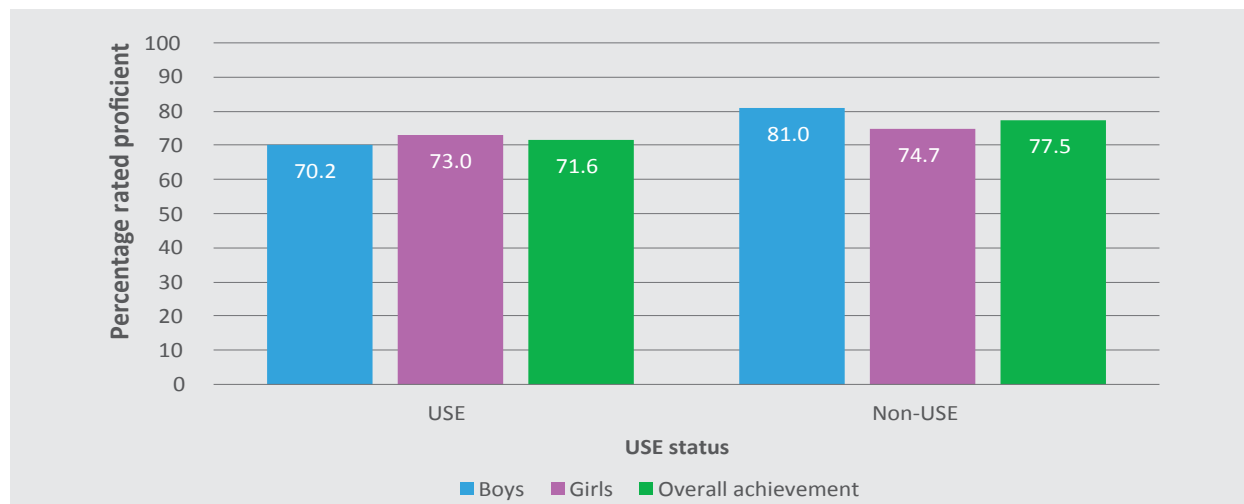
The proportion of S 2 learners who are boarders and rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill (79.4%) was significantly higher than that of the day scholars (68.6%) ( $p = 0.028$ ). Never the less, there was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill, regardless of the schooling status (Day scholar,  $p = 0.411$ ; Boarder,  $p = 0.129$ ).

Overall, the proportion of day scholars rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill (68.6%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Speaking sub-skill (73.6%) (Ref. Figure 8.1).

## 8.6 ACHIEVEMENT OF S 2 LEARNERS IN THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL, BY USE STATUS AND GENDER

The proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill, by gender and USE status, is shown in Figure 8.6.

**Figure 8.6** Percentage of S 2 Learners Rated Proficient in the Speaking Sub-Skill, by Gender and USE Status



There was no significant difference in the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill in either USE (71.6%) or Non-USE schools (77.5%) ( $p=0.176$ ). Similarly, there was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill, regardless of the school USE status (USE,  $p = 0.489$ ; Non-USE,  $p = 0.118$ ).

Overall, the proportion of S 2 learners rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill in USE schools (71.6%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Speaking sub-skill (73.6%) (Ref. Figure 8.1).

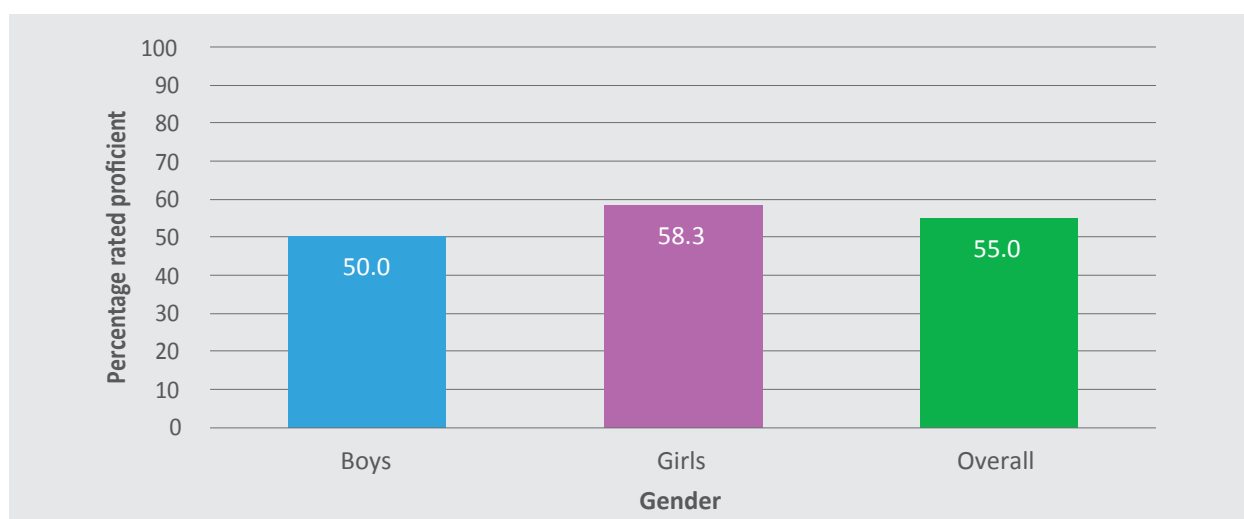
## 8.7 ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL, FOR S 2 LEARNERS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS

This section presents the achievement in the Speaking/Signing sub-skill for S 2 learners who are blind and those who are deaf. The results for achievement of learners with Special Education Needs were only disaggregated by gender because of the small number of learners.

### 8.7.1 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN SIGNING SUB-SKILL (SPEAKING SUB-SKILL), FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE DEAF, BY GENDER

This sub-section describes the achievement in the Signing sub-skill for S 2 learners who are deaf. The percentage of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient is shown in Figure 8.7.

**Figure 8.7** Percentage of S 2 Learners who are Deaf that are Rated Proficient in the Signing Sub-Skill, by Gender



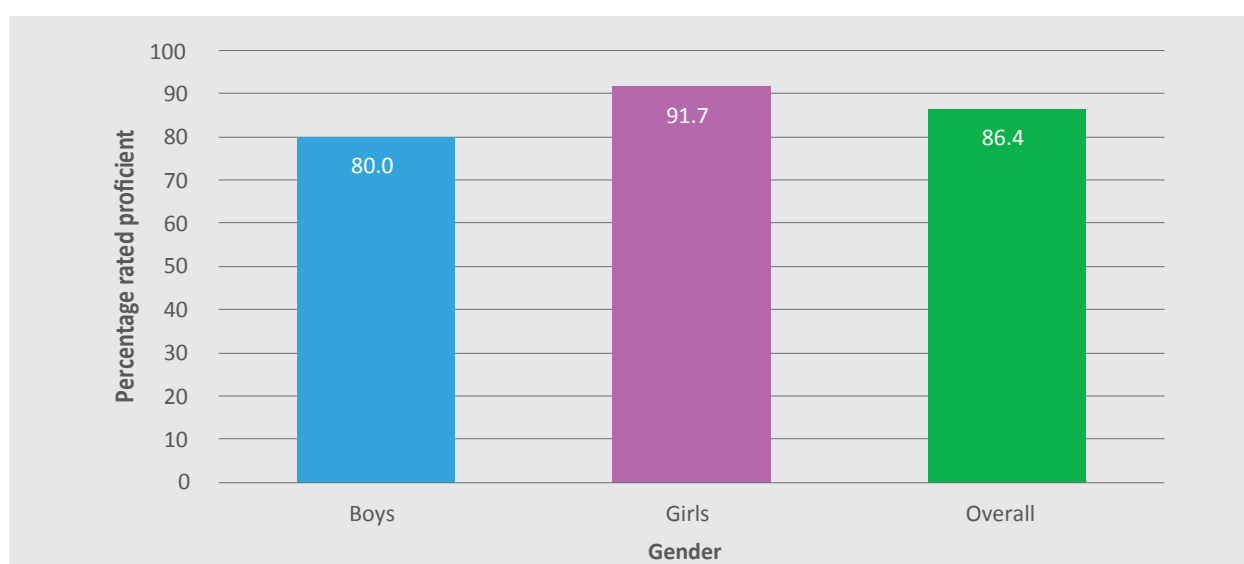
Results showed that more than half (55.0%) of the S 2 learners who are deaf were rated proficient in the Signing sub-skill. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners who are deaf that rated proficient in the Signing sub-skill ( $p=0.718$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are deaf that are rated proficient in the Signing sub-skill (55.0%) was lower than the national level achievement in the Speaking sub-skill (73.6%) (Ref. Figure 8.1).

#### 8.7.2 OVERALL LEVEL OF ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL, FOR THE S 2 LEARNERS WHO ARE BLIND, BY GENDER

This sub-section describes the achievement in the Speaking sub-skill for S 2 learners who are blind. The percentage of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill is shown in Figure 8.8.

**Figure 8.8** Percentage of S 2 Learners who are Blind that are Rated Proficient in the Speaking Sub-Skill, by Gender



Overall, about 9 in 10 (86.4%) of the S 2 learners who are blind were rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill. There was no significant gender difference in the proportion of learners who are blind that rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill ( $p=0.921$ ).

The proportion of S 2 learners who are blind that are rated proficient in the Speaking sub-skill (86.4%) was higher than the national level achievement in the Speaking sub-skill (73.6%) (Ref. Figure 8.1).

## 8.8 DETERMINANTS OF S 2 LEARNERS' ACHIEVEMENT IN THE SPEAKING SUB-SKILL

This section presents the findings of the binary logistic regression analysis on the determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in the Listening sub-skill. The determinants of S 2 learners' achievement in the Speaking sub-skill are presented in Table 8.2.

**Table 8.2** Determinants of S 2 Learners' achievement in the Speaking Sub-skill

| Variable                 | Category         | OR   | p            | [95% Conf. Interval] |
|--------------------------|------------------|------|--------------|----------------------|
| <b>Gender</b>            | Boy              | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Girl             | 1.03 | 0.876        | 0.728 -1.451         |
| <b>Age</b>               | 13               | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | 14               | 0.47 | 0.694        | 0.011 - 20.302       |
|                          | 15               | 0.74 | 0.837        | 0.040 - 13.625       |
|                          | 16               | 0.48 | 0.640        | 0.021 - 10.915       |
|                          | 17               | 0.60 | 0.753        | 0.024 - 15.029       |
|                          | 18               | 0.54 | 0.709        | 0.022 - 13.468       |
|                          | 19+              | 0.77 | 0.874        | 0.031 - 18.977       |
| <b>Schooling status*</b> | Day scholar      | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Boarder          | 1.93 | <b>0.004</b> | 1.243 - 2.989        |
| <b>School location*</b>  | Urban            | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Rural            | 0.60 | <b>0.004</b> | 0.426 - 0.845        |
| <b>School Ownership</b>  | Government Aided | –    | –            | –                    |
|                          | Private          | 0.72 | 0.055        | 0.508 - 1.007        |

**Note.** OR-Odds Ratio, p=p-value, \* Significant at  $p < 0.05$ , – Reference Category

Results in Table 8.2 indicate that schooling status and school location were key determinants of learners' achievement in the Speaking sub-skill.

### Findings showed that:

**Gender:** Boys and girls had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Speaking sub-skill (OR = 1.03, 95% CI [0.728, 1.451]).

**Schooling Status:** Learners who are boarders had a significantly higher chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Speaking sub-skill than day scholars (OR = 1.93, 95% CI [1.243, 2.989]).

**School Location:** Learners in schools in rural areas had a significantly lower chance of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Speaking sub-skill than those in schools in urban areas (OR = 0.60, 95% CI [0.426, 0.845]).

**School Ownership:** Learners in both private and government schools had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency level in the Speaking sub-skill (OR = 0.72, 95% CI [0.508, 1.007]).

## 8.9 AREAS OF DIFFICULTY FOR LEARNERS

In the Speaking sub-skill, even the highly proficient learners exhibited difficulty in the learning area shown in Table 8.3.

**Table 8.3** Area of Difficulty for Learners

| AREA OF DIFFICULTY                                     |
|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Engaging and relating with the audience when speaking. |

## CHAPTER 9

# STAKEHOLDERS' ADHERENCE TO THE LOWER SECONDARY CURRICULUM GUIDELINES ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

This chapter presents findings on stakeholders' adherence to the LSC guidelines on the implementation of CA at the S 2 class level. The LSC dictates the conduct of CA alongside summative assessment.

The curriculum guidelines focused on during FGDs and interviews included; availability of syllabus books at the school, adherence to instruction time, learners' sitting arrangement during lessons, administration of Activities of Integration (AoI) after every topic, provision of assessment feedback to learners, integration of generic skills in assessment, involvement of parents in CA activities, learners' access to reading materials, utilisation of time allocated for project work, and keeping of project portfolios by teachers and learners.

### 9.1 AVAILABILITY OF SYLLABUS BOOKS IN SCHOOLS

Most of the headteachers (87%) reported that their schools have syllabus books. One of the headteachers remarked:

*"We have syllabus books that teachers use for scheming, lesson planning, and evaluation."*

Another headteacher remarked:

*"Teachers use the syllabus books for determining syllabus coverage."*

In contrast, headteachers in 13% of the schools reported that their schools did not have copies of the lower secondary syllabus books. The absence of lower secondary syllabus books was highlighted during interviews with headteachers, one of whom remarked:

*"We never received hard copies of the syllabus books; however, some teachers have soft copies stored on their phones."*

This suggests that schools without copies of the lower secondary syllabus books may not be adhering to the lower secondary curriculum guidelines for implementation of CA.

### 9.2 COMPONENTS OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

This section describes the level of adherence to selected LSC guidelines with regard to the implementation of the CA.

#### 9.2.1 INSTRUCTION TIME

Teachers in almost all the schools (98.9%), reported that they conduct lessons after 3:00 pm., beyond the stipulated time. They asserted that this was done to ensure the early completion of syllabus content. This was observed during group interviews with teachers, during which they remarked:

*"The school administration always tasks us to ensure that we complete the syllabus by the end of S 3 class. As a result, we teach during the early morning hours, and sometimes after regular lesson time, we give activities of integration to learners."*

These findings were corroborated by learners from 64.2% of secondary schools who reported that teachers conducted extra lessons outside official school hours, that is, before 8:00 am, at night, or during weekends, a practice that contravenes established curriculum guidelines. Indeed, findings indicated that in 2 out of 5 of the schools for ordinary learners, lessons started earlier than the recommended time of 8:00 am.

On the contrary, this was not the case with SNE schools. During FGDs, SEN learners said:

***“Our teachers do not conduct extra lessons.”***

The findings indicate that many schools have continued to rely on extended instructional time to ensure completion of the syllabus content before the recommended time. While this approach may have helped learners access more content, it raises concerns about learner fatigue, teacher workload, potential decline in quality of learning and effective implementation of the curriculum.

### 9.2.2 SITTING ARRANGEMENT DURING LESSONS

The LSC recommends group formation during lessons, and this was evident in the findings, which showed that S 2 learners in 91% of schools sit in groups of 5-12 during lessons. During FGDs, learners remarked:

***“We conduct most of our class activities in groups, including discussions, assignments, research, and project work. The discussions enable us to share ideas with our colleagues, enhance our understanding, and make learning more enjoyable.”***

Group formation during lessons is feasible where there is ample classroom space, and findings indicate that teachers in 69% of schools reported having appropriate space for such arrangements. Making learners sit in groups encourages peer engagement, participation, collaborative problem-solving and enhances overall learning achievement. The fact that a considerable number of schools with adequate space utilized these arrangements for group activities during lessons indicates a strong alignment with the pedagogical goals.

### 9.2.3 ADMINISTRATION OF ACTIVITIES OF INTEGRATION AND PROVISION OF FEEDBACK TO LEARNERS

Results showed that in 83% of the schools, teachers reported that they administer Aol to learners in all subjects at the end of every topic. In one of the

group interviews with teachers, they remarked:

***“We generate Aols as a department using knowledge and skills acquired from trainings, and sometimes we use Artificial Intelligence (AI) to generate the activities of integration for the learners.”***

In another group interview, teachers remarked:

***“We get Activities of Integration from the teachers’ WhatsApp groups.”***

Obtaining activities of integration from social media platforms indicates that some teachers lack knowledge and skills to develop activities of integration. This practice can be detrimental to learners where the Aols are not aligned to their experiences and syllabus coverage.

As a good practice, learners who missed Aol in 86% of the schools were given another set to do. The provision of another Aol to learners who missed the initial set reflects an inclusive approach to assessment. In one of the group interviews with learners, learners stated:

***“In case we miss the activity of integration, our teachers organise a day and all those that missed sit for another activity of integration.”***

During interviews with headteachers, one of them said that when a learner misses an Aol, teachers always administer another one.

To ensure that teachers administer Aol and provide feedback to the learners, headteachers are expected to monitor and supervise them. This was reflected in the findings which showed that headteachers in 4 out of 5 schools reported supervising and monitoring CA activities. During interviews with headteachers, one of them remarked:

***“We use monitoring tools to check on effective teaching and learning. We also use ICT tools, Director of studies’ records and allocate time for Activities of Integration and projects on the termly program.”***

During another interview, one of the headteachers said:

*“At the beginning of every term, we provide clear guidelines to teachers and learners regarding when to conduct Activities of Integration and projects. The Director of Studies normally supervises and monitors their work.”*

Similarly, another headteacher stated:

*“We set deadlines and send reminders to teachers so that all records of Activities of Integration are forwarded to the Director of Studies and incorporated into the learners’ termly reports.”*

These findings suggest that majority of the headteachers are monitoring and supervising the administration of activities of integration to learners. But the practice of setting deadlines for teachers to administer Aols is against the spirit of the curriculum because the time for completing a topic may not be the same for all the subjects.

In regard to the provision of feedback to learners, results show that learners in three quarters (76.3%) of the schools reported getting feedback on the Aols across all subjects. Meanwhile, learners in 21% of the schools got feedback in only some subjects, and learners in 2.7% of the schools did not get any feedback at all. This situation implies that some learners may struggle to recognize whether they have acquired the necessary competencies and skills, and it may also hinder the identification of areas requiring improvement.

#### 9.2.4 INTEGRATION OF GENERIC SKILLS IN ASSESSMENT

The FGDs with learners focused on the integration of four generic skills in the teaching learning process by teachers, that is; Communication, Cooperation and self-directed learning, Mathematical computations and ICT Proficiency, Critical Thinking and problem solving.

**Communication:** Learners in 80% of the schools reported that their teachers ensured they made presentations during lessons.

**Cooperation and Self-directed Learning:** Learners in 90% of the schools reported that their teachers ensured participation in group activities during lessons.

**Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** Results revealed that teachers in 82% of the schools exposed learners to tasks requiring critical thinking and problem-solving.

**Mathematical Computations and ICT Proficiency:** Learners in only 41% of schools reported that their teachers provided tasks requiring the use of ICT for conducting research.

During one of the FGDs with learners, they stated:

*“Through group discussions, class presentations and research assignments, teachers are helping us to develop communication skills, team work, critical thinking and problem-solving skills as well as ICT skills.”*

These findings from learners were supported by teachers’ views where in one of the group interviews, teachers asserted:

*“While learners are actively participating in group activities, we are able to assess how; they collaborate, show respect for themselves and others, communicate effectively, and provide solutions to challenges that require critical thinking.”*

However, the low level of ICT integration in schools implies that most of the schools lack functional ICT infrastructure capable of supporting digital learning.

#### 9.2.5 INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS IN CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES

Findings showed that 80% of the parents were aware that CA consists of generic skills and values, project work and Aol. This is supported by learners’ responses that their parents check out for complete notes, errors, marked and unmarked work, handwriting, activities done, and dates in their books.

During one of the FGDs with learners, they said:

***“Our parents check books to find out whether we have notes, the exercises have marked, and then they ask some questions about what they find in the books.”***

On the contrary, results indicated that some of the parents/guardians do not check their children’s work because they are either busy or not aware of its importance. During one of the FGDs with learners, they revealed that:

***“Our parents always leave home very early in the morning, at around 5:00 a.m., to go for work, and most of the time they return when we are already asleep.”***

While other learners said:

***“Some of our parents are not educated and they do not understand this curriculum.”***

This was affirmed during interviews with parents, where one of them expressed disappointment by saying:

***“There is no positioning of learners in class, so I can’t tell how they are performing. The grading is different from that of the old curriculum and I do not understand them.”***

While, another parent remarked:

***“Yes, I have some ideas about the new curriculum, but the school needs to explain how marks are awarded, as it is difficult to interpret them.”***

While many parents were aware of continuous assessment, the findings indicate that parental involvement remained low. Factors such as limited understanding of assessment procedures and demanding work schedules reduced the effectiveness of home-based support. This highlights the need for schools with such parents to continue providing clear guidance and sensitization to parents in order to enhance their role in reinforcing learning.

## 9.2.6 ACCESS TO READING MATERIALS

Results indicated that learners in 97% of the schools had access to reading materials from the school library/book store. During one of the FGDs, learners remarked:

***“Our school allows us to use the books throughout the whole term and return at the end of the term.”***

However, findings also showed that 24.1% of the schools do not allow learners to take textbooks outside the library because of fear that they would lose them, have limited copies, or want to prevent mishandling. This was observed during FGDs where learners said:

***“We are allowed to read only within the school library.”***

This was also observed during another FGD where learners said:

***“Without a school ID, the librarian does not allow you to borrow a text book.”***

Whereas there is accessibility, teachers in 67% of the schools reported that the reading materials are not enough for the learners. This was noted during one of the FGDs where learners remarked:

***“We have very few copies of the learners’ textbooks at our school so we are not allowed to borrow.”***

To manage the situation, some teachers encourage learners to share the available textbooks in groups. This was observed during one of the group interviews where teachers remarked:

***“With the few books available, we manage by; grouping learners, reading from the available learners’ textbook, photocopy specific pages and use them as extracts.”***

While most learners had access to reading materials, the limited availability and restrictions on borrowing could reduce their opportunity for cooperation and self-directed learning. This indicates a need for increasing access to reading materials for under-resourced schools.

### 9.2.7 PROJECT WORK

In only 37% of the schools, learners reported that teachers provide them with the themes in the syllabus to guide their project work. During one of the FGDs with learners, they said:

*“Our teachers provide us with the theme and also guide us to generate ideas that help us come up with a project.”*

However, in another group, learners noted with concern that:

*“Teachers have not guided us on how to conduct project work. They said project work starts in S 3 class.”*

In regard to utilisation of time allocated for project work, learners in 54.1% of the schools reported that they utilised the time allocated for project work on the time table to do their projects. On the contrary, learners in some FGDs said they do not utilise the time allocated for project work. For instance, in one group they remarked:

*“Teachers have not told us why we have not done project work but they keep promising to start, and yet its time is allocated on the time table.”*

Similarly, learners in another FGD noted:

*“Our teachers told us that UNEB does not ask schools to submit scores for project work at S 2 class.”*

In schools where project work is done, learners further reported that they get the resources/materials for the projects from the environment, school, or receive support from their parents. This finding is supported by majority (97%) of the headteachers who reported that parents indeed provide necessary materials towards project work.

During interviews with headteachers, one of them said:

*“Parents provide money for study tours, buying of materials for project work like hand hoes, and provide guidance to learners regarding project implementation.”*

This was affirmed during interviews with parents where one of them asserted:

*“We are always encouraged by the school to support our children’s projects. Recently, my child informed me that they needed bean seeds and some money for their project, which I had to provide.”*

The lower secondary curriculum stipulates that all teachers must keep records of learners’ scores in Project work and Aols. However, results showed that teachers in only half of the schools carried out project work and kept learners’ records.

Regarding inclusiveness of SEN learners, headteachers reported that they organised trainings to ensure that teachers acquired the necessary skills and knowledge to support SEN learners and to create a supportive learning environment during project work.

### 9.2.8 CHALLENGES FACED BY SOME OF THE SELECTED STAKEHOLDERS IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF CONTINUOUS ASSESSMENT

This sub-section presents the challenges that headteachers, teachers, and parents face in the implementation of CA.

#### a) Headteachers

(i) **Inadequate resources for CA:** Many schools do not have sufficient teaching and learning materials, textbooks, or assessment tools, which makes it difficult for headteachers to effectively monitor and implement CA activities. This was evident during interviews where headteachers remarked:

*“It is expensive to conduct CA recurrently in terms of stationery and electricity.”*

During interviews, one of the headteacher of an SNE school remarked:

*“Provision of equipment like braille machines, papers, orbit 20 readers and talking scientific calculators for SEN learners is quite expensive.”*

- (ii) **Limited parental support towards learners' project work:** Some parents do not provide the necessary resources or guidance for learners' project work, which affects learners' ability to complete tasks successfully. During interviews, one of the headteachers said:

*"We are really struggling; some parents are not supporting their children with the necessary materials needed for project work."*

- (iii) **Negative attitude of teachers towards CA:**

A few teachers perceive CA as additional workload without sufficient incentives or training, which may reduce their enthusiasm and commitment to fully implement CA. This was observed during interviews where a headteacher remarked:

*"Some teachers are trying to follow the guidelines provided to schools but we still have those that are unwilling to implement CA as it should be done."*

- (iv) **Teachers' limited knowledge on scoring of CA:**

Many teachers lack clear guidelines or training on how to accurately assess learners' performance in Aols and project work, resulting in inconsistent scoring. This was evident during interviews where a headteacher stated:

*"My staff have attended very few trainings on CA, and there are many who are new in the profession."*

- (v) **Overcrowded classrooms:** large class sizes make it difficult for headteachers to ensure that CA activities are conducted effectively, and it limits the attention given to individual learners. During interviews with headteachers, they noted:

*"Teachers are overwhelmed with large numbers of learners; this has made it very difficult to follow up learners individually."*

- (vi) **Limited time available for assessment of CA:**

The need for early completion of the syllabus results into increased teaching load which reduces the time allocated for teachers to

plan, administer, and provide feedback on CA activities. Additionally, headteachers reported during interviews that most of their staff travel long distances to school and they have very few housing facilities yet some CA activities require enough time.

## **b) Parents**

- (i) **Too many demands from the schools**

**concerning projects:** Parents often feel overwhelmed by the materials and financial support requested by schools to complete project work, which can limit their engagement. During interviews with parents, one of them said:

*"Sometimes the materials required for projects are not readily available, and study tours organised by the school for the learners are too many and very expensive."*

- (ii) **Limited sensitization about CA:** Some parents have limited understanding of the CA process, its objectives, and the role they should play, which hinders their ability to monitor and support their children effectively. This was evident during interviews where a parent remarked:

*"Personally, I enjoy supporting my children, and I have supported those who completed school. However, with the one currently in S 2, I find it difficult to understand the project work and Activities of Integration they are doing. It would be helpful if the school could organize a parents' meeting to explain these aspects."*

## **c) Teachers**

- (i) **Large class size of learners makes it difficult to assess learners individually:**

Teachers reported that they struggle to provide personalized feedback and assess each learner's performance accurately due to overcrowded classrooms. During group interviews with teachers, they said:

*"Assessing generic skills and values is time consuming, and it is very challenging to observe these skills and values in the large S 2 class we have."*

**(ii) There is no standard way of reporting on generic skills and values:** The absence of a standardized framework for assessing communication, cooperation and self-directed learning, critical thinking and problem solving, Mathematical computations and ICT Proficiency makes it challenging to evaluate learners consistently.

During group interviews, teachers remarked:

*“We do not have a standardized tool for recording student scores in generic skills and values.”*

**(iii) Lack of sufficient training on assessment of generic skills and values:** Most of the teachers reported that they have not received adequate training on how to assess and report on these skills, leading to gaps in evaluation quality.

This was evident during group interviews with teachers where they remarked:

*“We have attended very few trainings on CA, most of us need more training on how to use the UNEB software for managing CA scores.”*

**(iv) Limited number of lessons to assess every learner:** Teachers reported that they cannot fully assess all learners in every subject or integrate comprehensive skills assessment into regular lessons. During group interviews, teachers said:

*“We are trying to assess generic skills, but the time allocated per lesson is not enough to fully assess every learner.”*

## CHAPTER 10

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the conclusions, areas of difficulty for learners and recommendations of the survey.

### 10.1 CONCLUSIONS

#### Overall Levels of Learners' Achievement

- Nationally, fewer learners at S 2 class are rated proficient in Biology compared to Mathematics and English Language.
- In Mathematics and Biology, more boys than girls were rated proficient. However, in English Language (Writing and Listening sub-skills), more girls than boys were rated proficient.
- Over the years 2014 and 2025, the percentages of S 2 learners rated proficient in Mathematics, Biology and English Writing sub-skill increased by a large percentage margin.

#### Achievement Levels of Learners with Special Education Needs

- Overall, more learners who are blind than those who are deaf were rated proficient in Mathematics, General Science and English Language.
- The proportion of SEN learners who were rated proficient was lowest in the Observation/ Listening sub-skill.
- The proportion of S 2 learners who are deaf and those who are blind that were rated proficient in Mathematics, General Science and English Language (Writing and Observation/Listening sub-skills) was lower than the national level achievement. However, the proportion of learners who are blind and rated proficient was higher than that of the national level achievement in the Speaking sub-skill.

#### Determinants of S 2 Learners' Achievement

Schooling status and school location had significant effect on S 2 learners' achievement of the required minimum proficiency level in Mathematics, Biology and English Language. Gender had a significant effect on a learner's ability to achieve the required minimum proficiency level in only Mathematics and Biology, while age of the learner had a significant effect on Mathematics, the Writing sub-skill and the Listening sub-skill.

With regard to school ownership, learners in both government and private schools had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency levels in Mathematics, Biology and English Language. Similarly, learners in both USE and Non-USE schools had equal chances of achieving the required minimum proficiency levels.

#### Stakeholders' adherence to the Lower Secondary Curriculum guidelines on the implementation of CA

Majority of the schools have implemented the curriculum guidelines regarding; sitting arrangement during lessons, administration of activities of integration and provision of feedback to learners, integration of generic skills in assessment, involvement of parents in continuous assessment activities, and learners' access to reading materials.

Nonetheless, some of the schools have not followed the curriculum guidelines in regard to; instruction time, development of activities of integration - that is, most teachers have a set deadline for the administration of Aols and do not develop their own activities of integration, integration of ICT in research work at school, and conduct of project work at S 2 class.

## 10.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations and corresponding responsibility centre are presented in Table 10.1.

**Table 10.1 Recommendations**

| S/N | Specific Actions                                                                                                                                                                             | Responsible institutions                                | Timelines               | Resource Implications                                                                                        | Monitoring Indicators                                                                                                            |
|-----|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|     | Embrace the use of graph boards and books to solve the challenges of plotting points, drawing bars and representing data in form of a line graph, including identifying lines of reflection. | Schools                                                 | Ongoing                 | Graph boards, graph books, Mathematical sets                                                                 | Number of teachers utilising graph boards; Percentage of learners able to represent/interpret information on the graph           |
| 1.  | Integrate scientific investigation skills in the teaching and learning process (e.g., laboratory experiments, fieldwork, community projects).                                                | Schools, MoES, NGOs                                     | Long-term (3-5 years)   | Infrastructure, laboratory equipments, community partnerships                                                | Number of science laboratories constructed, laboratory equipments supplied, and experiments conducted; student engagement levels |
| 2.  | Affirmative action should be taken to support girls in Mathematics and Sciences.                                                                                                             | MoES                                                    | Short-term (1-2 years)  | Teacher training, learning materials, mentorship programs, community engagement, scholarships and incentives | Percentage of girls rated proficient in Mathematics and Sciences compared to boys                                                |
| 3.  | Train teachers on effective strategies for teaching and assessing listening comprehension and speaking.                                                                                      | Teacher Training Institutions, TETD, UNEB               | Medium-term (2-3 years) | Training workshops, manuals, facilitation costs                                                              | Proportion of teachers trained.                                                                                                  |
| 4.  | Train more teachers on the integration of generic skills and values in assessment.                                                                                                           | TETD, NCDC, UNEB                                        | Medium-term (2-3 years) | Training workshops, manuals, facilitation costs                                                              | Proportion of teachers trained.                                                                                                  |
| 5.  | Design creative tasks that ensure learners develop their listening and speaking skills through classroom presentations and clubs e.g., debates, drama and dialogues.                         | Schools, NCDC, UNEB, DES, Teacher Training Institutions | Short-term (1-2 years)  | Training workshops, manuals, facilitation costs                                                              | Evidence of tasks designed; and proportion of learners able to ably speak and listen.                                            |
| 6.  | Develop and adapt instructional materials for SEN learners into accessible formats (e.g., braille, large print, audio, simplified texts, sign language dictionary).                          | NCDC, MoES, NUDIPU                                      | Short-term (1-2 years)  | Printing equipment, audio devices, specialized staff                                                         | Number of adapted materials produced; accessibility audits                                                                       |
| 7.  | Standardisation and mandatory inclusion of sign language in the teacher training curriculum                                                                                                  | MoES, Teacher Training Institutions                     | Medium-term (2-3 years) | Sign Language teaching materials                                                                             | Number of teacher training institutions with inclusive sign language curriculum. Number of teachers able to teach sign language  |

| S/N | Specific Actions                                                                                                      | Responsible institutions                                     | Timelines               | Resource Implications                                          | Monitoring Indicators                                                                                                          |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8.  | Integrate the use of ICT tools (e.g., computers, tablets, internet access) into research activities.                  | Schools, MoES, Ministry of ICT and National Guidance         | Short-term (1-2 years)  | ICT infrastructure, training, maintenance costs                | Number of schools with ICT labs; frequency of ICT use in research                                                              |
| 9.  | Develop a policy to regulate the instruction time and enhance the implementation of the curriculum guidelines.        | MoES                                                         | Short-term (1-2 years)  | Low cost (printing/ dissemination of circulars and guidelines) | Percentage of schools operating strictly within official 8:00 am-2:55 pm hours.                                                |
| 10. | Establish a school program to continuously sensitize parents on the interpretation of school reports and their roles. | Schools, Parent-Teacher Associations (PTA)                   | Short-term (1-2 years)  | Low cost (integrated into regular school open-day budgets).    | Attendance rates of parents at sensitization meetings.<br>Percentage of parents reporting clear understanding of report cards. |
| 11. | Ensure that learners start project work in S 1 class                                                                  | DES, UNEB                                                    | Short-term (1-2 years)  | Funds for monitoring                                           | Percentage of schools conducting project work at S 1 class.                                                                    |
| 12. | Conduct comprehensive research studies on learners' achievement gaps.                                                 | MoES, NCDC, DES, UNEB, Universities, Independent researchers | Medium-term (2-3 years) | Research funding, data collection tools, trained researchers   | Research proposals approved; number of studies initiated; Availability of disaggregated datasets; quality of analysis reports  |







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