

**FACTORS CONTRIBUTING TO ABSENTEEISM AMONG HIGH
SCHOOL TEACHERS IN ZAMBIA: THE CASE STUDY OF
SELECTED HIGH SCHOOLS OF
LUSAKA DISTRICT**

THESIS
M.ED
MAL
2010
C.1

BY
EMELDAH MICHELO MALUNGO

A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education
(Educational Administration)



THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

LUSAKA

JUNE 2010

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

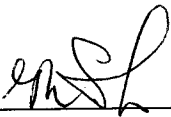
Except where otherwise indicated, this dissertation is my own original research work. It has not been presented in whole or part for examination for any other degree and that all sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete reference.

DEDICATION

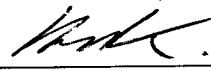
This dissertation is dedicated to my late dad, Edward Michelo and Mum, Mrs Lona Michelo, my husband Dr J.R.S. Malungo, my niece Melody Ziile and our four beloved children; Michelo, Milimo, Miyoba and the youngest son Milumbe.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This dissertation of Emeldah Michelo is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration of the University of Zambia.

Signed 

Date 15th July, 2010

Signed 

Date 15th July 2010

Signed 

Date 15.07.10

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply indebted to many people who have made this study a success. First and foremost, I would like to thank my Supervisor, Mr. G. N. Sumbwa for his timely guidance and constructive criticisms which helped to shape the study. I never stopped being so amazed at his dedication. He went through my work even at short notice. I appreciate all the contributions and suggestions most of which are incorporated.

My sincere gratitude goes to Emily Mwaamba Katongo Mporokoso for the provision of some documents and vital information which were crucial to my area of study as this made my work easier. Special thanks go to my dearest husband Dr. J.R.S Malungo for his advise, kindness and encouragement rendered to me during my research work. To my children and my relatives, I would say thank you for your patience.

I am indebted to the officials in the Ministry of Education particularly, the District Education Board Secretary's (DEBS) office who gave me permission to do my research work in the high schools of my choice. My special acknowledgement goes to head teachers of all the three high schools for allowing me to conduct the research at a time which was not convenient to do the work. To my friends, I would say thank you for your spiritual support and may God bless you.

Many thanks also go to Mr Million Phiri for helping me with data processing using Statistical Package for Social Sciences.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated factors contributing to teacher absenteeism in high schools. It also investigated the sex that frequently absented itself and the solutions to teacher absenteeism.

The study followed a case study design. The population consisted all the 17 high schools of Lusaka Urban district. Purposive and simple random sampling were used to select the schools; the selected sample comprised teachers, pupils and heads of departments, head teachers and deputy head teachers.

In depth interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires were used to get more in depth data. Quantitative data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) while qualitative data were categorised and analysed into themes and sub-themes.

The investigations and findings revealed a number of factors that contributed to teacher absenteeism which included illness, business and private tuition, watching television in the staffroom, studies and study leave, lack of motivation, frustration by management, official duties, taking care of young and sick children and family members. The other factors were heavy teaching loads, poor conditions of service, poor salaries, lack of teaching materials and incompetence and lack of seriousness among teachers. It was also revealed that female teachers absented themselves more than male teachers.

The study made recommendations that schools and the Ministry of Education could utilise to reduce teacher absenteeism namely: providing incentives to deserving teachers, providing better conditions of service, providing adequate teaching materials, constructing more houses, training more teachers especially in science, mathematics and Business studies and remunerating teachers more.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<i>Page</i>
Declaration	ii
Dedication	iii
Certificate of Approval	iv
Acknowledgements	v
Abstract	vi
Table of contents.....	vii
List of Tables	ix
List of Figures	xi
List of Acronyms	xii
Definition of Terms	xiii
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	1
• Background of the study	1
• Statement of the problem	2
• Purpose of the study	2
• Objectives	2
• Research questions	2
• Significance of the study	2
• Limitations of the study	3
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW	4
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY	11
• Introduction	11
• Research design	11
• Study population	11
• Sample	11
• Sampling Procedure	11
• Research instruments	12
• Data collection	12

• Data analysis	12
CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS	13
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS	33
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	44
REFERENCES	47
APPENDICES	51
A Questionnaire for Pupils	51
B Questionnaire for Teachers	53
C Questionnaire for Heads of Department	60
D Interview Guide for Head teachers and Deputy Head teachers	65
E Pupils' Focus Group Discussion Guide	66
F Interview Guide for Teachers	67
G Letter from the DEBS Office	68

LIST OF TABLES

	<i>Page</i>
Table 4.1.1.	
A statement indicating the extent to which pupils agreed or disagreed regarding the causes of teachers' absenteeism from classes	14
Table 4.1.2	
Information on whether pupils agreed or disagreed regarding teachers' absenteeism from classes on the sex frequently absented from classes	15
Table 4.1.3	
Pupils' responses on the age group of teachers that was mostly absent	15
Table 4.1.4	
Pupils' responses on why teachers absent themselves from classes	16
Table 4.1.5	
The responses pupils gave on teachers' reaction to the use of teachers' attendance registers	16
Table 4.1.6	
Pupils' responses on solutions to teachers' absenteeism	17
Table 4.1.7	
Teachers' responses on reasons for being absent from class	18
Table 4.1.8	
A statement indicating the extent to which teachers agreed or disagreed regarding causes of absenteeism from classes	19
Table 4.1.9	
Teachers' responses on the sex of teachers that usually absented itself from classes	21
Table 4.1.10	
The responses of teachers on solutions to absenteeism at school level	22

Table 4.1.11
The responses of teachers on the solutions to teacher absenteeism by the Ministry of Education 22

Table 4.1.12
Heads of Departments’ suggested reasons for teachers’ absence from classes 22

Table 4.1.13
Heads of Departments’ responses on the sex of teachers mostly absent from classes 23

Table 4.1.14
Responses from the Heads of Department on why a particular sex absented itself from classes 23

Table 4.1.15
A statement indicating the extent to which Heads of Departments agreed or disagreed regarding causes of teachers’ absenteeism from classes 24

Table 4.1.16
Heads of Departments’ responses on measures taken when absenteeism is Reported 25

Table 4.1.17
Responses from Heads of Departments on how often they monitored teachers 25

Table 4.1.18
Heads of Departments’ suggestion of teachers’ absenteeism at school level 26

Table 4.1.19
The responses of Heads of Departments on solutions the Ministry could take to reduce absenteeism 28

LIST OF FIGURES

	<i>Page</i>
Figure 4.1 Teachers’ responses on whether they had ever been absent from class with or without permission	18
Figure 4.2 Fate of teachers found to have been absent	20
Figure 4.3 Type of punishment respondents received for being absent	20
Figure 4.4 Sex of teachers usually absent from class	21

LIST OF ACRONYMS

MoE	-	Ministry of Education
EOF	-	Educating Our Future
FOL	-	Focus on Learning
WBNAS	-	World Bank National Absence Survey
HIV/	-	Human Immune Deficiency Virus
AIDS	-	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
LICs	-	Low Income Countries
WB	-	The World Bank
GRZ	-	The Government of the Republic of Zambia
FGDs	-	Focus Group Discussions
WDR	-	World Development Report
PROBE	-	Public Report on Basic Education
NASOTHP	-	National Absence Survey of Teaching and Health Personnel
WBR	-	World Bank Report
DEBS	-	District Education Board Secretary
ESOs	-	Education Standards Officers

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Absenteeism; being away from one's class regardless of the reason

High School; a school with grades ten to twelve i.e. senior secondary

Development; the economic progress and the general transformation.

Effective school; a school which is run properly and is productive in terms of academic performance

Economic growth; the increase in the total number of productive services and amount of wealth in an economy.

Basic education; type of education that involve junior secondary in addition to the original primary classes.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

Rowmire (1992:47) looks at education as a “process by which an individual gains knowledge or develop attitudes or skills”. It leads to individual creativity, improved participation in the social, economic and cultural life of society and hence to a more effective contribution to human development (Kelly 1999:03). Teachers play a critical role in imparting knowledge and skills in any education system. Therefore, it is important that teachers are not only trained, but that they are available to provide the service.

Education is purported to be a commodity to society, a core of human progress. It has significantly influenced the life of humanity all over the world in all spheres of development such as political, social, cultural, religious and economic development. The main goal of any learning institution therefore is to provide quality education to all its learners. To this effect, teachers play a significant role. Their attitude towards work can affect the general performance of learners either positively or negatively.

Teachers' absenteeism is undoubtedly likely to compromise the quality of education. Research indicates that teachers' absenteeism has severe effects on learning. Scott (1988) for example, asserts that instructional time has consequently been found to correlate with student learning. From this assertion, it may be concluded that teachers' absenteeism effectively limits instructional time, leading to poor academic performance.

Research work conducted in three High Schools in Lusaka urban district revealed that absenteeism among teachers was not uncommon. Preliminary investigations and personal observations made before conducting this study also indicated that the vice of absenteeism among teachers existed in Zambia. These revelations prompted this study. The study sought to unearth the factors that contributed to this scourge in three selected high schools of Lusaka.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

It was observed that a lot of teachers absented themselves from classes in some Lusaka urban district high schools. The factors that led to this vice could not be established at the time of observation. This study therefore, was set to investigate the factors that led to absenteeism among teachers in these schools, as well as to seek ways of arresting the problem.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study sought to identify factors that contributed to teacher absenteeism in some Lusaka urban district high schools; as well as to find ways of combating the scourge.

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives for this study were to:-

1. Investigate factors that contributed to absenteeism in Lusaka urban district high schools.
2. Find out which sex of teachers was mainly absent from classes and why?
3. Explore strategies aimed at combating absenteeism among teachers in High schools.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What factors contributed to absenteeism among teachers in Lusaka urban district?
2. Which sex of teachers were mainly absent from classes and why?
3. What measures should be put in place to combat absenteeism among teachers in High schools?

1.5 Significance of the Study

The study was essential because its findings would help school managers to come up with strategies on how to curb the problem of teacher absenteeism. The findings were also likely to be used by the Ministry of Education to formulate policies to address absenteeism among teachers in high schools'. This may in turn help improve pupils' learning and performance in due course.

1.6 Limitation of the Study

The study was confined to selected high schools in Lusaka Province. This was due to lack of funds and time on the part of the researcher.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Education is a critical factor in the development of any country. Educational performance determines the child's future which in turn has an effect on the economic growth of any nation (Kelly, 1999). In Zambia, the Government and its cooperating partners have instituted a number of measures aimed at improving the quality of education since Zambia's independence in 1964. Through its current policy, the Ministry of Education states that, "the main purpose of the education system in Zambia is to provide quality education to pupils" (MoE 1996).

The quality and effectiveness of an education system depends heavily on the quality of its teachers. They are the key persons in determining success in meeting the system's goals. The educational and personal well-being of children in schools hinges crucially on the teachers' competence, commitment and resourcefulness. According to MoE (1992) teachers are key individuals in determining whether the school can bring its undertakings to fruition or not. It is they who shape children's intellectual formation to promote their desire and ability to learn.

It seems that over many years, many and different factors have contributed to the undermining of the standard and quality of education in Zambia. Among them are compromised instructional time and double sessions practiced in some of the schools. However, these factors do not only affect Zambia, but the world over, as has been stipulated by various studies conducted in different countries (<http://web>; Word Bank.org.)

The World Bank National Absence Survey (WBNAS) reports very high levels of teacher absence in two African countries – Kenya 28.4% and Uganda 27.0%. In addition, the World Development Report (2004) cites a study that shows that up to 45% of teachers in Ethiopia were absent during a certain week with 10% of them absent for more than three days (World Bank, 2004).

The WBNAS found the rate for Bangladesh to be 14.9%. However, Sub-national variations were very large in all the three countries: India, Bangladesh and West Bengal. The most unfortunate and surprising thing was that no explanations were offered for these variations. Why for example is teacher absenteeism 40% in Delhi but only 15% in Gujarat? These large differences in absenteeism rates are likely to reflect differences in policy and practices in different education systems. WBNAS reports that teacher absenteeism rates in other Asian countries tended to be lower. Sri Lanka rated 11% in 1995, Nepal 14% in mid 1990s and Pakistan 10% in 1993. In Nepal many teachers regularly deserted their classrooms to do part time business. In south and Central America the WBNAS reports absenteeism rates of 13.5% in Ecuador and 10.6% in Peru in 2003.

Glewwe *et al* (1999) state that teachers in one area of Kenya were absent from school 28.4% of the time, and in school but absent from their classes 12.4% of the time. The 1999 Public Report on Basic Education for India found that one third ($\frac{1}{3}$) of the headteachers were absent when PROBE investigators visited; sparking considerable public debate on the issue in India (PROBE Team 1999). In addition to the above studies, another survey of primary schools in the States of Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh found that 17% of the teachers were absent from school and another 20% were at school but absent from their classrooms (Rao 1999, World Bank 2008).

In a sample of teachers in West Bengal, Amartya Sen found an absence rate of 20% among primary school teachers (Sen 2002). In a large sample of private schools in West Frontier Province of Pakistan, the rate of teacher absence averaged 18% (Murad & Reed, 1993). Another survey of primary schools in Pakistan found an absence rate of about 10% in the surveyed schools (Reimers, 1993). Another report by World Bank on Bangladesh in the mid-90s noted that often 50% of the teachers were absent and that there were common cases where only one teacher was present for over a hundred children at different grade levels (World Bank 1995).

Teacher absenteeism however, is widely reported to be much lower in private-for-profit schools, although there is little or no evidence to back this up. From the above demographic data of teacher absenteeism prevalence in many countries it is quite evident

that teacher absence was a worldwide problem. This may be the reason a number of researchers have conducted a number of studies into factors that were likely to account for teacher absenteeism.

A study conducted on Nicaraguan schools suggested that lack of local control over schools may sometimes be the contributing factor to teacher absenteeism (King and Ozler 2001). The World Bank (2002) on the other hand alludes to illness as a contributing factor to teacher absenteeism. In this study, HIV/AIDS was specifically cited as being responsible for the problem. Another study in line with this one was conducted by Das and others (2005). They argue that in Zambia, student learning suffers as a consequence of teacher absenteeism largely due to illness and death in the family. As this pandemic has serious adverse implications on the education system, the Ministry of Education (MoE 2005) has put in place an HIV/AIDS workplace policy aimed at arresting the situation. It provides continuous health education, care and support programmes for employees in anticipation that HIV infected teachers may keep healthy and thus reduce on teacher absenteeism resulting from HIV/AIDS.

Another study on teacher resource centres notes that teacher training can itself be the cause of absence, when it removes teachers from the classroom for up to a month of training with no substitutes to cover for these teachers. El-Sanabiy (1989) argues that in most cases gender may play a role especially when competing demands of home and workplace contribute to high rates of absence among female teachers. On the contrary the WBNAS study indicates that absenteeism rates among primary school teachers were higher among males in India, Indonesia and Peru but about the same in Bangladesh and Ecuador. However, no reasons have been given for this.

Poor motivation and lack of accountability is widely reported to result in high levels of teacher absenteeism in many low income countries (LICs). The World Bank (2004) portrays poor teacher attendance as a direct consequence of the lack of accountability of teachers and schools to parents and local communities. However, to date, the paucity of comprehensive cross-country data has made it impossible to reach robust conclusions.

In 2003, the World Bank conducted a National absence survey of teaching and health personnel in seven developing countries namely; Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Ethiopia, Uganda, Ecuador and Peru. This study evidently indicates that the overall level of teacher absenteeism is a poor proxy of teacher accountability and management oversight. This is attributed to the fact that it is difficult to measure teacher absenteeism that can be directly attributed to poor motivation and opportunistic behaviour.

The level of non-legitimate teacher absence is determined by a combination of two distinct set of factors – teacher motivation and management sanctions or punishments (LINS 1999). Disentangling these two is not easy. Teachers may for example be seriously demotivated, but an effective system of management controls can ensure that absenteeism remains low.

The deduction of pay for unauthorised absence is an obvious deterrent which can be effective in keeping teacher absenteeism to low levels, as is the case, in South Africa. However, systems are too crude and rudimentary to do this in many low income countries (<http://web;WorldBank.org>.) Nevertheless, little research has been taken on motivational and incentives issues among teachers.

There is a wide range of views about teacher motivation in Africa and South Asia, most of which are country specific. However, unacceptably high proportions of teachers working in public systems in LICs are poorly motivated. This is due to a combination of low morale and job satisfaction, poor incentives and inadequate controls and other behavioural suctions. Consequently, standards of professional conduct and performance are low and failing in many LICs (Scott 1998).

One of the most important findings of the World Bank research was that absenteeism rates among contractual teachers were much higher than for teachers with permanent status, in Ecuador, Indonesia and Peru; this differential is more than 10% (World Bank 2003). Available evidence suggests that teacher pay is generally very low and declining in real terms in most countries (Bennel and Acheampong, 2002). Bennel and Acheampong (2002) further reveal that teachers in the large majority earn less than three dollars a day which is

usually the main source of household income. Given that most households have more than five people, household income per head is well under one dollar a day. Salary supplementation requirement probably contributes to teacher absenteeism given that they need to make extra money at the same time they are supposed to attend to their classes.

The Nelson Mandela Foundation household survey reported low household income as a result of HIV Pandemic whose prevalence population is recorded at 11.4% and states that 12% of the country's teachers were infected with HIV (<http://www.aegis.com/conferences>.)

Increasing hours of work, larger class sizes, more subjects and constantly changing curricula are cited as major de-motivators in many countries. What is expected from teachers is not pitched at a realistic level in many countries given material rewards, workloads, work and living environments. The work and living environments for teachers are poor, which tends to lower self esteem and generally demotivating. Housing is a major issue for nearly all teachers. The struggling teacher is an all too common sight, especially in primary schools (Bennel et al, 2004).

The World Bank (2001) reveals that the most important reason for teacher absenteeism in Bangladesh, Ecuador and Uganda was official duty. Data for India was not available, but in Bangladesh, teachers were frequently absent from school in order to undertake official duties expected of all government officials such census, numeration and election monitoring ones (<http://web; World bank.org>). It is further stated that head teachers in all countries also frequently attend official meetings and other duties outside school. These absences tended to be longer in more remote schools.

The World Bank (2004) research on teacher absenteeism alludes to the fact that a very large number of teachers in many countries were on full-time study leave but continued to be on the payroll and counted as though these teachers were still in class. Teacher qualification upgrading programmes can involve regular absences from school in order to attend evening classes and support distance learning.

It is also argued that local teachers in a particular area are likely to be absent because of their ties to the local community and greater sense of accountability. However, this variable was statistically not insignificant at 5% in the World Bank Report (World Bank 2004) level on Peru. It pointed to local distractions including teacher involvement in politics and greater opportunity for secondary employment, especially farming which negatively impacted on teacher attendance.

Highly qualified and more experienced teachers in India and Indonesia were reported in the WBNAS report as being more likely to be absent. In Bangladesh however, less experienced teachers tend to have higher absenteeism rates.

Personal leave is another factor attached to teacher absenteeism. LINS (1999) indicates that, except for compassionate reasons, personal leave entitlements during term-time were rare in Africa. However in India, teachers were allowed to take a considerable amount of leave during term-time. In Karanataka for example, this amounted to 50 days out of the 220 day school year.

Poor time keeping is a major problem in some countries. Teachers arriving late, finishing early and leaving their classes during the day can seriously reduce total instructional time. In Ghana this amounted to only 11 hours per week in 1977 (LINS 1999) and an average of 17 hours per week in secondary schools in Tanzania. In Karanataka, India, teachers were reported to be in class for only two to three hours per day instead of the prescribed five to six hours.

These factors are only representative of many more other factors and different countries are influenced by different factors. However the main concern is not necessarily the matter of only knowing the factors contributing to teacher absenteeism but more importantly was to know how teacher absenteeism may be arrested. Different researches have been done pertaining to eradication of teacher absenteeism.

A study conducted in 3 districts of Uganda two of which were rural based and one urban based established existing efforts to reduce the challenge of absenteeism among teachers

with specific reference to HIV/AIDS based absenteeism. It recommended that teachers *should have a special medical scheme like other institutions such as the army and many others* and that teachers themselves should actively and effectively get involved in HIV/AIDS Programmes. <http://www.aegis.com/conferences>.

Another research conducted by Halsey Rodgers revealed that one of the best ways to reduce absenteeism was to better the infrastructure at work places. He clearly says that:

the most logical explanation in countries where there's little minifying of workers is that what's going to determine whether or not a person goes to work is how they feel about the place where they work. If the facilities are better, if they have for example functional toilets and a roof, they are going to be more enthusiastic about going to work and working in those better conditions. <http://web.worldbank.org/>.

According to Rodgers, increasing salaries alone is not expected to reduce absenteeism for staff who are neither well monitored nor rewarded for performance hence he places improvement of infrastructure as cardinal in reducing absenteeism.

Rodgers further suggests that periodic teacher visits rather than continually having teachers posted in rural areas without following them up to evaluate them would greatly reduce teacher absenteeism. He further states that absenteeism can be reduced if local institutions such as school associations are given power to hire and fire teachers. (<http://web.worldbank.org>). In one of the studies he conducted, it was discovered that the teachers who failed to report for work were rarely disciplined and therefore increased teacher absenteeism. As a result of this he says, it is not just enough to go in and set up parents-teachers associations but to give them power to determine the fate of the teachers.

Chaudhury and Hammer (2003) on the other hand, raises the issue of the political will to deal with the issue of high absenteeism as significant in combating teacher absenteeism. <http://web.worldbank.org/>.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and describes the methods used in collecting data and how the data were analyzed. It describes the research design employed, target population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection procedures and data analysis

3.2 Research Design

This study was a case study which was specifically conducted in three schools in Lusaka province namely Munali Girls High School, Munali Boys High School and Chelstone High School. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used in the data collection process and analysis. Analysis of qualitative data involved arranging material in themes and making explanations while quantitative data involved analyzing the statistics and expressing the data in numerical terms.

3.3 Target Population

The study population consisted of all the 17 high schools in Lusaka District. It targeted all teachers (male and female), pupils and administrators of those schools.

3.4 Study Sample

The study sample was made up three schools, and targeted 75 teacher respondents, that is 25 teachers from each school. The pupils targeted were 138 (46 from each school). Three head teachers, three (3) deputy heads and twenty (20) heads of departments, were also made part of the sample.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

Purposeful sampling was used to select the administrators while simple random sampling was used to select the needed teachers. The teachers' names were arranged in alphabetical order and every ordinary number was selected for participation until the required number was reached.

In the case of pupils random sampling was used. Two types of paper were put in a box with “yes” and “no” and those who picked “yes” were the ones that were involved in the study. Focus Groups Discussion on teachers and pupils centered on the availability. In each school one Focus Groups Discussion was done which comprised ten participants.

3.6 Research Instruments

The instruments used were; Questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions, Interview guides and existing documents.

3.7 Data Collection

Questionnaires were the main research instruments used to collect quantitative data. These were given to pupils, teachers, and heads of department. They were personally administered by the researcher so that she could clarify any queries raised and get back the filled ones the same day. Face to face interviews were held with head teachers, deputy head teachers, selected teachers in the departments and heads of department. The researcher personally conducted these interviews to ensure that information was obtained first hand. One Focus Group Discussion comprising 10 pupils was conducted at each of the schools.

3.8 Data Analysis

Qualitative and quantitative techniques were used in data analysis. Quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) with the help of an expert. This helped in generating graphs, tables and percentages. Manual analysis of qualitative data was done through forming categories, themes of the data that emerged and making explanations of them. The data from Focus Group Discussion responses and existing documents were used to validate the data from questionnaires.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study to show the factors that contributed to absenteeism among teachers. Also the sex most absent and solutions to the problem of absenteeism in three high schools are presented. When interpreting the information, the researcher considered the essential parts from the Questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions and interviews. The chapter has information from various perspectives: namely, from the pupils, teachers and heads of departments.

4.1 Findings from the Pupils' Questionnaires

This section discusses findings of the study as presented by the pupils.

4.1.1 Various statements on the reasons why teachers absented themselves from classes were presented to respondents in order for them to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with them. The findings on this are shown in Table 1.

Table 4.1.1**n. 138****Table 1: Information on pupil's response on causes of absenteeism.**

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Female teachers absent themselves to mostly take care of young and sick children & family members.	28.3	32.6	27.5	11.6
2. Male teachers absent themselves to most take care of young ones, children & family members.	2.2	5.8	37.7	54.3
3. Male teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business.	26.5	38.2	25.0	10.3
4. Female teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business.	8.7	26.1	44.9	20.3
5. Males teachers absent from classes to go & conduct tuitions.	31.9	26.1	26.8	15.2
6. Females teachers absent from classes to go & conduct tuitions.	11.6	24.6	41.3	22.5
7. teachers absent from classes due to lack of teaching aids	15.2	16.7	31.2	37.0
8. Teachers absent from classes to chat with friends and watch TV in the staffroom.	45.7	27.5	18.1	8.7
9. teachers absent from classes due to frustration by management	8.7	40.6	35.5	15.2
10. Male teachers absent from classes to go & drink beer.	27.7	1.2	29.0	18.1
11. Teachers absent from classes due to poor salaries.	27.5	34.1	26.1	12.3
12. Teachers absent from classes due to illness e.g. HIV and other related diseases.	6.5	23.2	34.1	36.2

The table shows that female teachers' taking care of the young and sick (61%), male teachers' involvement in tuition (58%), male teachers' beer drinking (59%), teachers' chatting and watching T.V. in the staffroom (73%), poor salaries (62%) and teachers'

frustration by management (49%) were the major causes of absenteeism among high school teachers.

4.1.2 Respondents were asked which sex of teachers were frequently absent from classes. The responses to this were as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Sex frequently absent from class
n. 138

Response	frequency	percent
Females	55	40.7
Males	64	47.4
Both sexes	19	11.9
Total	138	100

The Table shows that the majority of respondents 64 (47%) indicated that male teachers were the ones who were frequently absent from classes.

4.1.3 Respondents were asked as to which age group of teachers was mostly absent from classes. The responses to this were as shown in Table 3 below.\

Table 3: Age of Teachers Mainly Absent from Class
n. 138

Age	frequency	percentage
Young teachers	35	25.2
Old teachers	78	56.3
Both young and old	26	18.5
Total	138	100

Table 3 shows that the majority of the respondents 78 (56.3%) cited old teachers as the ones who were mostly absent from classes. This was followed by young teachers 35 (25.2%) and then both young and old teachers 26 (18.5%).

4.1.4: Responses from pupils on why a particular sex absconds more than the other.

Table 4
n. 121

Reason	frequency	percentage
Due to sickness	3	2.5
Have family problems at home	9	7.4
Have many classes to teach	14	11.6
Laziness	23	19.0
Taking care of their children at home	12	9.9
They drink beer	13	10.7
They have personal things to do	21	17.4
They like watching TV in staffroom	6	5.0
They usually conduct private tuitions	6	5.0
Too busy	14	11.6
Total	121	100

Table 4 shows that of the 138 respondents, 23 (19%) cited laziness, 21 (7.4%) personal things to do and 14 (11.6%) being too busy and having many classes to teach as the reasons why one particular sex.

Pupils were asked to what teachers' reactions were to the use of teachers' attendance registers. The responses were as shown in table 5 below.

4.1.5 Teachers' reactions to the use of teachers' attendance registers

Table 5
n. 117

Response	frequency	percentage
Teachers were more absent	16	13.8
Teachers were annoyed	11	9.5
Teachers were more regular	77	66.4
There were no changes	12	10.3
Total	117	100

The table shows that 77 (66.4%) of the respondents indicated that teachers became more regular, 16 (14%) that they were absent and 12 (10.3%) that there were no changes.

4.1.6 Respondents were asked to suggest some solutions to the problem of teachers’ absenteeism. Answers to this were as shown in Table 6 below

Table 6

n. 129

Action	Frequency	Percentage
Employ more teachers	12	9.3
Improve teacher’s salaries	8	6.2
Remove the televisions from the staff room	7	5.4
Replace them with better teachers	11	8.5
Their salaries should be reduced	32	24.8
They should be encouraged to do their duties	6	4.7
They should be fired	7	5.4
They should be paid according to their inputs	6	4.7
They should be punished	19	14.7
They should fix the time table to avoid crushing	6	4.7
Transferred to other schools	8	6.2
Tuitions must be abolished	7	5.4
Total	129	100

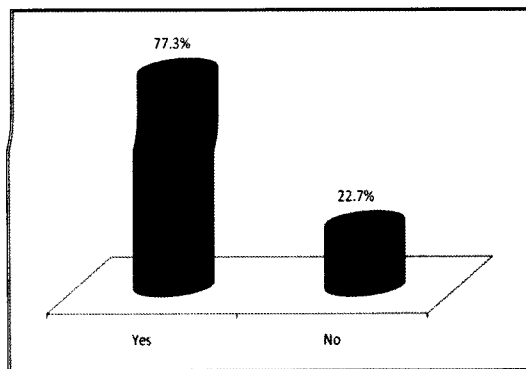
The table shows reduction of salaries 32 (25%), and punishment of culprits 19 (15%) as the main suggested solutions to absenteeism. These were followed by employment of more teachers 12 (9.3%) and replacement of absconding teachers. Abolition of the tuition system 7 (5.4%) was among the least mentioned solutions.

4.2 Findings from teachers’ Questionnaires

This section presents responses from the teachers.

4.2.1 Teachers were asked whether they had ever been absent from classes with or without permission. The responses were as shown in Fig 1 below:

Figure 4.1: Teachers’ response on whether they had ever been absent from class with or without permission



The figure shows that (77.3%) of the respondents said they had been absent while (22%) denied having done so.

4.2.2 Teachers were asked as to why they were absent from classes. Their responses were as shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7
n.57

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Attending to family issues	7	12.3
Attending to official duties	14	24.6
feeling lazy	3	5.3
Had funeral	7	12.3
Had private business	5	8.8
Sickness	21	36.8
Total	57	100

The table shows that the majority of teachers 21 (36.8%) were absent due to illness, 14 (24.6%) due to official duties, 7 (12.3%) due to funerals and another 7 (12.3%) due to other family commitments. And rather surprisingly, 3 (5.3%) attributed their absence from classes to ‘feeling lazy’.

4.2.3: Teachers' were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statements regarding causes of absenteeism from classes. The responses to this are shown in the table below.

Table 8

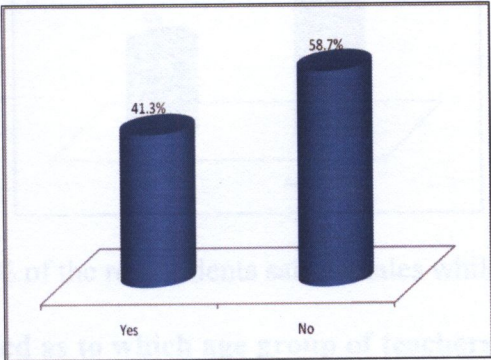
n. 75

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Female teachers absent themselves to mostly take care of young and sick children & family members.	30.7	58.7	4.0	6.7
2. Male teachers absent themselves to most take care of young ones, children & family members.	4.0	12.0	49.3	34.7
3. Male teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business.	14.7	53.3	24.0	8.0
4. Female teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business.	4.0	30.7	48.0	17.3
5. Males teachers absent from classes to go & conduct tuitions.	10.7	49.3	30.7	9.3
6. Females teachers absent from classes to go & conduct tuitions.	1.3	20.0	58.7	20.0
7. teachers absent from classes due to lack of teaching aids	1.3	14.7	48.0	36.0
8. Teachers absent from classes to chat with friends and watch TV in the staffroom.	4.0	6.0	45.3	34.7
9. teachers absent from classes due to frustration by management	22.7	45.3	25.3	6.7
10. Male teachers absent from classes to go & drink beer.	2.7	24.0	41.3	32.0
11. Teachers absent from classes due to poor salaries.	31.1	47.2	14.9	6.8
12. Teachers absent from classes due to illness e.g. HIV and other related diseases.	16.0	48.0	21.3	14.7

The table shows that female teachers taking care of the young and sick (89.4%), male teachers involvement in businesses (68%), male teachers' involvement in tuition (60%), teachers' frustration by management (68%), poor salaries (78.3%) and illnesses (64%) were the main causes of absenteeism from classes. It also shows male teachers drinking (26.7%) and chatting and watching T.V. (20%) as other causes of the scourge.

4.2.4 The Respondents who were absent without permission were asked whether some form of punishment was administered. The responses to this were as shown in Figure 4.2.

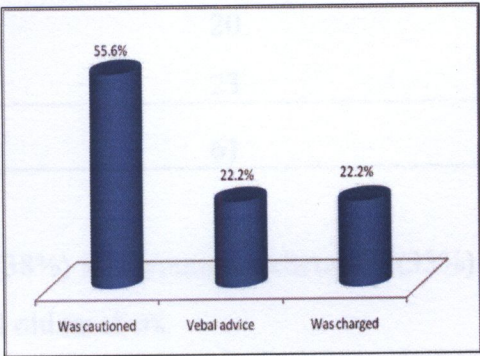
Figure 4.2: Fate of teachers found to have been absent



The figure above reveals that 59% of the respondents were not given any form of punishment while 41.3% of them said they were punished.

4.2.5 Teachers were asked to indicate what punishment they were given if at all they were found to have been absent. The responses to this were as shown in Figure 3 below.

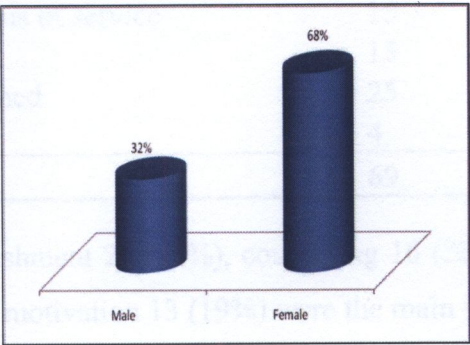
Figure 4.3: Type of punishment given to teachers who had been absent
n.75



Out of 75 teachers investigated, 57% indicated that they were cautioned, 22.2% that they received verbal advice and 22.5% that they were charged.

4.2.6 Teachers were asked as to which sex of teachers were usually absent. The answers to this were as shown in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4.4: Sex of teachers usually absent from class
n.75



The Figure shows that 68% of the respondents said females while 32% said males.

4.2.7 Teachers were asked as to which age group of teachers was usually absent from class. The answers to this were as shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Teachers' suggested age group of teachers that was usually absent from classes.
n.61

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Both young and old	18	29.5
Old teachers	20	32.8
Young teachers	23	37.7
Total	61	100

The Table shows that 23 (38%) said young teachers, 20 (33%) said old teachers while 18 (29%) said both young and old teachers.

4.2.8: Teachers were asked to suggest solutions to teachers’ absenteeism at school level. The answers were as shown in Table 10 below.

Table 10

n.69

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Counsel them	16	23.2
Improve their conditions of service	15	21.7
Motivate them	13	18.8
They should be punished	25	36.2
Warning them	4	5.8
Total	69	100

The table shows that punishment 25 (36%), counseling 16 (23.2%), improving conditions of service 15 (21.7%) and motivation 13 (19%) were the main suggested solutions.

4.2.9. Teachers were asked as to what the ministry should do to teachers who absent themselves from classes. The responses to these were as shown in Table 11 below.

Table 11

n.67

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Charge and expel them	13	19.4
Deduct from their salaries	11	16.4
Improve their conditions of service	25	37.3
Motivation	18	26.9
Total	67	100

The table shows that 25 (37%) of respondents suggested improvement of conditions of service, 18 (27%) motivation, 13 (19.4%) expulsion and 11 (16.4%) salary deductions.

4.3 Findings from Heads of Department Questionnaires

4.3.1 HODs were asked to give reasons for teachers’ absenteeism. The answers were as shown in Table 12 below.

Table 12: HODs’ suggested reasons for teachers’ absence from classes
n.17

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Attending to family issues	7	41.2
Attending to official duties	2	11.8
lack of motivation	1	5.9
Poor conditions of service	3	17.6
Sickness	4	23.5
Total	17	100

The table indicates that attending to family issues 7 (41.2%), sickness 4 (23.5%) poor conditions of service 3 (17.6%) and attending to official duties 2 (11.8%) were the main reasons given by Heads of departments for teacher absenteeism.

4.3.2: HODs were asked to indicate the sex of teachers who were mostly absent from classes. The answers to this were as shown in Table 13 below..

Table 13: HODs’ Reponses on the Sex of Teachers mostly absent from Classes.
n.20

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	7	35
Female	9	45
Both male and female	4	20
Total	20	100

The table shows that the majority of the respondents 9 (45%) indicated females as the ones who were mostly absent from classes, 7 (35%) of them indicated males while the remaining 4 (20%) indicated both male and female.

4.3.3: Heads of department were asked why a particular sex mostly absconds. The answers to this were as shown in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Reasons for a particular sex to be absent.
n.16

Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Attending to family issues	7	43.8
Attending to official duties	1	6.3
Don't care attitude	5	31.3
Economic pressure	2	12.5
Poor conditions of service	1	6.3
Total	16	100

The table shows that 7 (43.8%) gave attending to family issues as the main reason, 5 (31.3%) pointed to don't care attitude and 2 (12.5%) economic pressure among several reasons.

4.3.4: HODs were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with statements regarding causes of absenteeism from classes. The responses to this were as shown in Table 15 below.

Table 15
n.19

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. Female teachers absent themselves to mostly take care of young and sick children & family members.	40.0	50.0	5.0	5.0
2. Male teachers absent themselves to most take care of young ones, sick children & family members.	5.0	5.0	45.0	45.0
3. Male teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business.	10.0	55.0	20.0	15.0
4. Female teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business.	5.0	40.0	30.0	25.0
5. Male teachers absent from classes to go & conduct tuitions.	15.0	30.0	35.0	20.0
6. Females teachers absent from classes to go & conduct tuitions.	0.0	5.0	55.0	40.0
7. teachers absent from classes due to lack of teaching aids	10.0	5.0	25.0	60.0
8. Teachers absent from classes to chat with friends and watch TV in the staffroom.	0.0	30.0	20.0	50.0
9. teachers absent from classes due to frustration by management	25.0	40.0	20.0	15.0
10. Male teachers absent from classes to go & drink beer.	0.0	10.0	50.0	40.0
11. Teachers absent from classes due to poor salaries.	30.0	45.0	10.0	15.0
12. Teachers absent from classes due to illness e.g. HIV and other related diseases.	15.0	50.0	20.0	15.0

The table shows that female teachers taking care of the young and sick people (90%), male involvement in business (65%), male involvement in tuition (45%), teachers’ frustration by management (65%), teachers’ absence due to HIV/AIDS and other related illnesses (65%) and poor salaries (75%) were the major causes of absenteeism among high school teachers.

4.3.5: Responses on measures taken by Heads of Departments when absenteeism is reported?

Table 16

Punishment given	Frequency	Percentage
Nothing	1	7.1
Reminded Perpetrators not to be absent	2	14.3
Replacing	1	7.1
Counselling	10	71.4
Total	14	100

Out of 20 respondents, the majority 10 (71.4%) revealed that teachers were counseled followed by 2 (14.3%) of those who indicated that they reminded such teachers not to be absent while only 1 (7.1 %) reported replacement as well as no action taken. It can be said that the majority of teachers are talked to by the heads of department when they absent themselves.

4.3.6 reveals how frequent heads of departments monitored their teachers.

4.3.6 Responses on how often HODs monitor their teachers

Table 17
n.19

Timing of monitoring	Frequency	Percentage
Every two weeks	1	5.3
Everyday	10	52.6
not applicable	1	5.3
Once in a term	1	5.3
Once in the month	2	10.5
Rarely	2	10.5
Twice in a month	1	5.3
Weekly	1	5.3
Total	19	100

The study revealed that 10 (52.6%) of respondents monitored their teachers everyday. Only 2 (10.5%) did it once a month or rarely and 1 (5.3%) did it weekly, twice in a month and not at all, respectively.

4.3.7 Heads of Departments were asked to make suggestions on how to resolve absenteeism among teachers at school level (see Table 18).

Table 18 HODs suggested reasons on how absenteeism can be reduced at school level
n.20

Solution among teachers	Frequency	Percentage
Administrators to be strict on monitoring teachers	5	25
Classes to report absenteeism to the head of department	1	5
Improve conditions of service	9	45
Know the reasons for absenteeism and put up measures	1	5
Make teaching materials available	1	5
Motivate them	1	5
Provide effective, efficient communication between school and DEBS	1	5
Suspend lazy teachers	1	5
Total	20	100

Out of 20 heads of department, 9 (45%) said that conditions of service should be improved. 5 (25%) suggested strict monitoring by administration while 1 (5%) indicated suspension, motivation, provide teaching materials among others, respectively.

4.3.8 HODs were asked as to what the Ministry of Education should do to teachers who absent themselves from classes. The responses to this were as shown in Table 8 below.

Table 19 Suggestions on teacher absenteeism by the Ministry of Education.
n.20

Solution by the Ministry Of Education	Frequency	Percentage
Charge the culprits	3	15
Improve conditions of service	11	55
Provide adequate teaching staff	1	5
Provide effective, efficient communication between schools and DEBS	2	10
Provide study leave/permits	1	5
put up strict rules for absenteeism	1	5
Suspend lazy teachers	1	5
Total	20	100

The table reveals that 11 (55%) of respondents mentioned improvement of conditions of service as a way of reducing absenteeism rate. Only 3 (15%) said teachers should be charged while 2 (10%) reported providing effective, efficient communication between schools and District Education Board Secretary (DEBS). That is, improvement of conditions of service was mentioned by many Heads of Department as a major solution to reducing teacher absenteeism.

Findings from key informants and FGDs

4.4 Findings from Interviews with Head Teachers

- Teachers absented themselves because of low salaries, lack of preparation, overloads, laziness, tuition, studying and working, illnesses, water shortage, personal commitment, bad attitude towards work and attending funerals.
- Administrators did not report teachers’ absenteeism to the Ministry but deal with them as a school. For instance, they counseled and cautioned them and wrote letters in order for them to exculpate themselves.

- Administrators kept record of teachers who absented themselves such as permission book, class registers and supervision books.
- They often monitored their teachers on a daily basis.
- The sex most absent were females and factors associated to female absenteeism were, *females out numbered males, attending funerals, post natal and antenatal visits, taking care of the sick at home, maternity leave and laziness.*
- Suggested solutions included introducing a black book for absenteeism where teachers would record the time of reporting, providing accommodation, making transfer threats, talking to teachers who absented themselves and follow-up to check if they had improved, writing charge letters, head of departments to find replacement, giving incentives such as administrative roles which would ensure their availability in school.
- The Ministry of Education should pay teachers well, give them better conditions of service, employ more teachers, drill bore holes to reduce water shortages, provide a conducive learning environment, construct laboratories and libraries, inspectors to visit the schools frequently, give enough funding to high schools to reduce absenteeism.

4.5 Findings from FGDs with class monitors

During the FGDs it was said that:

- Teachers absented themselves due to the following factors; heavy loads, poor salaries, studies, sicknesses, official duties, private businesses and tuition, poor attitude towards work, water shortage, boredom, shortage of teachers, maternity leave and post and antenatal visits, chatting in the staffroom, lack of accommodation, inadequate preparation, inadequate teaching/learning materials and staff meetings.

- Class monitors kept records of teacher attendance such as class registers or period by period registers.
- Pupils reported teacher absenteeism to relevant authorities in the school although very little was done about the absenteeism of teachers.
- The sex most absent was female.
- The school should do the following to reduce absenteeism; provide teaching aids, motivate teachers, frequently monitor the teachers and make follow-ups, employ more teachers especially males, period by period registers to be handed in daily not weekly, provide accommodation, monitor the use of television in the staffroom, charge offenders and provide good equipment and materials in schools.
- The Ministry of Education should devise the following measures to reduce absenteeism:
 - Improve conditions of service by honouring the collective agreement
 - Increase salaries
 - Send qualified teachers to high schools
 - Provide teaching/learning materials
 - Punish offending teachers such as deducting salaries for those who absented themselves
 - Improve the water system and drill boreholes to supplement the water supply.

4.6 Findings from Interviews with Teachers

Interviews with teachers revealed that:

- Teachers from Mathematics, Commerce, Science, Biology were not happy with their heavy teaching loads.
- All the teachers interviewed said they did not have adequate teaching/learning materials in their departments.
- Many teachers who were absent from their classes were not punished.
- The sex of teachers usually absent were females and the factors associated with their absence were sicknesses and illnesses, funerals, maternity leave, antenatal and postnatal visits, taking care of the young and sick and stress due to responsibilities at home.
- The age group of teachers that mostly absconded were old ones because of boredom and frustrations due to lack of motivation.
- The teachers absconded due to lack of motivation, illnesses, poor salaries, lack of accommodation, water shortages, ill preparedness, lack of teaching/learning materials, heavy loads, private businesses and tuition, official duties, funerals, personal problems, chatting in the staffroom, boredom, visiting DEBS office and long distance and high cost of traveling from home to the school.
- The school could put up the following measures to reduce absenteeism; motivate teachers by buying adequate teaching/learning materials, discipline truant teachers, strict monitoring of teachers and giving stiff punishment to offenders, improve the water supply, administration to monitor the use of television in schools and advising teachers to attend to their classes on time.

- The Ministry of Education should put up the following measures to reduce absenteeism; drill boreholes to reduce absenteeism, give enough funding to schools, improve the conditions of service, increase salaries, build more houses for teachers, motivate the teachers, employ and train more teachers, construct laboratories in high schools.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FINDINGS

This part of the dissertation discusses the results of the study. The factors that were cited for absenteeism and the sex most absent are clearly detailed in this chapter. This chapter also addresses how absenteeism could be reduced. All the information collected through interviews, FGD and questionnaires have been dealt with.

5.1 Discussion on Causes of Absenteeism

5.1.1 Poor conditions of service

Many participants cited poor conditions of service, such as lack of accommodation, slave wages and poor salaries, as some of the major reasons for absenteeism in high schools. Fullan and Stiegebauer (1999) also clearly state that “the conditions of teaching seem to have deteriorated and it is a fact that teachers have become devalued by the community and by the public”. The respondents said that it was unfortunate for the government to underestimate them even when they are doing the job under very difficult circumstances. This reduces the morale of the educators. MOE (1992; 118) states that “terms and conditions of service crucially affect the moral and commitment of teachers”. The decline in teacher morale led to the increase in teacher absenteeism and indiscipline, thereby making institutions of learning ineffective. For effective learning and instruction school buildings should also be adequate and functional.

Accommodation

Accommodation was seriously taken as a matter of concern by pupils, teachers and administrators. Most of the teachers in the studied schools made their own off-school accommodation arrangements where they paid a lot of money for rent. Much of the accommodation for those that were given was not of good standard. For instance, some teachers lived in seemingly temporary structures that did not provide a descent home for the tea cher. Furthermore, teachers’ houses were not well maintained due to lack of resources. As a result many houses had deteriorated and were now in need of extensive rehabilitation. However, MOE (1992; 85) clearly states that to discharge their teaching work effectively teachers needed to have suitable and properly resourced working

environment. To commit themselves whole-heartedly to their teaching duties teachers needed to be adequately looked after in all aspects of the profession.

5.1.2 Involvement in businesses and private tuition

Some teachers tend to abscond from their academic duties due to private tuitions. It was discovered that due to the mushrooming of private schools and tuition centres, these centres engaged government teachers to help them because they did not have qualified teachers. This brought about absenteeism in classes which those teachers handled in the government schools. This problem was worsened by those teachers' need for extra income to meet life's requirements. Other than private tuition some teachers engaged themselves in different businesses such as trading in clothes and making pamphlets. This meant that teachers had to move from one place to another looking for merchandise and markets, thereby, leaving their classes unattended to. In Nepal many teachers regularly deserted their classroom to do party business. In South and Central America the World Bank National Absence Survey (WBNAS) reports absenteeism rates of 13.5% in Equador and 10.6% in Peru in 2003 as a result of business (World Bank, 1995): which is neatly in agreement with what this study has discovered.

5.1.3 Illnesses and deaths

A large proportion of respondents from all target groups cited illnesses, such as HIV and AIDS as one of the major reasons for teacher absenteeism in all the three high schools. Malungo (2004) and the World Bank (2002) specifically cited HIV/AIDS as one of the factors that made teachers repeatedly absented themselves from class even before they reached the terminal stage of the disease.

Grassly *etal* (2003) testify to this when they refer to “teachers dying at a faster rate than they are being replaced”. Hh://www.id21.org/health/nsngl.htm). The MOE (2003) in the document entitled, HIV/AIDS Guidelines for Educators states that teachers are dying in large numbers thereby challenging the capacity of the government training program to replace them. In addition to this the document shows the statistics of deaths of teachers. In the year 2000 alone, 1400 teacher deaths were reported in Zambia, more than double the 1997 figure of 624; while about 2,001 died in 2001. Roy Mwaba in the post newspaper of

August, 2006 further bemoaned the high rate of teacher attrition in the country. He revealed that Zambia lost about 800 teachers per year resulting in a critical shortage of teaching staff. This scenario left pupils unattended to before replacement teachers were deployed thereby increasing absenteeism rates. Undoubtedly the increasing teacher *attrition rate due to HIV/AIDS had adversely affected the quality of education in Zambia*. Teaching time was also lost due to HIV-related illnesses as teachers cared for the sick family members.

5.1.4 Taking care of the young and sick people

A good number of teachers, pupils and administrators cited home responsibilities as a factor contributing to teachers' absenteeism. Many respondents talked to said female teachers were the most perpetrators in this area compared to male teachers. Responsibilities cited were attending funerals, taking care of the sick children and family members as well as under-five clinics and maternity leave. El-sanabiy (1989) emphasises this when he argues that mostly gender may play a role especially when competing demands of home and work place contribute to high rates of absence among female teachers. However, the WBNAS report indicates that absenteeism rates among primary school teachers were higher among males in India, Peru and Indonesia but about the same in Ecuador and Bangladesh. Nevertheless no reasons have been cited for this to justify the scourge.

5.1.5 Lack of teaching learning materials and other facilities.

It was observed that in all the studied schools, teachers lacked materials such as text books for pupils, laboratory equipment and supplies and laboratory infrastructure. They also bemoaned lack of teachers' guides. They said that they purely depended on pupils' books which did not have some very important background information and objectives on various topics. Lack of books was emphasised during interviews mostly by teachers of Science, English and Mathematics. One teacher said that the required books were not available at all and if seen could be very few in the hands of teachers only. Furthermore, there was only one school out of the studied schools which had a laboratory and this made it difficult for science teachers to conduct experiments as required, therefore, making it difficult for pupils to understand concepts that required "hands-on" experience. This problem

prevented pupils and teachers from making necessary progress in the subject involved and this ultimately led to teacher absenteeism which affected the performance of pupils.

In some schools laboratories did not exist; educators just used kits which were not even adequate. One teacher said that “sometimes I do not go to the class because I do not have the necessary tools and chemicals to use and some pupils may think I am not competent as it is impossible to explain certain things without using aids”. He further said that “even if we tell administrators to buy equipment, they say that there is no money to buy equipment because science needs a lot of money to buy equipment”. Many educators blamed the government and the Ministry of Education for failing to create a conducive environment in which actual learning would take place because for an institution to be effective, it should provide a conducive learning environment. In addition, a lot of teachers said that they were forced to stand through out the lessons because there were no desks. Some also said that toilets were pathetic.

A World Bank study conducted in six developing countries revealed that the better the work environment in the school or health faculty, the lower the absence rate (<http://www.aegis.com>). According to these studies there was a clear association between infrastructure and lower absence. Roges says, the most logical explanation in countries where there is little monitoring of workers is that what is going to determine whether or not a person goes to work is how they feel about the place where they work. If the facilities are better, if they have for example functional toilets and a roof, they are going to be more enthusiastic about going to work and working in those better conditions. (<http://Web.worldBank.org>). According to this study raising salaries of workers alone should not be expected to reduce absenteeism for staff but that problems surrounding the teaching profession needed to be solved urgently.

5.1.6 Chatting and watching television in the staffroom

This factor came out strongly among the pupils as a cause of teacher absenteeism in all the studied schools. During FGDs, pupils said that “some teachers waste time watching TV in the staffroom as part of entertainment instead of attending to us. When we follow them up, they threaten us and tell us not to do so because they were aware about attending to classes”. According to the pupils, other teachers attended to them a few minutes before the

end of the lesson. Such a practice according to them was common especially after break or tea time. Glewwe et al, (1999) discovered that teachers in one region of Kenya were absent from school 28.4% of the time and in school but absent from their class an additional 12.4 percent of the time. In addition to the above studies, another report of primary schools in the states of Uttar indicated that 17 percent of the teachers were absent from school and another 20 percent were at school but absent from their classroom (Rao 1999 World Bank 2001). Such practices entailed compromised instructional time. This undermined the quality and standard of education as syllabuses were not completed.

5.1.7 Official Duties

Attending to official duties was one of the reasons cited for absenteeism in the high schools studied. Some teachers said that apart from having heavy teaching loads, they were given other responsibilities by management. The jobs mostly cited were those dealing with accounts, sports, careers and projects. Some pupils complained that sometimes when “teachers were assigned the above jobs, they did not even give them notes to write during their absence. As a result the syllabus was not covered as expected and this led to poor performance in the affected subjects”. This trend occurred even in other parts of Europe and Africa. For instance, the World Bank Report (2002) reveals that the most important reason for teacher absenteeism in Bangladesh, Ecuador and Uganda was official duties. Teachers were frequently absent from school in order to undertake official duties expected of all government officials such as census, numeration and elections. However, these undertakings were not mentioned as causes of absenteeism in the schools studied even though teachers may be involved in carrying them out in Zambia. This is probably because they were not routine, and that it was not mandatory to use teachers in carrying them out.

5.1.8 Heavy Teaching Loads

Some teachers cited heavy teaching loads as one of the factors that contributed to teacher absenteeism. This complaint was common among science, commerce and mathematics teachers in all the three schools studied. Kelly (1991) says that “in some cases classes become too big, consequently teachers have no time to prepare for classes or mark

homework because they are so heavily loaded with teaching duties". The teachers complained of a high teacher-pupil ratio. What worsened the situation was clashes on the time table which prevented some teachers from going to some of the classes. The problem of heavy teaching loads was compounded by the shortage of teachers in the nation. The nation needed many teachers particularly that many of them died due to AIDS and other diseases.

5.1.9 Lack of motivation

Lack of motivation was cited as instrumental in causing absenteeism in the schools studied. Some teachers especially those who had served for a long period of time had complained that despite their commitment to teaching, they had not been appreciated. They lost the morale they had as no promotions of any kind came their way from the time they started. This was an area where the Ministry needed to make radical improvement. The existing structure encompassed relatively few promotion posts. As a result many educators found that if they were to advance in life, they had to leave classroom teaching and seek a management or a similar post (MoE: 1996). This led to the loss of several teachers from teaching as well as the frustration of those who failed to secure a new post. Such problems would not arise if the promotion ladder allowed a teacher's salary to progress to the level of management salaries, or even beyond (MoE: 1992). Other teachers were demotivated because it took long for their problems to be sorted out and sometimes documents at the Ministry went missing. As a result teachers frequent the Ministry of Education starting from District Education Board Secretary (DEBS), Provincial Education Office (PEO) and Headquarters to follow-up their documents. The come of this was loss of instructional time as pupils were not attended to during their teachers' absence. The World Bank report (2004) highlighted poor motivation and lack of accountability in low income countries as one of the main factors that contributed to absenteeism.

5.1.10 Frustration by Management.

Some teachers were reported to be absconding from their duties because of frustration by management. Some school managers and higher authorities had been reported to be favouring some teachers and ignoring others. Management's negative attitudes towards

some teachers, lack of accommodation in schools were among the factors that frustrate teachers and thereby contribute to their abscondment from work.

5.1.11 Lack of seriousness among teachers

This reason was commonly cited by the pupils and administrators as one of the causal factors of absenteeism in all the schools studied. The administrators and pupils emphasised lack of seriousness, commitment and interest among teachers during the study period. They said that some teachers had a bad attitude towards work as if they were just forced to be in the teaching profession. In addition to lack of seriousness, some administrators cited lack of experience because a good number of teachers in high schools had diplomas instead of a first Degree as recommended by the Ministry of Education. *During FDG with pupils, respondents said that some teachers just left notes every time and “we keep on writing notes without explanations”.* They further, said that “if you ask something you did not understand in the notes they shout at you and scare you so that you stop asking them”. They also said that topics were rushed through while others were taught at a very slow pace with a lot of repetitions leading to non coverage of the syllabus. This suggested that some teachers were ill qualified, therefore, lacked competence in the subject matter. Mwanakatwe (1968) says that for effective learning to take place, teachers should be properly trained and qualified for them to be confident, efficient, successful and responsible enough to meet the ever changing challenges of the education system and the society. It is only through well trained teachers that education can flourish in the required manner.

5.1.12 Studies and study leave

Some teachers, pupils and administrators attributed absenteeism to some teachers' combining of study and work and others being given study leave without replacement due to shortage of teachers. One pupil said “our teacher does not come regularly and does not leave work, we are very much behind and when you ask him, he says he is too busy with school”. It seemed that teachers got preoccupied with further studies in institutions of higher learning to an extent that they abandoned their classroom work.

5.1.13 Water Shortages

Some teachers were reported to be absconding from their duties due to erratic water supply in schools. It was observed during the study that there were water problems in the studied schools. Water shortage was emphasised during Focus Group Discussions by pupils, teachers and administrators. At the time teachers were supposed to attend to their classes, those that were accommodated within the school premises, went out to fetch water. One respondent remarked that, “water is a ‘nightmare’ sometimes you wake up in the morning only to find there is no water, so instead of going to teach you begin by fetching water from the surrounding community and thereafter report late for duty”.

5.1.14 Lack of Monitoring by administrators and inspectors from the Ministry of Education

Lack of frequent monitoring by the administrators and Education Standards Officers (ESOs) from the Ministry of Education was cited as one of the causes of absenteeism in high schools. During Focus Group Discussions with teachers, a respondent said that “headteachers are never in their offices, they are busy attending meetings and workshops as a result teachers take advantage of the situation and adopt a laissez faire attitude towards work because there is no control over teachers”.

A head teacher said that “I do not go round to monitor teachers in their classrooms to see who is absent or not but I rely on class attendance registers from pupils”. This indicates that some head teachers do not strictly monitor their teachers.

A study conducted on Nicaraguan schools revealed that lack of control over schools may sometimes be the contributing factor to teacher absenteeism (King and Ozler, 2001).

5.2 Discussion on the sex that was mostly absent.

The majority of respondents indicated females as the ones who were mostly absent from classes compared to those that said males only and those that cited both males and females. This fact also came out strongly during Focus Group Discussions with teachers and in-depth interviews with the head teachers and the deputy head teachers. The factors that respondents cited for high absenteeism among female compared males were maternity leave, antenatal visits, mothers’ day, taking care of the young and sick people, attending

funerals, fetching water, chatting and watching T.V. in the staffroom, illnesses and attending to other family issues too.

5.3 Discussion on ways of combating absenteeism among teachers

5.3.1 Improvement of teachers' salaries

Improvement of teachers' salaries was cited by all target groups as one of the most important solutions to be considered by the Ministry of Education in order to address the challenge of teacher absenteeism.

Respondents further emphasised that if teachers were paid well, it would lessen their need *for involvement in tuition and other extra income seeking ventures*.

5.3.2 Employment of more teachers

That the government should employ more teachers to avoid giving teachers heavy teaching loads which sometimes resulted in Time Table clashes was cited by many respondents in all high schools.

5.3.3 Punishing of truant teachers

A large number of teachers, pupils and administrators cited punishment of truant teachers as one of the most effective ways of reducing absenteeism. This factor was also emphasised during in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions.

One of the respondents in a Focus Group Discussion had this to say, "pupils report to the administration about those teachers who do not attend to us but administrators always promise to sort out the issue but nothing happens".

Figure 2 indicates the fate of teachers found to have been absent. Out of 75 respondents, 59% revealed that they had not been given any form of punishment while 41.3% of them said they had been punished. This seems to suggest that many teachers went unpunished, therefore, most likely to continue with absenteeism.

5.3.4 Counselling

This was cited by all target groups as a measure to combat absenteeism. Respondents said that it was important to sit down with a teacher responsible and counsel him/her so that the root cause of the problem was established thereafter give verbal advice and encourage him/her to attend to the pupils at all times.

5.3.5 Expelling truant teachers

Some respondents cited expelling truant teachers as being cardinal in reducing absenteeism in high schools. This came out strongly during Focus Group Discussions where pupils said that teachers should be fired and some transferred to other schools so that others could learn a lesson.

5.3.6. Reduction of Salaries

A large number of respondents especially pupils cited reducing salaries for those teachers who absented themselves from classes. It was also emphasised during Focus Group Discussions with pupils that those teachers who absented themselves should be paid according to the number of periods taught. They should earn what they had worked for to prevent perpetuating the vice.

5.3.7 Motivation of teachers

A good number of respondents from all target groups cited motivation of teachers as an area which the schools together with the Ministry of Education should seriously address. They said that the school and the Ministry of Education should come up with measures of rewarding hardworking and committed teachers as well as those who had served for a long time in the Ministry of Education. The proposed incentives included giving promotions, verbal appreciation, giving gifts, promptly sorting out teachers' problems at DEBS offices, giving them decent accommodation and securing adequate teaching/learning materials.

5.3.8 Improvement of water reticulation

The problem of water shortages came out strongly during Focus Group Discussions with pupils and teachers and in-depth group discussions with the administrators in all the high schools studied. The respondents stated that the water problem was perpetual in the

schools therefore, the Ministry of Education should improve the water system and sink bore holes in all high schools to supplement the water supplies in the schools.

5.3.9 Frequent monitoring of teachers by the school administrators and ESOs from the Ministry of Education

It was observed, in the studied schools, that administrators were not strictly monitoring the teachers as result absenteeism was increasing each and every day. Some respondents suggested frequent monitoring by the administrators and ESOs as one of the major solutions in reducing absenteeism. This was also emphasised during Focus Group Discussions with pupils and teachers and in-depth interviews with administrators.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Summary

This study came as an attempt to assess the causes of absenteeism in three high schools of Lusaka Urban district. It also tried to investigate the sex and age group frequently absent from classes and the solutions to teacher absenteeism. This chapter further gives conclusions and recommendations of the study.

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to obtain the data for this survey, including questionnaires, Focus Group Discussion and in depth study guides. The data received were analysed both statistically and descriptively. The study revealed that pupils, teachers, administrators and the Ministry of Education had a hand in teacher absenteeism though most of the blame was put on teachers and the Ministry of Education who are the employers.

6.2 Conclusions

6.2.1 The conclusions of the study were that illnesses, taking care of the sick, poor conditions of work and salaries, involvement in businesses and private tuition, chatting and watching television in staffrooms, heavy teaching loads, lack of motivation, official duties, lack of seriousness among teachers' studies and study leave, frustration by management and lack of teaching learning materials were the causes of absenteeism among high school teachers.

6.2.2 Female teachers were the ones who were mostly absent from classes.

6.2.3 Improvement of teachers' salaries and conditions of service, employment of more teachers, counselling, punishing of teachers who absented themselves from classes, provision of adequate teaching/learning materials, improving water reticulation, motivating teachers, expulsion of teachers who absconded from classes, abolition of tuition and frequent monitoring of teachers by administrators were suggested as possible ways of combating absenteeism.

6.3 Recommendations

Taking into consideration the findings of the study, the researcher recommends the following:

- 6.3.1 Government should improve teachers' salaries in order to lessen their need for involvement in tuition and other extra income seeking ventures.
- 6.3.2 School administrators should devise and strictly enforce efficient systems of teachers' class attendance and deal firmly with culprits.
- 6.3.3 More teachers should be employed to avoid giving teachers heavy teaching loads which sometimes resulted in Time Table clashes.
- 6.3.4 School administrators should regulate and monitor the use of television in staffrooms in order to ensure that teachers do not miss classes due to this device.
- 6.3.5 School administrators should be fair in their allocation of responsibilities and treatment of teachers in order to avoid frustrating members of staff.
- 6.3.6 The Ministry of education should consider increasing grants so that high schools have adequate finances to meet their needs, such as teaching/learning materials and other operational costs. This would enhance quality in terms of inputs.
- 6.3.7 The Ministry of Education should ensure that laboratories, home economics rooms and libraries are constructed in all high schools and stock them with all essential equipment to improve the performance of pupils in schools. This would make teaching easier and motivate teachers.
- 6.3.8 The government should provide better facilities in terms of infrastructure to improve the working environment. For instance, construct more houses for teachers, rehabilitate teachers' houses to make them modern and habitable, provide better infrastructure in schools and build computer rooms.

6.3.9 The Ministry of Education should sink boreholes in all high schools to avert water shortages in schools.

REFERENCES

Acheampong, A (2003). **Ghana Study**. World Bank

Alcazar, L.F.; Rogers, H.; Chaudhury, N.; Hammer, J.; Kremer, M. and Muralidharan, K (2004). “Why Are Teachers Absent? Probing Service Delivery in Peruvian Primary Schools.” Unpublished Paper, World Bank and GRADE (Peru).

Bennel, P.S. Harding, S. and Rogers, H. (2004). PRSP Edu Sector Review in Sierra Leone. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Free Town.

Bennel, P.S. and Acheampong, K (2003). Research Project Application to DFID: Teacher motivation and incentives in low-income developing countries. Knowledge and skills for Development, Brighton.

Bennel, P.S.; Hyde, K. and Swanson, N. (2002) **The Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Education Sector in Sub-Sahara Africa. The Main Findings & Recommendations of a Three Country Study**. Brighton: Sussex University.

Chaudhury, N. and Hammer. J.S. (2003) “Ghost Doctors; Doctor Absenteeism in Bangladesh Health Centres.” **World Bank Policy Research Working Paper 3065**.

Das, J.; Dercon, S.; Habyarimana, J. and Krishnana, P. (2005) “Teachers Shocks and Student Learning: Evidence from Zambia”. **World Bank Policy Research Working Paper**.

Ehrenberg, R.G.; Rees, D.I. and Ehrenberg, E.L. (1991) “School District Leave Policies, Teacher Absenteeism, and Student Achievement.” **Journal of Human Resources**, 26;1, pp. 72-105.

El-Sanabiy, N. (1989) “Determinants of Women’s Education in the Middle East and North Africa: Illustrations from Seven Countries.” World Bank; Washington, DC.

Glewwe, P.; Kremer, M. and Moulin, S. (1999) "Textbooks and Test Scores; Evidence From a Prospective Evaluation in Kenya." **Working Paper**. Harvard University.

Fullan, M. and Stiegebauer, S (1999) The New Meaning of Educational Change, ed-
webs.edu.msu.edu/cepse/sped/courses/CEP_943_syllabus.doc.

Grassly, NC, Desai, K, Pegurri, C, Sikazwe, A, Malambo, I, Siamatowe, C, and Bundy, D (2002) "The Economic Impact of HIV/AIDS on the Education Sector in Zambia. AIDS 17:1039-1044.

Haibyarimana, J.; Das, J.; Dercon, S. & Krishnan, P. (2002) **Sense & Absence. Absenteeism and Learning in Zambian Schools**. World Bank: Washington DC.

<http://www.id21.org/health/nsng/htm>

<http://web;WorldBank.org>.

<http://www.aegu.com/conferences>.

Kelly, M.J. (1999) "The Impact of HIV/AIDS on Schooling in Zambia", paper presented at XIth International Conference on Aids STDs in Africa (ICASA), held at Mulungushi International Conference Centre, Lusaka, Zambia

King, E.M. and Ozler, B. (2001). "What's Decentralization Got To Do With Learning Endogenous School Quality and Student Performance in Nicaragua." World Bank.

LINS,V (1999). **Teacher Condition of Service in Developing Countries**. Oslo: Centre for International Education.

Malungo, J.R.S. (2004) "HIV/AIDS Implications on Socio-economic and Demographic Parameter in sub-Saharan Africa Zambia in Perspectives". **Medical Journal of Zambia** Volume 5 (2) 68-74 February.

MoE (1996) **Educating Our Future: National Policy on Education**. Lusaka: GRZ.

MoE (1992) **Focus On Learning; Strategies for the Development of School Education in Zambia**. Lusaka: GRZ.

MoE (2005) **HIV/AIDS Work Place Policy for the Education Sector**. Lusaka: GRZ.

Murad, A. and Reed, T. (1994). "A school and Parental Survey of Book Provision Issues in NWFP." International Book Development, Ltd.

Mwanakatwe, M.J. (1968). **The Growth of Education in Zambia since independence. Eastern Africa**: Oxford University Press.

PROBE Team (1999). **Publics Report on Basic Education in India**. New Delhi; Oxford University Press.

Rao, G.V.L. (1999) **Teachers Absenteeism in Primary Schools: A Field Study in Selected Districts of Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh**. New Delhi: District Primary Education Programme.

Reimers, F. (1993) "Time and Opportunity to Learn in Pakistan's Schools; Some Lessons on the Links between Research and policy", **Comparative Education**, 29:2, pp. 201-12.

Rwomire, A. (1992) "Education and Development." **African Perspectives in Prospectus**, 22. pp.227-239.

Scott, M.S (1998) Teacher Absenteeism, a growing dilemma in education. *Contemporary Education*, Volume 69 number 2 pp 95-99

Sen, A. (2002). "Pratichi Education Report; An Introduction".

World Bank, (1995). “Labor Market Policies for Higher Employment.” World Bank. Bangladesh Country Team; Washington DC. Oxford University Press for the World Bank.

World Bank (2001) **Teacher Development and Incentives in Brazil**. Washington D.C: World bank.

World Bank (2001). **World Development Report 2004 Making Services Work for the Poor**. Washington DC: World Bank.

World Bank (2001) “Expanding and Improving Upper Primary Education in India.” 104. Washington DC: World Bank.

World Bank (2002) **Karnataka: Financing Education in the Context of Economic Restructuring**. Washington DC: World Bank.

World Bank (2002) “Education and HIV/AIDS: A Window of Hope”. World Bank: Washington, DC.

World Bank (2004) “Papua New Guinea; Public Expenditure and Service Delivery (Discussion Draft)” Washington DC: World Bank.

World Development Report 2014. Making Services Work for the Poor. Washington DC: World bank.

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY
STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE PUPILS

Dear Respondent

I am a student at the University of Zambia collecting information on the reasons why teachers absent themselves from class. The information you will give is strictly for academic purposes. Also, the Ministry of Education may use the results to influence the formulation of policies on teachers in schools. This may in turn help to improve performance in schools.

Kindly answer all the questions in this questionnaire freely, correctly and honestly. All the answers you give will be treated confidentially.

Thanking you in advance

Emeldah Michelo

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PUPILS

Instructions

Tick or give brief information where necessary to the questionnaire below.

PART A: PERSONAL DATA

- 1. Age
 - a) below 12 []
 - b) 12-15 years []
 - c) 16-19 years []
 - d) 20 years and above. []

- 2. Sex
 - a) Male []
 - b) Female []

- 3. Grade
 - a) 10 []
 - b) 11 []
 - c) 12 []

PART B: QUESTIONS

- 1. Has any of your teachers been absent in the past one week?.
 - a) Yes []
 - b) No []

- 2. Has any of your teachers been absent since the start of the school term?
 - a) Yes []
 - b) No []

- 3. What reasons did he/they give for being absent?
.....
.....
.....

- 4. Do you keep records of teacher attendance

a) Yes []

b) No []

5. If yes, what type of records do you keep?

.....
.....
.....

6. What changes did you notice when you used teacher attendance registers.

a) Teachers were more absent []

b) Teachers were annoyed []

c) Teachers were more regular []

d) Other specify.....

7. Which teachers mainly absent themselves from classes?

a) Females []

b) Males []

c) Both females and male teachers []

8. Which age group absents mostly?

a) Young teachers []

b) Old teachers []

c) Both young and old []

9. Why do you think that this particular group of teachers absconds more than the other ones?

.....
.....
.....

10. What do you think should be done about teacher absenteeism?

.....
.....
.....

11. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement by ticking where appropriate:

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Female teachers absent themselves to mostly take care of young and sick children and family members				
Male teachers absent themselves to mostly take care of young and sick children and family members				
Male teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business				
Female teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business				
Male teachers abscond from classes to go and conduct private tuition elsewhere				
Female teachers abscond from classes to go and conduct private tuition elsewhere				
Teachers abscond from classes due to lack of teaching aids				
Teachers abscond from classes to chat with friends and watch TV in the staffroom				
Teachers abscond from classes due to frustration by management.				
Male teachers abscond from classes to go and drink beer				
Teachers abscond from classes due to poor salaries				
Teachers abscond from classes due to illnesses such as HIV and other related diseases				

Thank you for your participation

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY
STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

INTRODUCTION

I am a student at the University of Zambia collecting information about the factors that contribute to absenteeism among high school teachers in Zambia.

The findings of this study will primarily be used for academic purposes. Also, the ministry of education may use the results of this study to influence in addressing absenteeism among high school teachers. This may in turn help improve pupils learning and performance in due course.

All the answers you will give will be treated confidentially and your name will not be revealed. Therefore, give the information freely, correctly and honestly.

Thanking you in advance.

Emeldah Michelo

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Instructions

Tick or give brief information where necessary to the questionnaire below.

PART A: Personal Data

1. Sex

- a) Female []
- b) Male []

2. Age

- a) Below 20 []
- b) 21-30 []
- c) 31-40 []
- d) 41 and above []

3. Marital Status

- a) Married []
- b) Divorced []
- c) Separated []
- d) Widowed []
- e) Single []

4. Highest Academic Qualification

- a) Below Grade 12 []
- b) Grade 12 []
- c) Form 3 []
- d) Form 5 []
- e) Others (Specify).....

5. Professional Qualification

- a) Teachers' Certificate []
- b) Teachers' Diploma []
- c) Advanced Diploma []
- d) First Degree []
- e) Second Degree []

f) Others (Specify).....

6. Current Position Held

- a) Class Teacher []
- b) Section Head []
- c) Senior Teacher []
- d) Others (Specify).....

7. Number of years in service

- a) 1-10 years []
- b) 11-20 years []
- c) 21 years and above []

8. How many periods do you have?

- a) 20 and below []
- b) 21-30 []
- c) 31 and above []

9. Are you happy with your teaching load

- a) Yes []
- b) No []
- c) If the answer is no, why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

10. Do you have adequate teaching materials in your subject?

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

11. If not, how do you feel about it and why?

.....

.....

.....

12. Have you ever been absent from class with or without permission?

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

13. If your answer is yes? What was/were the reason(s)?

.....

.....

.....

.....

14. If you were absent without permission, were you punished?

- a) Yes []
- b) No []

15. If so, what punitive measures were given to you?

.....

.....

16. How do you feel when you are absent from class?

.....

.....

.....

17. What do you think are the main reasons why other teachers absent themselves from class?

.....

.....

.....

.....

18. Which sex of teachers (males or females), are usually absent, and why?

.....

.....

.....

.....

19. Which age group of teachers (young or old) are usually absent, and why?

.....

.....

.....

20. What do you think should be done about teacher absenteeism at school level?

21. What measures should the Ministry of Education put in place to stop teacher absenteeism?

.....
.....

22. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement by ticking where appropriate:

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Female teachers absent themselves to mostly take care of young and sick children and family members				
Male teachers absent themselves to mostly take care of young and sick children and family members				
Male teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business				
Female teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business				
Male teachers abscond from classes to go and conduct private tuition elsewhere				
Female teachers abscond from classes to go and conduct private tuition elsewhere				
Teachers abscond from classes due to lack of teaching aids				
Teachers abscond from classes to chat with friends and watch TV in the staffroom				
Teachers abscond from classes due to frustration by management.				
Male teachers abscond from classes to go and drink beer				
Teachers abscond from classes due to poor salaries				
Teachers abscond from classes due to illnesses such as HIV and other related diseases				

Thank you for your participation.

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY
STUDIES

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

INTRODUCTION

I am a student at the University of Zambia collecting information about the factors that contribute to absenteeism among high school teachers in Zambia.

The findings of this study will primarily be used for academic purposes. Also, the ministry of education may use the results of this study to influence in addressing absenteeism among high school teachers. This may in turn help improve pupils learning and performance in due course.

All the answers you will give will be treated confidentially and your name will not be revealed. Therefore, give the information freely, correctly and honestly.

Thanking you in advance.

Emeldal Michelo

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HEADS OF DEPARTMENT

Instructions

Tick or give brief information where necessary to the questionnaire below.

PART A: PERSONAL DATA

1. Sex

- a) Female []
- b) Male []

2. Age

- a. Below 20 []
- b. 21-30 []
- c. 31-40 []
- d. 41 and above []

3. Marital Status

- a. Married []
- b. Divorced []
- c. Separated []
- d. Widowed []
- e. Single []

4. Highest Academic Qualification

- a. Grade 9 []
- b. Grade 12 []
- c. Form 3 []
- d. Form 5 []
- e. Others (Specify).....

5. Professional Qualification

- a. Certificate []
- b. Advanced Diploma []
- c. First Degree []
- d. Second Degree []
- e. Others

(Specify).....

6. Current Position Held

- a. Class Teacher []
- b. Section Head []
- c. Senior Teacher []
- d. Head teacher []
- e. Deputy Head []
- f. H.O.D. []
- g. Others (Specify).....

7. How long have you held this position?

- a. Below 1 year []
- b. 3-5 years []
- c. 6-10 years []
- d. 11⁺ []

8. Number of years in service

- a. 1-10 years []
- b. 11-20 years []
- c. 21 years and above []

9. Do teachers absent themselves from class in your department?

- c) Yes []
- d) No []

10. If yes, why do you think they do so?

.....

11. Which subject is mostly affected by absenteeism?
.....
.....
12. Which teachers, males or females mainly absent themselves from class?
a. Males []
b. Females []
c. Both males and females []
13. Which age group absents mostly?
a. Young ones []
b. Old ones []
c. Both young and old []
14. Why do you think this particular sex is mainly absent?
.....
.....
.....
15. Do you report teacher absenteeism to the relevant authorities i.e. Ministry of Education.
16. What is done about it when it's reported?
.....
.....
.....
.....
17. Do you keep record of teacher attendance/absenteeism? If you do, what kind of records
.....
.....
18. How often do you monitor the teachers?
.....
.....
.....
19. What do you think should be done to reduce or stop absenteeism among teachers at school level?
.....
.....
20. What should the Ministry of Education do to reduce or stop teacher absenteeism?
.....
.....

21. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statement by ticking where appropriate:

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Female teachers absent themselves to mostly take care of young and sick children and family members				
Male teachers absent themselves to mostly take care of young and sick children and family members				
Male teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business				
Female teachers absent themselves from classes to go and do business				
Male teachers abscond from classes to go and conduct private tuition elsewhere				
Female teachers abscond from classes to go and conduct private tuition elsewhere				
Teachers abscond from classes due to lack of teaching aids				
Teachers abscond from classes to chat with friends and watch TV in the staffroom				
Teachers abscond from classes due to frustration by management.				
Male teachers abscond from classes to go and drink beer				
Teachers abscond from classes due to poor salaries				
Teachers abscond from classes due to illnesses such as HIV and other related diseases				

Thank you for your participation.

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY
STUDIES

**IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS
AND DEPUTY HEADTEACHERS**

ABSENTEEISM

1. Has any teacher been absent from classes in the past one week, with or without permission?
2. Has any teacher been absent from classes from the beginning of the term/school year?
3. Why do you think teachers absent themselves from classes?
4. Do you report teachers' absenteeism to relevant authorities? If yes, which authorities?)
5. What is done to the teachers who absent themselves from class?
6. Do you keep records of teachers' absenteeism? If so what type of records do you keep?
7. Which teachers, males or females, mainly absent themselves from classes?
8. Why do you think that this particular sex mainly absent itself from classes?
9. Do you monitor your teachers, if so how often do you do it?
10. How is the reaction of teachers when you monitor them?
11. What should be done to reduce teachers' absenteeism at school level?
12. What should the ministry do to reduce teachers' absenteeism in high schools?

QUESTIONS FOR CLASS MONITOR

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION FOR CLASS MONITORS

QUESTIONS

1. Has any of your teachers been absent in the past one week with or without permission?
2. Has any teacher been absent from the beginning of the term/school year?
3. What reasons did he / they give for being absent?
4. Do you keep records of teacher attendance?
5. Do you notice any changes on the part of the teacher when you use attendance registers?
6. Which teachers mainly absent themselves from classes?
 - (i) Males/ Females?
 - (ii) Young / Old?
7. What do you think are the main reasons why teachers absent themselves from classes?
8. What do you think the school should do to reduce absenteeism?
9. What do you think the ministry should do to reduce absenteeism?

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

1. How long have you been in the service?
2. How many periods do you have?
3. Are you happy with the teaching load?
4. Do you have enough teaching materials in your subjects?
5. Have you ever been absent with or without permission what were the reasons for being absent?
6. If you were absent, were you punished?
7. Which sex of teachers (male or females) are usually absent and why?
8. Which age group of teachers (young or old) are usually absent and why?
9. What do you think are the main reasons why teachers absent themselves?
10. What should the administrators at school level do to reduce absenteeism?
11. What do you think the Ministry of Education should do to reduce absenteeism?

All correspondence should be addressed
to the District Education Board Secretary
Tel: 0211 240250 / 240249
E-mail: debslsk@yahoo.co.uk



In reply please quote
DEB/LSK/101/5/1
No.....

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD SECRETARY
P.O. Box 50297
LUSAKA

19th June, 2008

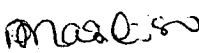
The Headteacher
Chelstone High
Munali Girls High
Munali Boys High
LUSAKA

RE: FIELD WORK FOR M.ED. STUDENT

This serves to introduce Ms. Michelo a student at the University of Zambia School of Education.

The student is taking a masters programme in education. The programme has a field component which she has to carryout and this office has granted the student permission to carryout the exercise.

Your usual cooperation will highly be appreciated.


P.M. Banda (Mrs)
Human Resources Officer
For/District Education Board Secretary
LUSAKA

cm*