

TITLE


The impact of restructuring in the Ministry of Education on district staffing and responsibilities in four selected districts on the Copperbelt.

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DECLARATION

I Xavier C. Kapambwe do solemnly declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has never been previously submitted for a degree at any other University.

Signed: 

Date: 01/07/08


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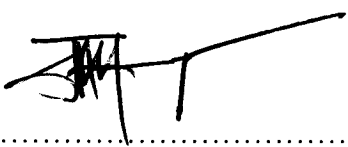
DEDICATION

To my late father Augustine Kapambwe, my mother Marthar Blanko Kapambwe, my dear wife Mary Chomba Chilufya Kapambwe, my children Alfred, Carmeline, Vergilia, Augustine and Yvert whose support and encouragement in my education will forever keep inspiring me.

APPROVAL

This dissertation by Xavier C. Kapambwe is approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Education (Educational Administration)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of restructuring in the Ministry of Education on district staffing and roles and responsibilities. The study population was all the District Board Secretaries (DEBS) ; District Education Standards Officers (DESOs); Education Standards Officers (ESOs); Planning Officers (POs) ; Accounts Assistants (AAs); Human Resource Officers (HROs); District Board Members (DBMs); District Support Staff (DSS); and Headteachers, in all the ten districts on the Copperbelt.

The sample size was 96 respondents. 57 were males while 39 were females. All these were selected from Chililabombwe, Chingola, Kalulushi and Lufwanyama using the purposive sampling method.

Information was collected using questionnaires, Focused Group discussions, and interviews. Three different types of the questionnaires were used for administrative staff, standards officers and Board members. These questionnaires had 13, 15 and 12 open ended questions respectively.

Focussed Group discussions had 12 guiding questions while the interview guide for support staff had 10 questions.

Data was analyzed by describing and explaining the respondents' responses using simple tables, graphs and percentages.

The study revealed that there was an upsurge in the roles and responsibilities at district level resulting in bloated staffing and that more staff were required in the areas of accounting, human resources and standards offices. It also revealed that bureaucracy with its long and winding channels existed and that there was misunderstanding between the office of the DEBS and that of DESO which was caused by unifying the initially parallel structures of the two offices and giving overall power to that of the DEBS.

The results further indicated that some functions were easy to decentralize than others. The results showed that while the district staff participated in planning and budgeting and carried out monitoring and evaluation

programmes, decision making, resource allocation and distribution as well as the recruitment and promotion of staff were not decentralized.

The results also suggested that although government's intentions to decentralize some functions in the education system were noble and genuine, bureaucracy and political interference hindered the ability of the district staff to work.

Basing on the findings of this study, the following are some of the recommendations made to the Government of the Republic of Zambia:

- The Government through the Ministry of Finance should adhere to the district plans and budgets for successful implementation of programmes.
- The Ministry of Education should not retain functions such as recruitment and promotion of staff, and decision making. Government should instead ensure wider representation on decision making at district level.

- Channels of communication and chains of command should be short to allow quicker and effective delivery system.
- The office of the DESO should be independent from that of the DEBS to enhance professionalism in the education system.
- District Education Board Secretaries should mend the existing gap by involving Governance Bodies in the management of education delivery at district level.
- Boards should be legalized by an act of parliament to authenticate their operations.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study looked at the impact of the restructuring programme in the Ministry of Education with specific reference to staffing and the roles and responsibilities of the staff at district level. The study mainly focused on devolution of power and authority to the points of delivery because the effective management of education in the district is dependant on how skilled the staff are and how best they are supported by the proprietors of education.

1.1 Lay out of the Dissertation.

This dissertation has six chapters. In chapter one, the researcher presents the background to the study. This contains educational policy in Zambia, the reforms, restructuring and decentralisation, establishment of District Education Boards, structure and functions of the District Education Boards, as well as the roles and responsibilities of the district staff. The chapter also includes the study's statement of the problem, purpose, objectives, research questions, significance, and definitions of its operational terms'.

In chapter two, the researcher highlights some aspects of related literature to the study by giving an overview of the international perspectives, research carried out by scholars on restructuring and decentralisation of education and finally Zambia's position with regard to restructuring and decentralisation of the education system.

In chapter three, the researcher gives some information on the methodology used, vis-à-vis the adopted research design, study population, sample size and sampling procedures, research instruments used and procedures followed when collecting data. Furthermore, the researcher elaborates on the techniques used in data analysis.

In chapter four, of this dissertation, the researcher uses the information collected from respondents through questionnaires, interviews and Focused Group Discussions to present findings on the impact of restructuring and decentralisation in Zambia on district staff and their roles and responsibilities.

The findings presented here are based on the views of district staff who include the District Education Board Secretaries (DEBS), District Education Standards Officers (DESOs), the

Education Standards Officers (ESOs), the Planning Officers (POs), the Human Resource Officers (HROs), Accounts Assistants (AAs) and the Supporting Staff (SS). The findings embrace views of Board Members (BMs) and the Headteachers of both High and Basic school sectors also. The researcher sought the knowledge of the respondents about their understanding of the staffing levels in the district, the roles and responsibilities of the staff and how Boards functioned. The findings are on the impact of the restructuring and decentralisation with regards to staffing, communication, decision- making, the climate, planning, funding, monitoring and evaluation. The chapter is concluded by the findings on the likely future of the policies of devolution in Zambia.

In chapter five, the researcher presents the discussion of the findings supported by the related literature presented in chapter one and two of the dissertation. This is followed by chapter six in which the researcher presents a summary of the study and the recommendations.

1.2 Background of the study.

Zambia obtained her independence from Britain in 1964. Upon independence she inherited the political, economic, administrative and education systems which the British colonial government had established.

Policy changes took place in education along side the changes in the governance periods termed: the BSA Company rule period (1890-1924), Colonial office rule period (1924- mid night of 23rd October,1963) and the Post – Colonial period (1964 to date) divided into the First and the Second Republics : 1964-1991 and the Multi –Party Democratic era 1991 to date.

The chief function of the Government Primary and Secondary Schools among primitive communities is to train the more promising boys from the village to be teachers, as clerks for the local native court and as interpreters

The education system during the colonial period was, however, decentralized and government managed it through the Local Education Authorities established in 1945. Although the system was decentralised very little involvement and participation by local communities was noted.

Rapid expansion in education marked the early years of independence in many African countries in the 1960s. In Zambia, the attainment of independence brought with it new demands for education. *The First and Second Republics ; 1964 to 1991* saw the need to provide education which gave equal opportunities for all regardless of race, ethnicity, religion or status in society. The government, embarked on universal mass education. It was the feeling of the leaders then that government should centrally control the education system which at that time was not too large. The policy thus changed from the colonial decentralised system to a Zambian centralised one.

In 1991, the system of governance changed from a one party system to a multi – party democratic system. In keeping with the democratic and liberal policies, Zambia embraced the decentralisation system in 1991. The Ministry of Education (MoE) adopted the decentralisation of the education system in 1996 and brought on board, Education Boards (EBs) first as a pilot project on the Copperbelt. This was followed by the restructuring of the MoE in 2003. The focus of this study was to determine the impact of this restructuring on district staffing and the roles and responsibilities of the office bearers in the management of education.

With decentralisation of the education system people's expectations changed and demanded for an effective and efficient delivery of services as well as prudent management of the resources in public institutions. The establishment of District Education Boards was, therefore, meant to make the operations of the education sector transparent to stakeholders. District Education Boards were structured in such a way that it allowed the participation of both the Governance Body, which comprised the appointed members, and the Management Team, which is the administrative wing of the Board. Both organs were supposed to be open and transparent when giving support and advice on matters affecting the districts.

Both bodies should allow communities' participation in:

- (i) Education planning and decision – making
- (ii) Formulation of local policies
- (iii) Resource mobilisation and utilisation.
- (iv) Problem solving.

Whereas the Governance body comprises various interest groups in order for decision-making to be widely shared, the management team is composed of MoE officials namely;

- (i) District Education Board Secretary (DEBS)
- (ii) District Education Standards Officer (DESO)
- (iii) 3 Education Standard officers (ESOs)

- (iv) Accountant;
- Human Resources Officer (HRO);
- Planning Officer (PO) and
- One representative of Head teachers.

Whilst the Management Team's task is to ensure that all affairs of the District Board are implemented and well managed and decisions well arrived at, the main role of the Governance Body is to ensure that local policies are formulated and to regulate management of the institutions for which they are established. The other major task is to guide the implementation of strategic decisions, actions and to advise management as appropriate (MoE,1996)

Job Opportunities at District level

The restructuring and decentralisation programme in the MoE had its own guidelines and criteria for recruitment and re- deployment of personnel. At district level, documented evidence indicates that two senior offices were advertised creating a parallel arrangement.

The two were that of the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) and that of the District Education Standards Officer (DESO) and both of which were graded at EMS /4.

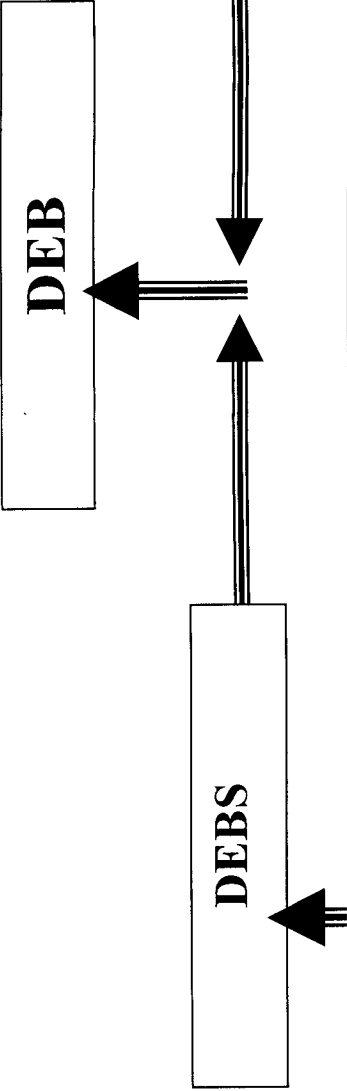
To qualify as DEBS or DESO, the minimum qualification was a first Degree in Education.

Another job titles which attracted the same qualification was the ESO, (EMS/5). For other job titles such as the Planning Officer (GPS/1), Human Resource Officer (GPS/1), District Resource Centre Coordinator (DRCC) (ES/1), Assistant Statistical Officer (GAS/5), Assistant Buildings Officer (TS/5) and Accountant (GPS/1), the requirement was either a diploma or certificate but a first Degree in their respective fields was an added advantage.

Gender was another criteriom for selection. Where two applicants competed and if one of the applicants was a female, the chance was given to her (MoE, 1996: 66; 2003). The other category of workers was the support staff who included the Registry Clerks, Typists, Office Orderlies, Watchmen, Plumbers and Drivers (MoE,2002). The support staff were either recruited centrally by Public Service Commission or locally by the respective Boards under Board expenses, in which case they became Board employees but followed the conditions of service determined by Boards using existing such as the Employment Act and the Industrial and Labour Relations Act (MoE, 2005:73).

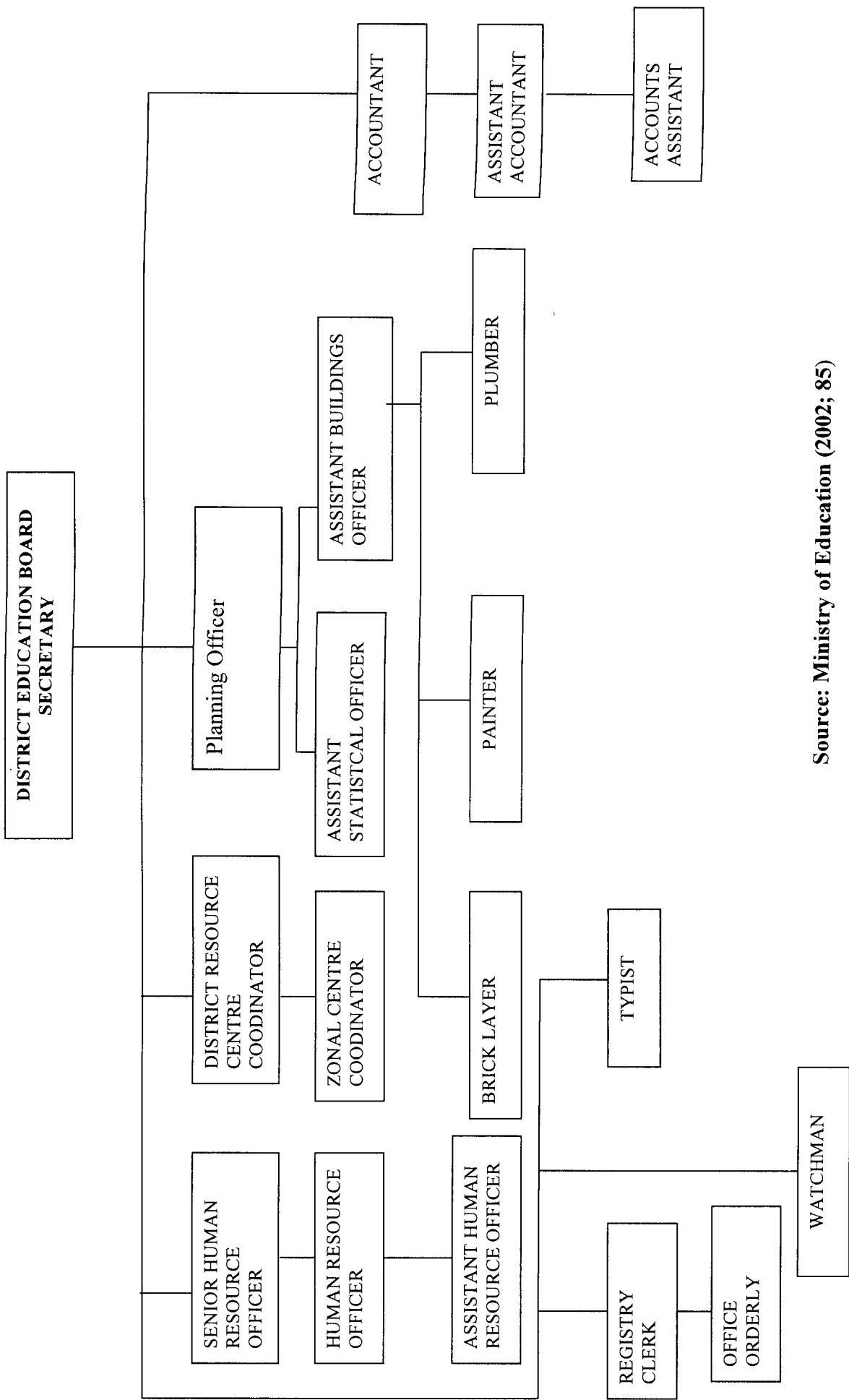
Organizational Structures.

As indicated earlier on the administrative wing of the district fell under the DEBS and the professional wing fell under the DESO. The two offices had their organisational structures as the following diagrams show:



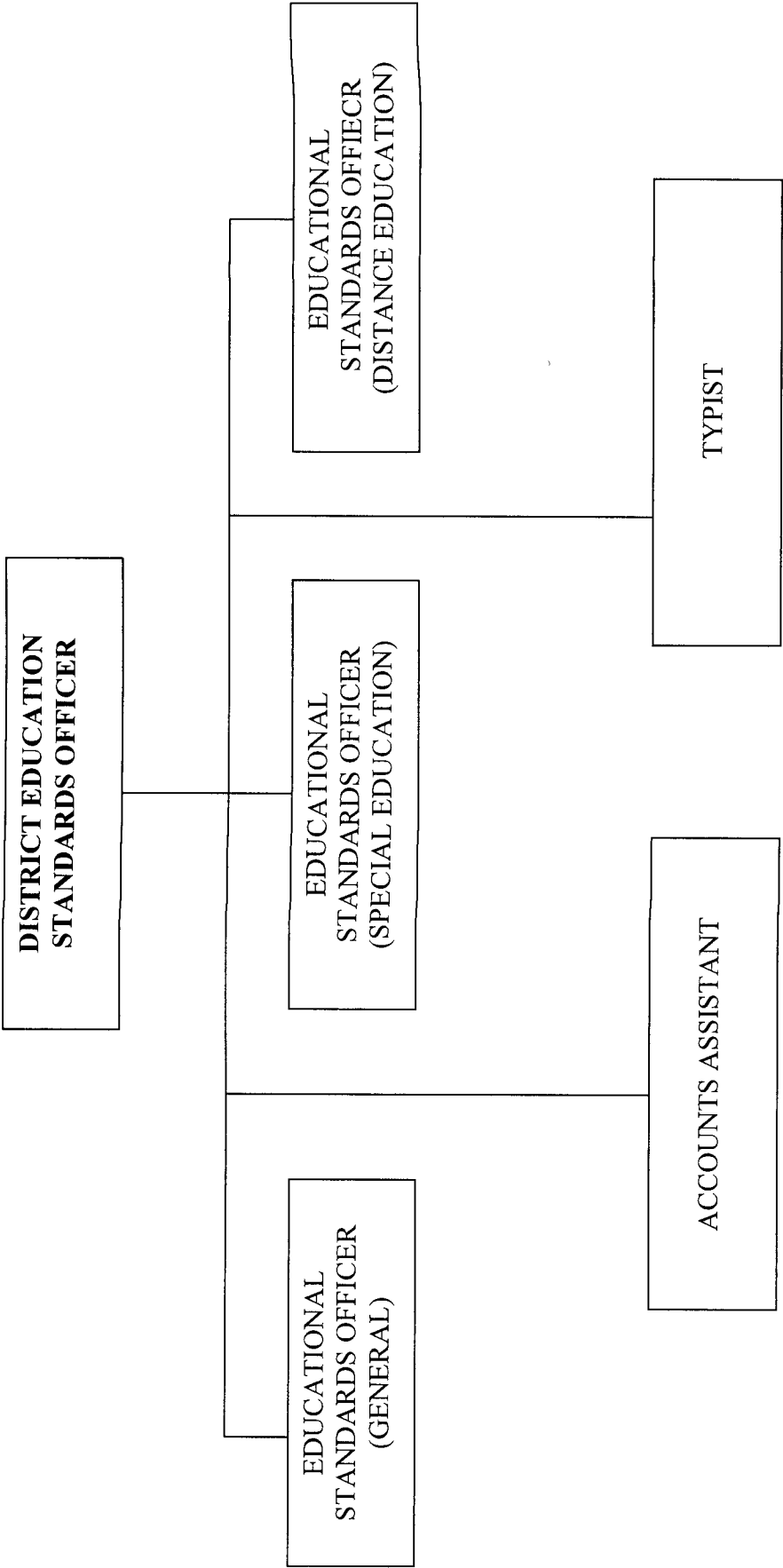
1	PLANNING OFFICER	ESO (GENERAL)
2	SENIOR HRO	ESO (DISTANCE) - 2 DISTRICTS
3	DRCC	ESO (SP. ED)-2 DISTRICTS
4	ACCOUNTANT	ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT
5	HRO	TYPIST
6	BUILDINGS OFFICER	DRIVER
7	ASS. STAT. OFFICER	OFFICE ORDERLY
8	ASS. HRO	WATCHMAN
9	ASS. ACCOUNTANT	
10	ACCOUNTS ASSISTANT	
11	TYPIST	
12	REGISTRY CLERK	
13	BRICK LAYER	
14	PAINTER	
15	PLUMBER	
16	DRIVER	
17	OFFICE ORDERLY	
18	WATCHMAN	

Source: Ministry of Education (2002; 84)



Source: Ministry of Education (2002; 85)

DIAGRAM 3: ORGANISATION STRUCTURE: DISTRICT EDUCATION STANDARDS OFFICE



Source: Ministry of Education (2002; 86)

Roles and Responsibilities of staff at district level

The devolution of a number of functions from the national headquarters and provincial offices to the district, schools and colleges as well as the establishment of Education Boards with a number of functions required that existing relationships, communication channels, processes and procedures reflect the new changes (MoE, 2004).

The roles, functions, responsibilities and accountability of key players or staff at district level followed the description of the job titles that existed at that level. The MoE (2004), list some of the key result areas as well as principal accountabilities for the administration wing as:

- (i) Timely planning of programmes and activities for efficient and effective implementation of policies and development of education in the district.
- (ii) Effective and efficient co-ordination of educational programmes and activities.
- (iii) Regular monitoring, evaluation and ensuring efficient, effective and economical utilisation of resources.

- (iv) Effective and efficient supervision of personnel and attending to staff welfare to ensure enhanced performance, order, discipline and accountability in school and management team in the district.
- (i) Regular receiving and maintenance of accurate up to date and reliable records for efficient management of schools within the board; and
- (ii) regularly communicating information to key players and stake holders in order to facilitate decision –making.

For the District Education Standards Officer, the key result areas and principal accountabilities are outlined by the MoE (2004) as:

- (i) supervising effectively inspection of schools and teachers in order to ensure compliance to set standards;
- (ii) supervising and planning in – service training programmes through the District Teachers’ Resource Centre in order to improve the teachers; professional competence and performance;

- (iii) ensuring effective monitoring and evaluation of in-service training programmes in order to recommend appropriate intervention;
- (iv) ensuring timely preparation of inspection reports in order to make appropriate recommendations to the District Education Board, the High School Boards and the Provincial Education Officer.
- (v) supervising staff in the section in order to ensure effective utilisation of financial resources in order to ensure improved provision of quality education.

Despite the fact that individuals perform different tasks, a relationships has to be enhanced because there are common issues that need to be shared among the stake holders which are based on the principles of shareholding, ownership and collective implementation of programmes and activities (MoE, 2004). In case of the district, the DEBS and the DESO are supposed to work hand in hand for successful management and implementation of educational programmes and activities.

It was four years after restructuring and decentralisation was implemented in the MoE in Zambia when the researcher thought about this study. He was motivated by the fact that failures had been recorded in some Zambian ministries where restructuring had taken place. For instance, the Post News Paper (Friday, May 11, 2007:8) quoted the Public Service Commission (PSC) Chairman, Austin Mweemba, as saying:

“We are concerned that restructuring has brought along with it tremendous inefficiency. The people we have put in place only boast of their papers when they have no knowledge of how to go about their work”

This was the case with the Ministry of Agriculture which had been significantly singled out as the major culprit despite having gone through several restructuring processes since 2004. This study, therefore, sought to find out the impact of the restructuring and decentralisation process in the MoE in four districts on the Copperbelt namely; Chililabombwe, Chingola, Kalulushi and Lufwanyama

1.2 Statement of the Problem

How do you mean? It was anticipated that the restructuring paradigm would create organizations at all levels that were to enable individuals think and solve problems creatively, and utilize new technology and information. In Zambia, the restructuring and decentralisation of the Ministry of Education came into effect in 2003, and has been

completed up to district level . Since then, only two studies have been conducted. The MoE (2004) carried out a study which concentrated on management issues. The other study was done by Kadange (2007) who concentrated on the effects of District Education Boards on the operations of basic schools in Zambia. The two studies left some gaps on the subject. This study, therefore, looked at the impact of restructuring and decentralisation in the Ministry of Education on staffing, roles and responsibilities carried out by such staff at district level as perceived by the stakeholders.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to determine the impact of restructuring and decentralisation on staffing at district level and explore the possible experiences the staff have had in performing their roles and responsibilities under the new education structure and management arrangements.

1.4 Objectives

The objectives of the study were to:

- (i) investigate what happened to the district structure and staffing levels after the restructuring programme in the Ministry of Education;

- (ii) determine the impact of devolution of power and authority on the roles and responsibilities of the district staff and Governance body in the management of education delivery at district level.
- (iii) investigate the effects of restructuring and decentralisation on work relationships and climate in the MoE at district level; and
- (iv) gather and examine the opinion of the stakeholders at district level and on the likely future of the policies of devolution.

1.5 Research Questions

The following were the research questions for this project:

- (i) What impact has the restructuring of the MoE brought on the district structure and staffing levels?
- (ii) What impact has the devolution of power and authority exerted on the roles and responsibilities of the district staff and governance body in the MoE ?
- (iii) What climate has the devolution of power and authority created among the staff and between staff and other stakeholders in the MoE at district level?

- (iv) What perceptions do stakeholders have on the future of the policies of devolution in education in Zambia, after experiencing the current restructuring programme

1.6 Significance of the Study

There are several reasons why this research is significant. Firstly, the study is important because little is known on this subject in Zambia. It was hoped that if successfully done, the study might provide useful information to various stakeholders. Secondly, the study is important because it has attempted to show that issues of educational administration were linked to political concerns. Thirdly, the study has contributed a great deal to the literature on the ongoing restructuring programme in the MoE and focused on its impact concerning district staffing, their roles and responsibilities and the nature of the work relationships that existed among them. The study revealed much about the operations of the education sector in the four selected districts. It was also anticipated that education authorities might use to decide whether to continue with the programme, modify it or abandon it if need arose.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

Since the study was conducted on the Copperbelt, an urban setting, the result could not be generalized to other parts of the country especially rural provinces. Many schools especially in Lufwanyama district were scattered with long distances between them. Lack of transport was in this case a limiting factor in this study. Another limiting factor was that little literature existed on the subject and the researcher had to use the internet. The research was poorly funded, hence, the restriction of the study to the Copperbelt Province of Zambia.

1.7.1 Definitions of Terms

Accountability	-	Giving an explanation for ones actions.
Authority	-	Delegated power
Board	-	District Education Board established under the Education Act
Bureaucracy	-	A system of management by many officials who are appointed rather than elected
Data	-	Information obtained about a sample in any study.
Decentralisation	-	Transfer of responsibility to the points of delivery
Delegation	-	‘Lending’ power by the central authority to lower operational levels
Devolution	-	Delegation of power by the central authority to local Administration
Governance Body	-	Members of the of the Board

appointed by the Minister representing various interest groups.

Management Team	- Administrative wing of the Board responsible for day-to-day running of district affairs
Reliability	- Precision of an instrument or a degree to which scores obtained with the instrument is consistent.
Respondent	- Participant in the study
Restructuring	- Changing the administration functional structure.
Stakeholders	- Direct or indirect beneficiaries of the education system.
Validity	- The degree of the correctness of inferences made on the basis of the results obtained from an instrument.

ACRONYMES

A. As	Accountants Assistants
AWPB	Annual Work Plan Budget
DBO	District Buildings Officer
DEBS	District Education Board Secretary
DEO	District Education Officer
DESO	District Education Standards Officer
DRCC	District Resource Centre Coordinator
E.Bs	Education Boards
EMS	Education Management Scale
ES	Education Scale
ESO	Education Standards Officer
GAS	General Administration Scale
GPS	General Professional Scale
HRO	Human Resources Officer
INSPRO	Inclusive Schooling Progarmmme

MMD	Movement for Multi- party Democracy
MoE	Ministry of Education
MoE RDC	Ministry of Education Restructuring and Decentralisation Committee
NGOs	Non Governmental Organisation
P.Os	Planning Officers
PSRP	Public Service Reform Programme
PSW	Public Service Workers.
S.S	Support Staff
T.S	Teaching Service
TSC	Teaching Service Commission

CHAPTER 2:REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section highlights the global picture of the topic of this study before linking it to the
Zambian experiences in order to throw more light on the study.

2.1 Global Picture

In education, it was anticipated that the “restructuring paradigm” would create organisations at all levels that would enable individuals to think and solve problems creatively, and utilize new technologies and information. Staff at district and other levels would need to focus on attitudes and abilities that would enable them learn and apply both traditional and new skills such as the capacity for self direction and the ability to work in teams (Duttweiler and Mutchler , 1989)

Some studies conducted in the Western world have revealed that today’s workplace needs professionals who are adaptable to new ideas, who can respond quickly to new conditions and who can learn new skills to respond to new challenges (Watson &Allison, 1992).

Educational systems and institutions in these developed countries, in response to societal and cultural pressures, are attempting to restructure and to reorganize to meet the needs of a modern society (Small, 1994).

Restructuring represents a significant initiative by an organization to rethink the paradigm within which it operates. It involves a “ re-organization that replaces central planning, control and supervision within a deregulated, decentralised system in which the “bottom line counts most” (Lawton, 1992). Studies by Lawton further confirm that restructuring has been quite effective in some former members of the Soviet Union, such as Latvia, Estonia and the Ukraine, as a means to re-establish their autonomy and control their own destinies (Lawton, 1992).

Restructuring in education implies that some powers must be decentralized to the point of delivery, where problems themselves actually occur. Educators and other stakeholders, must be empowered to diagnose problems and propose solutions, placing the welfare of clients ahead of institutions. In the United Kingdom and New Zealand, restructuring has been enacted at national level. Kentucky (USA) and Victoria (Australia) have enacted it at state level and at district level in Edmonton (Alberta) and Dade County (Florida) (Lawton, 1992). Lawton further says despite tremendous variety of the new structures, all the adopted new structures reflect a significant reorganization of the administrative, curricular and personnel dimensions of the systems and institutions. Prawda (1993), noted that successful decentralisation could come about as a result of retaining

experienced staff as was seen in Mexico. According to him decentralisation became fruitful if staff was given time to learn, design , test, fine tune and buy into it.

Sweden is one of the countries in the world where the education system is highly decentralised . A lot of authority and power has been devolved from the central government to local authorities. The municipal council and county council appoints one or two committees which have the responsibility to ensure that education activities are conducted in compliance with state regulations (Swedish Ministry of Education and Science, 1994). Blomer noted that local control evidently encourages responsiveness to local needs. In the United States (US), at the state level, policy- makers are supposed to set their own standards and monitor performance while granting districts the freedom to set their own policies to achieve the goals (Podomostko, Mc Cloud, Cuban, 2001).

In his findings of the research done in Argentina, Chile, Colombia and Mexico between 1980 and 1988, Prawda (1993), concluded that:

Decentralisation is not an end in itself and does not automatically or necessarily increase productivity, equity or quality. Thus, decentralisation of education is not a static situation, but a process, which is continuous dynamic activity, evaluation and re-adjustments.

In Papua New Guinea (PNG), a commitment to devolution and decentralisation in education has been a constant theme in the post-independence history. Policies of devolution and decentralization in education have thus not only been symbolic (Prunty, 1984), they have also been implemented in a range of material ways. Studies have, however, revealed that generally, these policies have not been successful, and that the nations have encountered numerous problems in both their articulation and their implementation (Bray, 1984; Micah, 1992; Axline, 1993). These findings have linked failure of success to ideological, political and bureaucratic dimensions which intersect in a range of complex ways.

As observed by Smith (1984) the ideological dimensions raise fundamental questions such as (i) Who has the right to participate in decision-making and at what level?(ii) What are the appropriate modes and practices in decision-making?(ii) To what extent do people have the confidence and relevant experience to make decisions which affect their lives? These questions need careful analysis and appropriate appreciable answers for successful implementation of policies of decentralisation.

Smith (1984) further observes that politically, there are issues of how power is expressed through policies. This power is exercised by people who occupy particular positions and

in most cases political power does not permit wide spread permission to participate in decision making. Bureaucratic dimensions on the other hand deal with issues of resources and resource allocation and the extent to which administrative arrangements are responsive to the wishes of the people. These arrangements that is ideological, political and bureaucracy either permit or inhibit the initiation, implementation and evaluation of particular educational initiative (Smith, 1984).

The reforms in the Ministry of Education entailed shifting from the centralised system of education to a decentralised system due to various problems experienced in the centralised system of education. The National Education Policy (1996) outlines these problems as follows :

- Top – heavy management at national and provincial levels;
- Long lines of communication and decision – making, resulting in inefficiency,
- Loss of power and authority at district and institutional levels in the management of education; and
- Protracted bureaucratic procedures in appointments, confirmation, promotion, retirement and disciplining of staff;

The process of restructuring and decentralisation was guided by the principle of shifting decision – making, functions and authority from the centre to the points of delivery namely; districts, colleges and schools (Zambian Ministry of Education Decentralisation Report, 2002) . Chimombo and others (2004) identify four (4) principal forms of decentralisation as:

- deconcentration
- delegation
- devolution
- privatisation.

According to Dennis and others (1984), deconcentration is the handing over of some amount of administrative authority or responsibility to lower levels within central government ministries and agencies. Delegation is described as making decisions on behalf of the central administration by public servants (Lungu, 1981). Delegated authority is usually characterised by a relatively high degree of control by the centre.

Fiske (1996: 10) describes devolution as the most far reaching form of decentralisation in that transfer of authority over financial, administrative, pedagogical matters is permanent and cannot be revoked at the wish of central authority. Privatization as defined by Dennis and others (1984) involves some government which divests itself of

responsibility for functions and either transfers them to be performed by private individuals or enterprises.

This study dealt with the impact of restructuring and decentralisation at district level. The nature of decentralisation dealt with involves deconcentration, delegation and devolution and it is of a political nature. The aim of the government for decentralisation was to come up with a lean , cost – effective highly motivated and productive work force. Decentralisation has devolved some power and authority to the districts, colleges and High Schools which are Management Boards. (MOE, 1996) .

Every innovation has its own advantages and disadvantages. The MoE (1996) highlights the advantages of educational decentralisation as follows:

- It relieves the Ministry of much of the burden of day- to – day business, thereby enabling senior officers to give attention to their principal functions.
- Decisions will be made closer to the points of delivery, where the action is taking place. This will allow for greater responsiveness to local needs.

- The implementation design embodies active community participation in delivery of educational services and decisions on the use and management of resources for schools and colleges.
- By entrusting greater power and authority to education managers at all levels, while simultaneously ensuring the involvement of the community, decentralisation will promote a sense of ownership and responsibilities for educational institutions.
- There will be an increased capacity building at national and local levels.

The advantages outlined above need structures or institutions to spear head the activities in order to achieve the goals of decentralisation for the benefit of stakeholders.

Restructuring involved changing the administrative functional structure of the entire

Ministry from the national headquarters to the school level. Decentralization on the other hand, entailed devolution of power and authority from the MoE Headquarters to district, college and school levels, respectively (MoE, 2001). Bray (1984: 5) says decentralisation is “the process in which the subordinate levels of the hierarchy are authorized by a higher body to take decisions about the organisation’s resources.” Tamukong (2004) says devolution is when the top management shares decision making authority with subordinates. Fiske, (1996;10) describes devolution as the most far-reaching form of

decentralisation in that the transfer of authority over financial, administrative, pedagogical matters is permanent and cannot be revoked at the wish of central officials.”

Devolution is, therefore, the delegation of power, especially by the central government, to local or regional administration.

The Zambian education system had become too big to be controlled from the central level effectively. Bloomer, (1991: 3) argued that:-

“If minor issues have to be referred to some central authority, rapid response is out of question. Furthermore, the ability of the centre to deal with its legitimate strategic concerns is impaired. Ministry Headquarters become paralyzed by the need to reach decisions on a limitless number of minor matters which by nature would be imperfect in an office remote from the particular district or school”

If decisions are made at the point of delivery, those who are making such decisions will exercise real authority which is binding. They are also responsible for consequences of their decisions in the decentralized system of education. In Zambia real authority was only felt from the Ministry Headquarters. This made subordinates lose confidence in their immediate supervisors at provincial level. Bloomer, (1991) quoted by the MoE Report, 2002, argues that, decentralisation releases human potential. People respond to

increased opportunities to use their talents and energies productively. Greater involvement in decision-making improves morale among workers in general, and managers in particular who will feel responsible for their decisions. A well designed system of decentralized management, thus, increases accountability especially where roles for all levels are clarified. Cole, (1986) argues that, in practice some functions are more easily decentralised than others. According to Fiske (1996) there are two types of decentralisation, namely: political and administrative decentralisation. Political, which is also known as democratic decentralisation involves assigning power to make decisions about education to citizens or to their representatives at lower levels of government. Authority is shifted to include people outside the education sector. Administrative, or bureaucratic decentralisation on the other hand is essentially a management strategy. Political power remains with the people at the top of the organizations. In their research on decentralisation of education delivery in Mauritius, Zambia and Tanzania, Chimombo and others (2004) observe that in developing countries, the rhetoric of decentralisation was very different from what occurred in practice. What this entails is that the noble intentions by the government namely: democratic participation, improved decision-making, effective communication, improved funding and worker motivation are frequently not easily translated into appropriate strategies and practices.

Devolution of power to the points of delivery in the MoE has its legality in the establishment of Educational Boards which are management structures at district, and school levels (Ministerial Statement, 2005, Times of Zambia). Educational Boards were established to promote the sense of ownership, and responsibility for educational institutions among members of the local community; and promoting transparency and accountability (MoE Report 2002; Ministerial Statement, 2005). MoE (2007) findings indicate that there who always a gap between the Governance Body and the Management Team. The education system seriously lacked a mechanism to counter individualistic management styles by some DEBS. With the advent of Boards the need for the orientation of personnel involved in the operations of this paradigm shift was unquestionable. When people knew what to do, they would be able to do it. District Board Secretaries who are performing otherwise need to be oriented so that they be changed leaders who, in turn, can prepare their subordinates accordingly (Ministerial statement, 2005).

2.3 A summary of related literature

Literature has revealed that in countries where restructuring and decentralisation of education has occurred, significant re-organisation with the devolution of some powers to the points of delivery has been noted. It has also been revealed that for restructuring and decentralisation in education to succeed, countries involved in this paradigm shift should guard against the intersecting problems of ideological, political and bureaucratic dimensions, which have been identified especially in Africa. There should instead be governance that allows for democracy which encourages innovations, initiative, transparency and accountability. The involvement of major stakeholders; parents, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), churches and other community members should enhance a sense of ownership and responsibility as they contribute towards the education system in various forms. Achievement of the goals or objectives of the restructuring and decentralisation in the education system should be by and through the people in our various localities. Successful decentralisation requires that appropriate mechanisms exist for sharing functions and powers among the various levels of the structure or among the partners contributing to the running of the system (Kelly, J. M. 1996: 245). The most basic change must occur in the roles and relationships existing between educators at all levels (Olson, 1989) Decentralisation in education can only work if community members

are prepared to put in time and energy necessary to make the reform work. Hanson (1988) says: If the local communities distrust, do not take seriously, do not participate in, or do not want to assume added responsibility, then the opportunity of successful change through decentralisation is seriously limited.

Effective and fruitful decentralization has been noted in Latvia Estonia, Ukraine, Mexico, Sweden and the United States of America (Lawton, 1992; Pravda, 1993; MoE-Sweden, 1994; Podomostko, Mc claud, Cuba, 2001). In Papua New Guinea, policies of development in education have generally not been entirely developed due to various dimensions (Bray, 1984; Micah, 1992; Axline, 1993)

Available evidence on decentralisation of education delivery in developing countries reveals that the rhetoric of decentralisation was very different from what occurred in practice (Chimombo and others, 2004). The experiences of education decentralisation in other countries as revealed in the above argument are quite similar and related to this study. Decentralisation in the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) have, for example not been entirely successful in Zambia (Post Newspaper, Friday, May 11th, 2007:8). In the Ministry of Health (MoH), Health Boards have been dissolved.. The MoE did a study which concentrated on management issues in education while in his recent study, Kadange (2007) concentrated on the effects of District Education Boards on the operations of basic schools in Zambia. Both studies, however, left some gaps on the

subject. This study, thus, looked at the impact of restructuring in the Ministry of Education (MoE) on staffing and their roles and responsibilities at district level.

It is clear from the above arguments that the restructuring and decentralization programme in Zambia will be an exercise in futility if the government does not create an enabling environment for the participation of various stakeholders and the accommodation of majority views.

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction.

This chapter describes the research design, study setting and provides explanations on the techniques that the researcher employed in collecting and analysing the data. In other words, the chapter highlights the target population, sample size, sampling procedure, ethical considerations, consent, instruments for data collection, the reliability and validity of the instruments, method of data collection, and data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

A survey research design was used to try and understand the views of the respondents on the impact of restructuring and decentralisation programme in the MoE on district staffing levels and the officers' responsibilities. Survey is the most commonly used descriptive method in educational research. Cohen and Marion (1998) indicate that surveys gather data at a particular point in time of the intention describing the nature of existing conditions. Survey also determines or identifies standards against which existing conditions can be compared. It determines the relationship that exists between specific events or variables.

Further more, a survey focuses on facts, beliefs, opinions, attitudes and behaviour pertaining to the existing situations and allows for changes in course of study (Thio, 1986; Bless and Achola, 1990) Strauss and Corbin (1998), observe that qualitative methods can be used to explore a new area or topic about which little is known. According to Bless and Achola (1988: 42), descriptive design “gives an accurate account of the characteristics of particular phenomena, situation, community or person” . A Survey was, therefore, appropriate for this study.

3.2 Study Setting

Participants were selected from four (4) districts located on the Copperbelt Province of Zambia. One of these districts is Lufwanyama, a typically rural district. The importance of mentioning Lufwanyama district as a typically rural district lies in its unique geographical position as schools are wide apart from each other with the longest distance being 144 km from the offices, which apparently are in Kalulushi urban. The other three (3) are mostly urban districts although some schools are found in the peri urban settings.

3.3 Target Population

The target population is defined as the entire population which the researcher is interested in and to which he /she would like to generalize the results of a study (Polite and Hungler, 1999B). The target population was all the District Board Secretaries (DEBS) ; District Education Standards Officers (DESOs); Education Standard Officers (ESOs); Planning Officers (POs) ; Accounts Assistants (AAs); Human Resource Officers (HROs); District Board Members (DBMs) (Governance Body), District Support Staff (DSS); and Headteachers, in all the ten districts on the Copperbelt.

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure.

From the four (4) selected districts, 96 respondents were selected. Male and female respondents were selected on equal representation in terms of gender in two (2) urban districts, namely Chililabombwe and Chingola. Representation in these two (2) districts was in the ratio 1:1 whereas Chililabombwe had 10 male and 10 female respondents, Chingola had 14 males and 14 female participants. The 1: 1 ratio was difficult to achieve in Kalulushi and Lufwanyama districts because of the fewer number of females serving as staff at district level or as Board Members. Lufwanyama was greatly affected and the researcher was only able to come up with 16 male and 4 female respondents giving a

ratio of 4 : 1 respectively. Kalulushi district had 17 male and 11 female respondents. In terms of gender representation, therefore, this study had 57 male and 39 female respondents in the ratio of 19:13.

In order to come up with the required sample, 96 respondents from four districts, the researcher applied purposive, theoretical or judgmental sampling, which is common in qualitative studies. Borg et al, (1996: 234) define purposive sampling as the selection of cases that satisfy an important criterion. It is the type of sampling that is entirely based on the judgment of the researcher in that sample is composed of elements which contain the most characteristic representation or typical attributes of the population. In this case, the researcher had to hand pick the 96 respondents who had the required characteristics of the study. Out of the 96 respondents, 37 were district staff members, 12 were board members and 47 were headteachers from the four districts studied. These were selected because they were well informed about the research topic (Borg et al, 1996: 307). The researcher took into consideration the location of the respondents when handpicking them so that it became easy for him to trace them.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Researchers have an ethical responsibility to recognize and protect the rights of respondents. The researcher had to consider the ethical issues in the respondent's setting. To cater for these issues, the researcher sought permission first of all, from the Assistant Dean- Post Graduate Studies at the University of Zambia (UNZA). Permission was addressed to "TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN". Since the research project was done on the Copperbelt, the researcher wrote to the Provincial Education Officer (PEO) attaching the original copy of the letter from the Assistant Dean. Permission was then granted to do the research in Chililabombwe, Chingola, Kalulushi and Lufwanyama Districts. The respondents' feelings were considered. The researcher created a warm and friendly atmosphere so that the participants could build confidence and trust in him. A consent letter was signed by each respondent with an assurance that the information they provided would be kept confidential.

3.6 Instruments for Data Collection

Questionnaires for the administrative staff and Board members, semi structured in-depth interview guides for support staff and Focus Group Discussions for the Head Teachers were used to collect data from the respondents. Three questionnaire check lists were prepared, one for those in administration, the other one for Standard Officers and the third one for Board Members. The checklists for the administrators, standards officers and Board Members had 19, 17 and 10 questions respectively. The checklists comprised open-ended questions. The data collected was qualitative. This kind of approach was used because it was explorative and required gathering as much information as possible and the researcher, thus, wanted to probe in depth the views of the respondents about the variables of the study. Open – ended questions allow for richer and wide perspective on the topic (Cohen and Manion, 1998).

Other instruments used were Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with Head teachers. 10 questions were prepared for discussions. Focus Group discussion presented an opportunity of allowing the respondents to express their views freely and more clearly. Semi-structured interview schedules for support staff contained 10 questions. As recommended by Cohen and Manion (1994), a semi-structured interview guide resembles

a “friendly conversation”. The researcher had an opportunity to probe and seek clarification on issues raised during the interviews.

3.7 Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

Reliability is the precision of an instrument (Strauss and Cohon 1998: 113-120). Validity of a measuring instrument is described as doing what it is intended to do, measuring what is supposed to be measured. The instruments used in this research project were piloted in January, 2007 and their validity established. Pre-testing of research instruments was done in Chingola district involving 12 participants, with 6 drawn from the district staff. Three (3) were Board Members and the other three were Headteachers. These participants had the same characteristics as the participants of the actual study. Pre-testing of instruments provided an opportunity to clarify some unclear statements to the respondents. It was also an opportunity to examine and clarify statements that may tend to measure what was not intended for. Following the Pre-testing of research instruments, corrections were made and ambiguous statements were rephrased. Some parts of the research instruments deemed unnecessary were left out.

3.8 Methods of Data Collection

Data was collected between early February and end of May 2007. The questionnaires were distributed by the researcher to respondents at their work places and homes in the case of Board Members. The researcher gave respondents one (1) week in which to put their views on the questionnaire in print. At the time of collecting questionnaires, the researcher took time with the respondents in their respective offices or homes and engaged them in a face –to-face conversation in order to clarify certain information arising from the questionnaire. This exercise took between 30 to 40 minutes for each respondent. Focus Group Discussions were arranged with Headteachers. In Chingola 14 headteachers attended the discussion on equal gender representation 7 males and 7 females. In Chililabombwe, 4 females and 4 males attended the discussion while in Kalulushi 15 attended the discussion in the ratio 3 : 2 males and females respectively. Lufwanyama district had 10 respondents with 7 males and 3 females in attendance. As indicated earlier, the researcher selected this method to give an opportunity to the respondents to express themselves freely and clearly during the FGD. The researcher had an opportunity to clarify and record views from the respondents in order to capture the information correctly. In the case of the FGD held in Chingola, the researcher captured the discussion using a video camera and proceedings recorded on a V.D. All the discussions were held in suitable roomy places away from the public.

Semi- structured in-depth interviews were organized for the support staff. Interviews involved verbal communication between the researcher and the researched. The researcher interviewed support staff one by one. The researcher found a suitable place where the conversation between the respondents and himself was confidential, away from the others. As the presence of the interviewer might be regarded as a potential threat by the interviewee, the researcher created a welcome atmosphere. The time spent on the interviews and focus group discussions depended on how much the participants were willing to contribute to the discussions. The respondents were all adults and, as such, the researcher did not spend much time on probing for information and clarifying the questions. All the respondents in this study were assured of anonymity.

The open-ended questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions and semi-structured in-depth interview guides were the techniques used in this study to collect qualitative data. The researcher took time with such respondents going through the letter. After a careful analysis of the contents of the letter, the respondents were convinced that there was no space for name and that their views were protected and would be kept confidential. They later signed willingly.

3.9 Problems faced during data collection

The researcher faced some difficulties during the data collection exercise. One of these was procrastination by some respondents who could not complete the questionnaire within the time frame of one week, which was agreed upon. This resulted in some of them misplacing the questionnaires. The researcher, however had to patiently explain the importance of their views on the subject and with their understanding, fresh copies of the questionnaires were issued. Some respondents were unwilling to be interviewed during working hours.

3.10 Methods of Data Analysis.

The data collected for this study was checked for accuracy, utility and completeness. Using the qualitative method, the responses from the participants were described and explained using tables, charts and percentages. Data from open-ended questionnaires, Focus Group Discussions and Semi-structured interview guides were coded and grouped according to the emerging themes using a comparative method described by Glaser (1978).

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents data interpretation and findings of the study to show the impact of the restructuring programme in the (MoE) with regards to the district staffing and the decentralised and delegated responsibilities to the district. When interpreting data, which was qualitative, the researcher considered the most significant categories and themes from the open-ended questionnaires, Focus Group Discussion and interview guides. The views of the majority of the respondents represented the most significant categories in this study. These were reflected in form of tables, charts and percentage with detailed description of the observed situations.

The findings are presented under the headlines that follow:

4.2 Presentation of the findings

4.2.1 Responses of the district staff as to how they were recruited

Table 1

.n = 37

Means of recruitment	Frequency	%
Through interviews	21	57
Other means	16	43
Total	37	100

From table 1 above, 21 (57%) of the respondents, said that they were interviewed. 16 (43%) of the respondents said they were not interviewed and were employed through other means.

4.2.2 Responses from district staff and Board members on the extent to which they understood their roles and responsibilities.

Table 2

.n = 49

Type of response	Frequency	%
Fully understood their roles and responsibilities	33	67
Partially understood their roles and responsibilities.	10	21
Were ignorant of their roles and responsibilities	6	12
Total	49	100

Table 2 above shows that 33 (67%) of the respondents fully understood their roles and responsibilities. 10 (21%) of the respondents partially understood their roles and responsibilities while 6 (12%) of the respondents expressed ignorance regarding their roles and responsibilities.

4.2.3 Respondents’ views on whether or not staffing was lean or bloated at district level.

Table 3

.n = 96

Type of response	Frequency	%
Districts have lean staff	10	10
Districts have bloated staff	70	73
Difficult to tell	16	17
Total	96	100

From table 3 above, 70 (73%) of the respondents said districts had bloated staffing levels. 10 (10%) of the respondents said districts had lean staffing levels. 16 (17%) could not tell whether staffing was lean or bloated

4.2.4 Respondents’ views on the relationship among district staff and other stakeholders.

Figure 1
.n= 96

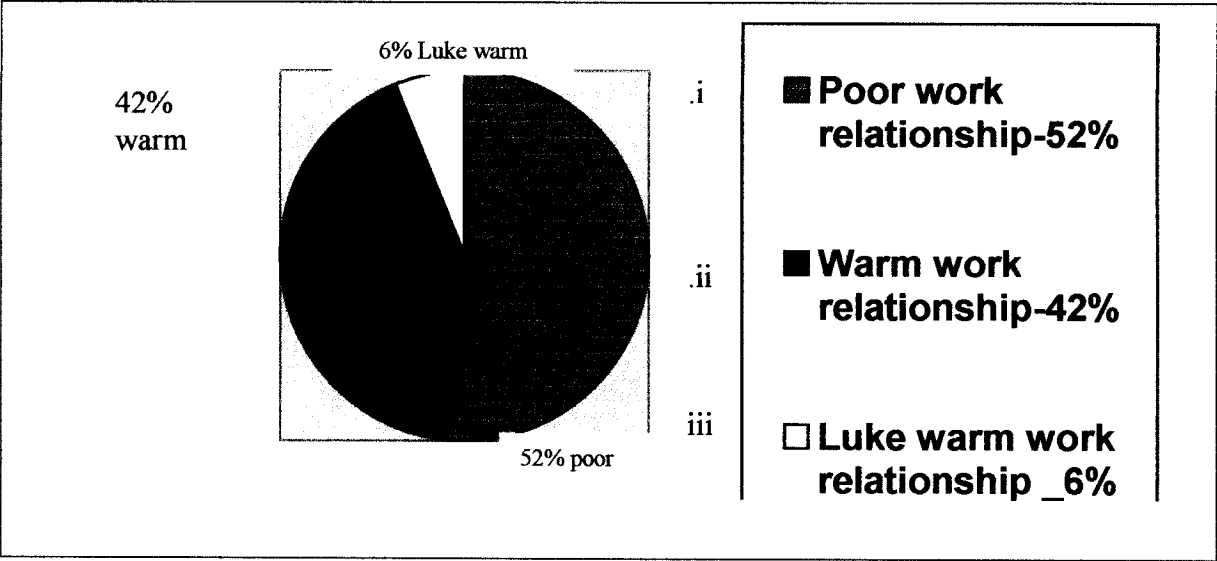


Figure 1 above, shows that of the 96 respondents 50 (52%) of them said the relationship was poor and no strong unity existed. 40 (42%) of the respondents said the relationship was warm and unity existed sometimes. 6 (6%) indicated that the relationship was lukewarm.

4.2.5 Respondents' views on DESO reporting to DEBS

Table 4

n. = 96

Type of response	Frequency	%
The two should be independent of each other	92	96
The structure should remain the same.	4	4%
Total	96	100

Of the 96 respondents 92 (96%) said that the two offices must be independent of each other to avoid confusion, while 4 (4%) of the respondents said the structure should remain the same.

4.2.6 Respondents' views on the impact of decentralization on communication.

Table 5

n. = 96

Type of response	Frequency	%
Communication has greatly improved	14	15
Communication has not improved and is poor	80	83
Communication has slightly improved	2	2
Total	96	100

Table 5 above, shows that out of the 96, 80 (83%) of the respondents said communication was poor. 14 (15%) of the respondents said communication had greatly improved, 2 (2%) said there was slight improvement in communication.

4.2.7 Respondents’ views on the impact of decentralization on decision making.

Table 6

.n =96

Type of response	Frequency	%
Decision making was greatly influenced by MoE Headquarters	62	65
DEBS made final decision without influence fro, HQ	27	28
Board members were part of the decision making at district level	07	7
Total	96	100

As table 7 indicates, out of 96, 62 (65%) of the respondents said the National Headquarters influenced decision making at district level. 27 (28%) said the District Education Board Secretaries made unilateral decisions. 7 (7%) of the respondents said Board members were involved in decision making at district level.

4.2.8 Respondents’ views on Planning and Budgeting .

Table 7

n. = 96

Type of response	Frequency	%
MoE planned for every one and most goals were achieved.	2	2
Provincial Headquarters planned for district and most goals were achieved	3	3
District management teams were involved in planning but most goals were not achieved.	91	95
Total	96	100

Table 7 above, shows that of the 96 respondents, 91 (95%) said district were involved in planning but most goals were not achieved. Three (3%) of the respondents said provincial Headquarters planned for the districts and most goals were achieved. Two (2%) of the respondents said MoE Headquarters planned for every one and achieved most of the set goals.

4.2.9 Respondents' views on resource allocation and distribution.

Figure 2

n.=96

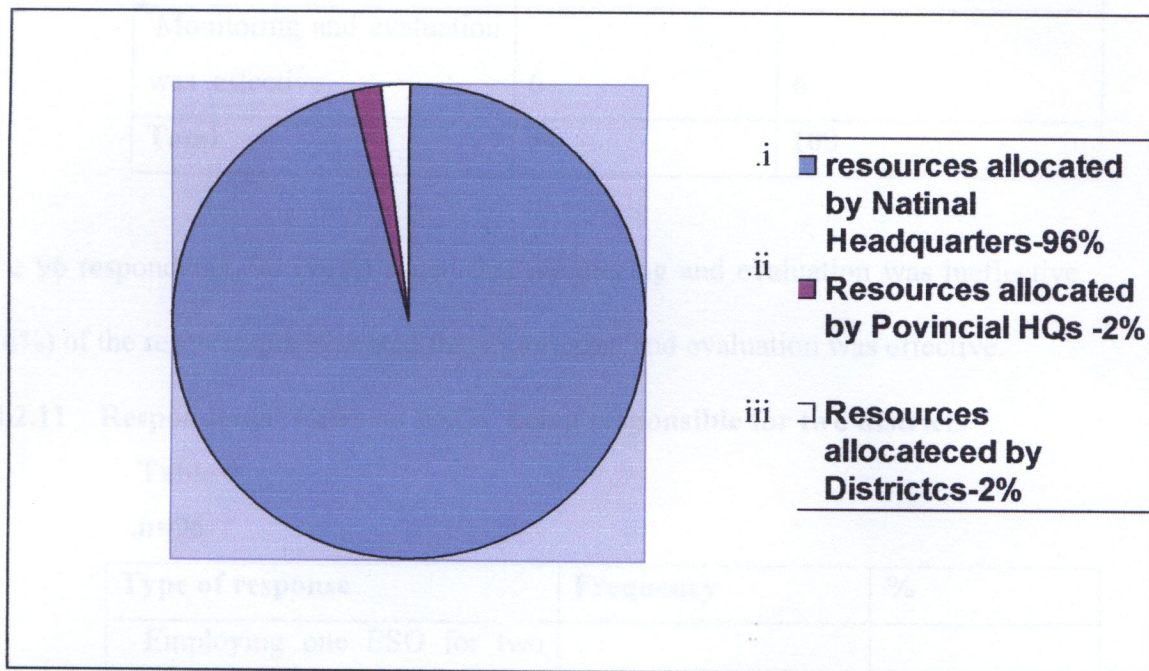


Figure 2 above shows that out of 96 respondents, 92 (96%) said the Ministry Headquarters allocated and distributed resources. Two (2%) said resources were allocated and distributed by the provincial Headquarters. The other two (2%) said resources were allocated and distributed by districts.

4.2.10 Respondents’ views on Monitoring and Evaluation

Table 8

.n=96

Type of response	Frequency	%
Monitoring and evaluation was ineffective.	90	94
Monitoring and evaluation was effective	6	6
Total	96	100

Of the 96 respondents, 90 (94%) stated that monitoring and evaluation was ineffective.

Six (6%) of the respondents indicated that monitoring and evaluation was effective.

4.2.11 Respondents’ views on ESOs being responsible for two districts

Table 9

.n=96

Type of response	Frequency	%
Employing one ESO for two districts should be done away with immediately	93	97
The arrangement should be maintained	3	3
Total	96	100

Out of 96 respondents, 93 (97%) sated that employing one ESO for two districts should be done away with, while only three (3%) said the arrangement should be maintained.

Respondents’ views on the likely future of restructuring and the policies of devolution in the MoE.

Table 10

.n=96

Type of response	Frequency	%
Decentralisation policies face a bleak future	66	69
Decentralisation policies face a bright future	23	24
Decentralisation policies face an unpredictable future	7	7
Total	96	100

Of the 96 respondents, 66 (69%) of them perceived a bleak future for the policies of devolution. 23 (24%) of the respondents said the future was bright while seven (7%) of the respondents, said that the future of the policies of devolution in the MoE was unpredictable

5.0 CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

This chapter presents the discussion of the findings of the study presented in the previous chapter. The discussion in this chapter follows the variables upon which data was based. The findings are discussed in the sequence as presented in chapter four and start with the recruitment of staff for the districts.

5.1 Staff Recruitment

The findings from the district staff respondents revealed that most of them (57%) were interviewed before being employed. Those who were employed through other means constituted 43%. Those who were not employed by the Government were either interviewed or simply taken on by the Board, in which case they became Board employees. The revelation^{showed} that some of them were interviewed before taking up their appointments is consistent with the Teaching Service Commission (TSC) (January, 2002) Job Advertisements. Good as this was, however, it is unfortunate that some un-interviewed individuals were appointed to positions leaving out those who had attended the interviews.

The following statement from a senior district officer testifies thus:

“Interviews were conducted at the Teaching Service Commission. Initially, it was good but later on people who never went for interviews were given positions. This shows that some people were favoured and that was evidenced by one DEO who refused to move until he was appointed DEBS. The concept and practice of “wako ni wako” principle is deeply rooted in the system. Nepotism, tribalism and favoritism were and are still being used to select people for jobs and promotions. In some cases some politicians are involved in selection of officers either indirectly or directly. So, the system was and is still biased”.

It can be argued that, this reported favouratism or “bias” is certainly not good for the education system. It defeats the aims of the restructuring programme the Ministry decided to embark on. This is because people who avoid taking part in interviews but seek to be appointed on the basis of “isms” that is tribalism, nepotism etc are usually unqualified. Their appointments can hardly bring efficiency in the system at all.

5.2 District staff’s knowledge and skills regarding their roles and responsibilities.

The findings on whether or not the staff and the Board members had knowledge and skills of the salient features of their roles and responsibilities, was that the majority of them (i. e. 67%) had the knowledge and skills to carryout their responsibilities. Initially, most of them were “raw” and could not function accordingly due to the fact that they

were just starting the operations of the new structure and had no training. One standard's officer stated:

“From the start, I got lost. since there was no orientation before I took up the appointment. It was “job on training” and I made a lot of mistakes initially. Even my friends can bear witness that we were ignorant of the jobs we were appointed for. Most of us have learnt these skills through workshops, seminars and reading of available literature on restructuring and decentralisation in the MoE.

This is supported by Prawda (1993), who concludes in his findings that decentralisation is not an end in itself and does not automatically or necessarily increase productivity, equity or quality. Thus decentralisation of education is not a static thing but a process which is continuous and dynamic as well as one that requires constant monitoring, evaluation and re-adjustment. Supporting these findings, the then Minister of Education Mr. Andrew Mulenga , (Times of Zambia, 2005) stated that District Board Secretaries who were performing otherwise needed to be oriented so that they be changed leaders who, in turn, can prepare their subordinates accordingly.

5.3 District staffing levels

Available literature on staffing indicates that MoE needed to come up with a lean, cost effective and productive work force (MoE, 2005). However, the findings of the study portray a different picture. 70 (73%) of the respondents indicated that staffing at district level was bloated instead of being lean. This is in line with the Ministry of Education (2002) which states that District Education Board Secretaries have each been staffed with three additional education standards officers (ESOs) to maintain standards ...unlike in the past when they only had one each. Further more, the proposal to abolish some positions at district level such as the Buildings Officer, Stores Clerk, Brick Layers, and many others was not implemented. The findings indicated that most of these positions were filled at district level due to demand. Currently, the establishment at district level shows that the DEBS office has 19 members of staff whereas the office of the DESO has 6 members of staff giving a district a total of 25 members of staff per district, as opposed to the district total of 15 members of staff in the old structure (MOERDC, 2002) You wish to say;

This translates into, a 66.6% increase in the numbers of employees who run education work at the District prior to restructuring; which factor made respondents consider the workforce as being bloated.

5.4 Work relationship among district staff and other stakeholders.

After a critical analysis of the work relationship among the district staff and other stakeholders, it also was established that there was no strong rarity among workers in some districts which resulted in poor work relationship. This was created by poor individualistic styles of leadership exhibited by some District Board Secretaries. Lack of communication, lack of respect for others, pompousness, arrogance, lack of consultation, and many others were some of the factors leading to poor work relationship in the districts. At the time of this study, the researcher witnessed a serious management problem in one of the sampled districts, during a meeting to resolve an impasse between teachers and their DEBS addressed by the Provincial education officials. During this time, the Teachers' Union representative stated that:

This DEBS is a very bad leader. He runs the office like a farm. He intimidates his subordinates and uses threats to run the district. How do you work with the DEBS who says, " I am a ruthless person, I smile as I see you die". He is some one who works alone and does not know the functions of the standing committees of a Board. How does he spend money? He is big headed but ignorant of the operations of the decentralised system. Such who have no respect for humanity and the system must not be here. We demand for his transfer (District Union Leader)

In some cases, the Board Secretaries are indifferent even to their own staff as one ESO stated:

Some times DEBS makes decisions without consulting the management team. The fact that if you are not aware of such decisions and you hear from your junior officer, you get embarrassed (one ESO).

The findings are supported by the views of the Public Service Commission chairman, Austin Mweemba, who says that the people who have been put in place boast of their papers when they have no knowledge of how to go about their work. The restructuring has brought along with it tremendous inefficiency. (Post Newspaper May 11, 2007:8). For the Board members and staff, it was clear that the climate in some districts was quite poor and in some cases resulted into transfers of some officers at district level as the case was in one of the sampled districts.

5.5 Dissatisfaction regarding the DESOs' subordination to DEBS

Dissatisfaction over the DESO's subordination to the DEBS was one of the findings of this study. People stated that the arrangement created a bossy attitude in some of the DEBS which the affected DESOs naturally disliked. Consequently, divisions and confusion arose as a result of members of staff supporting one or the other of these two officers. Since such divisions do not auger well for the smooth running of the District

office, the researcher is inclined to support the suggestion by most respondents 92 (96%) that the two offices should be independent of each other. After all, the DESO's office mainly deals with issues of standards whereas that of DEBS is for general administration.

5.6 Poor communication

80 (83%) of the respondents pointed to long bureaucratic channels and inadequate transport as responsible for poor communication. Whereas the former (bureaucratic channels) can not be wholly removed; it is certainly not justified to allow them to hinder appreciable progress within the education system. Devolution of many of the Ministry's functions to Districts can help alleviate some of its problems that arise from poor communication. An example of is the issue of staff discipline. Boards should be allowed to conclusively deal with such matters, although a mechanism should be put in place to prevent them (Boards) from doing so with malice. Regarding the inadequacy of transport which MoE (1996) acknowledges, the government is hereby urged to ameliorate this problem by either providing more vehicles to District Education Offices or pool vehicles at District level that the Ministry of Education officials can make use of.

5.7 Decision-making at district level.

The findings of the study pointed to educational beauracracy, politics and various “isms” that is nepotism, tribalism and favouratism as factors which greatly influenced the nature and outcomes of policy and administrative decisions at district level in the education system. Certainly, none of the factors cited by the respondents in this study allows for appreciable and efficient system because each of them contributes to slow or no progress at all. In the case of beauracracy and political influence, the researcher is in support of the majority 62 (65%) of the respondents’ view that the power to decide on major issues was a preserve for senior officers within the hierachy. The process is tied to the long and winding beauracratic channel which delays solutions to cases that require short and quick answers. Consequently, political power and various “isms” already refered to above, come in and influence such decisions. In this case, districts are not allowed to conclusively decide on promotions, confirmations and discipline of staff but only make reccommendations to higher authority for action.

The findings of this study, are in agreement with those of Cole, (1986), Chimombo and others (2004) who argued that in practice some functions are more decentralised

than others. In developing countries the rhetoric of decentralisation was very different from what occurred in practice. The democratic participation in decision-making in the education bureaucracy is seriously lacking in Zambia. The findings of the study, therefore, show non fulfillment of the purpose for which decentralisation was embarked upon ie. to promote a sense of ownership and responsibility for educational organisations among members of the local community and promoting transparency and accountability (MoE, 2002). It has been established that democratic decentralisation is essentially a management strategy and political power still remains with the people at the top of the organisations. This implied that the power to solve problems at district level had strict limitations and the DEBs had to consult higher offices before coming up with the decisions. Sometimes instructions came from politicians, who gave directives especially on promotions and staff discipline.

5.8 Planning and budgeting.

With regards to the respondents' views on the impact of decentralisation on planning and budgeting, the majority, 91 (95%) of the respondents revealed that district management teams were involved in planning but that most of the goals were not being achieved. One District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) observed:

It is the responsibility of the Management Team of the district to plan and budget for the district annually. During the planning and budgeting stage, goals are set and prioritised accordingly. However, things do not work out according to our plans and budgets. People at the MoE Headquarters seem to have their own priorities and this kind of arrangement frustrates people at district level and sometimes we tend to wonder as to why we are even involved in planning.
(DEBS)

Similar sentiments were expressed by one Planning Officer who stated:

My opinion is that, because of the set up of the national policies, although the idea of decentralisation is in existence, it is not really implemented. This is because of national barriers, which do not allow us to carry out our own priorities and perform our tasks freely.
(Planning Officer)

The views expressed above which the researcher strongly supports, indicate that management teams plan and budget for their programmes but fail to achieve set goals because the MoE disregards what is planned and brings up other things for implementation. The findings of this study are supported by the policy on planning (MoE, 1996: 169) which acknowledges:

A further problem lies in generating a sense of ministry ownership for projects and activities that may respond more strongly to down perceptions than to perceived needs within the ministry. In the process, the local vision for education may give way to donor-driven activities.

Apart from the internal pressures, the Zambian government is also subjected to outside influences such as the International Monitoring Fund (IMF) and World Bank. Priorities on economic and administrative policies are not necessarily of Zambian's own choosing. The aid agencies have also advised the Zambian government on the directions educational policies should take (MoE, 1996). An imposition of priorities by an aid donor intrudes into the affairs of the recipient (Conry, 1982). In Zambia most projects have stalled because of the imposition of priorities by donor aids. One District staff official commented

The construction projects in my district have come to a stand still because the Sector pool Funds for infrastructure are not forthcoming. The donors are slowly pulling out and I doubt the completion of the projects because the priorities have shifted from infrastructure to other programmes. (One district staff)

5.9 Resource allocation and distribution.

The majority of the respondents (96%) said that resources were allocated and distributed by the national headquarters and that such allocations were determined by the Zambian government's economic policies. Although MoE had been restructured and being was managed from the districts and provinces, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) still had the overall budgeting control over their activities. Most of the allocations were tied to particular objectives and tasks, which usually hindered the implementation of programmes and activities that were planned by district staff altogether. The carrying out of very minor works on such programmes sometimes was therefore, due to insufficient allocations. One DEBS pointed to this when he stated:

The apparent run down of government services and infrastructure in the district is not due to the district squandering the resources. The reality is that districts have been expected to do more with less and less funds (DEBS)

This view, which the researcher supports is shared by many others in education, as they see the educational share of the national budget decline every year. Those in charge of education are expected to do more with less funds. The study findings are in line with the MoE (1996: 163) observations, which indicate that.

Since the early 1980s the education sector has suffered from the insufficient and declining levels of public funding. There has been no major or sustained recovery from this drop. The sector accounts for only 9% of the total public budget. As a proportion of the GDP and total public budget, public education spending in Zambia ranks among the lowest in Africa and the world.

The MoE (2007) findings confirm the findings of this study and states:

District Education Boards relied entirely on the government grants and these are usually applied strictly in accordance with the specified annual work plan activities. Unfortunately, actual funding has never been equal to the budget requirements. The greater deficit was experienced in the funding to school infrastructure....District education Boards had no means of raising local resources to supplement government budget support

It was, however, appreciated that though the funds were inadequate, they have made a difference especially in supporting rehabilitation of the district offices and school infrastructure, paying repatriation to some retirees and settling in allowances to a few newly recruited teachers while others have to wait for their turn. However, the equation of equal distribution of the merger resources received by districts remains a “jigsaw puzzle” and attaining equal distribution of these resources is far from being achieved due to several factors such as the various needs and requirements of individual districts.

.10 Monitoring and evaluation by the district staff.

Available literature indicate that both the administrative (DEBS) office and that of the District Education Standards officer (DESO) have the duty and responsibility to monitor and evaluate performance of their staff , schools and the Boards themselves as per set standards. The findings of this study on the effect of decentralisation on monitoring and evaluation indicate that there was no effectiveness. This ineffectiveness was attributed to an upsurge in the roles and responsibilities performed by the staff at district level. A typical example is that of the Human Resources officer (HRO) who had to monitor and evaluate performance by other HROs in high Schools in addition to the management of the pay roll for the district. The HRO had to manage support staff and teachers from the time of recruitment to the time of retirement. Processing of the necessary papers to the appropriate authorities through the DE BS, for appointments, promotions, discipline and

other cases was a very big task for the HRO. In support of the ineffectiveness of the staff at district office, one Accounts Officer states:

The accounts unit keeps the operations of the district running. The unit has to have enough staff because transparency and accountability is seen in the records of books of accounts are kept. This is not only done at the district office but we have to monitor and evaluate how funds are being utilized in schools as well. One person can't be effective. It requires team work and should be supported with transport. Equally the Planning Officer can't work in isolation because planning is a collective responsibility.

The study findings are supported by the findings of the MoE (2007) monitoring report which suggest that in order to achieve efficiency, there should be capacity built at district level in terms of numbers of staff and their competencies. There would be need to employ sufficient members of qualified staff and continue to train them in areas of accounting, planning and human resources management. MoE (1996: 130-131) stresses the need for training of key personnel at district office. It also emphasizes the need to develop and put in place effective and transparent system of accountability at all levels of the system.

5.11 ESOs being responsible for two districts

Analysis of the findings on the effect of decentralisation of the MoE concerning Education Standard Officers (ESOs) who are responsible for two districts show that

these ESOs are ineffective. (97%) of the respondents said the arrangement should immediately be done away with immediately if effectiveness and efficiency have to be achieved. The ESOs involved are those for Special Education and Distance Learning who monitor two districts each. One ESO admits to the above sentiments thus:

In most cases the ESO tends to concentrate on one district and the other district suffers. He / she is more effective and efficient in one district. There are many reasons for not being effective in two districts, the major being inadequate funding, which cuts on mobility on the part of the ESOs concerned. Further more, we do not have the equipment like the computers. The idea of reporting to two districts is very taxing. Sometimes we miss the district planning and evaluation meetings due to this dualist membership.

Further inquiry of the study showed that some schools, especially those in rural and peri-urban areas, were not visited for a period of one year while urban schools were visited at least monthly. Views of the majority during the Focused Group Discussions organised for Headteachers can be summarised in the following manner.

It is evident that some schools are not visited for as long as one full academic calendar. How do they monitor two districts with the current economic hardships which have seen reduction in funding? Over loading ESOs with work only reduces on their potential to work as the conditions under which they operate are very difficult. Government should seriously revisit this arrangement by employing more ESOs (FGD).

The findings of this study are in line with MoE (2007) monitoring report which states :

Standard officers were overloaded with work especially that those dealing with Special Education and Distance Learning were combining functions of monitoring standards and implementing programmes of education delivery in the areas.

It is evidently clear from the findings of the study that more standards officers are required for effective and efficient education services at district level. These should be supported with adequate funds and given a vehicle specifically for the monitoring and evaluation of programmes by DESOs and ESOs.

5.12 The unpredictable future of the restructuring and policy of devolution in the Ministry of Education.

With regards to respondents' views on the likely future of the policies of devolution, the study revealed that devolution policies faced a bleak future. Of the 96 respondents, 66 (69%) of the respondents perceived a bleak future as opposed to 24% who saw a bright future for these policies, while 7% of the respondents were not sure of the future of the restructuring and the devolution policies in the MoE in Zambia. The researcher is inclined to support the argument of the majority who argued that there were serious barriers to the success of devolution policies. These barriers came from internal pressure of ideological, political and bureaucratic rationality on one hand and the International

Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and donor-aid agencies on the other hand. One respondent from Chingola observed:

If reforms are to succeed government should be prepared to give us the resources. These policies require huge funding. But if given less money, I think the reforms will be a failure.

This view is shared by many others in education, as they see the education share of the national budget declining every year. So, the only way to help lessen the economic pressure is to appeal to foreign aid. However, depending on donor aid has its own problems. One respondent expressed his fears in the following manner:

I have observed that there are lots of problems in securing the loans from the aid donors. The process is long starting with identification of the project, to the release of funds. After securing the fund the problems come in terms of usage of money from aid-donors such as the World Bank. They make sure that they send in their own experts and consultants to advise on which educational project we should undertake. We spend a lot of money paying their travel, hotel and consultancy expenses. Most of the money goes to meet their expenses. In this case, the funds are not spent on the priority areas.
(Lufwanyama Respondent)

The financial constraints are a big barrier because they are compounded by ambiguities surrounding the policy of devolution. There is a shift in the meaning of what it is (devolution), how it should be implemented and what should be the expected outcome and who should benefit from it.

These views are consistent with Purity (1984), Bray (1984), Micah (1992), Axline (1993) and Conroy (1982) who in their findings linked failure of success of devolution policies in education to economic ideology, political and bureaucratic dimension which intersect in many complex ways. Generally, devolution policies have not been successful and countries that have these policies have encountered numerous problems in both their articulation and their implementation. The researcher shares the prediction by the majority 66 (69%) that Zambia's devolution faces a bleak future if the barriers are not removed.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.0 CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this study was to find out the views of the district staff, Board Members and Head teachers on the impact of restructuring and decentralisation with regard to district staffing and the roles and responsibilities of such staff at district level.

The major conclusions of the study are as follows:

- 6.1.1 That the staffing levels appeared to be bloated as compared to the previous district personnel due to large increase in staff numbers.
- 6.1.2 That despite the marked increase in staffing levels, staff were still overloaded with work due to an upsurge in the responsibilities.
- 6.1.3 That to maximize efficiency in the delivery of education services there should be recruitment of more qualified staff in the human resource department, planning, accounting and standards office, especially ESOs for Special Education and distance and Open Learning. Capacity building should not be stopped.
- 6.1.4 That bureaucratic channels were still long and winding. This has rendered decision-making very difficult as the channel begins from the school to the District Education office, to the Provincial Education

office to the Permanent Secretary and to the Teaching Service Commission . The same channel was followed to convey decisions back to the districts. The new structure should allow certain decisions to begin and end at district level. As at now, promotions, confirmations and even some transfers still wait for decisions from above, with noticeable favouratism.

- 6.1.5 That communication was still poor. In addition to the bureaucratic channels, there was a serious need for improvement in transport, especially for Lufwanyama and Chililabombwe. Monitoring and evaluation of programmes were greatly affected due to lack of transport.

Other serious challenges revealed in the study were that:

- 6.1.6 That there was a need to have the DESO's office operate independently from that of the DEBS. This would remove divisions among the work force.
- 6.1.7 That a gap existed between the Management Teams and Governance Bodies which contributed to poor relations between the two bodies. The poor relationship affected performance of the district staff.

6.1.8 That most of the plans and priority goals made by district Management Teams were not achieved because the national headquarters preferred national priorities.

6.1.9 That funds disbursed to District Education Boards were inadequate and that there is need for such funds to be increased in order for restructuring to succeed.

6.1.10 That the future of devolution policies in Zambia was bleak until and unless foreign influence, political interference, bureaucracy and various favoritisms were seriously checked and stopped.

6.2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of the study prompted the researcher to recommend as follows:

6.2.1 The Zambian Government through the Ministry of Finance and Planning should adhere to the District Plans and Budgets and increase grants to districts for successful implementation of the education programmes.

6.2.2 The Ministry of Education should not retain functions such as recruitment of staff, confirmations and promotions. These should begin and end with District Education Boards, as long as there is wider representation on decision making. The ministry should only come in where an officer is recommended for a position outside the district.

- 6.2.3 The office of the DESO should be independent from that of the DEBS. This will enhance professionalism and improvement of standards in the restructured system of education as well as remove the leadership problems that are being experienced in some of the District Education offices currently.
- 6.2.4 The District Board Secretaries should involve Governance Bodies in the management of education delivery at district level.

6.3.0 Future Research

The study focused on determination of the impact of the restructuring programme in the Ministry of Education and specifically looked at District staffing and their roles and responsibilities in Chililabombwe, Chingola, Kalulushi and Lufwanyama district of the Copperbelt of Zambia. Some issues raised might attract future research. Some of those I feel should be considered for future research are:

- 6.3.1 A comparative research on the impact of the Decentralisation and Devolution Policies in the Rural and Urban Provinces of Zambia.
- 6.3.2 A comparative research on the impact of restructuring in Education between Zambia and a neighbouring country such as Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique or Tanzania.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE DEBS AND ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF.

Province :

District:

Gender:

Age:

Marital Status:

Highest Academic Qualifications :

Highest Professional Qualification:

Position :

Work Place Setting :

(Urban, Peri- Urban, Rural)

Number of years served:

1. How were you employed? Explain.

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2. How informed were you (at the time of recruitment) on the salient features of your job?

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3. Do you think the decentralization programme needed more staff as compared to the previous staffing levels at district office? Explain .

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4. Explain the work relationship between district staff and other Board members.

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5. What are your views on the arrangement that the DESO reports to the DEBS despite both having the same salary scale (EMS/4) and each officer having his/her own subordinate staff?

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6. How has decentralization impacted on communication? Explain whether it has improved or not.

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7. What would you say about decision making in the decentralized system of education in your district? Explain.

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8. What are your views on the impact of decentralization on planning and budgeting for your district?

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9. Explain how resources are allocated and distributed in the decentralized system of education in Zambia and how this has impacted on the system.

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10. What are your views on the impact of decentralization on monitoring and evaluation of performance in your district?

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11. In your own view explain the effectiveness of the ESOs who are appointed for two districts?

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12. How do you view the likely future of the decentralization and devolution policies in the MoE in Zambia?

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13. What suggestions and recommendations can you make to help improve the devolution policies in the MoE in Zambia.

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APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STANDARDS OFFICERS. (DESOS AND ESOS)

Province :

District:

Gender:

Age:

Marital Status:

Highest Academic Qualifications :

Highest Professional Qualification:

Position :

Work Place Setting :

(Urban, Peri- Urban, Rural)

Number of years served:

1. Explain how you were recruited?

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2. Were you skilled and knowledgeable in your field of operation about the salient features of your job before taking it up? Explain.

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3.What can you say about staffing in your department in you district? .

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4. Describe the work relation ship between your office and that of the DEBS as well as other staff and Board members.

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5. What are your key responsibilities in the district?

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6. What are your views concerning the DESO reporting to the DEBS despite the two officers having the same salary scale and each of them having his/ her own subordinate staff?

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7. What impact has decentralization brought on communication in your district ? Explain

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8. Explain the impact of decision making process in your district in the decentralized system of education.

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9. What are your views on planning and budgeting for the district in which you are a member?

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10. How is resource allocation and distribution done and what effect has the arrangement got on the operations of your district / section.

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11. How effective is you section/ department in monitoring and evaluation of performance in your district / section?

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12. How do you explain the effectiveness of the ESOs who are appointed for two districts?

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13. What would you say are the problems in the implementation of the policies of devolution in the MoE in Zambia?

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14. What are your views on the likely future of the policies of devolution in the MoE in Zambia.

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15. What suggestions and or recommendations can you make to help improve the

devolution policies in the MoE in Zambia?

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APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BOARD MEMBERS

Province :

District:

Gender:

Age:

Marital Status:

Highest Academic Qualifications :

Highest Professional Qualification:

Position :

Environmental setting :

(Urban, Peri- Urban, Rural)

Years of membership on the Board

1. How did you become a board member?

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2. Explain the membership of your Board (Composition)

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3. What are your views on the effectiveness of your Board in your district?

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4. Explain the involvement of Board members in the running and delivery of
education services in your district.

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5. How has your Board impacted the decision making process in your district?

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6. What has the decentralization programme done to equip you with the skills and knowledge to run your Board effectively?

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7. What relationship exists between the Board and district management team? Explian.

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8. What role do Board members play in planning and budgeting for the district education activities.

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9. Generally what would you say are the problems affecting the implementation of devolution policies in education in Zambia?

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10. How do you perceive or look at the future of devolution policies in the MoE in Zambia?

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APPENDIX D

FOCUSED GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR HEADTEACHERS

1. What do you understand by the terms decentralization and devolution of power?

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2. The purpose of restructuring and decentralization was to create a lean, cost- effective and highly motivated productive work force.

What would you say about the staffing levels at the district office.

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3. What are your observations on the district’s ability to make decisions?

4. What are your views on communication?

5. How do you look at the impact of decentralization in the MoE concerning planning and budgeting for the district including basic School.

6. How effective is the Head teachers’ representation on the District Education Board?

7. What would you say has been the impact of decentralization on monitoring and

evaluation of performance by the district staff.

8. Some ESOs are responsible for two districts each. What effect has this arrangement on their performance and system as a whole?
9. How do you describe the allocation and distribution of resources in your district in the decentralized system of education?.
10. How do you look at the relationship of staff in your district and what effect has it got on performance?.
11. What do you think are the difficulties faced by implementers of devolution policies in the MoE in Zambia?
12. What do you think is the likely future of decentralization policy in the MoE in Zambia?

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR SUPPORT STAFF

Province :

District:

Gender:

Age:

Marital Status:

Highest Academic Qualifications :

Highest Professional Qualification:

Type of work/ occupation

Name of Employer:(GRZ,Board)

Work place type/ setting :

(Urban, Peri- Urban, Rural)

Number of years in current work

1. How were you recruited and who is your supervisor?
2. Explain the duties or your responsibilities at the district where you work. Do you think you are overloaded?
3. What is your work relationship with other district staff and how do you look at work relationship between DEBS' and DESO's office?
4. What impact has decentralization brought on communication?
5. How do you describe the impact of decentralization on resource allocation and distribution?
6. What can you say about decision making in your district. Do you take part in discussions of matters affecting your local operations?
7. How do you describe the operations of your district generally and how do you look at welfare of the workers?
8. What do you think are the problems faced by implementers of devolution policies in education in Zambia?
9. How can you describe the future of the decentralization policy in the MoE in Zambia?
10. How do you perceive or look at the future of devolution policies in the MoE in Zambia?

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11. What recommendations can you make on devolution policies in the MoE in Zambia?

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