CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background

Educational partnerships world over have become an important phenomenon in education provision. The emphasis of these partnerships is on quality, access, equity and general school improvement. Bush and Bell (2006:258) note that,

> Such partnerships are frequently intended to support a series of strategies to enhance the academic performance of children and can be found embodied in many policy statements on education in a large number of countries.

In order to put this study in the right perspective, the entry point would be the Declaration that came out from the World Conference on Education For All (WCEFA) held in Jomtien, Thailand, in 1990. Bray (2000:9) quotes Article 7 from this conference which states that

> National, regional, and local education authorities have a unique obligation to provide basic education for all, but they cannot be expected to supply every human, financial or organisational requirement for this task. New and revitalised partnerships at all levels will be necessary: partnerships among all sub-sectors and forms of education; ... partnerships between governments and non-governmental organisations, the private sector, local communities, religious groups and families.... Genuine partnerships contribute to the planning, implementing, managing and evaluating of basic education programmes. When we speak of an "expanded vision and a renewed commitment", partnerships are at the heart of it.

 Kelly (1999:219) defines educational partnerships as, 'a contractual relationship among the various agents of development, in particular between the people concerned and those intervening from the outside.' The World Conference on Education For All (WCEFA) (1990) held in Jomtien reaffirms this commitment to partnerships in the education sector when it stated that there should be 'an expanded vision and a renewed commitment'.

Since the inception of formalised and organised education system in Zambia, partnerships in education have been encouraged and have made a tremendous impact to

the entire system. The underlying principle for educational partnerships is that they should identify and recognise the roles of parents, teachers, non-governmental organisations, faith-based organisations, communities and private business houses in education provision. Concerted efforts by all these stakeholders would result in the supply of the needed qualified human resource, teaching and learning materials, furniture, transport and infrastructure maintenance and development for school improvement. This is being encouraged because most governments cannot manage to deliver successfully all the requirements of the education sector, considering the many other demands on their already strained budgets.

One of the objectives of Education For All (EFA) is to increase access, equity and quality of education. It has been realised that the vision of this conference will only be achieved with collaboration with the Private Public Partnerships (PPP). This is being encouraged more than ever before in institutions of learning. Growing private-sector participation in basic education delivery in many developing countries, calls for greater partnership arrangements with the public sector. This helps to improve access to education for poor and disadvantaged groups (Kwame, 2009).

The Zambian Ministry of Education policy document of 1996 encourages community participation in the planning and management of the education sector at all levels. An overall objective of the national policy on education is to establish new and revitalised partnerships, involving all providers of education at all levels. In addition, MOE (1996:35) states that,

> A major objective of liberalization and democratization is to enhance the involvement of individuals and civic society in development. Community participation in education is one way of realizing this. A principal thrust of educational policy, therefore, must be to give people the opportunity to provide educational services or to improve on what is being offered. Such community involved should be the rule and not the exception that it tended to be in the past.

In instances where the collaborations exist, there should be an increased awareness of roles and responsibilities of the community and private business houses. With such an understanding in place, accountability and a sense of ownership of institutions is inculcated. Educational provision makes it more feasible in ensuring that parents are able to exercise their right to choose the kind of education that will be offered to their children (Kelly, 1999).

Partnerships maybe viewed from three perspectives, these are individuals partnering with the Ministry of Education (MOE), private business enterprises and corporate institutions partnering with MOE and lastly, Non- Governmental Organisations (NGO) and Faith Based Organisations (FBO) collaborating with MOE. Once in place, these collaborations help ease the economic constraints that the government may be experiencing in the provision of education. But it should be noted, however, that even if economic constraints were not a factor, experience world-over has shown that there is much to commend the involvement of non-governmental agencies in the financing and management of education (MOE, 1992).

At the national level, government partners with other international cooperating partners like UNESCO, UNICEF, JICA, NORAD, British Council, SIDA, VVOB, IMF among many others. These cooperating partners are involved in capacity building of teachers, Ministry of Education staff development, providing funding for capital projects such as infrastructure development, furniture provision and budget support to the entire Ministry of Education.

In local Zambian high schools, partnerships mainly occur at Parent Teachers Association (PTA) level, communities, private business houses and School Board collaborations. Areas of support in these collaborations include subject-specific needs like those of science laboratory equipment, computers, physical education equipment, text books provision or transport. The other aspect is that of NGOs funding a specific program like support for Orphaned and Vulnerable Children (OVC), Girl-child bursary schemes and

or material support. Other areas of support include infrastructure maintenance and development, transport, staff development, and general financing of institutions.

Educational partnership takes place at different organisational levels and in different ways. This research has, however, looked at partnerships between schools and their communities especially the roles of parents, links that exist with other local organisations and the roles played by private local business houses. Even when there appears to be different characteristics in the form and nature, the end product of these education partnerships is to see that school improvement is attained.

Bush and Bell (2006:259) observe that

> What partnerships have in common is that their espoused purposes are usually related to the improvement of the educational experience of pupils and students in the schools and colleges to which the partnership agreements relate.

Experience elsewhere demonstrates that there is a strong positive correlation between the direct involvement of parents in the activities of the school and their willingness to contribute financially to these schools (MOE, 1992).

1.1 Statement of the problem

In Zambia, partnership in education started before the 1930s. This partnership was characterised and dominated by Faith Based Organisations (FBO) running and managing most of the primary schools in existence at the time (Snelson, 1974). In the 1920s the only government secondary school existing was Barotse Secondary School. At the time, FBOs main area of interest was primary education which basically aimed at equipping learners with reading, writing and arithmetic knowledge. Further, basic agriculture skills, carpentry, domestic science and needlework were taught (Mwanakatwe, 1968).

The policy document, Educating Our Future, of 1996 has recognised the need to establish working partnerships in the education sector at all levels. The private sector

and communities may have taken up the challenge but the input from them might not be adequate. For this reason, government has tried to provide the legislation and framework in the Education policy in which private public partnerships can operate. This helps to sensitise parents and communities to come to the realisation that the mantle of educating their children was their responsibility just as much as it was for the government. Communities are not aware of 'what it takes' to run schools; neither are they clear on the recurrent cost implications of any new development (MOE, 1992)

This study therefore attempted to establish the existing partnerships, successes and challenges, areas of these collaborations and how these may be strengthened to ensure sustainability.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The main objective of the study was to investigate existing partnerships in rural Zambian high schools. Where they exist, the study looked at the effectiveness in the provision of quality education, and to some extent discussed how these could be improved and sustained.

1.3 Specific objectives

The following were the specific objectives of this study:

   a)   To establish the types of Education Partnerships existing in Zambian rural high schools.

   b)   To assess the effectiveness of these Education Partnerships in quality education delivery.

   c)   To ascertain the input levels and areas of partnership collaboration with schools in the delivery of quality education.

   d)   To find out challenges that may be encountered in these Education Partnerships**.**

1.4   Research questions

This study was guided by the following research question:

    a) What types of Education Partnerships were in existence?

    b) What were the areas of support that were covered in these partnerships?

    c) How effective were these Education Partnerships?

    d) What were the challenges encountered in the existing Partnerships?

1.5   Significance of the study

It is hoped that the findings of this study will help the Ministry of Education address partnership challenges especially in rural areas of Luapula and other provinces in the country. Furthermore, it is hoped that the findings will help strengthen and add value to policy formulation on education partnerships.

1.6 Delimitations

The study was carried out in the rural districts of Kawambwa, Chienge and Nchelenge of Luapula province and targeted high schools only. Although there are varying degrees of partnerships at different levels and areas of support, this study focused on the local partnerships involving the school PTA's, School Boards, local communities and NGOs in these districts only. The international partnerships highlighted earlier in the introduction were not part of this study.

1.7 Limitations of the study

There were a restricted number of respondents and participants; therefore this has limited the extent to which the findings can be generalised. The target schools and communities were deliberately chosen firstly, because of their location and secondly because of their communities' level of understanding of policies and expectations in government programs such as educational partnerships. It was not possible to study all rural communities of the province but it is hoped that the sampled schools were representative enough to show what obtains in these areas.

Due to the limitation of time, finances and the vast area of Luapula, with its' not too friendly terrain which include big rivers, lakes, hilly terrain and swamps, some of the districts were not covered. Because of this, the research instruments and methods were designed to suit the sample size and target population.

1.8 Operational definitions

Education

Imparting and acquiring of knowledge through teaching and learning, be it formally or informally, at school or similar institutions, home or wider community.

Collaboration

The act of working together to achieve set targets.

Partnership

Relationship between two or more people or organisations involved in a same activity.

Community

A group of people who live in the same area with a common background or with shared interest within that society

Institution

An organisation that is influential in the community like a school, bank, hospital or college

Participate

To take part in an event or activit

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

This chapter presents a review of studies that have been conducted on education partnerships. Partnerships are meant to compliment efforts by the government in its quest to enhance academic performance of pupils, provide access and the overall improvement of the quality of education offered. Schools, colleges and universities can greatly improve by changing and developing partnerships within and outside the institutions perimeters. The chapter will also look at the overall aims and objectives of education partnerships and see how best these can be applied in order to see the fruition of these collaborations. The World Declaration on Education For All (EFA) spoke of the need for an expanded vision that surpasses present institutional structures and encompasses, among other things, universalising access and strengthening partnerships (MOE, 1992).

2.1 Background: A historical perspective

Education provision before and after independence in Zambia, has been that of partnership. Major players included missionaries, private sector and government of the day. In 1964 approximately1000 primary schools were run by voluntary agencies, a further 700 by local education authorities, and less than 100 by the central government. In 1967, government schools numbered 1562 against 914 agency schools, while by 1979, government primary schools totalled 3,431 and only 62 voluntary agency schools remained (MOE, 1996).

2.2 Overall aims and objectives of Education Partnership

In as much as there were partnerships since inception of organised education structures, there was need to revitalise these partnerships (MOE, 1996). This is because establishing mechanisms for parental involvement is the key in facilitating school improvement (Bush and Bell, 2006).

Effective partnership involves giving attention to the role that cooperating partners can play, formulating policies to guide the partnership and establishing strategies that facilitate it (MOE, 1996). The aim is to see that democratisation of education provision is encouraged so that the Ministry of Education positively interacts with communities who are the direct beneficiaries of the service. There is also a need to see that a sense of ownership of these institutions is inculcated in the communities. MOE (2007:15) states that,

> A school-community partnership is a thoughtfully created mutually beneficial union between schools and communities where vision, responsibilities and risks are shared for a common purpose. The school-community partnership strategy is based on a genuine relationship where concerned parties benefit from the synergies of cooperation and add value to the fruits of success.

Bray (2000) further notes that there is a rationale for partnerships, within every partnership; the various actors may have different reasons for collaboration. For example, when governments, communities and international agencies work together, each side may have a different reason for doing so. In most settings, however, one may identify a cluster of important rationales for engaging in partnerships.

The partnerships emphasise the need to support ways and means of improving academic performance in particular and the general school improvement to enhance pupil and staff welfare. Hopkins (1994:258) notes that, "School improvement is an approach to educational change that is concerned with process as well as outcomes." School improvement is about raising student achievement through enhancing the teaching-learning process and the conditions that support it. It is about strategies for improving the schools capacity for providing quality education.

Schools benefit greatly by the involvement of the parents body in their daily routines and programme of activities. The community has a lot of skills, expertise, knowledge and experiences that would benefit the school and supplement efforts of teachers. Such an attribute embodied in the community goes a long way in supporting efforts directed at

school improvement. Stoll and Mortimore (1997) observe that the value of partners which involve parents, community representatives, education authorities and local business houses go a long way and are a very beneficial component in supporting school improvement. It should be however pointed out that there is no substitution of the roles of the various partners and stakeholders such as parents, teachers and or the community. The various roles played out should instead be complimentary in the efforts to achieve desired goals.

2.3 Role and value of partners

Partnership in the education sector can take place in a number of ways and at different levels. The levels include contribution in mobilisation of resources, provision of incentives to pupils and staff, budget support and infrastructure development. The principle is based on the fact that the government cannot supply all the necessary human, financial and organisational resources. Those who collaborate with the government in education provision have a right to do so, mainly because the government allows them (Kelly, 1999).

The liberalisation of the education sector by the government as outlined in the 1996 policy document mean that there will be an increase in classroom space thereby increasing on access, developing a sense of ownership in the communities, increasing on transparency and accountability and providing checks and balances in institutions of learning. The wider community must be engaged to ensure school effectiveness as provision of quality education cannot be left to chance. The Global Education Initiative (2007) states that,

> It is now widely appreciated that partners can be good sources of skilled management, planning, accounting, technical support and other forms of consultative expertise, not just money, infrastructure, commodities and training.

The challenge is how we can engage the wider community. Macbeath and Martimore (2001) posit that if we wish to raise standards, we have to work on what happens outside

school and make demands on members of that wider system to play their part. Bray (2000:46) sums up the above scenario as follows,

> By themselves community self help initiatives are likely to increase rather than decrease geographic and social disparities. This is because the groups which are already advantaged are in a better position to help themselves than are groups which are disadvantaged. This fact can be a justification for direct government interventions for the disadvantaged groups. However, these interventions are more likely to succeed if they take the form of partnerships with those groups. Thus while governments need to monitor their partnership schemes to ensure that scarce government resources are not chiefly being devoted to groups which are already well-endowed, they should also note that partnerships can be a powerful instrument of reaching the disadvantaged."

Because of this observation, The World Bank (1996) suggests that the poor be given incentives to participate. They further state that partnership schemes can demonstrate ways in which schools and their members can reach out to serve the needs of the poor, as well as their needs.

Rural communities are at a great disadvantage when it comes to understanding the concept of partnership and the principle behind cost-sharing. This may be attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, literacy levels have an impact in appreciating the government of the days' pronouncements on policies. Secondly, there are socio-economic factors to be taken into consideration. Peoples' priorities in these communities are many and apparently education for their children does not rank highly. Bhatnagaar and Williams (1992) further indicate that socio-economic factors enhance the inequalities between urban and rural communities. Relatively prosperous groups were in a better position than impoverished groups to form partnerships with governments. Urban communities were able more easily to raise cash resources, and may have better educated and more articulate school-committee members.

In discussing partnerships, it is important to establish what constitutes a good partner. Good partners may have characteristics like making commitments and delivering these

on time. They should actively participate in planning and executing these plans. Good partners should help and be part of a solution to challenges that may be encountered by schools. In instances where there are more than one partner involved with any one school, mutual trust, respect and consent should prevail. This collaboration should translate in achieving shared results and goals. To attain sustainability, partners should attempt to engage in long term agreements (Cassidy, 2007).

The cost sharing stand point should be emphasised during PTA general meeting to help parents appreciate this concept. To this effect Windham (1992:3) writes that,

> Whether through new organisational structures or through reorienting existing structures to include a basic education component, local and national partnerships can help provide materials, facilities and personnel to meet the basic education challenge. A special benefit of this broadening of participation is to focus greater public attention on educational issues and to establish a stronger societal commitment to the principles of the world declaration.

Consideration should be taken when establishing good partnership linkages. There ought to be responsiveness to any given local context, a widely shared vision, realistic goals and objectives and an understanding that all partners will share the successes and failures of the agreement. It is for this reason that Cassidy (2007) emphasises the need to have plans and all agreements discussed and researched for them to be meaningfully implemented.

When agreements and work plans are well spelt out, there would be no conflicts arising as partner role and responsibilities will be addressed. Agreement on key performance indicators and performance targets will be highlighted. Longer-term partner commitments will be ideal in attaining set targets. To realise the vision of a given partnership, honest and open multiple-path communications is cardinal (Global Education Initiative, 2007).

Cassidy (2007) further adds that partners should be engaged in a genuinely shared and

coordinated strategy for education reform and change. The concept of partnership should be expanded and legitimised as it will ensure an active participation of a much broader set of stakeholders in education. This will help show how change should happen with minimal government interference thereby adding value to the partnership.

2.4 Partnership with parents and the local community

Parents should play an important role in the education of their children. This should be encouraged in order to cultivate a sense of ownership of these institutions. Education begins in the immediate families of the learners, so parents should be encouraged to help and see what goes on in their institutions. The development of partnership between schools and parents as individual family units representing their children at a particular school represents a complex and sometimes controversial aspect of state intervention in education.

MOE (2007:16) states, "The primary objective of the school-community linkages is to, narrow the gap between the school and its community." In this regard, the school should play a greater role in the life of the community and vice-versa. The school should prepare pupils to live a rewarding and satisfying life in the community. Additionally, the community should participate in improving infrastructure and enhancing school credibility among parents and other community members.

Parents' involvement should be seen to move from merely providing financial and material support to schools to a more proactive role through influencing decision-making which represents views of parental groups, getting involved in the consultative process and the full participation in the governance of the schools.

Fordham (1992:37) makes this very important observation,

> Changes in the way schools are administered, especially if they make clear efforts to relate to the local community, can change perceptions about the school's interaction between the school and the community. A surprising result is that the positive ideology that is engendered is more important to educational success than the economic

resources provided to the school by the community.

The recognition of the important role parents and communities play in quality education delivery cannot be underplayed and perhaps this is the reason the Ministry of Education in its policy document places emphasis on the need to sustain these collaborations. Ng (1999:553-6) states that, 'The intention of the policy change was for parents to play a much more proactive role in supporting learning and in facilitating the attainment of a much higher level of academic performance by their children.'

For these partnerships to be effective and sustained, the need to follow the legislation provided by the policy and to operate within that framework is important. Governing bodies in schools should further make local adjustments to the agreements making them suit the prevailing local environments. Bush and Bell (2006:261) observe that,

> Children are more successful when schools and parents work together and this can happen most effectively if parents know what the school is trying to achieve. The issue now is whether such a partnership based on a legalistic agreement is the best way of establishing an appropriate form of home-school relationship.

When agreements and legislation that will guide the operations of these partnerships are in place, conflicts between teachers and parents are removed and a balance of power is achieved. Stakeholders will play their roles knowing fully what they are to do and their limitations. In this way, the agenda's are driven not by parental interests but instead will focus on pupil performance and achievement and aggregate goals. To attain these, collective responsibility becomes inevitable. Parents, teachers and the wider community should pool their efforts and resources to achieve desired goals. This effort should be expressed at societal level more than the individual level. When this kind of approach is taken, the benefits will also be appreciated and accrued not only at individual level but also at school and community levels.

Bray (2000) highlights one major challenge on the governments' willingness to devolve decision making, and of the communities to take it up. The challenge for policy makers is to decide what controls are necessary in given situations. In certain instances the

controls are desirable to harmonise components of national education systems and to safeguard the rights of the children. While in other instances controls stifle community initiatives and make a mockery of claims about partnership.

This kind of parental involvement in the running of schools is not only peculiar to Zambia. In England, the Department for Education (1994:25) argues that, 'Our future prosperity as a nation depends on how well our schools, in partnership with parents, prepare young people for work.' The implication noted here is that students, teachers and parents are partners in the educational enterprise. Parents should not be viewed as being merely passive participants in the partnership but that their roles are repositioned to that of equal and active participants in the education market-place (Bush and Bell, 2006).

The best that parents could possibly do is to see how best they may divide their time in order for them to volunteer their labour and be available, when required, for school activities. Bray (2000:32) notes that,

> From the perspective of partnership, therefore, the most instructive situations are ones in which governments provide some resources and communities provide others. Particularly common are models in which governments provide some or all of the teachers' salaries and communities provide land, buildings and other facilities.

The success and failures of these partnerships will invariably be evaluated by overall pupil performance. These partnerships assume a control and accountability mechanism for the general performance of the school. MOE (2007:16) further states that,

> Genuine partnership provides the ability of partners involved to influence the programme. The major actions that will create successful partnership include shared knowledge, mutual dependency and organisational linkages that provide integration, information through outreach activities.

Studies by Sheldon and Epstein (2002) further reveal that the involvement of parents in the affairs of the school and school routines ensured maximum attendance of pupils to

school activities. Chronic absenteeism and truancy among pupils is curbed.

Schools and teachers, however, cannot solve attendance problems alone. Family processes also are important influences on student absenteeism. Parents and the community should develop behaviours that will monitor pupil whereabouts, engaging the children in discussing what goes on in school and parents active involvement in activities of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

The benefits of having an active community and private sector participation in the education sector are huge. One notes the increase of classroom space thereby increasing on access especially in remote rural communities through community schools. Quality is enhanced as parents and the sponsors will respond promptly to the demands and challenges that institutions may face. Further, care for infrastructure; reduction of vandalism to school property is curbed because of the sense of ownership in the immediate communities (Bush and Bell, 2006).

The devolution of power to points of delivery is meant to engage parents and communities. This is not a new phenomena and peculiar to Zambia only. The Education Act (1988) of Britain also introduced a new system of school management called The Local Management of Schools. The devolution of the administration of schools was to balance the inevitable centralisation involved in the national curriculum (Giddens, 2006).

In Zambia, the policy raises issues on the involvement of parents and the community. They are encouraged to raise learning achievements of pupils, increasing level of access, the participation and retention of girls and other disadvantaged children, infrastructure maintenance and enhancing school credibility (MOE, 1996).

2.5 Role of the private sector

The government cannot run the education sector alone without the involvement of other stake holders such as the community, business houses, NGO's and the church. The task of educating a nation is too huge to be left to the government alone. Voluntary agencies

make a significant contribution to education provision in Zambia through their grant aided schools and colleges (MOE, 1996).

Establishment and running of schools by individuals and organisations is a growing mode of community participation in education. Private institutions which currently provide educational facilities include individuals, corporate world, religious organisations and communities.

The Policy Framework Paper mentions Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and private business houses as supplementing the public sector services by taking care of individuals with paying capacity, thereby allowing the public sector to allocate more resources for the poorer sections of the community (MOE, 1992).

Bray (2000) notes that the role of NGO's deserves special mention because they received particular prominence at the Jomtien Conference on Education for All (EFA). The fact that many NGO's attended this conference is testimony enough of the changing times in education partnerships. World Conference on Education for All Secretariat (1990:34) wrote on NGOs, "It is not possible after this week for anyone to consider having a major educational conference or meeting without the participation of these important groups."

Bray (1996) observes that alternative ways of resource mobilisation should be sought. He further explains that resource for capital works, the government together with community leaders should organise and solicit for these while resources for recurrent needs should be borne by the school management and the community.

Bush and Bell (2006) state that in many countries, the alliance between education and commercial organisations is based on the need to find non-governmental resources to support either the basic provision of education or its improvement. This conceptualisation of partnerships was intended to create a set of relationships based on the involvement of community, industrial and business groups that would move the educational agencies more rapidly towards the achievement of general educational

policy objectives and to the attainment of specific levels of pupil performance in tests and examinations.

Governments are now more willing to shift at least some of the responsibility for educational provision into the private sector in order to keep public spending under control and to avoid tax increases. The rationale for this is that partnership with the private sector reduces cost. In part, this is what has been seen with the liberalisation of the education sector, the financial burden on the government is eased by bringing on board the private sector which is helping with support in opening up new schools and provision of other learning materials. MOE (2007) records that an ideal School-Community Partnership exists when the community promotes learning and is willing to enter into a genuine partnership with the school to achieve equitable access, improved retention, progression, achievements and quality of education for all school-age children in the area. The community should appreciate the school as a learning and action resource for the entire community.

2.6 Justification

Enhanced community participation in the education sector will help in alleviating the financial crisis in the state dominated sector. Users of the services provided by the sector will further develop a sense of ownership of these institutions; respond promptly and positively to challenges encountered by schools (MOE, 1992).

The benefits of such collaborations are so great and the impact is positive on both the pupils and staff. The failure to consider educational partnerships in the wider context, including the economic situation and the nature of power relationships within a country, allows politicians to deduce simplistic solutions to complex problems and seek to develop partnerships within education systems that serve a narrow purpose (Bush and Bell, 2006).

MOE (2007:15) further explains the need for education partnership as,

> A working relationship between individual community
> members and local organisations in which parties

cooperate and share specific rights and responsibilities. Sharing of roles creates utilization of local competencies, collective responsibilities, team building and ownership of programmes.

A highly centralised system that effectively marginalises the community's involvement in school management, contributes in a country like Zambia, to poor functioning and a low level of efficiency. With the increased participation of the community in this sector, it is noted that there is an increase in the enrolment percentage especially at basic school level. Many new schools continue being opened especially in rural areas and among smaller communities (MOE, 2005).

2.7 Summary of literature review

The benefits of having an active community and private sector participation in the education sector are massive. These include increase in classroom space, thereby increasing on enrolment and access, maintenance and development of infrastructure, transparency, accountability, staff training and transport. Quality is enhanced because of close supervision and monitoring by stakeholders. Additionally, there is increased care in the use of school property and a reduction in vandalism by the schools' immediate community.

The less privileged in society should be given an opportunity to contribute on issues of governance of these institutions through such partnerships.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Overview

This chapter looks at the way information on the research topic was collected and how this data is integrated in the various situations of the research area. The research methodology used was primarily one which is qualitative but in some instances a quantitative approach was used albeit in a small way. Further, this chapter also looks at the participants involved in the research.

3.1 Qualitative Approach

The study used both qualitative and quantitative research design. A lot of factors were taken into consideration to arrive at which method was to be used in the survey. The qualitative approach was chosen as it provided a good situational analysis of what actually obtained in the study areas. This approach paved way for participants to fully express themselves without any restrictions to what they had to say. Participants' volunteered information knowing they would not be assessed or evaluated but were made aware that generalisations of the information given was what was important. The study used the ground theory in part as well. Trochim (2006) discusses ground theory as one which has the research beginning by raising generative questions which help to guide the research but which are not confining or static. As the data is gathered, core theoretical concepts are identified. Tentative linkages are developed between the core concepts and the data.

Parts of this survey used the quantitative approach especially when looking at figures of involvements and numbers of sponsored learners and who their sponsors were. The approach was used in addressing objective questions. This approach helped in providing a balanced view of the situation. The quantitative approach was thus seen as complimentary and not a substitute of the other approaches in the data collection process. Further, this multipronged methodological approach tried to embrace information and data from varied sources, in the process highlighting the many

challenges and obstacles encountered by the communities and schools covered in the research areas. Kvale (1996:5) emphasises that, 'knowledge is validated through practice.'

The interaction with the various stakeholders in the study areas helped provide deeper insight and understanding of the successes and challenges faced in the implementation of the policy on partnership in education at community, board and PTA level.

3.2 Data Collection Methods

The gathering of raw data used a variety of methods. In research, this is referred to as triangulation. Bryman (2008) defines triangulation as the use of more than one method or source of data in the study of a social phenomenon. In addition, the different methods helped supplement information collected with actual figures. In some instances, these figures supported some of the information collected hence providing a clear view of what was being discussed.

The semi- structured interviews were very beneficial as they allowed the participants to give a more subjective view. These views came from their experiences, expectations and fears. They also brought out the issue of the many opportunities available which they felt were not well explored and taken advantage of.

The process of gathering information using a multiplicity of approaches was not arbitrarily done, but a careful consideration of the weaknesses or strengths of one approach over the others was done so that validity and appropriateness of information collected was realised.

In the process of data collection, written documents were used on the research topic and other documents generated by the government through the Ministry of Education in particular, electronic media such as the internet, Participatory Learning Approach (PLA), semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and observations.

3.2.1 Participatory Learning Approach (PLA)

Chambers (2002) defines PLA as, 'A growing number of methods, approaches and behaviours to enable and empower people to share, analyse and to enhance their knowledge of life and conditions and to plan and act, monitor, evaluate and reflect in issues concerning them.'

The researcher became actively involved in some of the meetings and discussions of the PTA and Board at Nchelenge High and Ponde High Schools. The researcher tried to ask probing questions in meetings so that the participants could be more explicit in their deliberations hence allowing for the collection of desirable data for this research.

This approach helped in critically assessing the understanding of the subject by the participants. The participants were encouraged to see new possibilities by exploring new avenues in the private public partnership arrangement. The approach was also a learning experience for the researcher just as much as it was an eye-opener for participants. It further allowed participants to evaluate solutions and this afforded them the opportunity to critically assess their situation to fit their understanding of the problem posed.

3.2.2 Observations

The other method used was the observation method. In this method, the researcher tried to position himself at convenient points to see the interaction between the schools authorities and the community through the operations of the PTA committees and school boards. A systematic observation schedule was used to ensure uniformity in all the surveyed schools. This schedule listed types of partnerships, areas of support, fundraising ventures, transport and other activities the schools collaborated in with other stakeholders. Such a schedule helped to present reliable and valid information.

What helped the data gathering procedure here was that some members of some of the committees at some of the selected schools were on a daily basis monitoring the projects

that the schools were undertaking. The researcher therefore had a chance to observe and interview these people. Such meetings were helpful as some information in a structured interview is withheld and does not come out in full. One setback of participant observation method is that when participants know that someone is observing them, the behaviour is not natural but one notices a modified outlook in behaviour and disposition in their transactions meant to suit the observer (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009).

The researcher's experiences of working with the communities, NGO's and interactions with other PTA committees over the years in the teaching service was very beneficial in noting the challenges and other success of the community.

The observations took the form of participant observation in meetings. Here, the researcher was a passive member, taking down notes and allowing meetings to take a natural course without intervening. In addition, the researcher observed some committee members working in one of the tuck shop at one school. The other observations involved some PTA members who were monitoring and supervising a wall fence being repaired at a girls' hostel at Nchelenge High School. The researcher was privileged to see some PTA committees at work in trying to rehabilitate some furniture at Nchelenge High School, supervising work at a grinding mill at Kawambwa boys. This was hands-on and provided first hand information on what was going on in these schools.

Although Participants observation has its demerits, it may teach researchers to learn from the people who in research are said to be the custodians of reality (Smith, 2008). The people know better and so the researcher has to learn from them and not impose his subjective views on them. Therefore, there should always be mutual understanding and respect of each other's disposition in the research process (Smith, 2008). Having taken this into consideration, the researcher learnt some new changes and approaches in dealing with some challenges. This interaction was also beneficial to some of the committee members as they were able to see other dimensions of some situations through probing questions.

3.2.3 Interviews

This survey used semi-structured interviews. These questions were designed in such a way as to elicit subjective views of the research participants. Where it was noticed that the questions were falling short in some areas and not bringing out desired responses, probes were used so that the interviewee could open up and share a lot more. The information helped create and bring out the social reality of what was being sought.

The interview questions were carefully constructed to bring out the desired information sought. These questions were not exhaustive but only guided the flow and course of the interview. In some instances, the interview would bring in information that was not sought, however, when this happened, such data was politely discarded and the interview was steered back on course.

The researcher had to be cautious of the data collected as some information was cosmetic and was given for the sake of impressing him. Others said some things out of malice and frustration. The interpretation and analysis had to take into consideration the mood, gestures and time of the day when the information or responses were elicited. In addition, the responses were, at analysis stage, grouped according to the topic or the subject they discussed.

It is worth mentioning here that the interviewees were given the chance to fully express themselves with very minimal intervention. The researcher only interjected when the discussant went beyond what was expected. This control helped save on time.

3.2.4 Focus Group Discussion

This approach was used because firstly, it is a very cheap method in capturing the views of a large sample. Secondly, literacy levels in the areas surveyed were quite low and questionnaires could not have been suitable. Further, this approach is highly interactive and provokes participants to think and look at other options available. Bryman

(2008:474) defines the focus group method as,

> A form of group interview in which: there are several
> participants (in addition to the moderator/facilitator); there
> is an emphasis in the questioning on a particular fairly
> tightly defined topic; and the accent is upon interaction
> within the group and the joint construction of meaning....
> thus the focus group method appends to the focussed
> interview the element of interaction within groups as an
> area of interest and is more focused than the group
> interview.

Under this approach some PTA committee members, teachers and selected members of the community were given topics to discuss. This approach was one of the most interesting data collection methods. Some members became too emotional, others became too politically motivated and blamed political party X for the run down school infrastructure, others apportioned blame to political party Y, a fair share of the participants praised this administration at a particular school, others thought their views were not respected and were marginalised. A lot of views were brought out in the different groups that were selected for these group discussions.

The researcher was an observer in all of these debates. The researcher was almost carried away by some of the deliberations. He had to resist the temptation by holding back the emotions and allow reason and research ethics to guide the discussions. Bias in some topics was almost, in many cases on his horizon as he was touched by the reality of some of the views by the discussants. It is worth mentioning here what Miles and Huberman (1994:8) note with regard to bias;

> Researchers have their own understanding, their own
> convictions, their own conceptual orientations; they, too,
> are members of a particular culture at a particular
> historical moment. Also, they will be undeniably affected
> by what they hear and observe in the field, often in
> unnoticed ways.

The focus group discussions were very beneficial as not all participants agreed to one school of thought but most of them had divergent views. This method was useful as

Nupon and Wangenge – Ouma (2009:88) stated, "... is useful for ascertaining respondents' thoughts, perception, feelings and retrospective accounts of events."

3.3 Research Target Population and Participants

The districts chosen for the research were Nchelenge, Chienge and Kawambwa. In Nchelenge, there is only one high school, Nchelenge High School; Chienge has two, Ponde and Mununga High Schools. Kawambwa has five. From the five in Kawambwa, only one was surveyed, Kawambwa Boys Technical High School because of its location.

The choice of the districts and the schools involved was deliberate by plan and design. The selection took into consideration the rural setting, communities surrounding these schools and the socio-economic and cultural orientation of the areas where the schools were located. In part, this helped establish the community's capacity to understand the government policy with regard to partnership in education and the other facet of cost-sharing implications.

The choice of participants was purposive and included eighty parents (PTA members, School Board representatives, community members, businessmen; 20 from each school). Six Education Standard Officers; 2 from each district. Four head teachers; 1 from each of the surveyed schools. Forty teachers; 10 from each one of the schools surveyed. Forty pupils; 10 from each one of the schools. Twelve members from organisations (CBOs, FBOs, NGOs); 4 from each one of the districts. This gave a total of one hundred and eighty two (182) as the sample size. From these participants, many ideas and views were noted which characterised the heated debates especially from focus group discussions.

Focus group discussions were used with parents partly because of literacy levels and also the large numbers involved. The rest of the participants semi structured interviews were used as questionnaires could not suffice largely due to the small numbers involved with each category.

The communities in the districts chosen are classified as rural and generally socio-economically challenged. These are communities struggling to eke out a living. It is

because of such a situation that the researcher was attracted to establish the response to partnership in education policy and how these communities would embrace the concept and support the pronouncements on collaborations between the schools, their immediate communities and the government.

Mununga High School is a new school in Chienge district. Before, there were only basic schools in Mununga and parents sent their children to Nchelenge High School 60 kilometres away which in this case was the nearest to their community there. Over the years, this proved to be expensive on the part of parents as they were required to look for transport money for their children and were also required to pay for their boarding fees. This distance also affected the parent's participation in contributing to the welfare of the school.

Hostility in other communities was encountered in the process of data collection. Some of these communities complained of the government having neglected them with no one taking the responsibility of caring for the welfare of their children. Some members of the community told the researcher that other people (politicians) had been to their areas but none of their promises had come to fruition. It was apparent that they had misunderstood the purpose and visit and it took time for some of the more enlightened members to explain to them the purpose of the visit.

The researcher asked for their (community) contribution as their participation was invaluable. Everyone who participated in the research, regardless of what they said made a mark on this research. The researcher respected everyone's contributions and views. It was emphasised at the beginning of all the interviews and discussions that in the exercise at hand there would be no wrong contributions as whatever they all said was important.

3.4 Ethical Consideration

One of the very important elements in research is the issue of ethics. This entails that there should be respect and regard to the participants in the research and also protect

their contributions and identity. The views of the participants should be given the confidentiality they deserve. The views were to be used be for academic purpose only and for this study in particular.

Efforts have been made to conceal the participants identities and where need arises; pronouns have been used to refer to people and some locations. This has been done to avoid possible victimisation of the participants and not to allow a situation that may warrant them to be unnecessarily held accountable for any remarks made in the process of availing me with any information for this research topic. Bell (2002) notes that research often involves a great deal of co-operation and coordination among different people in different disciplines and institutions, ethical standards provide the values that are essential to collaborative work such as trust, accountability mutual respect and fairness.

The researcher in the field encountered many ethical issues. He took into consideration the issues of honesty, not fabricating or falsifying data and not to misrepresent information that was collected. He strived to avoid bias in data interpretation and personal decisions where objectivity was required. He pledged to all the participants that the commitment to confidentiality would be upheld and only with their express permission would their identities be revealed if and when need arose.

In the process of carrying out this survey, efforts were made to avoid making careless mistakes through negligence as the informants' openness and respect could not be taken for granted. Ely (1991:218) writes, "Qualitative research is an ethical endeavour."

In the event where a case of misrepresentation of facts may mistakenly be processed in the course of writing of this document, the researcher shall be accountable and will take full responsibility of the repercussions arising thereof and to tender unreserved apologies for the stress and inconvenience any of the many participants may be subjected to. It is only hoped that such an incident will not arise, as the entire piece of work was done in utmost good faith.

3.5 Limitations of the study

The sampling was purposive therefore it cannot claim to be highly representative. The findings were generalised to a limited extent but it was important and useful.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the research carried out in Nchelenge, Chienge and Kawambwa districts on education partnerships between the schools and the communities. These findings are guided by the research objectives and attempts to answer the research questions outlined in the first chapter of this research. The findings are within the framework of what is known on partnership in education and the role of parents in these collaborations and what is currently obtaining in the schools taking into consideration these linkages. The first part of these findings will relate to the first two objectives in this study, namely (1) to establish the types of education partnerships existing in Zambian rural high schools and, (2) to assess the effectiveness of these education partnerships in quality education delivery. The last part of the chapter will address objectives (3) and (4) to ascertain the input levels and areas of partnership collaborations and the challenges encountered in these partnerships respectively.

4.1Types of Partnerships found in the Schools and areas of support

This subsection presents the types of education partnerships existing in the four high schools surveyed namely; Nchelenge, Kawambwa, Ponde and Mununga High Schools. Five types of partnerships were identified. These include: School Boards, PTAs, and Partnership with NGOs, Communities, and the Private Sector.

4.1.1 School Boards

The findings indicate that all the surveyed schools have school boards as stipulated in the MOE Policy. The composition of school Boards according to the guidelines designed by MOE should be two teachers of either gender, two pupils, one ward councillor, one resident of district representing the local community, three members of the community chosen by Parent Teachers Association Annual General Meeting, two representatives from the teacher unions, one PTA chairperson, one church representative, one representative from DEBS, the head teacher.

The MOE Policy outlines specific objectives that school boards must follow. These include the provision of democratic and liberalised education, devolution of power and authority to points of delivery and enhance transparency and accountability in institutions of learning.

The study established that the school Boards in these particular schools were not generating any income. They relied mostly on the activities of the PTAs for any programs they were undertaking. They also utilised grants from the Government and part of the school fees to undertake any ventures. The MOE policy document (1996) stresses the need for the boards to take up the custodial roles and maintenance of these institutions.

For the Boards to be effective, they require an on-going sensitisation programme on issues affecting the sector like the current strategic plan being implemented. In the case of school A, the study revealed that only one member of the Board had received any formal training on the objectives and operations of the board.

One respondent observed that it was difficult to operate in the school board when the rest of the Board members had no idea of the expectations of the government on Private-Public Partnerships. '*My fellow committee members do not know what boards are for; no one told them anything. After elections of board members the head teacher said you are now on the committee come for meetings when we call you*'. This study observed that the consequence of this lack of orientation and training is that there is very little commitment by Board members to work for the improvement of the schools.

The research also brought out the fact that in the surveyed schools, board meetings were rarely held. This resulted in a lot of parents and community representatives not being aware of the roles they should play in the running of the institutions. This means that these important stakeholders could not make any meaningful contributions and informed decisions. At one school, one female board member reported that '*Since I was*

nominated, they have never called me for any meeting; I do not know why we are called
members and what we are supposed to do.'

The study revealed that there was very little interaction between the parties that were supposed to be in partnership. The study further noted that partnerships might not succeed since the members of the community were not exposed to the provisions of the policy on private public partnership and were therefore not ready to get involved from the planning stage up to implementation. As a result, there seemed to be a lack of commitment to the entire process. The question that arose was on what measures that could be put in place to rectify this. This study found out that this could be resolved through meetings, in-house training and a continued on-going sensitization programmes. Another respondent was of the view; "*We need to build the capacities of the communities. It would help if a component of the money raised from the PTA projects was set aside to carry out such trainings.*"

The Boards are supposed to monitor entire school programmes but due to the lapses in community membership, this is not done to the expectations of the rest of the communities. The school management does much of the work. The capacity building aspect has not been taken seriously and this in turn affects the effectiveness of the Boards. In one of the schools, one head teacher complained that Board members did not show up for meetings when called upon especially when these meetings coincided with either the farming or fishing seasons. He observed that '*most members on the board are pre-occupied with income generating activities; school meetings to them are secondary'*.

A local councillor had this to say on the existence of school Boards '*The school Board is only on paper and membership is not representative enough as required by the MOE guidelines on partnership in education. The immediate community does not take ownership of the school as they feel it is for the government and not ''theirs'' '*.

During the course of the survey it was further revealed that these many challenges are compounded by the inability to undertake viable and sustainable income generating ventures. This was largely attributed firstly, to inadequate start up capital due to low

collection of fees as a result of low socio-economic status of parents and guardians in the schools catchment areas. Secondly, lack of capacity by board members in entrepreneurial skills to venture into viable and sustainable business projects. There was also the lack of commitment on the part of the board members who requested for allowances even before they embarked on fund raising activities. It was also revealed that there were difficulties in harmonising the income generating activities and the core business of the school (teaching and learning).

One head teacher further pointed out the fact that monitoring and evaluation of board activities were not well coordinated by the Ministry of Education Boards services unit resulting in non adherence to set standards by the various education boards. He added that the handover at the end of each board's term of office is not usually well organised and coordinated. This failure to properly execute this exercise resulted in the failure to systematically continue with planned programme implementation. Another challenge that was tied to this was the long time it took for the Minister of Education to appoint board members resulting in some members overstaying their term of office.

4.1.2 Parent Teacher Associations (PTAs)

Parents Teachers Association (PTA) were enacted by statutory instrument number 156 of 1967 and amended by statutory instrument number 45 of 1976 on the formation and operations of PTAs in schools. This study established that all the four schools surveyed had active PTA's in place. The PTA is composed of, five members from the school staff and five members representing the parents. The parents' representatives are elected at the PTA AGM. In the school community partnership surveyed, this was the most active body. The PTAs constantly interacted with the respective school administrations and teachers. The parent representation is very active in all the four high schools surveyed and were involved in all areas of the schools.

Parents who are on this association are elected every year at an annual general meeting (AGM). Teachers also elect representatives to sit on this association. This partnership is well strengthened possibly because it has been in existence for a long time, and was

established by an Act of Parliament.

Parents involvement in the activities of the school does not just limit to those elected to be on the committee but it extends to other members of the community who have time to help out on the various projects and activities initiated by the PTAs and the schools in general.

4.1.3 Projects undertaken by PTAs

It was revealed that in all these four high schools under study, the PTAs had embarked on a number of projects and some of them had been successfully implemented. For instance, in the four schools, with the exception of school D, the PTAs had managed to buy 29 sitter school buses (figs.7&9) from the funds they collected from parents.

At one of the schools, the school PTA collaborating with the Board has embarked on a number of projects and planned others for implementation as soon as funds allow. The PTA is on a fund-raising exercise to enable them focus on areas that need attention like infrastructure rehabilitation and furniture assembly. The fund-raising ventures include school uniform production (fig.1). These uniforms are tailored and sold to pupils at this school. This also includes knitting of school jerseys and selling of school HIV awareness T-shirts for pupils.

Fig.1: A Tailoring project at one of the schools

Each one of the four schools surveyed has a school tuck-shop that serves the pupils and the local communities. Profits realised are minimal. On two occasions at school A, the PTA attempted to supply beef to the school and to the local community. The PTA members reported that both these fundraising attempts were a loss. The committee members involved asked for allowances even when they knew they were making losses on the ventures they had embarked on. One interviewee revealed that members of the community view the schools in the locality as their sources of income. He observed that, '*communities see us as the affluent; they say they should benefit (economically) from what happens here in the school. We tell them we are not a profit making organisation but they never listen, it's tough dealing with the community here and imagine these are the sentiments of most of the people here'.* In the same school under discussion, communities have been known for pilfering from the school they are supposed to support. One pupil reported that it was difficult to secure their belongings because of rampant thefts they often experienced. Another pupil reported that*, 'even what we grow in the school gardens, maize and vegetables, are often stolen, just imagine, it's like your father stealing from you...it is very sad.'*

There are however some positive aspects of community involvement in the school

activities at school A. For example, at the time of this survey, desk maintenance project was in progress (fig.2). The school had rehabilitated 30 by 2 sitter desks, 10 chairs and 17 single sitter desks. Whilst the enrolments have been steadily increasing over the years, there has been no corresponding increase in the number of desks available in schools. For instance, the standard ratio of desk per pupil should be one desk per two pupils but current situation the desk pupil ratio is one desk per 17.2 pupils (NDEBS Office, 2010).

Fig.2: Rehabilitation of desks project by one school PTA and Board

The school administration uses part of the PTA levies and part of the funds realised from the fund-raising ventures to run school activities that are not supported by government funding. The other project that was found being carried out was the wall fence maintenance at the girls' dormitory section (fig.3). The school was adding two more courses on top of the boundary wall at the girls section to improve on security.

Fig.3: Maintenance of part of the perimeter wall at a girls' dormitories at one of the schools

The school together with its PTA and board has earmarked a number of projects to be undertaken in the year 2012.

Like school B, school A would like to include chicken rearing as one other fund raising venture.

Fig.4: Poultry house at a school built by the PTA

The rearing of chickens would also supplement the school health nutrition (SHN) programme. Other ventures planned include cattle rearing and completion of the school fence.

At one school, the PTA has been rearing cattle (fig.5) for the last three years. At the time this survey was being conducted the school had sixteen animals. The piggery section was discontinued the previous year because the pigs became a menace to the local community. They were destructive to crops in the fields for the community which brought a lot of antagonism between the school and the immediate communities. The decision to discontinue the project was arrived at after the community could not compromise and agree in helping the school take care of the animals. One parent interviewed recalled the antagonism between the school and the community that the rearing of the pigs caused. He reported that, *'We told the headmaster that if he did not kill the animals(pigs) we would ensure that in the next PTA meeting, we will not pay school fees; we told them they will get the money from the pigs.'* In addition to rearing animals, the school also has a viable poultry with 400 birds (fig.4) for sell to the community and partly to supplement the pupils' diet.

Fig.5: Cattle rearing project at one of the schools

At the time of the survey at this school, the PTA was rehabilitating the standby kitchen (fig.6) which had not been in use in the last couple of years. This rehabilitation work had reached roof level.

Just as the case is with the other three schools surveyed, the finances realised from these projects are directed among other activities towards payment of wages for workers employed by the PTA and Board. The workers include the station hand man, driver, cook, typist, grinding mill operator and the tuck shop assistant. In addition to these, all the schools surveyed have identified orphaned and vulnerable children whom they support from these same funds realised from the projects.

Fig.6: Construction of a new outdoor kitchen at one of the schools

In these four schools, the private business community does not get involved in what happens in the schools and do not in any way contribute anything. In one focus group discussion, it was revealed that the businessmen and women were the ones who wanted to get something from the schools by charging high prices for the goods and services supplied to these institutions. In this study, interviews with local businessmen about their involvement in the schools life revealed that it started and ended with them supplying the schools with goods and services required. According to one respondent, '*schools are a separate entity. We have nothing do with them. Our business ends at*

supplying them (schools) with the goods they order.'

In one PTA meeting, the Chairperson tried hard to explain the concept of partnership to the parents in attendance. The parents argued that government brought the schools to their communities and so it was its responsibility to maintain them. *'maybe we should take our children back with us to the fields where we don't have to pay them. The government told us to bring our children here to learn and not to bring money; why are you changing things?'* one parent retorted angrily.

The survey also revealed that participation in other planning activities and meetings in the schools surveyed is not encouraging. Parents and the community often insist on sitting allowances if they are to attend meetings that are called to discuss matters concerning school improvement. This attitude has not supported the aspect of community contribution.

The projects being undertaken by these PTAs need capital injection as the profits realised are negligible. The PTA/Boards cannot manage alone. Appeals to involve parents, the community and the local business houses have yielded nothing positive. There are however promises from the government to supplement these efforts.

At Ponde the major income generating activity being undertaken by the school is brick moulding. The bricks are sold to the community and some are used within the school for the construction of a girl's hostel (fig.13). Workers from the community are employed for this exercise and are paid from the profits realised. The same applies to the workers employed to work in the school maize fields.

Fig.7 A 29 sitter school bus bought from PTA levies

In all the schools surveyed, the Boards do not seem to have any fundraising ventures except through their PTAs. The table below shows the numbers of workers employed by the PTA and Boards in the studied schools.

Table 1: Workers employed by PTA/Boards

	Kawambwa	**Mununga**	**Nchelenge**	**Ponde**	**Total**
Typist	1	1	0	1	3
Driver	1	0	1	1	3
Watchman	1	1	2	1	5
Cook	1	1	1	0	3
Hand men	3	1	3	1	8
Teachers	**0**	**0**	**1**	**0**	1
Total	**7**	**4**	**8**	**4**	23

School D has begun initiating partnership programs with the community around it. The PTA has initiated the construction of another 1 x 3 classroom block to increase pupil enrolment in the vast catchment area. This called for more capital injection, prompting the school to apply for Constituency Development Funds (CDF) in order for them to complete the project.

This PTA has also embarked on a project to construct a science laboratory (fig.8). For this project the school has sent numerous appeals to both parents/guardians of pupils and the wider community to come forth and help with the upfront contribution in the form of building sand, crushed stones and timber. The school management still await the response from the community.

Fig.8: School science laboratory construction: community upfront contribution of stones and sand.

Further, the school has embarked on a fund raising exercise to enable them procure a school bus to help ease the challenges they face in transporting pupils for sporting activities and other school programs. The school has sent appeals asking parents, through the PTA, to contribute an amount towards this project. The appeal has further been extended to the local business community and beyond.

This school has also engaged some workers, a watchman and a station hand man who are paid by the PTA. Because of the limited income the school generates, they still

struggle to meet the wages for the few workers they have engaged. The table that follows shows a summary of PTA ventures in the surveyed schools.

Table 2: PTA ventures in the surveyed schools

	Kawambwa	**Nchelenge**	**Ponde**	**Mununga**
Transport	School Bus	School bus	School bus	Nil
Business ventures	Tuck shop hammer mill	Tuck shop Uniform Tailoring(sales)	Bricklaying. Tuck shop	Tuck shop
Agricultural activities	Cattle rearing, poultry	Nil	Maize growing	Nil
Infrastructure	Construction of standby kitchen	Wall fence maintenance	Construction of a girls hostel	construction of science laboratory

This study found that the local business community need to do more to support the initiatives that the school management proposes. The study noted that numerous appeals to the business community for assistance have not yielded expected results. The wider community has been asked to take ownership of the schools and safe guard the new infrastructure. It was observed that the school authorities are yearning for a community that is responsive in protecting these structures from vandalism.

The vision of the Ministry of Education (2006) is to provide equitable, accessible and quality education to its citizenry. This may only be realised if the communities, local business houses and linkages with the corporate world are strengthened. The challenges such as resource mobilisation, sensitization and active community participation should be tabled by other stakeholders like chiefs and local authorities in order to address these.

With the involvement of a number of stakeholders in the affairs of the schools,

transparency and accountability will be increased. Ownership at present in these schools by the community is lacking. It was revealed in the course of the study that the community does not want to take up responsibility for fear of getting involved in the work meant for government officers.


Fig 9: Another 29 sitter bus bought from PTA levy at one of the schools

4.1.4 School Partnerships with CBOs and FBOs and areas of support

There are Community Based Organisations (CBO) and Faith Based Organisations (FBO) operating in the schools understudy. These organisations have partnered with schools to provide support in form of school bursary schemes to orphaned and vulnerable children (OVCs) and in one or two isolated cases help schools with various materials and sports equipment.

The following are some of the sponsors of pupils captured in the pie chart below:
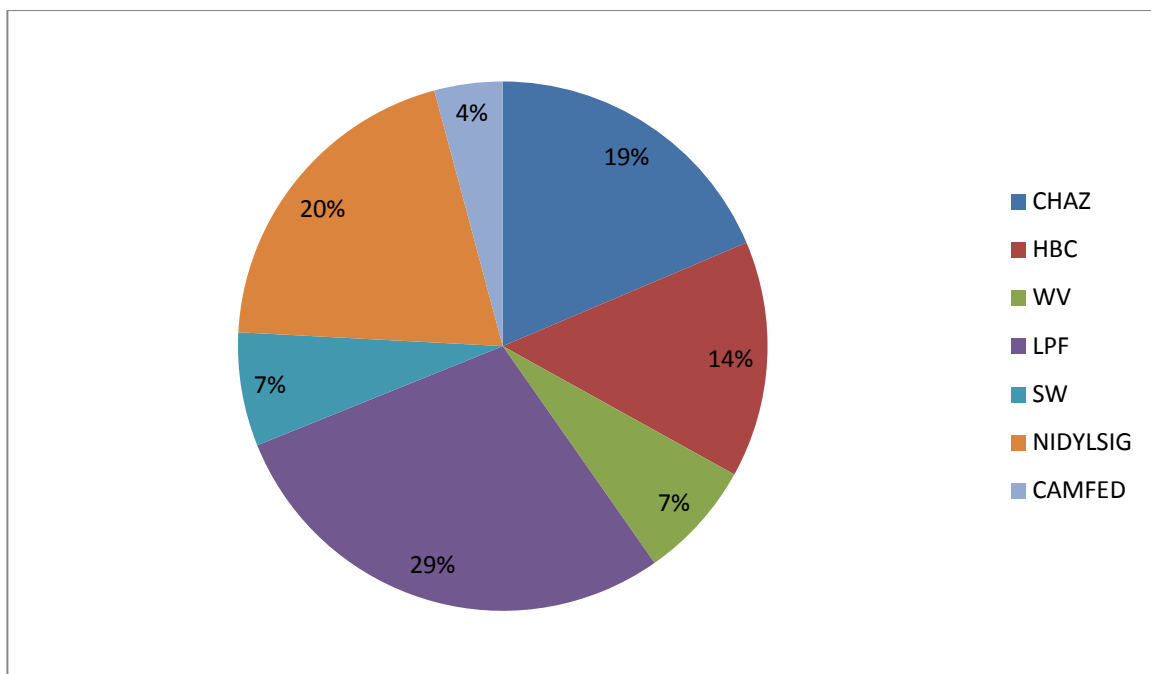
Fig 10: Pupil bursary schemes by CBOs and FBOs in the four high schools

The chart gives the reader the glimpse of partnerships taking place in the communities under study. Among these NGO's, only World Vision International makes some support in terms of text books, sports equipment like soccer jerseys and footballs. The other organisations' support is only the provision of school fees. School administrators acknowledged the major contributions that these FBOS and NGOS have made to their schools. According to one head teacher *'FBOs and CBOs pay their fees promptly, such finances help us provide food for the boarding section because many times funding from the government is erratic'.* There are however very few individual who are willing to sponsor learners in their own capacity as individuals. Only one person, a known Professor in the education field, has initiated this process of individual involvement in sponsoring learners at one of the high schools in this survey.

4.1.5 Schools Partnership with NGOs

The FBO's and NGO's support in the areas of school pupils bursary schemes have been very effective and supportive of the Orphaned and Vulnerable Children. One NGO,

Campaign for Female Education (CAMFED) supports bursary schemes for girls. This organisation besides payment of school fees, provides beddings, groceries and transport money to the pupils they sponsor. Once a client is taken on, the sponsorship continues up to college or university level if the pupil is selected. One widow was full of praise for this organisation, *"I am very lucky because I would never have managed to send my three girls to high school were it not for CAMFED. This suffering am going through would have been worse: I hope they don't stop...."*

4.1.6 Community Response to HIV/AIDS (CRAIDS)

This is a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) that deals with HIV/AIDS cases and orphans and has partnered with the schools. This organisation deals with sensitisation of the pupils and the school community, parents and teachers on issues on HIV/AIDS. It has further taken on the sponsoring of orphaned and vulnerable pupils identified by the community and the school by paying for their school fees.

At the time of the researcher's visit to school A, CRAIDS had 4 pupils, 3 boys and 1 girl on its sponsorship roll. It raises its funds from the operations of a grinding mill (fig.11) which was donated by the District AIDS Task Force (DATF) to the school to support any HIV/AIDS programmes in the school.


Fig.11: Grinding mill donated by CRAIDS at one of the schools

4.1.7 Partnership with Local Communities

The local community partnerships in all the high schools visited for the purpose of this study basically begins and ends with their monetary contribution to the PTA, for those with children at these schools. The local business community does not take an active role in these partnerships in all the surveyed schools. The partnerships in existence here is more one sided and only happens once an invitation is extended by the school management for them to attend a given function.

In the case of school A, the administration together with its PTA has embarked on a number of small scale projects. The funds realised from these projects are directed towards meeting the wages for the workers employed by the board. These workers include, an office orderly, typist, driver, sanitary orderly and the hammer mill attendant.
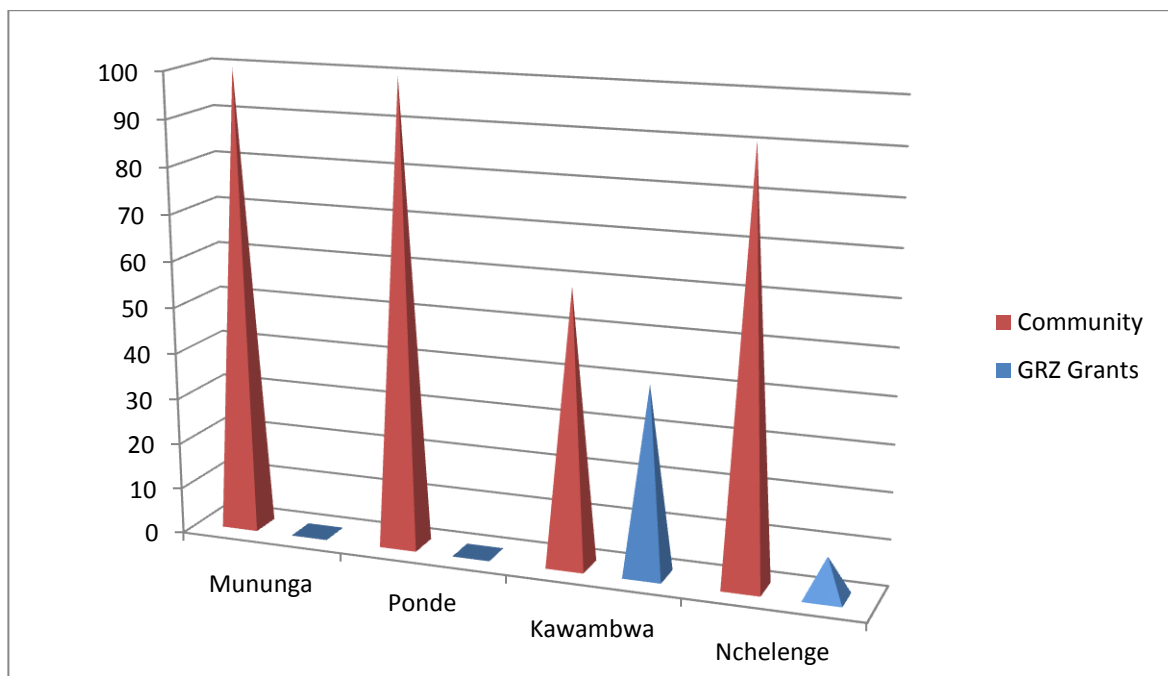
Fig12: Percentage of Community and Government funding to schools, 2008 - 2011

The situation at school B is a unique one; PTA members tend not to be involved in most of the activities they plan for and instead has given the mandate to the school management to take care of all the programmes laid down. The wider community only

comes in to perform supervisory roles. The other NGOs and FBOs that are collaborating with this school only end at offering bursary schemes to pupils.

School C was upgraded to a secondary school in 2002, it then attained high school status in 2004. Before, it was a primary school. It is 8 kilometers from the towns' civic centre. This is a day school catering for both boys and girls. A project is underway to construct girls dormitories to cater for pupils from distant places. The catchment area for the school include Lambwe Chomba 80 kilometres away, Lambwe Chikwama 40 kilometres, Chilindi, Puta, Chienge 8 kilometers, Mwabu, Chipingu, Lupiya 48 kilometers away, Kalobwa 30 kilometers away. Other catchment areas include Kanyangala, Kalembwe and Kasote. All these communities are in outlying areas making the need for boarding facilities for pupils a priority.

Partnership with this school and the community is only at PTA level. The school Board exist by name only and is very inactive. Meetings with the Board members are far spaced and it is not easy to convene a meeting with a 100% community representation. The few members who attend meetings are the ones who are also active in monitoring the projects currently being undertaken by the school.

The wider community was involved in a one-time support for the upfront contribution of sourcing building sand, crushed stones, brick moulding, for the construction of a girls' dormitory. Other than that, the community does little else besides the fees they are asked to pay for their wards. What was also observed was the community lack of sense of ownership of the schools. In some places it could be deduced that communities felt that the government had an obligation to build and maintain the schools and to furnish these schools with enough desks.

Fig.13: Part of the community contribution towards the construction of the Girls' hostel at school

Collection of these levies has not been easy. There is a lot of resistance from parents as they believe that education provision should be free and that the government sends 'millions of kwacha' to the school which is usually misapplied by the head teacher.

School D mentioned earlier, is the second high school in Chienge. Like school C, this school has recently been upgraded. It caters for both boys and girls. This is a day school despite having a vast catchment area. The government built modern structures (fig.15) and the school opened in January, 2010. Presently, it has a total population of 247, 175 male pupils and 72 females, as at July, 2011. The school is sited 50 kilometers from Chienge civic center. Its catchment areas include communities of Kafulwe, Kabwe, Nyamfwa, Kaseke,Kabole, Muya and Mipa. The school is trying to use the PTA to improve enrolment of girls at this school. It seems very few girls want to go to this school inspite of its new, inviting structures (fig.14). Perhaps through partnerships, the goal of ensuring that women are empowered with education may be realised.

Fig.14: Sign post at the entrance to one of the schools constructed by the Community

There is a similar situation at this school to what obtains at the other three schools studied in this research. The community involvement in school programmes is almost nil save for a few PTA members working on a few school projects.

Fig.15: Part of the newly built structures at school D

4.2 Effectiveness and Challenges of Partnerships

This subsection attempts to look at the last objective, to investigate challenges that may be encountered in these education partnerships. These are the challenges that came out from the discussions and observations during the course of the research.

The School Board, PTAs and the local community partnership have not been very effective largely due to lack of sensitisation. The information that was availed during the course of the research was that all they were able to do was to contribute in terms of fees and labour when they were asked to.

The partners identified could do well if they are constantly reminded of the roles of members in the community and the institutions around them. This should be an on-going programme because of migrations and waning interests in the activities of the school. What came out quite often from the interviews was that parents believed the support they gave was a one off contribution. Some community members talked to at one of the schools argued that in the previous year they had done some brick moulding and contributed money. They were not ready to continue working for the school. They were of the opinion that schools were making too many demands on them in terms of money, time and labour.

The other issue observed was the competing priorities in the lives of the community. Parents and other members of the community would rather attend to income generating activities to sustain their welfare other than spend time volunteering their labour. The communities here are yet to appreciate that education is a life time investment for their children.

Another challenge noted in these education partnership in the schools studied is the full involvement and participation of parents in the life of the schools. Two of these schools are fully fledged boarding schools with pupils coming from distant places, parents find it economically difficult to attend meetings called by the school. In effect, their valuable contributions are missed and they do not participate in the inputs of others. Collective

responsibility is not attained. With this in mind parents and the wider communities are implored to take up the challenge and heed the call for their active involvement in all school activities they may be required to attend and participate in. Membership by numbers only is basically not enough.

FBOs area of collaboration is largely seen in pupils bursary scheme save for world vision which once in a while would make a one off donation in the form of books or and sport's equipment.

This effectiveness in their support may largely be attributed to the financial support they too receive from big foreign mother body organisations with massive capital backgrounds. The challenge here lies in whether there will be sustainability once these collaborating partners leave since the capacities of these communities are questionable.

It was also revealed in the process of the research that the community, instead of them making a contribution to the school, they were the ones who wanted to benefit from it. They would ask for an allowance if they were invited to do some work and even ask for a few supplies from the boarding facility. Others even went to an extent of asking for a piece of furniture for them to sit on in order for them to write minutes when they were at their homes.

The aspect of cost-sharing, collaboration needs to be firmly discussed in these economically, impoverished communities. As long as they still hold the view that the government should provide education and finance its operation they will not make effective contribution. The other contributing factor is the literacy levels. If communities could understand the meanings of the government pronouncements and be in a position to interpret policies, it would help realise the expectations of government.

In the three high schools studied A, C and D, were CAMFED supports OVCs, it was discovered that there was apathy by parents who had their wards supported by this organisation to help on the school's committees. CAMFED school mentors, teachers in charge of CAMFED activities, revealed that parents neither attend meetings nor monitor

CAMFED activities as they felt the programme was not directly benefitting them.

Similar to this challenge faced by CAMFED at school level, is the matter raised by school A CRAIDS committee. The local Community is expected to play a major role in monitoring and managing the grinding mill. Here too, there is apathy as the other stake holders feel that they should get a percentage of the proceeds for their personal use.

In both instances, community response is yet to be inculcated for them to appreciate the aspect of cost sharing.

In these rural and economically disadvantaged communities, the PTAs attempt to assist the schools albeit in a small way, depending on their capacities. The effectiveness of these partnerships could make a greater impact if sensitisation was encouraged and carried out among the communities and the teachers. Strategies for strengthening these PTAs input once applied would make a difference.

It should be appreciated that the profits made from ventures undertaken by these associations are marginal but they however help in supplementing Government efforts. One PTA member said, *"if we had capital to do bigger projects we would do a lot and we can develop. By now we could have finished constructing the science laboratory for our pupils. Just give us a lot of money to start projects and you will see the difference."*

The study further revealed that at one high school, some parents complained of the absence of meetings which are used to disseminate information on what school management is doing. She reported that; *"for the last two years we have never met as a PTA, and all we are told is that school fees have been increased. This year we are not paying any new fees until we are called for a meeting to tell us where they take the money."* Because there is very little communication, many parents are suspicious of what happens in the school. Another parent added *'we see them (teachers) buy cars for themselves. I think that's our money.'*

4.3 Summary of findings

The findings on challenges of education partnerships in rural Zambia high schools indicate that there is information on cost-sharing in education provision that need to be explained to parents and the wider community. In the schools surveyed, the boards were not doing much to foster linkages with other stake holders and organisations that would have helped these schools in one way or the other, financially or otherwise. Although the policy is very clear on the issues of devolution of power and authority to points of delivery, stakeholders and other interest groups were not actively involved in the governance of these schools. It was also revealed during the course of the survey that government alone cannot sustain quality education delivery without the involvement of the communities largely due to the poor financial flow from central government which made it difficult to attend to a lot of school programmes planned for.

Policy implementation on partnership in education is further hampered by the conflicts on pronouncements on free education provision. This distortion and misrepresentation of facts has not helped in involving communities taking an active role in the administration of the schools. Teachers, education authorities, traditional leaders and other line ministries should help in disseminating the correct information on education provision.

Stakeholders in the sector are implored to make positive contribution if any change in the schools is to be seen and sustained. Parents may be willing to help and support schools. What is therefore required is the explanation of the provisions of the policy so that the set objectives are achieved. What has been observed from the study is that the transition from the era of free education to the present day of cost sharing has not been easy in the rural communities. The societies there still see the provision of education to be the responsibility of the government. Taking up the challenge of ownership of the schools shall require aggressive sensitization of the communities on the meaning of cost sharing.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Overview

This chapter presents the discussions on the findings on education partnerships in rural Zambian high schools surveyed. The discussion will be based on the findings and will be related to what is provided for in the policy document of the Ministry of Education on partnership. In addition, other documents on education partnerships will also provide other information to support the discussion.

5.1 Community Participation

This sub section discusses community involvement in the provision of education in the surveyed schools. It further discusses the capacities of the communities to support education provision in partnership with the government.

The objectives of this collaboration between the government and communities are outlined in the MOE policy document (1996) and include education provision, school improvement and strengthening school and community linkages.

In the case of school A, the school management was trying to sensitise and build the capacity of both the parents and the wider community. This is a very cardinal aspect if these partnerships in schools are to take effect and make any meaningful impact. By extension, the local authorities and DEBS should take up the challenge and try to reach the masses through the community radio stations available in the districts. Councillors and headmen should have enough information on school partnership to enable them discuss with confidence during their meetings with their subjects. Bray (2000:12) aptly states that, "A functioning school is a true community in its own right, and an indispensible centre for the wider community's social and cultural needs and interests." To attain this goal, school governing bodies should be strengthened. All stakeholders such as parents, representatives of church organisations, business houses, NGOs, and other interest groups should be brought on board.

The sensitisation of parents is a very important component in the partnership to avoid conflicts. Parents should know their roles and their limits. In some instances some partners were said to be overbearing. One teacher complained thus "*these parents come to my class, inspecting my records of work and admonishing me in front of the pupils, it is very embarrassing. They over step their boundaries by their over bearing behavior*" These fears expressed need not arise when partners are told what their roles and responsibilities are. These have been adequately explained in the MOE 1996 policy document. Further, one of the strategies outlined in this document related to this states, "The Ministry of Education will review existing legislation and its effect on community participation, particularly as this relates to the establishment and running of schools." Although this strategy appears in the policy, it has however not been implemented going by what was found in the schools surveyed.

Fordham (1992:22) discussed the concepts of partnerships at the WCEFA. Fordham envisioned a partnership that took into account the people, culture and the context on to which this partnership would be forged. This entailed;

> Developing strong partnerships with parents and communities means a new way of working for governments, for service agencies, and for educators. Above all, it means listening to the needs of local communities and addressing their local agendas. It means becoming familiar with the people and their religious beliefs, their customs and their food taboos. Then it is possible to see how best to build on what they know.

5.1.1 The role of School Boards in Education Partnerships

The school boards in the schools surveyed were not very active and were in existence on paper only. From the findings one notices the lack of understanding among members of what they should be doing. The roles and expectations are not well spelt out to the members.

The challenge however is that the training component will have to be done almost every year as membership is always changing because of the mobility of members. One head

teacher explained that they kept on co-opting members each term which disrupted the continuity of laid down programmes. Even though this observation was made, when plans were made for the schools, new members should be oriented so that the programmes planned for were sustained.

The decentralization policy entails that there is devolution of power from the central offices such as ministry headquarters to points of delivery. To attain this, these boards should be creative, innovative and imaginative. They should initiate linkages with the corporate world. The board needs to understand the strengths and weaknesses of the local community. This would be the basis for them to lobby and network with other organizations. In this regard MOE (1996:2) states that,

> democratization of education, with its demand for partnership in educational provision, requires that the Government creates an enabling environment, and establishes rules and regulations, that will protect the rights of various educational agencies to full and fair participation in educational development.

Most of these challenges noted have further been worsened by the school boards inability to lobby and initiate linkages with other partners outside these communities. The need for capacity building to facilitate such processes is very important and crucial. For boarding schools like Kawambwa and Nchelenge, which needs supplementary funds to meet their huge budgets, this cannot be underplayed and the need for outside support becomes inevitable.

5.1.2 The roles of PTAs in Education Partnerships

The PTAs were established by an Act of Parliament. This is a body that has collaborated with schools for a long period of time. Initially, the aim was only to help school administration with a few projects that schools needed to undertake. With time, this body has evolved and in many instances, like in the schools studied, they are the cornerstones of development. They have gone into fundraising ventures to support infrastructure development and maintenance, transport provision and also help to

employ support staff. The associations raise money to support school operations.

During the Public Service Reform Program (PSRP) of 2000, a good number of ancillary staff was laid off from the schools. In a number of institutions like the schools surveyed, some of these workers were key to school operations. The workers included drivers, sanitary orderlies, cooks and watchmen. The PTAs have employed some of these staff in all these schools, and they are paid their wages by the PTAs from the various business ventures being undertaken in the schools. In Nchelenge and Kawambwa, the PTAs have included some teachers on the payrolls to help needy departments where Government has not deployed teachers.

If these projects were a measure of the performance of the PTAs or the strength of the partnerships with the communities, one would say the communities were performing well and needed a lot of support and further sensitisation. Collaboration should not only be at monitoring and supervising, but a lot more can be achieved with the community's positive outlook and their active involvement in the schools to ensure quality education delivery.

The wider communities which include local business owners should be included in sensitization programmes. In all the cases studied, the business communities do not play active roles in the various school programmes. Perhaps this may be attributed to certain political pronouncements which do not include these potential partners. Politicians would always say, "*we will bring you a school here.*" This is misinterpreted by the communities to mean that these are government schools to be run and maintained by the government. Such misunderstandings could be avoided if the politicians told the community that together with them, government would put up a school at a given community. This would mean that from the start, the community would be involved and a sense of ownership would be instilled.

One Deputy Head teacher at one of the schools expressed a lot of reservations in allowing the PTA to be involved in the operations of the school as they would "interfere" with their administrative work. He had this to say, *"These people do not*

know their limits, once you allow them they will think they are the ones to run the school". In addition, another teacher felt that the community has had very unrealistic expectations largely because some elements do not understand how the school functions.

MOE 1996 explains why the concept of partnership is very important in the provision of education in the new dispensation. It explains the reduction in public resources for education which has resulted in a major part of direct costs being transferred to Parents Teachers Association. Business owners and NGOs are encouraged to support schools in such forms as direct ownership of schools, adoption for existing schools and support for disadvantaged children.

Communities that may not be economically advantaged may contribute material in kind to help realise the vision of cost sharing. Such materials may include timber, thatch, poles and in other cases steel pipes for desk assembly. Bray (2000:23) submits that,

> Those communities that are demanding expansion can much more easily provide bush material classrooms and other needed infrastructure for the village based Elementary schools.... Also, (effective involvement of) communities in building and managing the educational solutions to problems that they have been pressing the government to resolve for them is likely to ease some of the political pressure. Participation builds ownership and a better understanding of the true nature of the educational problems facing the country.

The aspect of cost-sharing and collaboration needs to be firmly discussed in these economically, disadvantaged communities. As long as they still hold the view that the government should provide education and finance its operation they will not make effective contributions. Kelly (1999:187) notes

> The Ministry recognizes that there are a number of constraints that currently hinder the effective involvement of communities in education. These include factors like: poverty, restrictive education legislation, lack of communication between education authorities and communities,

During the course of this study it was revealed by some participants that they shunned meetings because almost all reports were made in the English language which a good number of parents did not understand. Parents felt left out in such deliberations and could not participate fully because of this language barrier. One parent said, '*At times we go for these meetings but we just sit outside under the tree shades because they speak in English, and everything is in English, maybe for you to go for the meeting, you should be educated, they don't say this to our face but that's how it is*' However, one head teacher in Chienge remarked saying that they always translated the reports into the local language and members of the community were free to contribute using the language they were most comfortable with. This may be said to be the challenge associated with literacy especially in the official language.

The reluctance of most parents to pay school fees, which include the PTA levy, adversely affects most school programs. In all the four high schools visited this came out as a major challenge. Parents were very reluctant to pay for their children. The notion of free education has been misinterpreted. The cost sharing pronouncements in these rural communities should be revisited with a very aggressive campaign for it to yield positive results. The study found out that communities think that schools receive a lot of money from the government. It was very difficult to get their input on matters concerning school fees. One headman in Mununga said the schools were brought in their areas to serve them and there was no need to ask parents to pay. The negative attitude in such communities will call for a lot of civic education among all stakeholders and most importantly among the immediate communities surrounding these schools. If this attitude were to continue, the long term effects would be too ghastly to contemplate.

5.1.3 FBOs and NGOs as Partners in education provision

The major partners in the schools visited include FBOs and NGOs with no local business owners adopting any particular component of school programmes. It is quite apparent that all these partners have taken on assisting with pupil bursary schemes only and not taking on other areas like infrastructure development, staff development and teaching materials support.

CRAIDS is one other organization which supports pupils financially and is an active partner in HIV/AIDS counseling to both staff and pupils. It provides logistical support to ensure that activities on HIV/AIDS are carried out. This capacity building component is equally very important and cardinal for effective delivery of quality education.

The dependence on funds from almost all these NGOs and FBOs is not sustainable. This is because most of these organizations also depend on foreign donor support money. Once these cooperating foreign partners decide not to give any support, this will trickle down to the schools and the void left in the schools budget will have an adverse effect on the budget of the schools thereby affecting their operations. Linkages with local organizations that promote self sustenance are vital and should be forged.

During the research it was further noted that there was a duplication of roles between the NGOs and FBOs partnering with the schools. Almost all these organizations were into pupil bursary schemes. An important component like infrastructure development and educational material support is not covered. However, in instances were these organizations found a forum to discuss the nature of support to schools, a lot of areas may be covered and the support would be spread across the many disciplines in the schools.

5.1.4 The role of the Government

In all these schools the major role the Government plays is to facilitate the payment of salaries to the teaching staff and to remit grants once in a while to schools. School D has however not received any government funding because it was not gazetted since its inception. In 2011, the school was gazetted and the authorities there were hopeful that some funding would be sent to the school. The Head teacher said, "*We are really looking forward for some financial support this year. You realize that what we are getting from pupils by way of fees falls far short of meeting the many demands in the school. Since we have been gazetted we hope there will be a difference.*"

To support co-curricular activities, teaching materials and staff development programs,

schools rely solely on the funds realized from the PTA levies and PTA projects. This calls for the need to diversify on fundraising ventures in order to get enough income that would help the schools. Caution must however be taken against the temptation of schools being turned into full business houses ultimately losing the focus or the core business which is teaching pupils.

What is noted in the two fully fledged High Schools, A and B, the income generated from PTA projects and NGO/FBO combined is a lot more than the grants the government has sent to the schools in the period 2007-2010. Kelly (1999:187) observes, "This financial involvement of parents, the community, and the wider non-governmental sector is central to the improvement and expansion of education, within the frameworks of liberalization and constrained government resources for the sector." For school C, the school administration said information on government grants were restricted and so could not be availed to researchers. However, according to the school administration, between 2007 and 2010, the community contributed K 605,790,000 towards the running of the institution.

At school B, the government allocated K 380,368,000 against K900,720, 000 from the combined efforts of the PTA, community and NGOs. The government translates to 40.6 % of the school budget (KTHS, 2010).

The picture at School A is that government grants between 2007 and 2010 amounts to K572,569,430 where as the combined contributions from the community, NGOs and PTA add up to K682,372,200 representing a difference of 8.7 percent. Taking into account the size of the school, both the community and government funding falls far short in meeting the school's budget (NHS, 2010).

In these rural communities were this study was carried out, the idea of individuals partnering with the schools is a relatively new phenomenon. Members of the community talked to expressed ignorance on this. In their view they talked of NGOs and companies as the only ones capable of such an undertaking. In the four schools visited, it is only school B which has partnered with an individual, who is assisting OVCs with some

education bursary scheme.

5.1.5 Local Business Community

Sensitization of the community is important in ensuring that the partnerships discussed in the MOE policy are attained. Local business houses should be targeted in order for them to realize that they are key stakeholders. These can be asked to adopt a school so that they support it in one way or the other. This may work for them as promoting and advertising their enterprises and in the same manner they too will be paying back to their community. In this manner there will be a cross pollination of ideas from various stakeholders in planning school programmes and sharing in decision making. This aspect is conspicuously absent in the schools visited.

5.1.6 Parents as agents of change in education partnerships

One positive outlook noted in the communities visited is that parents are encouraging children of school going age to go to schools. Many parents are sharing the vision of having their children get some education to enable them get a decent job and consequently be economically empowered. The challenge however is the limited classroom space available at senior grades. This challenge is the one the communities would like to address by partnering with the schools in the construction of more classroom blocks.

The involvement of parents and the wider community in the activities of the school will enhance retention and completion rates of the girl child. Parents will be able to share the challenges of their children in an environment where they will all be part of the final decision that may be arrived at. Matters of both staff and pupil discipline would also be discussed in an intimidation free atmosphere thereby sharing the problems that stall the delivery of quality education.

Matters of HIV/AIDS and related issues of OVCs, child headed households and other health related issues which are seen to hinder active involvement of parents, pupils should be discussed and were possible solutions found. This calls for teamwork like one

exhibited already by some NGOs and FBOs who have taken on the responsibility of supporting a number of OVCs. The challenge however is to see how this support may be sustained in the event of some of these partners withdrawing their support.

The study further revealed that when parents are involved and invited to discuss programmes of the schools, they were more often fault finding instead of offering constructive criticism to management. At one of the schools, parents were more interested in discussing financial matters than dealing with matters related to pupil discipline and the performance of their children in public examinations. '*You ask as for money every time yet the financial report is saying the school is bankrupt now you want to divert our attention by discussing books only, it cannot be true, we cannot come all the way to hear which child was out of bounds and who stayed out of school'*. This mistrust between stakeholders would be averted if communication was improved. When all the partners and stakeholders are involved in planning and objectives and targets are set as a team suspicions are subsequently minimized. This further helps in reducing the tension that was seen in all the four schools when they discussed matters of accountability of the school fees and why a section of parents would want to resist payment of these same fees which are helping schools run.

The PTAs and Boards have the capacity to lobby other business houses to help support schools. Influential people in the community can be invited to spearhead such activities and ensure that linkages with other organizations that would support the schools are formed.

5.1.7 Teacher involvement in Education Partnerships

The majority of teachers talked to in the course of the study felt left out in the partnership arrangement. One teacher observed that they felt like outsiders and their roles were not appreciated. Most parents thought that the role of teachers was to merely go to class to teach. Although this study found this to be true, one study by Kelly (1999)

has also shown that some teachers tend to distance themselves from the education partnerships. He observes that unhelpful attitudes of teachers and education authorities tend to hamper community efforts. This attitude may be attributed to poor conditions of service which discourages teachers in taking up extra roles like that of sensitization of the community.

From what has been noted above, the greatest challenge teachers have in this process is to help disseminate and educate the communities on the expectations of government on the issues of ownership of these schools by the communities. The levels of literacy in these areas are not high and thus asking teachers to help interpret policy to the people there becomes difficult. According to the Zambia Demographic Health Survey (2007) in Luapula province 24.9% of women have had no access to education compared to 15.9 % of the men. 53% of the women had some primary education, whilst the men were at 50%. Only 10.3% of women completed primary education against 15.3 of the men. In addition, only 8.9 of the women have had access to some secondary education, the men at this level stand at 14.0%. out of these, 1.3% of the female completed secondary education and 2.6% for the men. All in all, 0.8% of the females have had access to higher education and the men stand at 1.5% on the same level. This level of education also reflects on the capacity of both men and women to make a positive contribution in these PTA meetings. Considering that these meetings are mainly attended by the women whose education levels are quite low in view of what has been seen above, interpretation of policy becomes difficult. If the communities could understand the meanings of the government pronouncements and be in a position to interpret policies, it would help realise the expectations of the government.

Other areas of support that meet resistance from parents and the wider community is the sponsorship of teachers for in-service programmes. Parents talked to on this matter said that upgrading of teachers qualifications was private as they would be the ones benefitting in terms of higher salaries and promotions. The parents did not see the benefits of a well qualified staff for their children. When this was explained they still insisted that the government should pay for such teachers as they are eventually

transferred to work in other districts and provinces.

5.1.8 Social Cultural issues Hindering Partnerships

This study also found out that partnerships are being hindered by barriers which are mainly as a consequence of socialization. Socialization is the process by which an individual comes to accept societal standards of social behavior (Giddens, 2006) Sociologists view socialization as taking place in phases and often involving different groups of socializing agents. Giddens further notes that it is through socialization that people tend to accept and tolerate societal norms, values and beliefs. Chinoy (1961) further defines socialization as a process by which people inherent norms, customs and ideologies that enable them to become useful members of society.

The effect of socialization seems to be a factor that is impeding women participation in education partnerships in the rural Zambian schools. In the studied communities women seem to not to take an upper hand in educational partnerships despite them being the larger participants in school/community meetings. Men usually send women to PTA meetings stating that they have important things to do with their time. Women are often grouped with children hence they are told to attend to children's issues. Women too thought that even though they attend school meetings, they have no zeal to take part in the discussions because the men were there. Women strongly felt that culturally it was a man's duty to speak on women's behalf. For this reason, men had assumed leadership roles in all the partnerships in the schools under study.

At one of the schools, women waited outside whilst men deliberated on issues in the main hall. They waited with empty lunch boxes and bottles in readiness for lunch which they said they would be serving the discussants in the hall. One woman said '*I am here because my husband has gone fishing, I am supposed to listen but I think I am not contributing anything to the discussion; so that is why I am outside. We are waiting for lunch so that I can be involved in serving drinks and food, then I can go away.*'

Another issue that education partnerships have to tackle is the issue of girls not attending

class, high pregnancy levels and dropout rates in the schools where this study took place. For example at Mununga High, whilst there are 347 boys enrolled at the school only 72 girls have been enrolled. It will be difficult to carry out these plans if women are not seen to take an active role even at community level. In these communities there are very few role models that girls can look up to. But if these school community partnerships are seen to be all inclusive and women taking a leading role, the state of affairs would change.

5.1.9 Summary of Discussion

Education partnership is a very important component to the delivery of quality education. Stakeholders in the sector are implored to make positive contribution if any change in the schools is to be seen and sustained. Parents may be willing to help and support schools. What is required therefore, is the explanation of the provisions of the policy so that the set objectives are achieved. What has been observed from the study is that the transition from the era of free education to the present day of cost sharing has not been easy in the rural communities. The societies there still see the provision of education to be the responsibility of the government. Taking up the challenge of ownership of the schools shall require aggressive sensitization of the communities on the meaning of cost sharing.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Overview

This study was guided by the following specific objectives, to establish the types of education partnerships existing in Zambian rural high schools, to assess the effectiveness of these education partnerships in quality education delivery, an investigation into the challenges that may be encountered in these education partnerships and to ascertain the input levels and areas of partnership collaborations with schools in the delivery of quality education for the pupils.

The communities in the areas studied are rural and economically disadvantaged. As much as they are expected to contribute financially and materially to the schools in their locations, it is very difficult for them to do so because of the many competing demands on the few resources. Their priority has largely to do with their subsistence.

6.1 Conclusion

In the quest to fulfilling the objectives of this study a qualitative approach was taken as it was seen to be the best in providing information on what was obtaining on the ground. Data collection methods included, Focus Group Discussions, Observations and Semi structured interviews. These data collection methods were deliberately designed for this particular study in order to get and assess the information as it applied to the participants various contexts.

The major findings revealed from the study on education partnerships include the need to have well sensitised communities on government policies, pronouncements and the expectations on the aspect of cost sharing. Furthermore, it was revealed that some of these rural communities are not ready to take up ownership of these institutions and still believed that schools were for the government and not theirs. School boards were not actively involved and were not participating in school policy making and forging

linkages with other stake holders. In all the instances the boards only existed on paper. Additionally, the boards were not raising any income and largely depended on the PTAs as major sources of funding besides the irregular grants the schools received from government. However, it should be mentioned here that the finances realised from these projects run by the PTAs are quite negligible to sustain programmes in these schools. These PTAs have also neglected to follow guidelines on how and when pupils should be levied but have made it an on-going activity to collect money each term. MOE guidelines state that pupils can only be levied when there is an approved project to be undertaken.

The study further revealed that partnerships with the communities were not strong and lacked sustainability. Communities cannot manage to maintain these schools because of other competing socio-economic factors. Noted as well is the fact that when all these NGOs involved with these schools pull out there shall be no one to fill the void that will be left. It is clear that the PTAs, communities and local business houses in these communities do not have the capacity to take over and continue with the various areas of support.

In all these schools areas of collaboration with the various partners include pupil bursary schemes, transport, infrastructure maintenance and development, wages for workers and material support in the areas of sports.

The major partners with these schools include parents, NGOs, CBOs, FBOs all engaged at different levels and are doing the best under the circumstances to support and raise funds to supplement government efforts in providing access and improve on quality education delivery.

6.2 Recommendations

This subsection looks at the recommendations for the effective implementation of school partnerships in some rural high schools not performing to the expectations of government basing on the outlines found in the policy document, MOE, 1996. These

recommendations based on the findings include:

- Participation in planning should involve management, the community, parents and other stakeholders.
- School boards should be versatile in school based policy formulation and embark on linkages with other stakeholders.
- Communication between the school management and the community should be emphasised to instil trust, transparency and confidence between partners.
- There should be a deliberate programme, by government, to ensure sustainability of partnerships.
- Sensitisation should be an on-going activity; capacity building for board and PTA members must be emphasised.
- Mobilisation of resources and income generating activities must be well harmonised with the schools core business.
- Communities should make land available for school use through the local authorities and chiefs.
- Minister of Education should expedite appointments of Board members.
- Handover of Board/PTA members at the end of each term of office should be systematic.
- Monitoring and evaluation of Board activities by Ministry of Education board services unit must be well coordinated.

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Appendix A

My names are Denis Kaputo Mukunta. I am carrying out research in Education Administration and Management. I am here to get your views on Educational Partnerships between the Community, Business houses and the Government. The information may help the Ministry of Education (MOE) plan and see how best they can provide quality service to the schools for the benefit of the learners and the community.

Interview guide for members of the community

1. Tell me how you have contributed to the welfare of the school in your area?
2. How has the community helped the school to function in your locality?
3. How best can we encourage the involvement of the community in the education sector?
4. Have you read the education policy on partnerships?
5. What is your understanding of partnership?
6. Do you attend PTA/BOARD Meetings in your community?
7. How can the education sector involve a lot of members of the community?
8. Has any education officers ever addressed the community on the need for involvement in the affairs of the school?

Interview guide for Ministry of Education Officers

1. What are the challenges of school education partnerships?
2. What intervention can address these challenges?
3. What measures have you put in place of arrest these challenges?
4. Have you carried out sensitization with the communities where the schools are?
5. Have you evaluated the partnership policy?
6. How best can you bring on board other stake holders in the education sector?

Focus group questions

There will be a PLA exercise for members of the community. The question will include:

1. Description of where they live
2. What they like about their community
3. Distance between their community and the high school
4. Their relationship with their school
5. What they can do to improve it
6. Their relationship with teachers and education authorities in their locality

Interview Guide for Teachers

1. What is your understanding of partnerships in education?
2. Explain how partnership in school is working?
3. Explain what your role is in these partnerships?
4. How has the community responded to the call for partnership?
5. What efforts have been made to sensitize the community on education partnerships?
6. What are the areas of support do you get in these partnerships?
7. What are the challenges noted in these partnerships?

Appendix B

The University of Zambia

School of Education

Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies

Observation Schedule

(a) Partners involvement in school programmes/activities

Community, NGO,FBO,CBO roles	Use of service	Contribution of resources	Consultation with schools	Involvement in school programmes
Policy Design				
Resource mobilization				
Monitoring of curriculum implementation				
Supervision of projects				
Linkages, networking and lobbying				
Monitoring use of school infrastructure				
Interest in pupil affairs				

(b) Areas and levels of support

	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Very poor
School pupil					
Staff Development					
Transport					
Infrastructure					
Furniture					
Sports					
Pupil Discipline					

(c) Other areas of concern

1. Do partner organizations visit the school often?

   (a) Yes   [ ]   (b) No   [ ]

2. Are meetings between school and organisations held regularly?

   (a) Yes   [ ]   (b) No   [ ]

3. Are teachers actively involved in sensitization of community on partnerships?

   (a)   [ ]   (b) No   [ ]

4. Are parents interested in pupils' affairs?

   (a)   [ ]   (b) No   [ ]

Other important comments or observations