



**EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS IN CONFLICT
RESOLUTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA AND THE COPPERBELT
UNIVERSITY FROM 2015-2017**

BY

SIMEO KABWE

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DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to my late father Mr. Benedict KABWE, being my first teacher, for his academic mentorship. I also dedicate it to my late mother Martha Mwenya KABWE for her love and care.

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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I, SIMEO KABWE, Hereby declare that this work herein is my own , and that all the works of other persons used have duly been acknowledged and that the work has not been presented to University of Zambia before or any other institution for similar purposes.

Signature..... Date

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation by Simeo KABWE has been approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Master of Science in Peace, Leadership and Conflict Resolution.

Examiner's Signature:

Signature: **Date:**

Signature: **Date:**

Signature: **Date:**

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ABSTRACT

The study explored the effectiveness of student unions in conflict resolutions in public universities: a study of the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt university from 2015-2017. In the study, there was a great need to understand the ways in which university administration make student feel the sense of ownership of the University, how the same administration pay attention to student Union, and the suggested ways to improve the effectiveness of student unions in conflict resolutions in Public universities in Zambia.

The research design used in the study was a descriptive survey design which aimed at obtaining information from representatives of the targeted population. The study employed qualitative approach that used the following research instruments to collect data: questionnaires and one-on-one interview guides. The sample size for the study comprised 2 deans of students, 8 students, 6 student union representatives from both UNZA and CBU, 2 deputy vice chancellors, 2 lecturer Disciplinary committee members, 2 representatives from Ministry of Higher Education and 2 Police representatives. This made the total number of sample size to be 24. The collected data was analyzed according to the emerging themes.

The findings of the study established that, student unions in public universities in Zambia are not effective in conflict resolutions. Among other revealed reasons causing ineffectiveness of student unions include: lack of effective Dialogue and Communication, Lack of training and basic skills in conflict management by student unions, Political interference, new changes in University, delay in payments of meal allowances, lack of mentorship from older unions and often the long procedure before a decision is taken even in urgent issues.

To improve the effectiveness of student union in conflict resolution in public universities in Zambia, the study recommends that, there be an effective and efficient dialogical communication and cooperation among stakeholders, student unions operate without political interference and control, and setting up some training before taking up office by student union so to build their capacity in conflict management. The paying of student meal and other allowances adheres to the schedule of the academic calendar.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

Conflict as it were is largely an omnipotent trait of human societies since it is almost impossible to find two parties or more with entirely overlapping interests without experiencing one form of conflict or another. Etadon (2008) stated that conflict can also be described as a situation in which persons or groups disagree over means and ends as they try to establish their views in preference to others. According to Wilmot and Hocker (2011), conflicts are inevitable in groups and organizations because of the nature of human beings who differ in values, orientation, attitudes and levels of understanding. And the universities being centers of learning, with diverse needs are not left out (Veronica Oguntoye, 2016). Here, a conflict is a struggle (Anih, 2008). Conflict could, therefore, occur in a society anytime and over any issue. Conflict can also be defined and interpreted as behaviours intended to obstruct the achievements of some other person's goals. In this wise, conflict is based on the incompatibility of goals which arises from opposing behaviours.

Conflict can be viewed at the individual, group or organizational levels. There are many types of conflicts, among others: Intra and Inter personal conflicts. These conflicts are different in nature. For example, political, economic, social, religious and structural conflicts. Since these conflicts are omnipresent in human life, there is need for combined efforts by society to engage in conflict prevention and resolution. Institutions such as public universities have their pertinent conflicts (eg, riots, strikes, boycotts, violent demonstrations etc) hence the need to engage in resolving them. The Ministry of Education through the University Act of 1992 of the laws of Zambia commissioned the existence of Student Unions in Universities in order that student unions take charge of student affairs.

This chapter considers the background to the problem of the study, the problem statement, the general and specific objectives from which the main research and sub research questions are framed, and the significance of the study. It also highlights the conflict resolution conceptual framework, noting and defining the operational definition of key terms such as effectiveness, conflict resolution, public university, and student union respectively. The summary concludes the chapter.

1.1 Background to the problem of the study

Generally, the student union is both a student platform for addressing various social, political, academic and corporate issues of the student community and a link between students and university administration. Student leadership participation in the university governance is very important, regardless of their capacity to influence the university's decisions. Student unions performance is not just a single function but a multiplicity of functions, such as mediation among others.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Ministry of Education through the University Act of 1992 of the laws of Zambia commissioned the existence of Student Unions in Universities in order that student unions take charge of Student affairs. This creation of student unions in higher institutions of learning was not only to act as links between students and university management on issues that affect the students life at the campus but also as bodies that have the charge to handle both academic and corporate issues where there are conflicts.

In the recent past, the University of Zambia (UNZA) and the Copperbelt University (CBU) have been experiencing conflicts that have been emanating from different issues ranging from social, political, academic and corporate issues of the Universities. These conflicts have created serious challenges and tensions among others, abrupt closure of the universities, destructive demonstrations, remonstrations, riots, strikes, political interference and other conflicts. Campus conflicts result from disagreement between the authorities and the students. Issues in conflict are mainly those that directly affect the social and academic well-being of the students. Some of the factors mainly responsible for such conflicts both in the past and in the present are: Campus accommodation, allowances, water and sanitation, electricity Supply, academic and other corporate issues. These conflicts have had serious consequences on the academic calendar which results in late completion of the syllabus, leading not only to poor performance by the students but also delay in graduation.

However, due to violent demonstrations, riots and abrupt closure at UNZA-CBU in the recent past, it appears as though student unions are not effective in resolving university conflicts.

This is what has given the researcher the impetus to conduct an investigation into the effectiveness of Student unions in conflict resolution in two selected public universities; the University of Zambia and Copperbelt University from 2015-2017.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the Effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution in two public universities: The University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University from 2015-2017. The study also discusses student leadership as one of the interactions offered by universities and which affects both the academic and social dimensions of student life on campus.

The Zambian Higher Education Act 2013 repealed and replaced the University Act of 1999 provided under paragraph 27(4) of the Third Schedule, the existence of a student's union in a higher learning institution. UNZASU is such a student union comprising two branches at the Great East Road Main Campus and Ridge way Campus. In the past UNZASU used to be an affiliate of confederation student unions called ZANASU. It is important to know that affiliation to ZANASU was by free consent and did not in any way take away the autonomy of students unions. Flowing from the privilege to affiliate to ZANASU was the right of a student union to disassociate from the same. The effects of such disassociation are two-fold; these are that a student union is independent from ZANASU and its regulations, and that ZANASU should not purport to be a mother-body of a disassociated student union (Government of Zambia, 2013).

The Copperbelt University Students' Union known as COBUSU has equally evolved, experienced and addressed almost, if not similar challenges and issues as UNZASU. The Copperbelt University (CBU), located on Jambo Drive, Parklands in Kitwe, is the second largest public Universities in Zambia, UNZA being the first.

Throughout the World, Student leadership in the form of student governance is an input into the education process and an important component in the university management system. Each of the public universities has a student governing body referred to by different names as the student union, or government and in other countries, congress. Whichever title used, this is a body that represents a student parliament that has office bearers who are elected after each academic year. The function and structure of the student union in Zambia's public university system is more or less similar to that in other universities in the rest of the world.

Against this background, this study endeavours to investigate the effectiveness of student unions in conflict resolution in public universities of Zambia with an intent to focus on the University of Zambia (UNZA) and the Copperbelt University (CBU) from 2015 to 2017.

1.4 General Objective

To find out the effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution in Public Universities in Zambia: UNZA and CBU.

1.4.1 Specific Objectives

1. To find out if the university administrations provide a forum for student unions to feel a sense of ownership in their activities in public universities of Zambia.
2. To determine the extent to which the administration pay attention to student Union for it to be successful in conflict resolution in public universities of Zambia.
3. To suggest ways of improving the effectiveness of student unions in conflict Resolution in public universities in Zambia.

1.5 Main Research Question

How effective are the student unions in conflict Resolution in public universities in Zambia?

1.5.1 Sub Research Questions

The study will be guided by the following research questions;

1. What is the university administration doing to make student unions feel a sense of ownership in their activities in public universities in Zambia?
2. To what extent is the administration paying attention to Student Unions for it to be successful in conflict resolution in Public universities in Zambia?
3. What suggestions can be provided to improve the effectiveness of student unions in conflict Resolutions in Public universities in Zambia?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study, it is hoped may contribute to the academic and corporate worlds in the following ways:

1.6.1 Knowledge

The findings of the study on effectiveness of student unions in conflicts resolution in public universities in Zambia may be of great value to provide deeper knowledge to most stake-holders, such as the registrar responsible of academics, Students unions executives, the deputy Vice chancellor (DVC) who deals with all the social, moral and academic affairs, distinguished lecturers, disciplinary Committee and the Ministry of Higher Education who may find the results of the findings beneficial from the data which will be presented and interpreted to serve them in

making informed decisions about the effectiveness of students unions in conflict resolution in public Universities in Zambia. The security wing such as the police will benefit from the study in their management and resolution of conflicts in public universities.

1.6.2 Literature enrichment

All the consumers of education may equally benefit from the study as it will contribute to the enrichment of the existing literature on conflict resolution in public universities especially from the Zambian perspective.

1.6.3 Policy Makers

It is also hoped that the research findings would be useful to various stakeholders in the education sector especially the policy makers as the study will provide a bench mark to formulate, strengthen and improve future policies in public universities.

1.6.4 Motivation

The study may help to motivate all stake holders in the education sector as it will create for them the opportunity and platform to realize that they are all partners in education, each contributing accordingly.

1.7 Operational Definition of Key terms

This study has identified the following key operational terms:

1.7.1 Effectiveness

Productivity Commission Staff Research Note (PCSRN) (May, 2013), defines Effectiveness as a measure of how well the outputs of a program or service achieve the stated objectives (desired outcomes) of that program or service. It is the degree to which objectives are achieved and the extent to which target problems are solved. The Oxford Advanced learner's Dictionary Seventh Edition, describes Effectiveness as producing the result that is wanted or intended.

In the study, effectiveness means how well the student unions are considered in Conflict Resolution in the two public Universities in Zambia.

1.7.2 Conflict Resolution

The term conflicts carries a variety of definitions, depending on the usage and the context of its usage. It is a universal feature of human society. It takes its origins in economic differentiation, social change, cultural formation, psychological development and political organization, all of which are inherently conflictual and become overt through the formation of conflict parties, which come to have or are perceived to have, mutually incompatible goals (Oliver Ramsbotham, 2011).

Thesaurus (1993) defines conflict as synonymous with dissension, antagonism, opposition, disagreement, discord, combat and encounter. This is echoed by the advanced Learners Dictionary which simply puts it as 'being in opposition or disagreement.' The view of Rahim (1992) was collaborative: "conflict as an interactive process is manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or differences within or between social entities, that is, individuals, groups, organisations. Gardiner and Simmons (1992) defined conflict as any divergence of interests, , activity or priorities between individual, groups or organizations or nonconformity to requirements of a task, activity or process. UNICEF (1995) sees conflict to occur not only in situations of violence but between people over ideas, values, positions and perspectives on a range of issues.

Moore (1996), further adds that conflict is a struggle between two or more people over values, interests, competition for status, power or scarce resources.

Wilmot and Hockey (2011), conclude that conflict is an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others in achieving their goals.

It can be concluded therefore that Conflict resolution is a process of managing a conflict and negotiating a solution (Neil Katz and Kelvin McNulty, 1994).

1.7.3 Public University

A public university is a university for the public (Todd Pettigrew, 2010) that is predominantly funded by public means through a national or subnational government, as opposed to private universities. For Grove (2016), Public universities are funded by the government partly through the taxpayers, and are mostly larger in size.

It is a university for the public that is predominantly funded by public means through a national or subnational government, as opposed to a private university (Grove, A., 2016).

1.7.4 Student Union

Student Union (SU) is a representative structure through which students in a University, College or school become involved in the affairs of the school, working in partnership with management and staff and parents for the benefit of the school and its students (Oxford English Dictionary 6th

ed., 2014). SU refers to any organizations which by virtue of their composition are entitled to represent student communities at particular universities as a whole. A student union is committed to supporting all student from a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences which acts as an official representation and advocacy on campus. It represents the voice of the students' body at the university. The student union aims at immersing the students in a wealth of cultural events and activities as well as quality support services including the social, sporting, recreational, cultural and academic interests.

8.1 Ethical Consideration

Before going in the filed for data collection, the consent will be sought and obtained from the relevant research authorities. Permission will be requested from UNZA-ZOU Ethics Committee, and an introductory letter from the Dean of Post Graduate in the School of Humanities will be issued. The ethical considerations will be adhered to from the beginning to the end of data collection.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

This study would have covered all public universities in Zambia but it is limited to the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University because they are the oldest public universities.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

2. The limited period of time in which the study was conducted by the researcher.
3. The financial constraint that the researcher faced as this study was solely self-sponsored.
4. Not sufficient literature on the effectiveness of student unions in conflict resolution in Zambia's public universities to accelerate the study.
5. The delay by the respondents in making data available for the study
6. The researcher's limited means of transport to reach out to the respondents.

1.1.1 Conclusion

In this chapter, the researcher has looked at the background to the study, the purpose of the study, the statement of the problem, the objectives, the research questions, the significance of study, and also the definition of operational key terms, the ethical considerations and some limitations to the

study, all in an attempt to investigate the effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution in the two Public Universities in Zambia, UNZA and CBU.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter presents a review of the related literature which covers the understanding of various authors on the effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution in Public Universities. In this study, the literature review is divided according to sub-themes based on or related to the research questions such as to find out the effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution in Public Universities in Zambia: UNZA and CBU, to find out if the university administrations provide a forum for student unions to feel a sense of ownership in their activities in public universities of Zambia, to determine the extent to which the administration pays attention to student Union for it to be successful in conflict resolution in public universities of Zambia, to suggest ways of improving the effectiveness of student unions in conflict Resolution in Public Universities in Zambia. The chapter also identifies some research gaps, and it ends with a conclusion. Each sub-theme begins with global perspective, followed by regional and finally local perspective which in this case is Zambia.

Conflict, in Dahrendorf's (1959) view refers to tension within the organizational system. One may observe such tension by paying attention to possible incompatibilities among departments, to incompatibilities among staff members or employees, to complexities of the communication network, and even to the organizational structure itself. Conflicts affect the accomplishment of organizational goals due to their attending stress, hostilities and other undesirable factors when poorly managed. The issue of conflict management then becomes paramount for goal accomplishment.

The term conflict carries a variety of definitions, depending on the usage and the context of its usage. Duncan (1975) opined that conflict implies some types of hostility and perhaps some desires to do harm which may be considered an extreme case of competition.

Thesaurus (1993) defines conflict as synonymous with dissension, antagonism, opposition, disagreement, discord, combat and encounter. This is echoed by the Advanced Learners' Dictionary which simply puts it as 'being in opposition or disagreement.' Rahim (1992) contends that conflict is an interactive process which is manifested in incompatibility, disagreement, or difference within or between groups. Gardiner and Simmons (1992) on the other hand defined

conflict as “any divergence of interests, objectives or priorities between individual, groups, or organizations or nonconformity to requirements of a task; activity or process”. Conflict is different from competition, although competition may result in conflict. Some believe that conflicts may occur without any specific reference to competition, as it could occur as a result of breakdown in the mechanism of decision-making.

De Cenzo (1997) has this to say: Whenever two people come together, there are bound to be disagreements at times. That’s natural. However, sometimes these differences can grow to enormous proportions where they become detrimental to the involved parties and the organization. When that occurs conflict is present.

A critical analysis of the definition of conflict as “the struggle over resources or ideas, between two or more parties caused by the perceptions of the contending parties that both or all cannot have what they desire”, buttresses the idea of conflict as originating from competition. This is in line with Sisk and Williams’ (1981) definition of conflict as the process which begins when one party perceives that one or more of its concerns have been or are about to be frustrated by another party. From various points of view, the definition of conflict connotes that a trace of competition cannot be totally ruled out.

To some, conflict is synonymous with violence, but to the United Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund (UNICEF, 1995) conflict is not necessarily synonymous with ‘violence’ and that conflict occurs not only in situations of violence but conflicts inevitably occur between people over ideas, values, positions and perspectives on a range of issues. In the opinion of Kerzner (1998) conflicts can occur with anyone and over anything. Seville’s statement on violence and human nature (as cited by UNICEF, 1995) nevertheless stated that it is not part of human nature to be violent and that violence is a learned response to conflict and if violence can be learned, other responses are possible and can be learned as well. Thamhain and Wilemon (1974) in their attempt to define conflict provided both sides of the coin, the negative and the positive side of it. They stated: Conflict is defined as the behavior of an individual, a group, or an organisation which impedes or restricts (at least temporarily) another party from attaining its desired goals (Nordic Journal of African Studies no. 28) .

Although conflict may impede the attainment of one’s goals, the consequences may be beneficial if they produce new information which, in turn, enhances the decision-making, lengthy delays

over issues which do not importantly affect the outcome of the project, or a disintegration of the team's efforts. No matter how hard one tries to define the term, one is prone to agree with Sisk and Williams (1981) that, "conflict is one of those phenomena that are experienced by everyone but that can be defined completely and accurately by no one". Several types of conflicts are identified in literature, including intra-personal, intra-group, inter-personal, inter-groups, etc (Wilmot, 2011).

According to DeCenzo (1997) organisational conflicts can take the following forms: horizontal conflict, vertical conflict, and role confusion/conflict. From literature, sources of conflicts can be classified into three, namely, competition for scarce resources, drives for autonomy, and goals divergence as a result of differences in opinion. Ivancevich (1996) argues that four factors are known to contribute to conflicts. They are: work interdependence, differences in goals, differences in perceptions, and increased demand for specialists.

Five stages of conflicts were identified by Pondy (1969). These are: latent conflict, perceived conflict, felt conflict, manifest conflict, and conflict aftermath. Conflicts have both positive and negative effects on an organization depending on the management and its final outcome. To Zikmann (1992) "effectively managed conflicts can help identify previously undetected problems and attitudes. They can also help clarify uncertainties and improve overall cooperation". Conflicts should not totally be seen as evil, but rather as a challenge to effect change. An organization should not run away from conflicts because they are part of human existence as no one or organization is an island to himself or itself. Conflicts should not be handled with hypocrisy, suppression or pretense. A good approach to its Conflict resolution is highly essential for peace and progress (Zikmann, 1992).

2.1 Effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution

Effective leadership is the backbone to any group or organization. The leader acts as a facilitator for the group and without it the group has little chance for success. Communication is only as good as its leader's. The effectiveness of student unions rely heavily of the type of leaders and their communication and leadership qualities and style. Among other reasons for the effectiveness of Student Union in conflict resolution is as a result of student activism in the university life. Student activism at the university level is nearly as old as the university itself (Laura Tucker, 2017) and over time, has evolved into different names and widened functions have brought forth efficiency in responding to numerous issues affecting students. Tucker (2017), contends that

student activism is work by students to cause political, environmental, economic, educational or social change even though often focused on schools, curriculum, and educational funding.

According to Grills (2009), Student Union at Leeds University, after having undergone so many changes and adjustments over time, has been effective. This has been achieved through dialogue, thereby resulting into a more professional relationship that has generated greater positive impacts for the university. Grills (2009), asserts that like many universities world over, Leeds University has experienced considerable changes to the operating environment for students' union. With those changes comes a change in the emphasis for the "partnership" which underlies communications, dialogue and engagement between University Management (UM) and the respective Students' Union (SU).

In Malaysia, every year, the Malaysian Ministry of Higher Education create a forum and have a meeting and arrange programmes with all student unions. In 2011, Universiti Sains Malaysia established Students' Consultative Assembly (Malay: Dewan Perundingan Pelajar, DPP), the first student parliament established and the oldest of its kind in Malaysia, to involve participation of more student leaders in decision and policy making as well as to establish a legislative branch in its Students' Union system instead of having the only executive branch. As at May 2016, 7 public universities in Malaysia had their student parliament established. In this country, student unions are respected and are rendered effective in their operations at the campus (<http://www.unesco.org/open-access/term-uses-ccbysa-en>).

Obiero (2012) contends that at Kenyatta University in Kenya, Students have a say on the issues that affect themselves and their academic profile hence their voices are seriously considered. The student representatives are capable of communicating the voices of the student mass in the department committees of Kenyatta University. Students usually participate in the university boards such as: the University Senate, and the university department committees such as: sports, entertainment, disciplinary committees of the universities. The studies show that student participation is influential in the department committees of Kenyatta University (Obiero, 2012). At this University, the student unions are effective as they participate in decision making, and this has restored calmness, when a good consultation on both ends has been established. The decisions made on mutual consultation have made their executions easier and effective (Lizzio and Wilson, 2009).

Allotey (2012) offers a different opinion when he argues that the same can however not be said of the National Union of Ghana Student unions today. National Union of Ghana Student (NUGS) has ceased to be the mouthpiece of Ghanaian students, thanks to greed, corruption and taking sides on national issues based on political expediency among its leadership. The Union is seen as amateurish, unfocused, divided and without any disciplined leadership (Allotey Okai James, 2012).

In Zambia, Ndoyi (2017) states that Student Unions in Zambia today have been active but they have received a lot of suppression. The recent past call of the Minister of Higher Education Hon. Nkandu Luo's proposal to abolish students unions from high learning institutions in the country is clear evidence of the voices being suppressed hence making it ineffective to a great extent. The call by the Minister is a clear act of weakening a strong student activism, an act which can be perceived as ways of silencing dissenting voices of the students (Prince Ndoyi, 2017).

Students both at University of Zambia and at the Copperbelt University have on different occasions voiced out their concerns, demonstrated and rioted over delayed meal allowances, accommodation, sanitation, mismanagement of University fund, etc. At CBU, students have on many occasions demonstrated demanding that government pays them their delayed meal allowance. Their voices mainly have received brutal and violent intervention of the Zambia Police. "We were beaten badly by Zambia Police over the weekend, over our meal allowances which have not been paid, how they (government) would expect us to go back to class. This is very unfair, government should just pay us and there will be no problems here, yes we will not get back to class until our accounts are credited." Government should just be fair on us we can't be in class on an empty stomach (Paul Mwitwa, 2017).

2.2 Administration makes student Unions feel the sense of University ownership

Klemencic (2017), contends that being a student is first and foremost about self-formation, about gaining knowledge and developing skills, joining a profession, finding a job. It is also about learning to take care of oneself and how to balance competing time commitments. It is about building relationships and developing a unique identity. It is centered on self-development: the present and the projected future self. Higher education administrators understand these conditions of studentship. At the heart of the higher education enterprise is the question of how universities cater for students' academic and personal development. An awareness that academic conditions,

such as the quality of teaching and learning, cannot be separated from students' health and social and economic well-being are beginning to gain ground in institutional strategies.

These changes are more notable in contexts where institutions compete for students and devise marketing strategies around student satisfaction. Measures of student satisfaction drive institutional leaders to consider carefully how to meet student expectations (Manja Klemencic, 2017). The expectations of universities with regard to students and students' responsibilities to their universities are usually less clearly stated, except in terms of academic responsibilities and discipline. The students' rights charters in the United Kingdom stand out in their explicit emphasis of students' university citizenship. Strictly speaking, students' university citizenship is more than just student engagement in the university community and showing stewardship of the university environment, facilities and resources. It implies students' voluntary contribution to make a positive impact on their university and its community beyond their own narrow self-interest, to work for collective benefits or communal interests. First, students need to be aware of the real possibilities they have to contribute and have the freedom to do so. The more difficult question is how to motivate them to contribute beyond their immediate self-interest. Students' sense of belonging to their universities comes to the fore here. Klemencic (2017) argues further that student feel a sense of belonging when they have invested in the university, consider it to be a personalised space and perceive affective interpersonal relationships there has been shown in research as essential for positive student experiences and academic success and, more generally, for a student's subjective sense of well-being, intellectual achievement, motivation and even health.

According to Klemencic (2017), belonging refers to a student's perceptions of intimate association with the university: to feel a central and important part of the university and a sense of ownership of their university, each of which fulfils their human need for inclusion, acceptance and efficacy. These in turn strengthen students' sense of responsibility to the university; evoke university citizenship and even expectation of having a voice and being involved. Higher education officials can intervene in the institutional 'habitus' to create conditions that strengthen a sense of students' belonging to the university and consequently students' integration and agency (Manja Klemencic, 2017). Such interventions are particularly called for in the case of first-year students, but also for selected groups that might require additional support, such as, for example, first-generation students or international students.

Students' sense of belonging is equally central to the notion of students' university citizenship. From a focus on student engagement as a goal in itself we need to move towards a more nuanced discussion of student agency in critically shaping their interaction with and within the higher education environment and of how these interactions can be extended from self-interested pursuits to also acting for the collective well-being and in the collective interest.

A university is built on strong interdependencies between students and staff and this nurtures a collective spirit and enables collective behaviour. It is when universities embrace expressive individualism and commercial values that students' sense of citizenship to their university is inhibited (Manja Klemencic, 2017).

According to Voelkl (1997), the term engagement refers to the extent to which students own, identify with and value schooling outcomes, and participate in academic and non-academic school activities. Ownership and co-responsibility comprise a psychological component pertaining to students' sense of belonging at school and acceptance of school values, and a behavioural component pertaining to participation in school activities (Finn, 1993). The participation component of engagement is characterized by factors such as school and class attendance, being prepared for class, completing homework, attending lessons, and being involved in extra-curricular sports or hobby clubs (Johnson et al., 2001).

Klemenčič (2015), states that the students at Harvard University are more involved in quality enhancement as a combination of students' agentic possibilities for such involvement ('power') and student agentic orientations ('will'). The University has seen a great shift from the traditional focus on how institutions can assure educational quality to how students can be co-responsible for and contribute to the wellbeing and advancement of their university (Klemenčič (2015). At this University, the Student Union has enjoyed from the University management, quality assurance, quality enhancement, university governance, university culture, university-student relationship, capability, freedom, individual and collective belonging and identity (Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris, 2004).

According to Grills (2009), Leeds University has a commitment to engage SU in key decisions and bigger debates, such as the General Election, and listening and paying attention to the student experiences create trust and sense of security and ownership, thereby create the dialogical relationship. This is characterized by the mutual understanding of issues between the SU and the

University administration, which, consequently, is a clear sign that at Leeds University, students' voices are heard and respected. Crux at this university, is therefore, listening to student voices (Aidan Grills, 2009).

In Nigerian universities, Student involvement in decision-making is not well embraced and accepted as a result of the organizational structure and bureaucratic nature of the educational system (Adeleke, 2000). Oke, Okunola, Oni and Adetoro (2010) all argue that most university school administrators do not allow their students to participate in decision-making in their universities. They assert that the major problem confronting their universities is the alienation of students from decision-making. This present situation in our universities is described by Fletcher (2004) as 'tokenism and manipulation' where students are given a voice but in fact have little or no choice about what they do or how they participate. There is no meaningful engagement of students in deciding some of the issues that affect them directly. Despite the usefulness and relevance of student participation in decision-making in university management, it has been established that not all university administrators encourage and practice student involvement in decision-making in their university.

The South African Union of Students (SAUS) and South African Students Congress (SASCO) represent South African students on national level (Morrow, 2009).and have the longest sustained history of student representation in the country. Student are involvement in national higher education decision-making, student representation is reported in both South Africa's Council on Higher Education. In addition, students are represented in various national agencies, including the Higher Education Quality Committee and the National Student Financial Aid Scheme of South Africa (Cross 2004; CHE, 2010).

2.3 Administration Paying Attention to Student Unions

Student Unions have an affecting and effecting impact on the life and activities of a university hence it's important that the University administration dialogue, partner and collaborate with students. Grills (2009), argues that paying attention is at the crux of a successful Students' Union at Leeds University. Grills further adds that dialogue is cardinal as it urges students first and foremost to believe in the why behind what they do, adding that Student Unions are unique, busy places; they hold a melting pot of talent, ambition and ideas which create an exciting place to work.

Paying attention to the students has led Leeds University to embrace a new excellent teaching framework in the balance, which has brought about conjecture around the impact this could have upon the role of student union and quality processes (Grills, 2009). Dialogue creates a strong bond of partnership between the students and the university administration. It instills the sense of ownership of the university by all stake-holders. Listening as means to more effective organizational management is not a new concept, in fact, it's a timeless value. Covey (1989), argues that it is important to seek first to understand, then to be understood." Covey points out that our education and socialization has placed an emphasis on teaching us how to communicate (e.g. read, write, and speak), but doesn't prepare us to really listen to what others are saying. He outlines some common behaviors that are often mistaken for listening, and contends that empathic listening, with the intent to really understand what the other is trying to communicate, is the only true form of listening (Michael Papay, 2016).

Kenneth Blanchard and Spencer Johnson (1982) assert that the best way to engage student unions is to allocate time to listen to employees. Listening helps managers to solicit feedback and proactively find out about problems before they escalate. It's also the only way for management to get to know people as individuals and ensure that they feel genuinely valued.

Howell (2016), contends that university administration should not assume that students will like a particular change or project affecting them without dialoguing with them first and then make changes or redevelop buildings with their interests in mind. It is good to communicate the opinions of students as ultimately Student Unions are built around making the voices of students heard. It is also important to never be complacent hence always looking to improve the welfare of the students (Howell, 2016).

In addition, dialogue has led to more scrutiny and expectation over outcomes from investment in the students' union in terms of Governance, leadership and management. There has been a refocusing upon "core" activity, derived from a higher level of accountability to students. The voice of the student union is heard and respected paving the way to collaboration and good relationship between the university management (UM) and the student union (SU) (The Higher Education Code of Governance, December, 2014).

In the United States, Klemenčič (2015), observes that the student Union and its influence on and involvement in university life, structures and processes towards quality enhancement have

become a more noticeable trend at Harvard University. This is an indication that there is much more dialogue and consultation between the University management and the Student Union.

Allotey (2012) stated that over the years, the National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) has served the purpose for its establishment, but as it stands now all is not well. These students require the NUGS to speak for them. After all, NUGS was formed to be the voice for the voiceless. The Ghanaian Government has suppressed NUGS, denying them the voice and freedom to do the right thing. Allotey (2012), laments lack of dialogue between the university management and the student union. He further argues that Students have all over the world proven to be the strongest force that even dictators fear but the same cannot be said about the NUGS of present day Ghana because the student Union presidents has aligned itself to the various political parties in order to serve their selfish and parochial interests (Allotey, 2012).

In Zambia, an observation is made over instances that the Student Unions have received threats. Ndoyi (2017) confirms that there has been so many instances when either the University administration or the minister of higher education threatened to dissolve the Union or even expel students unions. There has been very little dialogue between the ministry of Higher Education and the Student Union, making the student Union perform inefficiently in resolving university conflicts (Ndoyi, 2017). The recent past proposition of the Minister of Higher Education Hon. Nkandu Luo's proposal to abolish students unions from high learning institutions in the country is clear evidence of Student unions being suppressed. The move by the minister was condemned by Former Zambia National Students Union (ZANASU) vice-president (Prince Ndoyi, 2017) who called on the general public not to take the Minister of Higher Education's proposal to abolish students unions from high learning institutions in the country. It is a wrong move and it must not be given undue attention or audience as it is nothing but a retrogressive idea or proposal Ndoyi (2017).

2.4 Ways to improve Student Unions' Effectiveness

Martell (2017) argues that one of the ways to improve student union's effectiveness is protest. Student protest should be encouraged. How managements respond to it is about the sort of university you have in the first place. When choices are made about the university's future, staff, students and their unions should be meaningful citizens and partners. Its inevitable people look for other ways to make their voices heard and protest is one of the ways (Luke Martell, 2017). Peaceful protest helps both the stakeholders of education to evaluate policies and rules of

engagement that govern universities. Martell (2017) further contends that when procedures feel rigged it's no wonder people resort to action outside governance structures. Managers should respond to protestors by talking to them. Disciplinary procedures shouldn't be a substitute for dialogue. Managements should be accountable when things go wrong for the university and good relations collapse. Governing bodies should be ready to act. An open, participatory university is the best response to protest (Luke Martell (2017)).

Chetty (2010), says that student protest politics is to be cherished. It is a time for students to really express what they believe in and stand for while growing up in a learning environment. Of course this does not detract that these protests may get out of hand and elements within the student groups may want to resort to violent behaviour. University administrators should certainly learn to negotiate rules governing protests action with student leadership and have this in place ahead of any protest action. This will contribute to minimizing the groups that wish to pursue a more violent of form of protest or demonstrate behaviour that would in ordinarily be unacceptable to society at large. Above all administrators should learn to engage and keep the channels of communication with protesting students and their leaders (Gopalkrishna Chetty, 2010).

Hazan (2010) posits that Students must have the right to peaceful protest on their campuses. The global outpouring of respect for Nelson Mandela makes today's protests all the more significant. Its important not to forget that student-led protests and campaigns played a key role in supporting Mandela's anti-apartheid movement in the 1980s (Louise Hazan, 2010). It is this resurgent student protest movement, on issues ranging from fees and cuts to fossil fuel divestment and workers' rights, which is now under threat. Students want better representation of their views throughout their institutional structures and are willing to engage positively and constructively to this end. Instead of seeking to suppress this critical engagement university administrators should welcome and encourage students' protest. A much more effective response is to come out of the ivory tower and sit and engage with students on their own terms in their own spaces. Many registrars, let alone vice-chancellors, do not sit down on the floor with their students in tents and occupation sites and just talk or just listen (John Parkinson, 2016).

Through dialogue with student protesters and engagement with the students union prior to any disciplinary action, universities can take the lead on creating a true partnership with students and staff. True partnership does not mean forums with no communicable change afterwards but real results that are tangible for the community. We need to start exploring the meaning of democratic

universities – with meaningful involvement of the community in decision-making. This form of governance will hold senior leaders accountable to their communities and enable them to make decisions that the communities are invested in.

Education Act 1994 of Cardiff University states that all Student Unions must be run democratically in order to improve its effectiveness. A great Students' Union is one strives to improve on its effectiveness (Tom Cannon, 2015), which mixes good standard practices (e.g. student involvement) with their own, individual ideas. Above all else, Students' Unions should listen to their students. This can be achieved in many ways, from general feedback to highly sophisticated research. Students' Unions lobby, debate and campaign on behalf of the students they represent. They also facilitate student activities, such as clubs, peer support and volunteering. Funding is crucial in the proper functioning of student unions. Cannon (2015) explains that Some SU funding comes from the university; this is known as the block grant. But more often than not, this is supplemented with SU fundraising efforts as well as sales from the unions' commercial outlets. Any money the SU receives must be spent in a way which furthers their charitable purpose and subject to the Education Act 1994 which urges all Student Unions be run democratically.

Lizzio & Wilson (2009) in their study, posit that the merits of involving students in the running of the affairs of institutions are generally described from one of the three perspectives namely: functional, developmental and social. Whatever the students are involved in should be beneficial to the university, to the student and also to the society. As noted by (Sabin and Daniels, 2001 in Lizzio & Wilson, 2009), the merits of sharing governance from the functional perspective brings about enhanced accountability in terms of transparency of policy and decisions, evident deliberation in relation to consideration of the stakeholder views and learning from experience. By involving students in quality control means obtaining direct feed-back from the consumers (students) of the education (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

A strategic alignment between University management and student union is important, and this can bring about more non-academic service provision, sharing or collaboration in the management of a university. There should be retention and enrichment activity which hold great potential, with many examples of students' union growing leadership skills and opportunities outside the classroom. Quality enhancement activity has a strong tradition of partnership,

innovative and evidence-based input, since student engagement work has received targeted investment over recent years.

Another element is that there should be a contribution to the educational mission of the university management and partnership which builds a sense of belonging and affinity that in turn has enhanced the student union experience. Partnership also offers possibilities for thinking and acting differently, and for effecting a fundamental transformation of higher education. The underlying prescriptive message is that universities should develop institutional pathways for students' involvement in university, along with cultivating students' sense of collective belonging and collective university identity.

Levy (2014) argues that students are often positioned as passive consumers of, rather than active participants in, their own higher education. It is timely to take stock and distil the current context, underlying principles and directions for future work on students as partners in learning and teaching. Working and learning in partnership heightens an awareness of conflicting priorities and tensions between the different perspectives and motivations of those involved, and it raises challenges to existing assumptions and norms about higher education.

In department committees of the universities, students should be equal partners and expected to play an important role in the university governance or decision-making process (Olsen, 2007; Bergan, 2004). The department committees are more concerned with the issues that affect student activities. In the department committees of the universities, student voices are mainly concerned with student academic activities such as: class attendance by the lecturers, examination, internet connection, the use of the library.

Students should be engaged in Curriculum design, pedagogic consultancy course evaluations and in departmental staff-student committees, but it is rare for institutions to go beyond the student voice and engage students as partners in designing the curriculum and giving pedagogic advice and consultancy (Bergan, 2004). According to Agbetu (2007), Universities can best engage with student politics by ensuring that the student body once organised and unified beyond a certain threshold, has a legitimate mechanism to dismiss those on the senior management team or at least compel them to re-apply for their post. Students are the key stakeholders in any university making vice-chancellors the equivalent of CEOs. Yet, where teaching staff are selected and fired on their academic ability, administrative members of staff are often immune to any outside questioning of

their ability or indeed, moral integrity. Just as parents are present on the governing bodies of schools, patients on hospital governing bodies, students should be involved in any interviewing or disciplinary process and have representatives with the power to influence appraisals and budgets (Toyin Agbetu, 2007). To have a successful student union, it's important to listen to what Students want. Elliot (2015) informs that we can't assume that students will like a particular change or project; we need to ask them first and then make changes or redevelop buildings with their interests in mind. It's good to communicate the opinions of students as ultimately Students' Unions are built around making the voices of students heard. It's also important to never be complacent; we're always looking to improve what we do, while meeting our students' needs." In addition, keeping student union at the centre of the organisation is key; we make sure their views and opinions truly guide us. You then need to have positive, proactive staff in place to bring their ideas to life (Stephen Battersby, 2015).

Universities should also encourage constant dialogue with student representatives at all levels. Parties to conflicts should use the democratic norms of dialogue, due process and fairness in resolving their differences. University administrators should therefore put in place adequate machinery for dialogue, for parties in conflicts to discuss their disagreements in a mutual relationship. In this wise, dialogue would be well recognized as the best option for conflict management. The way and manner in which students are handled will go a long way in determining their psychological perceptions to issues that can precipitate conflicts and crises (F.I. Etadon, 2013).

2.5 Research Gap

Tucker (2017), looks at the evolution of student unions arguing that student unions over time, have evolved into different names and widened functions, and have brought forth efficiency in responding to numerous issues affecting students. Tucker only considered the evolvement of student unions into different names and widened functions but not their effectiveness in conflict resolution.

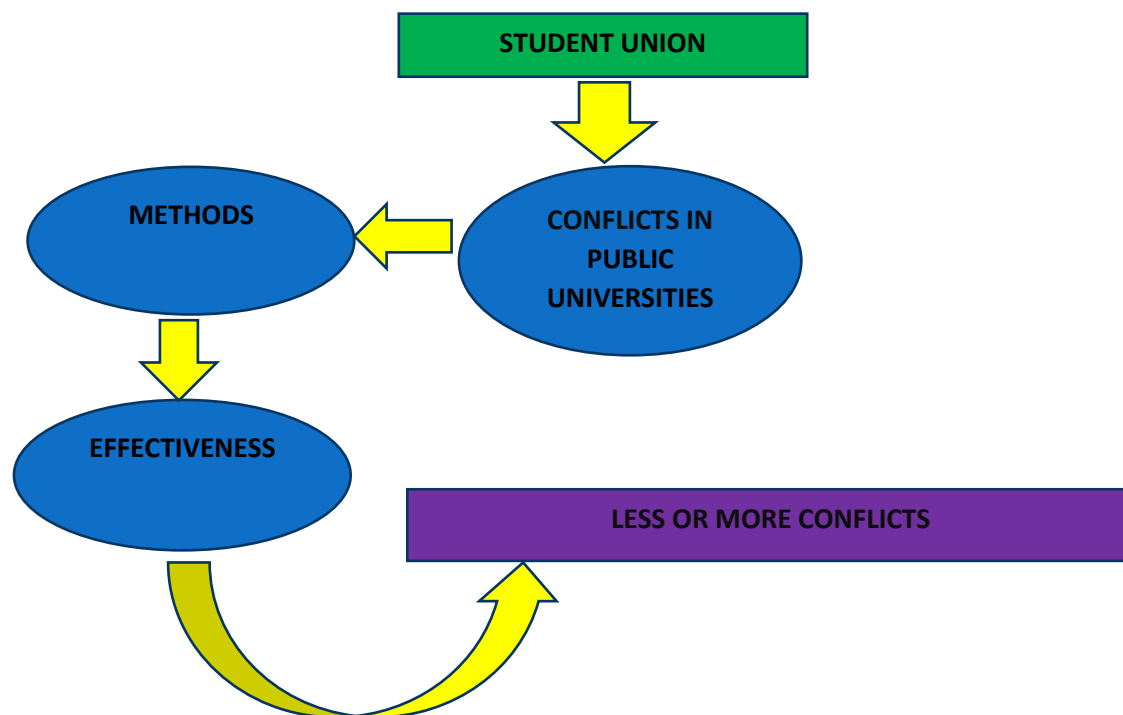
Victoria (2016), concentrated on different conflicts occurring in public universities and their impact on staff effectiveness. This study rather concentrates not on the impact of conflicts on Staff effectiveness but on the effectiveness of student Unions in conflict resolution in public university.

Olaleye (2013) dwells on causes of conflict and management techniques of resolving conflicts by university administrators and not by student unions.

Mwanza (2018), student unions (ZANASU) should train in non-violent direct approach to resolving conflicts that promotes peaceful resolution of disputes among students and discourage riotous behavior that have rocked institutions of higher learning. Mwanza does not discuss the effectiveness of Student Union but rather looks at the training of student Unions.

This study has also discovered the limitedness of literature in Zambia on the effectiveness of student unions in conflict resolution in public universities of Zambia, UNZA and CBU. The researcher has identified the need for having a clear policy of engaging students and staff effectively as partners. This research has also identified the need to make combined efforts by the education administrators to improve student participation, valuing students not only as consumers of education but much more as partners in the education sector. It is hoped that this research will contribute to closing these gaps.

2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



Source: Researcher (2018)

The conceptual frame work indicates the presence of student unions, and acknowledges the existence of conflicts in public universities. The student unions, in trying to resolve these conflicts, are using diverse methods which if appropriately used can lead to their effectiveness and subsequently reduce the escalation or prevent conflicts. However, if the methods used are not appropriate, curbing conflicts will be a failed experience and the obvious result is conflict perpetuation.

2.7 Conclusion

Generally, both University administrations and Student unions have been adversely affected by lack of knowledge of conflict Resolution techniques. Most university administrators and Student Unions handle conflicts by trial and error approach because there are no specific procedures and methods of resolving conflicts. In some university systems, students do not participate in university decision making. Some students do not know the importance of a student union, making them lose out on how to channel their grievances. In many cases the students just take to the streets to protest against the University authority. In some universities especially in Africa, both the university administration and student Union in conflict resolution rarely explore the use of dialogue as a resolution technique. In Zambia, there is a great need to use effective relevant strategies in conflict resolution in public universities.

This chapter presented some related literature available on the effectiveness of student unions in resolving conflicts in public universities. It viewed related literature on: global, regional and Zambia respectively. The essence of the reviewed literature was to help identify the common grounds, research gaps, the theory of conflict that have explained why humans are conflictual beings. The chapter has subsequently made contributions towards the effectiveness of student unions in resolving conflicts in public universities in Zambia.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter describes the methodology that will be used in conducting the study. Research methodology is a broad term that involves all strategies that describe how, when and where data was to be collected and analyzed (Chilisa and Preece, 2005). In this chapter, the research design, the study site, target population, sample size, sampling techniques, data collection methods and instrument, validity testing and reliability, data analysis techniques, ethical considerations are described. It ends with a summary of the chapter.

3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive survey design as the researcher was interested in gathering information on the existing conflict resolution methods. A descriptive survey attempts to describe characteristics of subjects or phenomena, opinions, attitudes, preferences and perception of persons of interest to the researcher. Moreover a descriptive survey aims at obtaining information from a representative of the population and from that sample; the researcher was able to present the findings as being representative of the population (Orodho, 2009).

The research design was therefore descriptive survey. The survey in the methods of conflicts essentially consisted of assessments of the present management techniques. Questionnaire and interview schedule were employed as tools for collecting data.

It is on the basis of the foregoing reasons that the design was found suitable for this study which enabled the researcher to assess the effectiveness of student unions in conflict Resolution in Public Universities in Zambia with the focus on UNZA and CBU.

3.1.1 Study Sites

Our research was conducted at University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University which are the oldest public universities in Zambia. Other sites were at the Ministry of Higher Education and at the Police headquarters in Lusaka.

3.1.2 Target Population

Borg and Gall (1979) viewed population as all the numbers of a hypothetical set of people, event or object to which we wish to generalize the results of our research. In this study, the target population was all key informants such as UNZA-CBU student Unions, Lecturers Disciplinary Committees, Deans of Students, the Deputy Vice Chancellor (DVC), Ministry of Higher Education, and the Police representative.

3.1.3 Sample Size

A sample size is the number of participants or elements selected from a universe to constitute a desired representation of a given population Kasonde Ng'andu (2013). The sample size for this study comprised 2 deans of students, 8 students, 6 student union executives from the two Universities, 2 deputy vice chancellors, 2 lecturers Disciplinary committee members, 2 representatives from Ministry of Higher Education and 2 Police representatives. This made the total number of sample size to be at 24.

3.1.4 Sampling Procedure

Bryman (2008) stated that a sample is a segment of the population that is selected for investigation. In this study, the researcher employed non-probability (purposive) sampling to select key informants relevant to the study. Non-probability sample is a sample that has not been selected using a random selection method.

3.1.5 Purposive Sampling

This study will use Maximal variation sampling. This is a qualitative method of sampling in which the researcher samples cases or individuals on the basis of the difference in characteristics or trait. It is used when the sample size is very small. The researcher purposively has targeted UNZA-CBU student unions, the students, Ministry of Higher Education representatives, Deans of Students, the Deputy Vice Chancellors (DVC), Lecturer Disciplinary Committees (LDC), and the Police representatives.

3.4 Research Methods and Instruments

Research instruments refer to the tool a researcher uses in collecting the required data (Kasonde Ng'andu, 2013). This study will employ the following research instruments: one-on-one interview technique and questionnaires. Robson, (2002: 270) defines semi-structured interview as where the interviewer has prepared a set of questions in advance, but is free to modify their order depending upon the interviewer's perception of what seems appropriate in the context of the conversation.

By using the semi-structured interviews, the investigator was able to dig deep by reframing interview questions in different ways to find out the possible existence of this phenomenon and how this may affect the aspect of student unions' effectiveness. The interviews were conducted a one to one basis and the questions were open-ended. The semi-structured format was thought to be the most appropriate method, this was to ensure that significant questions posed by the study are addressed, while allowing for the participants views and perspectives to be revealed through an open-ended facilitation of discussion. The student union leaders through the discussions freely aired their perceptions of how they were involved and the roles they played

3.4.1 One-on-One Interview technique

Mushingeh (2000) defined interview guide as a technique in which the researcher faces a respondent during an interview. In this study, the researcher will conduct one-on-one interviews so that the subject at hand could be explored in its depths and ask follow up questions. This method will be useful because it will allow the researcher to explore, confirm ideas and in-depth information about the effectiveness of student unions' voices in conflict resolution in public universities in Zambia with the focus on UNZA-CBU. The interviews in this research will be conducted in English language only.

3.4.2 Questionnaires

The study will use unstructured questionnaires, made up of questions that will elicit free responses from the respondents. These questionnaires will be distributed to the lecturer disciplinary committee as well as to student unions. Due to the limited time frame of this research study, respondents will be solicited to complete the questionnaires at least within two weeks.

3.4.3 Data collection Procedure

Kombo and Tromp (2006) define data collection as the process of finding information for the research problems. It may involve conducting an interview, administering a questionnaire or a focus group discussion or observation. However, this study will apply one-on-one interview technique and administering questionnaires.

3.4.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis entails categorizing, summarizing, and ordering the data and describing them in meaningful terms. There are many analysis methods that can be used. However, the type of analysis method used is heavily dependent on the research design and the method by which the data was collected or measured (Moore and McCabe, 1989). In this study, data was collected through one-on-one interview technique and questionnaires.

3.4.5 Data and Data Collection Instrument Reliability

Reliability is a measure of how consistent the results from the test are and the validity of data. The data collection instrument is the extent to which data collection instrument measures what it is intended to measure (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). It is concerned with the consistency of the results obtained from a measuring instrument (Bless and Achola, 1988). To ensure that the research instrument remains consistent and clear to the respondents, all questionnaires will be piloted and cross checked so to make corrections and modifications.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the research methodology used in the study, highlighting the research design which was a descriptive survey design since the researcher was interested in gathering information on the existing conflict resolution methods. A descriptive survey attempts to describe characteristics of subjects or phenomena, opinions, attitudes, preferences and perception of persons of interest to the researcher. , research site which are the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University which are the oldest public universities in Zambia. Other sites were at the Ministry of Higher Education and at the Police headquarters in Lusaka. Sampling procedures, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis techniques and reliability and validity of measurements.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS

4.0 Overview of the Study

The foregoing chapter discussed the methodology which was utilized in the study. The current chapter will present the findings of the study on the Effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution in Public universities: A Study of The University of Zambia and The Copperbelt University from 2015-2017. The findings are guided by the emerging themes from the research questions based on the research findings which are: Effectiveness of Student Union in Conflict Resolution, Administrations make student Unions feel the sense of University ownership, Administration paying attention to student unions, Ways to improve Student Unions' Effectiveness

The findings for all the research questions are as a result of the responses from the conducted interviews of the respondents.

4.1 Demographic profile of the Research Participants

All the participants volunteered to give their age, sex and social status as the valuables that could have an influence on the interpretation of the data collected in the field.

4.1.1 Figure 1. Participants' age range

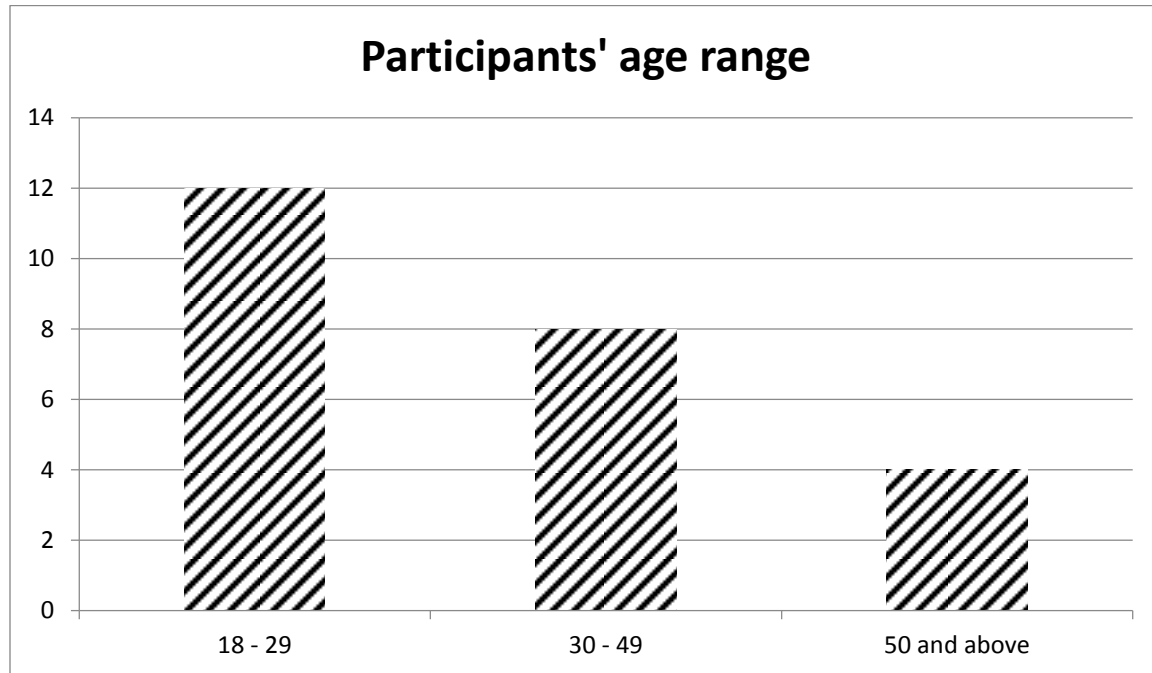


Figure 1 above illustrates the demographic characteristics of participants according to age. Out of the total of 24 participants in the study, 12 had their age ranging from 18-29 years, while 8 had their age ranging from 30-49 years, 4 had their age 50 years and above.

4.1.2 Figure 2. Participants according to Sex: total No. 24

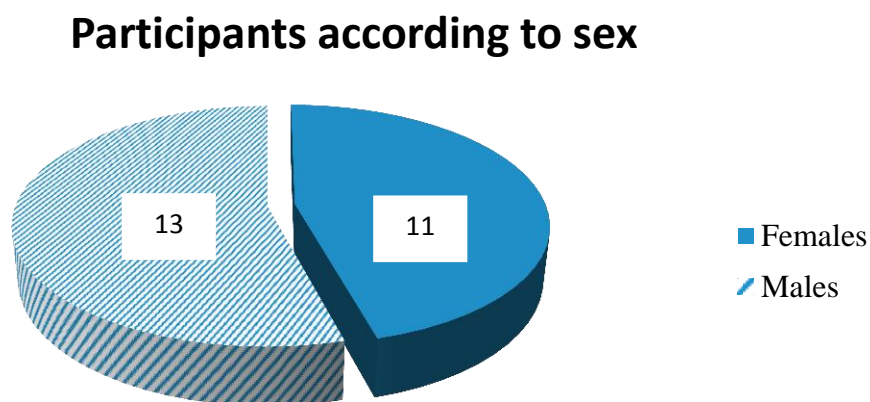


Figure 2 above shows illustrates the study had more male than female respondents. This was an overall account of both students, UNZA/ CBU administrations, the Zambia Police and the

Ministry of Higher Education. There were 11 female and 13 male respondents, making the total number of 24 participants of which the majority were males.

4.1.3 Figure 3. Social status of Participants

SOCIAL STATUS	NUMBER
Employed	10
Students	14
Total	24

The foregoing table shows the demographic characteristic of the participants according to the social status. Out of the 24 participants, 10 of them were employed while 14 of them were students of UNZA and CBU respectively.

The findings guiding the study above were the result of the responses received from the questionnaires and from one on one interviews.

4.2 Effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution

The respondents gave diverse answers to the effectiveness of student unions. From the 24 respondents, 16 of them said that the student unions are not effective in conflict resolution in public universities while 8 respondents affirmed the effectiveness of students unions in conflict resolution.

4.2.1 Figure 4. Student union effectiveness

RESPONDENTS	NUMBER
Effective	8
Not effective	16
TOTAL RESPONDENTS	24

The effectiveness was therefore discussed in the following ways:

4.2.2 Dialogue

Dialogue was seen as a tool for student union's effectiveness, adding that if there is no effective dialogue between the student union and other stake holders in education, the union cannot operate effectively. 8 respondents said that students unions are effective because the union dialogues a lot with the students, the university management, the Ministry of Higher Education and the police especially during crisis and riots.

A union member said:

dialogue helps us to see the root causes of conflict thereby we look at issues collectively. We hold cooperate and hold meetings with the stakeholders. Through dialogue, certain issues resolved and charter a way forward. Adding further that the student unions also have the ability to speak from a well-informed perspective in the interest of students and at the same time not injuring other stake holders. It's all in the dialogue that problems are often resolved though sometimes confrontation also works.

Another pushed further that “we are effective because each time there is a problem, we quickly respond and ensure that we act in a fair manner regardless of whoever is involved, be it a relative or a friend.”

4.2.3 Communication

Although at times there is communication breakdown, communication has been helpful in dissemination of information and programmes of the university. Apart from posters of different announcements, there is also a radio station open to all students, for example UNZA radio. The monk square and discussion forum are all available channels of communication which helps student unions effective in resolving conflict. A reliable respondent said that there has been quarterly and annual meetings in which agendas are set and evaluated. In these meetings, information is given to stakeholders. Communication between university administration and student unions has helped the unions to be effective.

4.2.4 Accommodation

Eight students expressed the effectiveness of the unions in terms of accommodation. One of them said that the student unions are effective. They help us each time we have challenges as students,

for example, when there are issues of accommodation, the union comes in and speaks for us so that other students who are not accommodated can be helped or allowed to squat.

Those who saw student unions as not effective argued that ineffectiveness is for the following reasons:

4.2.5 Lack of Basic Skills

Four (4) key informants emphasized that the student Unions lack the capacity and basic skills in conflict resolution and management. This is the reason why once the union is elected in office, the members tend to relax and forget their responsibilities. One of them further emphasized:

Student unions lack basic skills in conflict management. There should be an induction course in conflict resolution for the incoming student unions which will help them in capacity building. Some members of the union are in schools of mines or engineering etc and they have no idea of conflict management hence they need short courses or complementary courses before they take up student Union office. In addition, they need to understand their role and mandate very well, university legislation should be understood. This will help them not to be driven by students' populace.

A reliable correspondent lamented:

Student unions have not done well, if I am to rate them I would give them 4 out of 10. They lack capacity, driven by mob psychology or student populace, and there is fear of impeachment hence they easily get involved in riots and 'viva'. The fear of impeachment which can result in loss of their incentives or allowances make them not effective in resolving conflicts. They want to side with students.

A student added that “the unions have not been effective; they run away during “jumbo or viva.” They do not work for the good of us students. They are just puppets with no personal stance on issues, always siding the administration.

4.2.6 Political interference

A majority of respondents indicated that student unions are not effective because of too much interference from political parties.

They lamented that:

This political interference divides the student unions as the unions place their loyalties, affiliation and allegiance in different political parties. There is too much external influence and control of student unions especially by the government. A student pointed that Student unions also become “boot lickers” to the university management and the government rendering them ineffective.

4.2.7 New changes in University

There is also lack of information between the university management and student union to students on certain new university changes which results in students not being cooperative and or supportive.

A reliable respondent posited that:

The changes that the university management want to implement sometimes stir up conflict and subsequently violence. Major stake holders such as the police, ministry of Higher Education need to be informed well in advance so that together we find a way to prevent the conflicts that might arise from such new changes. But often we are informed late by university managements.

4.2.8 Mentorship Gap

Generally, the respondents hinted on the need to provide mentorship for student unions, which they argued to be helpful in the union’s capacity building.

Three key respondents noticed that:

there is a wide mentorship gap between University student unions and other unions that we have in Zambia. Student unions need to be mentored by other unions or at least there should be a good interaction of different unions who will mentor the young ones. There is also urgent need to emphasize and re-emphasize the role of mentorship in grooming future leadership.

4.2.9 Procedure too long

Some students and union members felt that the procedure to deal with urgent issues was too long hence make student unions not effective. A student said that the university protocol and procedure slow decision making by the student union in issues that need a quick response. If there isn't, then there is need for a well-drawn policy and constitution to govern student union. Certain powers should left for the union, that way it will be efficient.

A student said that:

since my first year, I have encountered a situation where you report to the student union (COBUSU) but they take too long to respond because of long procedure and protocol and even after responding, there is no guarantee that the response is the desired one. Something that needs quick response or immediate attention is left to protocol and procedure. Mostly, we just sort out our own issues rather than wasting time to go to the ineffective student union. Rare cases are adequately and efficiently dealt with.

This is evident enough that the longer the issue takes the higher the anxiety by the concerned to have the feedback. This can create tension and eventually burst out into conflicts.

4.3 Administration make student Union feel the sense of University ownership

The respondents expressed different views and responses but the following were common views:

4.3.1 Decision Making

Decision making is the process of identifying problems and opportunities and then resolve them (Boddy, 2008). Some respondents said that student unions feel the sense of ownership of the university when the student representatives are involved in all university committees and in decision making.

Six student union members indicated thus:

We feel the sense of university ownership when we tell the students who have not registered that they will write the exams and the university management allows it. In addition, when the union fee or money is entirely controlled by the union and the union makes decisions on how to spend it. Budgeting of the union fund brings such feeling. We

are given the liberty to make our own budget and we do it. It gives us that great sense of ownership, trust and we are more willing to work. Making our own budget is a great motivation. We are the boss of our own in this regard even though the university management regulates all.

They further stated that “we feel the sense of university ownership when we deal with issues concerning registration, missing results, bursaries, budgetary approval, electricity, water and sanitation issues and holding meetings so to find the way out:

In life everyone would want to make decisions especially us students, so to be chosen and be part of the university leadership is a great feeling. Serving on the union and coordinating student affairs such as bursaries, registration etc instills in us that sense of ownership of the university. We are the bridge between students and the university administration hence we feel the sense of ownership.

However, three student representatives felt that although they participate in the decision making in the university, there is need to do much more on this important issue:

There is need to democratize the decision making in public universities so that the student leadership can also take part fully in the governance of public universities. The roles and decisions we make at times are artificial and mostly are subjected to the constant criticisms of the university management. We are really not free to be ourselves and operate as we should.

4.3.2 Engagement and Dialogue

There was a common thinking from the respondents that Student union is part of the university stake holders hence they are engaged in planning, negotiations and dialogue. A key informant explained that “our prime aim is engagement. We sit together and listen to the grievances, problems and displeasures of student Union.”

Another noted:

The administration makes student unions feel a sense of University ownership in every aspect. Our aim is not confrontational in resolving conflicts or imposition should there be change at the campus but we engage and dialogue with all the stake holders about the

happenings at the university. If say for example, there are new student union elections, the new office bearers' names and details are communicated to for example the Zambia Police Service. If there is a problem, we sit with the union and try to resolve it. This way student union are involved in administration hence make them to feel the sense of university ownership.

A respondent explained that:

Since union members (academic affairs and vice president) are part of the disciplinary committee, this provision creates student union feel sense of university ownership and when the student unions are engaged in dialogue and diverse activities where their voices are heard, all these are ways to make student unions feel a sense of university ownership.

4.4 Administration paying attention to student unions

The general view of the respondents especially students is that the administration pay attention to student unions when holding a collective meeting and also when there is conflict such as protest over delayed allowances, shortage of water and electricity issues; riot, class boycott, go slow, unrest and other sorts of tensions.

4.4.1 Collective meeting

Almost all union members indicated that administration pays attention to student union when there is a collective meeting.

A student union member indicated that:

Our university administration calls for a meeting whenever there is an issue that needs our attention. By holding a collective meeting and ensuring that union members are part of the decision making committee is a gesture that the administration pays attention to us. During these meetings they listen to the unions' cries.

4.4.2 Conflicts at Campus

All student-respondents said that university administration pay attention to student union when there are conflicts.

A student voiced out that:

They do not care about anything. It is only when there are conflicts such as riots, class boycott and unrest, go slow and all other tensions at the campus that's when the administration pays attention. We don't even know whether it's even attention that they pay to us or just fear of the President of the Republic of Zambia or the Minister of Higher Education. Maybe they act only to safe guard their jobs very often than not they leave it too late to handle or prevent such conflicts.

4.5 Ways to improve Student Unions' Effectiveness

The general consensus from the respondents was that student unions' operation needs an improvement for it to be effective. The following are some of the suggested areas that need improvement if the student union is to be effective:

4.5.1 Effective dialogue and communication

Communication among the Ministry of Higher Education (MHE), the University Administration (UA) and the Student Unions (SU) was seen as one of the ways to improve the effectiveness of student unions.

A student remarked that:

there should be an effective dialogue and communication between the ministry and the students union, and the university administration and the student union so that the latter can relay information to students in good time." He added that to attract or capture students, it's not just what you say, but how you say it that counts. Communications seem to have an attitude, again, either intentional or ill-considered. If the information is simple and clear, it avoids ambiguities and misunderstands.

A union member amplified by adding that:

the academic affairs office needs to be well informed. It should have the first hand information in order to keep students up to date with the trending things. But often there is lack of information from the administration to the union to relay to students. The union is often kept in suspense prompting speculations and uncalled for tensions. The students want to know the happenings or the decision made over something by the university administration yet all is delayed or mystified hence conflicts rise unnecessarily. It's all about information, availability and keeping students informed. If information that needs to be relayed to student is communicated in good time, it will certainly reduce speculations and consequently promote the smooth functioning of student unions.

Another one further contended that:

public university administrators should rely on the student unions to get information and also pass information to the students. The participation of student union in the governance of public universities is very crucial, as they are the bridge hence it is through their involvement that any public university can be at peace. No student union, more conflicts. The union should always be in the know-how if not it will be difficult to function effectively.

4.5.2 Cooperation

One of the causes of university conflicts is lack of cooperation among the stakeholders of education. It was observed that cooperation was key to improve the effectiveness of student unions. A key informant said that “lack of cooperation especially by the students when trying to resolve conflicts makes it difficult for the student union to operate effectively. The student union is fine, we interact, we dialogue and we cooperate well but not students.”

A student remarked that:

Student unions usually don't cooperate, don't dialogue and don't keep their word. It's just either they are stealing money and making themselves rich or planning without considering the welfare of the students. They need to cooperate, to work hard and keep what they promise to do for the benefit of the whole institution. Maybe there is need to

choose leaders who will be more supportive and render help to students and the management. Maybe they should be punished too, or maybe they need training in many ways about their role and mandate. They are legitimate stakeholders who are elected in order to get a chance to represent the students in the university council but they are just selfish, and very inefficient in many areas. I think they are just corrupt and only think about themselves.

4.5.3 Interference

Ten respondents reported that there has been too much interference from political parties, the police and the government which has often caused division even within the student unions. Members of the union have different political affiliations where they pledge their loyalties hence the political interference does not promote the unity of student unions. The external interference only renders students unions ineffective and this does not contribute to the wellbeing of the university.

A key respondent informed that;

The political and economic factors surrounding most of the public universities are haunting some students especially student union members hence they end up finding solace in politicians. These politically influenced student unions fail to make good leaders and good decisions for the interest of other students. There is an undeniable political syndrome in public universities that is interfering with the learning process. There is need to clean up the system and put up measures of non-partisan by student unions.

A student union respondent further noted:

The operation of the union should be emphasized on the non-partisan. Unions should not be influenced by political parties but rather be independent and be formed by the act of the parliament. We should be in total control of our properties, of our money and also be left to solve problems that are within our jurisdiction. If its conflicts, we need to exhaust the whole process of conflict resolution before a disciplinary committee. In short, we need total control of things that are under our office. We are motivated more when we operate without external influence and interference for the two often cause demotivation. We are tired of the presence of the police in the campus even on very minor issues they coming.

Their presence alarm us and create in us the sense of insecurity because seeing men and women in uniform raises always a question, are we safe, is everything ok? Their presence in the campus does not promote a good learning environment.

A student substantiated further on the influence and interference of politicians when she argued that:

It is like all Zambian public universities are owned by the political parties rather than the Zambian Government. All we see are different politicians influencing us in one way or the other. We admit that we all have different political affiliation but an academic environment should be left free from political interference that way we will learn freely. Some of the big riots or violence are fueled by politicians but in the end it's us student who suffer abrupt close of universities and even get beaten by the police. Politicians should leave us in peace, and let them fight among themselves rather than disturbing us.

4.5.4 Capacity building in conflict management

Some respondents observed that many union members have no capacity on conflict management strategies hence they fail to contain even the basic conflicts. Therefore it's important for them to be empowered with basics of conflict management skills.

A reliable informant argues:

Student unions need capacity building in areas of conflict management because most of those in union have not the slightest skills in conflict resolution and management. Before induction into office, they should have a short course on conflict management strategies which will equip them with some skills to resolve conflict at their latent stage. And once in office, a seminar or workshop on conflicts can be given and this will empower and render the student union effective in conflict resolution.

Another key respondent contended that:

Capacity building is necessary because in building the capacity of student unions, there is need to provide supervision, guidance and mentorship of the same union. If possible, there should be within the union a legal representation who will advise the union on legal issues. This will improve not only the voting system but also the union set up and

composition. The union should be equipped with capacity for peace building and conflict management strategies.

Supporting the same idea of capacity building, two respondents suggested further that student union exchange programmes should be implemented in public universities:

Student unions need some form of an exchange programme with other universities outside Zambia. They need a field trip or a learning programme so that they go and learn from other student unions from the universities outside our country. Our public university administrations should identify other universities and make a cordial link so that student unions in Zambian public universities can go there and learn more on leadership roles and conflict management. Countries like Zimbabwe, South Africa, Kenya and Namibia maybe beneficial to our student unions.

4.5.5 Motivation

To improve the effectiveness of student unions, majority of the student union members advocated for motivation which they felt would boosted not only their morale and ego but also create a sense of appreciation.

Some student union members remarked that:

We need to be motivated, Motivation in terms of incentives or otherwise would ginger us to work more. We sacrifice our personal time for the welfare of students, and sometimes our fellow students even forget that we also have come to learn like them, we really sacrifice for them in many ways especially our time which we are to use for our study. Our sacrifice calls for some sort of motivation which can be a great booster in our work. Sometimes when things go wrong especially campus conflicts, we even get suspended and the risk for expulsion cannot be ruled out. It is through motivation that we can feel appreciated. Motivation can allow us to work to our best, enjoy learning relationships with our peers, and feel we are competent to reach our goals, and foster self-determination. But often we are not motivated that much.

4.5.6 Student Union Composition

A good number of respondents suggested a change in the composition of student unions or best enlarge its structure arguing that the current student union composition is rather too small to manage affairs of thousands students.

A reliable informant suggested that:

There are so many students with different backgrounds and cultural differences to be managed by this small body of students. There is maybe need to expand the student leadership or best find a different structural system that will accommodate more the operation of student union. Student union expansion will create effectiveness on the part of the student union. Maybe the composition be like that of parliament where there is a member of parliament in each floor of the university hostels, and those students from boarding houses and the day scholars elect their representative who would act like a member of parliament. I think this kind of structuring student unions will enhance their effectiveness since the representatives will be much closer to the students by the virtue of them (student representatives) being from the same floor, the same hostel or the same boarding house.

Another further suggested that:

student unions should be composed of student representatives from different schools. For example, the School of mines or the school of education should vote or elect their student representative. After all are elected, it will be from among these representatives that the president and his executive should be chosen while maintaining other representatives as members of the university council. You may call the executive as ministers and the rest representatives as members of parliament.

A notable informant expanded on the same idea of student union enlargement by saying that students should be given more representation in public universities. This will strengthen student unions and make them effective in their dispensation of duties and responsibilities.

4.5.7 Knowledge of University Governance

Some respondents expressed the need for thorough understanding of the importance of the student involvement in university governance, emphasizing that:

In addition to all that have been said, all students who wish to be in leadership should first develop a thorough understanding of the university governance. They must be knowledgeable about the university's decision making process and seek the background information required for their informed participation in the governance of public universities. Furthermore, they must be aware of their own limitations as students and be willing to stay within their confines.

4.5.8 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the findings of the study on the topic: Effectiveness of Student Union in Conflict Resolutions in Public Universities: A Study of the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University from 2015-2017. It revealed a number of issues in the composition and operation of the student unions and their relationship with other stakeholders in the education sector among which are the university administration, the police and the Ministry of Higher Education. The chapter further presented the findings on the effectiveness of student unions and discovered that the unions are in some ways effective and in many other ways not effective. The questions were on effective dialogue, engagement and communication, cooperation among all stakeholders, external and internal influence and interference, motivation, student union expansion, training and capacity building in conflict management. The following chapter will discuss the research findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.0 Overview

The previous chapter presented the findings based on the research objectives. This chapter discusses the findings of the study which aimed at investigating the Effectiveness of Student Union in Conflict Resolutions in Public Universities: A Study of the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University from 2015-2017. Discussions in this study will be in line with the emerging themes from the findings and the objectives of the study. The study's objectives are as follows: to find out the effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution in Public Universities in Zambia: UNZA and CBU, to find out if the university administrations provide a forum for student unions to feel a sense of ownership in their activities in public universities of Zambia, to determine the extent to which the administration pay attention to student Union for it to be successful in conflict resolution in public universities of Zambia, to suggest ways of improving the effectiveness of student unions in conflict Resolution in Public Universities in Zambia.

5.1 Effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution

In this study, while the minority (8) argue for the effectiveness of student unions, the study has revealed that student unions are not effective (16-majority) in conflict resolution in public universities in Zambia. The salient issues on student unions not being effective are revealed to be due to lack of effective dialogue, collaboration and communication among stakeholders especially between student unions and the university administration, and student union and the Ministry of Higher Education. This is supported by Grills (2009) when he asserts that like many other universities world over, Leeds University has experienced a considerable change to the operating environment for students' union. With those changes comes a change in the emphasis for the "partnership" which underlies communications, dialogue and engagement between University Management (UM) and the respective Students' Union (SU). The research revealed that there has been scanty dialogue and mostly late communication which often results in misinformation or no flow of information among stakeholders. This has been a recipe for conflicts in public universities. Grills (2009) further adds that Dialogue creates a strong bond of partnership between the students and the university administration as it also instills the sense of ownership by

stakeholders. Howell (2016) shares the same idea when he contends that university administration should not assume that students will like a particular change or project affecting them without dialoguing with them first and then make changes or redevelop buildings with their interests in mind. He further adds that it is good to communicate the opinions of students as ultimately Student Unions are built around making the voices of students heard. It is also important never to be complacent hence always to look to improve the welfare of the students (Howell, 2016). They established that dialogue and communication are vital for without these elements, student union operation would be ineffective.

Furthermore, it was discovered that student union lack training, capacity and basic skills in conflict resolution. There is need for union office bearers to take up short courses in conflict management. The researcher found out that the lack of capacity is also as a result of lack of mentorship and interaction of student unions with other unions in the country. Training of student unions in conflict management gives confidence in proper articulation and handling of issues with a common interest by the stakeholders. When union members are trained, they will have an affective and effective voice or say on issues affecting them. Obiero (2012) adds that at Kenyatta University, student unions have a voice on issues affecting students and their academic profile.

In addition, it has also been indicated that student union are not effective because of corruption, internal and external influence and political interference which paralyses and divide the student union approach and effectiveness in resolving university conflicts. This is supported by Allotey (2012) when he laments that National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) is amateurish, unfocused, divided and without any disciplined leadership. He further adds that student union takes sides on issues based on political expediency. The Ghanaian government has suppressed NUGS, denying them the voice and freedom to do the right thing, and align student union presidency to political parties in order to serve their own selfish and parochial interests (Allotey, 2012). This is also supported by Fletcher (2004) when he argues that there is tokenism and manipulation in Nigerian universities, students have no choice about what they do or how they participate. The same idea is further expressed by Broddy (2008) as he argues that Students through their leadership usually present their interests which are never taken into consideration hence decisions made from assumptions about the future of the public university may not turn out as the people hope. The unattended to grievances are the reasons for the protests, riots and violence in public universities.

The study has revealed that the procedure to follow in order to resolve conflicts often is too long and this makes it difficult to resolve conflicts from the latent stage.

5.2 Administration makes student Unions feel the sense of University ownership

The researched study revealed that student unions feel the sense of university ownership when they hold collective meeting and dialogue with the university administration. In dialogue, students feel part of the process. They get involved and participate in decision making and policy formulation. This is supported by Lizzio and Wilson (2009) when they say that the decision made on mutual consultation has made student union's executions easier and effective at Kenyatta University. Obiero (2012) further amplifies that student unions are effective as they participate in decision making, and this has restored calmness, when a good consultation on both ends has been established at Kenyatta University. This idea was also cherished by Malaysia University (2011) where student leaders participated in decision and policy making where even a legislative branch within the student union system was established. One of them said that we are engaged in the life of the university...not only academically but also in extra-curricular activities such as sports and hobby clubs. This is substantiated by Johnson (2001) when he argues that the participation component of engagement is characterized by factors such as school and class attendance, being prepared for class; completion of home work, attending lessons, and being involved in extra – curricular sports or hobby clubs.

The student leaders are allowed to take a leading role in matters affecting the students such as in disciplinary matters. The student union's voice is easily heard and they ensure that they inculcate positive values and morals in their peers and ensure that the incoming students build on what has already been achieved (Terry, 1998). This means that the sense of ownership is as a result of students being wholly involved in academic and non-academic university activities, and the imparting of moral values.

The study further discovered that student unions are involved in diverse ways whether passive or active way. One of them explained that “our prime aim is dialogue. We sit together to talk and listen to the grievances, problems and displeasures of student Unions. This is an indication that student unions is a portion of stakeholders. Another one said that union members (academic affairs and vice president) are part of the disciplinary committee. It is crystal clear that the

provision for student union to have a representation in the university disciplinary committee creates the sense of university ownership by the student union. This is a clear indication as argued by Klemencic (2015) that there is a great shift from traditional focus on how universities can assure educational quality to how students can be co-responsible for and contribute to the wellbeing and advancement of their university. Leadership, according to Robbins (2009), is the ability to influence a group towards the achievement of a vision or set goals. The student leadership has a role in influencing others on the decisions made by the university. Cole (2003) further adds that student union make decisions on matters within their sphere of competence. Students as a group, through their leadership will be able to make decisions affecting them as ender users. Unlike in Nigerian universities where student unions are not involved in decision making as argued by Adetoro (2010) that the major problem confronting Nigerian universities is the alienation of student unions in decision making. Power rests only with the university administration and the students have very minimal formal participation in decision making. Despite all this however, student unions participate in the boards and university committees thereby assist in the achieving of the university goals. However, student unions in Zambian public universities makes student union part and parcel in decision making.

5.3 Administration Paying Attention to Student Unions

The study has discovered that, while student union feel the sense of university ownership, the administration only pay attention to the student union when there are conflicts. A student said that” it’s only when there are conflicts such as riots, class boycott, unrest, go slow and all sorts of tensions at the campus that’s when the administration pays attention. Sometime they leave it too late to handle or prevent such conflicts.” It is important to pay attention to the integral life of the students at the campus failure to which always results in tension and conflicts.

Paying attention to student unions entails listening to and understanding their daily experiences in the discharge of duties and responsibilities. It creates not only a rapport and a working relationship but also creates a sense of trust, belonging and security as substantiated by Grills (2009) when he says that paying attention to student experiences creates trust and a sense of security and ownership, thereby creating a dialogical relationship. Paying attention assures quality and collaborative life by both the student unions and the university management. This is

supported by Fredricks, Blumenfeld and Paris (2004) when they state that the student union at Harvard University has enjoyed from the university management, quality assurance, quality enhancement, university governance, university culture, university-student relationship, capability, freedom, individual and collective belonging and identity. It is evident that at this university, the administration pays attention to the holistic life of the student union.

In addition, the research established that despite great efforts made by some university administration officials in paying attention to student unions, not all university administrators pay attention to students outside their (administrators') job description. This makes it difficult to access feedback from students who are the consumers of education as Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) contend that paying attention is itself an appreciated motivation that can make student unions not only to work to their ability and full potential but also to acquire leadership skills from the mentorship of their university management. According to Kochhar (2012), one of the important aims of institutions of higher learning is to prepare the youth for work, to equip them for occupations as well as prepare them for an integral human living.

5.4 Ways to improve Student Unions' Effectiveness

The study has revealed that effectiveness of student unions in conflict resolutions in Zambian public universities need an improvement. There is need to evaluate the conditions and working environments under which student unions operate.

5.4.1 Efficient dialogical communication

In any organization, communication and dialogue play a crucial role for its advancement. There should be a dialogical communication among all stake holders in education. As this is expressed by a student when she remarks that “there should be dialogue and communication among the Ministry of Higher Education (MHE), the University Administration (UA), the Student Unions (SU) between the ministry and the students union, and the university administration and the student union so that the latter can relay information to students in good time.” Communication facilitates the process of dialogue and students cannot be alienated from dialogue especially on issues that affect their academic and cooperate life. This idea is further advanced by Grills (2009)

when he says that dialogue creates a strong bond of partnership between student union and university administration. In the same vein, Howell (2016) adds that it is good to communicate the opinions of students as ultimately Student Unions are built around making the voices of students to be heard.

5.4.2 Cooperation

In as such as communication and dialogue are important in the effectiveness of student unions, cooperation among the stakeholders of education is a key element. The study revealed that cooperation especially by students made crippled the functioning of student unions as one reliable informant argued that “lack of cooperation especially by the students when trying to resolve conflicts makes it difficult for the student union to operate effectively. The student union is fine, we interact, we dialogue and we cooperate well but not students.” Some students also remarked that “student unions usually don’t cooperate, don’t dialogue and don’t keep their word. It’s just either they are stealing money and making themselves rich or planning without considering the welfare of the students. They need to cooperate, to work hard and keep what they promise to do for the benefit of the whole institution. Maybe there is need to choose leaders who will be more supportive and render help to students and the management. Maybe they should be punished too, or maybe they need training in many ways about their role and mandate.” Cooperation can help student leaders to contribute to the quality of the learning environment by looking at their peers experiences in their public universities. They keep their student unions vibrant by using the already known messages and rituals such as awarding the high performing students (Blandford, 2006).

It is evident that in order to have an effective operation of student unions, the stake holders among which students are, need to cooperate for cooperation helps to stick to the same strategic plan and vision in order to attain the set goal which in this case is to improve the welfare of students.

5.4.3 No Interference

The study has revealed that there has been too much interference from university administration, political parties, and the government security wing especially the Zambia Police Service in the operation of student unions. Ndoyi (2017) supports this when he posits that there has been so many instances when either the university administration or the minister of higher education threatened or expelled student union or threatened to dissolve the student unions in Zambia. This has often caused division even within the student unions. Members of the union have different political affiliations where they pledge their loyalties hence the political interference does not promote the unity of student unions. Interference only renders student unions ineffective and this does not contribute to the wellbeing of the university. From the study, it is evident that student unions are somewhat suppressed and suffocated by the interference hence there is need for freedom of operation. Freedom will give them an opportunity to exercise their office according to the students' constitution and the given mandate. There should not be interference but rather partnership where student unions are seen as participants in education. This is supported by Levy (2014) when he contends that students are often positioned as passive consumers of education rather than participants in their own higher education.

Furthermore, the operation of the union should be devoid of partisan politics but rather be independent and be formed by the act of the parliament as expressed by a union member when he says “we should not be influenced by political parties, we should be in total control of our properties, of our money and also be left out to solve problems that are within our jurisdiction. If it's a conflict, we need to exhaust the whole process of conflict resolution before disciplinary committee or the police. In short, we need total control of things that are under our office. We are motivated more when we operate without interference for interference demotivates us.”

5.4.4 Training and Capacity building in conflict management

The study established that student unions often lack training and have no capacity in conflict management strategies hence they often fail to find an amicable way to manage or resolve conflicts. It is important for them to be empowered with basics on conflict management skills. They need some short courses before they take office on conflict management, seminar on their role and mandate and also provide them with mentorship or coaching especially from and by

other civil unions within Zambia. A reliable informant argues that Student unions need capacity building in areas of conflict management because most of those in union have not the slightest skills in conflict resolution and management. Before induction into office, they should have a short course on conflict management strategies which will equip them with some skills to resolve conflict at their latent stage. And once in office, a seminar or workshop on conflicts can be given and this will empower and render the student union effective in conflict resolution. Another key respondent contended that capacity building is necessary because in building the capacity of student unions, there is need to provide supervision, guidance and mentorship of the same union.

Further, if possible, there should be within the union a legal representative who will advise the union on legal issues. This will improve not only the voting system, the union set up and composition but more so the right channels or procedure to follow when expressing grievances.

5.4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the findings of the study which were informed by the objectives of the study which were: to find out the effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolution in Public Universities in Zambia: UNZA and CBU, to find out if the university administrations provide a forum for student unions to feel a sense of ownership in their activities in public universities of Zambia, to determine the extent to which the administration pays attention to student Unions for it to be successful in conflict resolution in public universities of Zambia, to suggest ways of improving the effectiveness of student unions in conflict Resolution in Public Universities in Zambia. The study established that the student union is not effective in conflict resolutions in public universities in Zambia. The study revealed some of the ways to improve student unions' effectiveness among which are dialogical communication, cooperation, devoid of political interference, student unions' training and capacity building in conflict management. The next chapter draws conclusions and makes recommendations based on the findings of the study.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

The preceding chapter discussed the findings of the study while this chapter will present the conclusion and the recommendations of the study on the Effectiveness of Student Unions in Conflict Resolutions in Public Universities: A Study of the University of Zambia and the Copperbelt University from 2015-2017.

6.1 Conclusion

The study has shown that student unions are not effective in conflict resolution in public universities in Zambia. Their ineffectiveness is not only self-willed but also because of different circumstances and conditions surrounding their operations. Student unions in Zambia, according to this study, have been affected by interference from different political parties, as well as university management. This can cause lack of motivation and perhaps division on the part of student unions. The study has revealed that student unions are not often regarded as equal partners in education but rather consumers of education. In the study, it is observed also that student unions have been ineffective because they have suffered lack of mentorship. Other older unions in the country could have been a great source of inspiration but there has been little or no interaction between the student unions and other existing unions. The study has also revealed that student unions in public universities in Zambia have lacked basic skills, knowledge and capacity in conflict management. There is need to provide these skills which can be useful tools to improve the effectiveness of student unions in Zambia. In addition, the study has shown that lack of cooperation from students and among student union members makes student unions ineffective. Furthermore, the research has confirmed that some of the student union members do not understand clearly their role, mandate and procedures of handling conflictual issues hence they are influenced by student populace. There is need therefore to have a legal representative within the student union who would advise the student union on legal matters.

6.2 Recommendations

Drawing from the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Public universities in Zambia should be democratically governed without political interference, and students should be considered not only as consumers of education but as equal partners in education.
2. Training in capacity building in conflict management by way of short courses, seminars, conferences should be provided to student unions and university management in conflict resolution quarterly.
3. Students need enlightenment on the importance of the student unions in Universities, their role and mandate as this will enhance conflict management strategies and will serve an important purpose by bridging dialogical communication gaps, which can cause conflicts.
4. Student Unions should have a legal person to advise on disciplinary and legal matters.

6.3 Recommendation for further research

There is need to make a comparative study of the student unions in Public Universities and student unions in Private Universities in regard to their effectiveness.

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QUESTIONNAIRES

Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire for the Student Union

UNZA/ZOU

Date.....

Dear respondent,

I am Simeo KABWE, a post-graduate student at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University, where I am undertaking a Master's degree in Peace, Leadership and conflict Resolution.

I am currently on research study on the topic EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF THE ZAMBIA AND THE COPPERBELT UNIVERSITY FROM 2015-2017.

I am kindly requesting you to assist me by filling the questionnaire below to the best of your knowledge.

The information that you will supply will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will NOT be used anywhere else than the purpose for which data is collected.

Thank you for accepting to contribute to this study.

INSTRUCTIONS

You may respond to the questions either by ticking in the box, or by filing in the blank spaces provided where explanations are required. You need not write your name.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. State your Gender
 - a. Male ()
 - b. Female ()

2. Indicate your Age
 - a. 18-29 ()
 - b. 30-49 ()
 - c. 50+ ()

Academic Qualifications

3. In what year (level) of University education are you?
 - a. First ()
 - b. Second ()
 - c. Third ()
 - d. Fourth ()

Profession Qualification

4. What position do you occupy in the Student Union?
 - a. President ()
 - b. Vice President ()
 - c. Secretary ()
 - d. Treasurer ()
 - e. Committee Member ()

5. SECTION B. EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNION IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- a. How effective is the student Union in conflict resolution in your university? Explain further.....

- b. What are some of the challenges that render your student union ineffective in conflict resolution at university?

c. What are your strengths in conflict resolutions?

6. SECTION C. ADMINISTRATION PAY ATTENTION TO STUDENT UNIONS

a. In what ways do the University Administration pay attention to the student unions?

b. Any platform / forum provided to address issues affecting students?

Yes () No ()

c. If yes, mention them.....

d. How often do student union meet the administration to discuss cooperate issues affecting students? i. Rare () ii. Often () iii. Very Often ()

e. Do students have independent forum to resolve conflicts that are inter-students?

i. Student Union meeting () ii. Disciplinary session () iii. Council meeting ()

iv. General assembly () v. Others.....

7. SECTION D. ADMINISTRATION MAKE STUDENT UNION FEEL THE SENSE OF OWNERSHIP

a. In what ways does the Administration make you feel the sense of university ownership?

b. In which way are you involved in conflict resolution and policy formulation in the university?

c. What issues are reserved to your office to handle by the administration?

d. what type of conflicts are effective in resolving in higher institution of learning?

8. SECTION E. IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS' OPERATION

a. In what areas of your office do you feel need an improvement so to be more effective in conflict resolution?

b. What are some of the challenges that you face in resolving university conflicts?

c. What suggestions would you make to improve the effectiveness of the Student Union?

Thanks in advance for your kind cooperation.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendices

Appendix 2: Questionnaire for the University Disciplinary Committee

UNZA/ZOU

Date.....

Dear respondent,

I am Simeo KABWE, a post-graduate student at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University, where I am undertaking a Master's degree in Peace, Leadership and conflict Resolution.

I am currently on research study on the topic EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA AND THE COPPERBELT UNIVERSITY FROM 2015-2017.

I am kindly requesting you to assist me by filling the questionnaire below to the best of your knowledge.

The information that you will supply will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will NOT be used anywhere else than the purpose for which data is collected.

Thank you for accepting to contribute to this study.

INSTRUCTIONS

You may respond to the questions either by ticking in the box, or by filling in the blank spaces provided where explanations are required. You need not write your name.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

- 1. State your Gender
 - a. Male () b. Female ()

- 2. Indicate your Age
 - a. 18-29 () b. 30-49 () c. 50+ ()

Academic Qualifications

- 3. What level of University education attained?
 - a. First Degree () b. Masters () c. PhD ()

Profession Qualification

- 4. What position do you occupy in the Disciplinary Committee?
 - a. President () c. Secretary ()
 - b. Vice President () d. Treasurer ()
 - e. Committee Member ()

5. SECTION B. EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNION IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- a. How effective is the Student Union in conflict resolution in the university? Explain further.....

- b. In what areas/cases do you feel the student union has been:

- i. Effective.....

- ii. Ineffective.....

- c. What role do you play to enhance the effectiveness of Student Union?

6. SECTION C. ADMINISTRATION PAY ATTENTION TO STUDENT UNIONS

- a. In what ways do you pay attention to the Student Union?

- b. What are some of your meeting points with the Student Union in conflict resolution?

- c. Any challenges faced? Please mention them.....

- d. Suggestions for the future improvement of how the administration pay attention to the student union.....

7. SECTION D. ADMINISTRATION MAKE STUDENT UNION FEEL THE SENSE OF OWNERSHIP

- a. In what ways do you make the student union feel ownership of the university?

- b. To what extent do the administration involve the Student union in the university policy formulation?

- c. What has been the work relationship between the student union and the university administration?

- d. What are the possible challenges faced in making student union feel the sense of ownership of the university?

8. SECTION E. IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS' OPERATION

- a. Do you think the Student Union has been effective in conflict resolutions?

- b. What challenges do you think student Union face in their operations?

- c. What suggestions would you make to improve effectiveness of student union in conflict resolution?

Appendix 3

INTERVIEW SCHEDULED: For the Dean of Students

UNZA/ZOU

Interviewer..... Interviewed.....

Place.....Date.....Time.....

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am Simeo KABWE, a post-graduate student at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University, where I am undertaking a Master's degree in Peace, Leadership and conflict Resolution.

I am currently on research study on the topic EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF THE ZAMBIA AND THE COPPERBELT UNIVERSITY FROM 2015-2017.

I am kindly requesting you to assist me by filling the questionnaire below to the best of your knowledge.

The information that you will supply will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will NOT be used anywhere else than the purpose for which data is collected.

Thank you for accepting to contribute to this study.

1. In your opinion, what kind of conflicts occur at this university?

2. As the Dean of Student, what is your role especially when there is a conflict among students or between the university administration and students?

3. How would you describe the kind of relationship have with the Student Union?

4. Do you feel the Student Union is effective in resolving conflicts in this university?
Explain further.....

5. To what extent do you think the university Administration pay attention to the student Union?

6. As the Dean of Students, in what ways do you think the Student Union feel the sense of Ownership of the University?

7. What problems and Challenges do you face when there is a conflict at the university?

8. What suggestions can you give for to improve the effectiveness of Student Union in Conflict Resolution?

Thank you for your precious time and valuable contributions.

Appendix 4

INTERVIEW SCHEDULED: For the Vice Chancellor

UNZA/ZOU

Interviewer..... Interviewed.....

Place.....Date.....Time.....

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am Simeo KABWE, a post-graduate student at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University, where I am undertaking a Master's degree in Peace, Leadership and conflict Resolution.

I am currently on research study on the topic EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF THE ZAMBIA AND THE COPPERBELT UNIVERSITY FROM 2015-2017.

I am kindly requesting you to assist me by filling the questionnaire below to the best of your knowledge.

The information that you will supply will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will NOT be used anywhere else than the purpose for which data is collected.

Thank you for accepting to contribute to this study.

1. As the Vice Chancellor, what is your role in resolving Conflicts that may occur in this University?

2. Are there conflicts that are solely resolved by the Student Union? Shed more light.....

3. How effective is the Student Union in conflict resolution at this University?

4. In your opinion, what are the key elements for an effective student Union in conflict resolution?

5. To what extent is the Student Union involved in the life and administration of the university?

6. Do you think the student Union feel the sense of ownership of this University? Expand more.....

7. In what areas do you think you pay attention to the Student Union?

8. Give any suggestion (s) you feel will render the Student Union more effective in Conflict Resolution.

Thank you for your precious time and vital contributions.

Appendix 5

INTERVIEW SCHEDULED: For the Zambia Police Service
UNZA/ZOU

Interviewer.....Interviewed.....

Place.....Date.....Time.....

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am Simeo KABWE, a post-graduate student at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University, where I am undertaking a Master's degree in Peace, Leadership and conflict Resolution.

I am currently on research study on the topic EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF THE ZAMBIA AND THE COPPERBELT UNIVERSITY FROM 2015-2017.

I am kindly requesting you to assist me by filling the questionnaire below to the best of your knowledge.

The information that you will supply will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will NOT be used anywhere else than the purpose for which data is collected.

Thank you for accepting to contribute to this study.

1. One of the duties of the Mobile Police Service is keeping domestic order. To what extent are you involved when there is conflicts especially at UNZA and CBU?
2. Do you consult the University Administration on the mode of operation in resolving University Conflicts? Explain further.....
3. Do you engage the Student Union in University Conflict Resolution?
4. Explain further the answer in question 3
5. In your own view, how effective the Student Union is in University Conflict Resolution?
6. What challenges/difficulties do you face in when there is a conflict at UNZA/CBU?
7. What would you recommend for the student Union to be Effective in Conflict Resolution?

Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix 6

INTERVIEW SCHEDULED: For the Ministry of Higher Education

UNZA/ZOU

Interviewer.....Interviewed.....

Place.....Date.....Time.....

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am Simeo KABWE, a post-graduate student at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University, where I am undertaking a Master’s degree in Peace, Leadership and conflict Resolution.

I am currently on research study on the topic EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF THE ZAMBIA AND THE COPPERBELT UNIVERSITY FROM 2015-2017.

I am kindly requesting you to assist me by filling the questionnaire below to the best of your knowledge.

The information that you will supply will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will NOT be used anywhere else than the purpose for which data is collected.

Thank you for accepting to contribute to this study.

1. As the Minister of Higher Education, what role do you play in the resolution of University Conflict?
2. What forum, if there is, do you have with Student Union to resolve University conflicts?
3. In your own opinion, how would you evaluate the effectiveness of Student Union in conflict Resolution?
4. To what extent would you say the university Administration pay attention to the Student Union?
5. Would you say the student union feel the sense of ownership of the university? Explain further.....
6. What challenges do you face as a Minister of Higher Education in dealing with the student Union?
7. What would you suggest for the Effectiveness of the Student Union?

Thank you very much for your valuable time and vital contributions to this study.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Appendices

Appendix 7: Questionnaire for the Students

UNZA/ZOU

Date.....

Dear respondent,

I am Simeo KABWE, a post-graduate student at the University of Zambia in collaboration with Zimbabwe Open University, where I am undertaking a Master's degree in Peace, Leadership and conflict Resolution.

I am currently on research study on the topic EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES: A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF THE ZAMBIA AND THE COPPERBELT UNIVERSITY FROM 2015-2017.

I am kindly requesting you to assist me by filling the questionnaire below to the best of your knowledge.

The information that you will supply will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will NOT be used anywhere else than the purpose for which data is collected.

Thank you for accepting to contribute to this study.

INSTRUCTIONS

You may respond to the questions either by ticking in the box, or by filing in the blank spaces provided where explanations are required. You need not write your name.

SECTION A: Demographic Information

1. State your Gender
 - a. Male () b. Female ()

2. Indicate your Age
 - a. 18-29 () b. 30-49 () c. 50+ ()

Academic Qualifications

3. In what year (level) of University education are you?
 - a. First () c. Third ()
 - b. Second () d. Fourth ()

4. SECTION B. EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNION IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

a. How effective is the student Union in conflict resolution in your university? Explain further.....

b. What are some of the challenges that render the student union ineffective in conflict resolution at university?

c. What are the methods used by student union in conflict resolutions?

6. SECTION C. ADMINISTRATION PAY ATTENTION TO STUDENT UNIONS

a. In what ways do the University Administration pay attention to the student unions?

b. Any platform / forum provided to address issues affecting students?

Yes () No ()

c. If yes, mention them.....

d. How often do you think student union meet the administration to discuss cooperate issues affecting students? i. Rare () ii. Often () iii. Very Often ()

e. Do students have independent forum to resolve conflicts that are inter-students?

i. Student Union meeting () ii. Disciplinary session () iii. Council meeting ()

iv. General assembly () v. Others.....

7. SECTION D. ADMINISTRATION MAKE STUDENT UNION FEEL THE SENSE OF OWNERSHIP

a. In what ways does the Administration make you feel the sense of university ownership?

b. In which way are you involved in conflict resolution in the university?

b. what type of conflicts are effective in resolving in higher institution of learning?

8. SECTION E. IMPROVING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT UNIONS' OPERATION

a. In what areas of student union do you feel need an improvement so to be more effective in conflict resolution?

b. What are some of the challenges that students face in resolving university conflicts?

c. What suggestions would you make to improve the effectiveness of the Student Union?

Thanks in advance for your kind cooperation.