

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

**An Investigation into Zambian Parents' Involvement in their Children's
Education in Selected Rural Schools of Central Province**

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**A Dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of
Education in Sociology of Education**

2011

DECLARATION

I Christabel Mubanga Musonda do declare that this dissertation is my own work and has not been submitted for a degree to this or any other University.

Signature:_____

Date:_____

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my family: My parents, Mr. F and Mrs D. Musonda for making me what I am today; My husband and son; for being understanding and supportive throughout my study period and my brothers and sisters for all the words of encouragement.

APPROVAL

This dissertation by Christabel Mubanga Musonda is approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Master of Education in Sociology of Education of the University of Zambia.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work would not have been a success without the support of many people who contributed their time, skills and expertise. My gratitude goes to them.

My special gratitude goes to Dr O.C. Chakulimba, my supervisor for his invaluable critical support and encouragement. I would also like to thank Dr S.W. Khunkuli for his technical support during the design of the project proposal. For the cooperation during data collection, I would like to thank Mr. C. Chitaya and all the respondents in the study.

Lastly, but not the least, I would like to thank my younger sister Chileshe Musonda for all the assistance and encouragement rendered to me during the entire research period and in particular, the data analysis.

I will always thank the Almighty God for His love and mercy.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

BESSIP	Basic Education Sub Sector Implementation Programme
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
PTA	Parent Teacher Association
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences

ABSTRACT

The study investigated the involvement of parents in their children's education in selected rural schools of Mumbwa District, in Central Province of Zambia. The four objectives of the study were: to examine ways through which parents got involved in their children's education, to find out the benefits of parental involvement in their children's education, to find out barriers to parental involvement in the education of their children and to find out ways of improving parental involvement in children's education.

The study used a survey research design. The goal of a survey is to gain specific information about either a specific group or a representative sample of a particular group. The researcher used this research design because of so many advantages it presents and these are outlined in chapter three.

The sample was drawn from six government basic schools and the surrounding households from a population size of 12 school managers, their deputies, 32 teachers and 78 parents in six rural communities namely: Shimbizhi, Nambala, Chabota, Kalundu, Myooye and Nangoma communities. It included 6 school managers, 6 deputy school managers, 10 teachers and 40 parents. Teachers were selected using the random sampling technique while parents were selected using purposive sampling or judgmental sampling technique. To collect data, questionnaires were used for both teachers and parents. The questionnaires had both open and closed ended questions. These included questions on different aspects of parental involvement in children's education. A Statistical Package in Social Sciences (SPSS) was used in analyzing responses from the respondents.

The findings from both teachers and parents revealed that generally, parents were involved in their children's education through the following ways: being members of the PTA, providing school requisites, assisting children with school work and participating in school infrastructure development. Most people interviewed viewed parental involvement as contributing labour towards school construction projects.

Teachers interviewed reported that parental involvement in children's education had benefits for the school and the pupils, and these were: teachers found it easy to understand children's home environment as a result of instant interaction between parents and the school, the school's monitoring and evaluation of children's academic performance was enhanced because parents were engaged in children's education and improved school infrastructure due to parents' contribution of skilled and unskilled labour.

The study showed that there were a number of barriers to parental involvement in their children's education of which the major ones were: high illiteracy levels among parents, high poverty levels among families and lack of knowledge on the importance of education.

To help increase the levels of parental involvement in their children's education, parents and teachers who were interviewed suggested that; parents should attend school meetings, participate in the decision making processes and support their children with schoolwork. Other suggestions were that Parents should visit the school to discuss academic performance with the teachers and that they should be sensitized on the importance of education. These suggestions were reported as ways of improving parental involvement in children's education.