

**THE HUMAN FACTOR IN DECENTRALIZING
MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS:
THE CASE OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

THE
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by
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Degree of Master in Educational Administration

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my wife Victoria.

DECLARATION

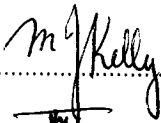
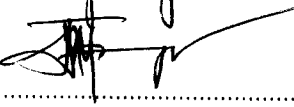
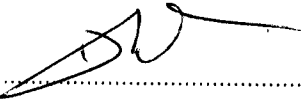
I hereby declare that the work in this research report is my work and that it has not previously been submitted for any other degree at this or other universities.

Signed EDW Date 11/11/2002

APPROVAL

This dissertation of Edward Nkonde is approved as fulfilling part of requirements for the award of the degree of Master in Educational Administration.

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the extent of staff preparedness and willingness to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions at the University of Zambia. It does so by means of questionnaires and interviews administered to teaching and senior non-teaching staff. The study also compares the level of decentralization in policy documents with what is actually operating in the units.

The findings of this research show that most teaching and senior non-teaching staff have a good understanding of the objectives for the devolution of selected functions to units at the University of Zambia. They understand that decentralization was adopted and is being intensified to remove the management dysfunctions of centralization. They see decentralization as being aimed at enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in education delivery in the University.

On the question of the extent of staff preparedness to participate in the implementation of the decentralization, the research has found out that both teaching and senior non-teaching staff feel they do not always have the required competencies in carrying out the devolved functions.

While the two categories of staff have overwhelmingly supported decentralization as a management approach, they are not keen to participate in its implementation.

The comparison of the level of decentralization in policy documents with what is actually operating in the units shows that there is no discrepancy between the two models.

In the light of the findings of this research, the report has recommended that the University of Zambia should not make further decentralization until the institution has consolidated what is currently in place. To do this the University should, firstly, conduct skills training for its staff to empower them in the management skills in which they have acknowledged inadequacies. Secondly, the institution should initiate longitudinal studies aimed at making periodic checks on staff readiness and preparedness to participate in the implementation of the approach. The implementation of the findings

of these studies will further consolidate decentralization in the institution. Thirdly, the University should regularly communicate to its staff the positive impacts of the decentralization on the management of the University. Communication of the success of the decentralization will motivate willingness in the staff to participate in the current and future devolutions.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AAD	Administrative Assistant to the Dean
AAU	Association of African Universities
ACU	Association of Commonwealth Universities
CHEMS	Commonwealth Higher Education Management Service
DAE	Donors to African Education
FO	Financial Officer
IIEP	International Institute for Educational Planning
MOE	Ministry of Education
PO	Purchasing Officer
PR	Purchase Requisition
GRZ	Government of the Republic of Zambia
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNZA	University of Zambia

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

1.1 The context of decentralization in universities

It is generally agreed among scholars, donors, governments and universities themselves, that traditional management practices in universities cannot cope with the highly dynamic conditions in the modern world. This has become more evident today when most universities are suffering heavy budget cuts by their governments and are advised on the one hand, to embark on revenue generation activities and on the other use the meagre funds from their governments more efficiently. Writing from different perspectives, researchers of university management and administration have all suggested that management crises in universities are not only financial but are also rooted in wrong management practices. The scholars believe time has come to make innovations in management styles. One approach currently receiving special attention in a number of universities is decentralization of selected central administration functions. Decentralization is a management style by which top management shares decision-making authority with subordinate structures. Different universities are devolving different functions from the central administration to units with a view to enhancing efficiency. The assumption is that resources are likely to be raised and used more efficiently if those who are directly affected by the decisions taken are given maximum discretion in deploying them. The scope, scale and spread of decentralization have been dictated by contextual factors of individual universities. Some have started by divesting a few personnel, financial and academic functions. Research shows this is advisable because large scale decentralization may not be easy to handle by lower structures that have hitherto been used to merely implementing instructions.

The concept of decentralization in universities is linked to a bigger management approach sweeping across universities in the world. Fielden

(1994) says 'all over the world, universities are embarking on strategic plan exercises' (p.2), while Sanyal (1995) reports that most universities in the United Kingdom, in Netherlands, Australia, Canada and the U.S.A are adopting this new approach of management. In Africa, Saint (1992) speaks of strategic planning undertaken in Botswana, Cameroon, Ghana, Mozambique and Tanzania. Strategic planning is determining how you are going to pursue long-term goals with the resources at hand. The various corporate functions and units are systematically rather than intuitively integrated in the pursuit of the set goals. Strategic planning works better in an institution where the central administration shares power and authority with implementers of policies. This is because unlike traditional planning techniques, strategic planning aims at preparing the institution to move in step with the fast changing environment in which the organization finds itself. This can only be managed if policy makers, implementers and stakeholders share the responsibility of watching and responsively reacting and proacting to economic, political and social phenomena in their dynamic environment. Weindling (1997) in Kelly (1997), defines strategic planning as: "a means for establishing and maintaining a sense of direction when the future has become more and more difficult to predict..... the process by which members of (an) organization envision its future and develop the necessary^r procedures to achieve that future" (p. 16).

The connection of decentralization to strategic planning has been well captured by Kelly (1997:16) who says ' strategic planning is a form of involvement of policy makers, planners, implementers and stakeholders in :

- (a) the clarification of an organization's vision and values;
- (b) the evaluation of internal and external trends and pressures affecting the organization;
- (c) the assessment of needs;
- (d) identification of desired outcomes;
- (e) the assignment of priorities to various programmes and initiatives;

- (f) the specification of activities to achieve priorities;
- (g) estimating the costs of the proposed activities and the likely sources of income;
- (h) a continuous process of monitoring and evaluation to adjust to the ever changing internal and external environment.'

From this definition we can see a natural linkage between strategic planning, which has already received wide acceptance in universities, and decentralization that is becoming a direct consequence. Decentralization ensures success of strategic plans because participation in planning and implementation by stakeholders and change agents in activities, clarifies an organization's vision and values, creates a sense of belonging and ownership of the organization's planning activities. This in turn leads to the much needed stake holder and change agent commitment to the change process.

1.2 **Background to the current devolution of administrative functions to units at the University of Zambia**

Partly because of the reasons mentioned above, the University of Zambia produced its first strategic plan *The 1994 - 1998 University of Zambia Strategic Plan* in 1993. The exercise received much encouragement and support from donors, the government and the University Council. Among other things the document mentions increased decentralization of some management functions to units as points of delivery. The scope of the devolution covers financial, academic and administrative aspects (UNZA Strategic Plan 1993).

1.3 **Examples of Devolved Functions from the 1994 - 1998 University of Zambia Strategic Plan**

The Strategic Plan proposed devolutions in three areas; financial, academic and administration.

1.3.1 **Financial devolution**

- Units were formally delegated powers to prepare their own budgets

- The units would also administer their budgets
- Each unit was empowered to evaluate its own budget

1.3.2 Devolution of Academic Functions to Deans

- Decisions on matters pertaining to the admission of students to a particular school;
- Decisions on the courses students will be required to take or from which they should be exempted and their continuation or discontinuation in school programmes;
- The Dean to be responsible for publishing the results of university examinations held in the school; and
- Later the university senate devolved running of examinations to schools.

1.3.3 Administrative Devolution to Schools

- Authority to appoint junior and ancillary staff.
- Authority for management of Junior staff.
- Approving leave for all categories of staff.
- Handling all issues pertaining to external examiners.

So far some of the decentralized functions that have been implemented are financial management, running of examinations, admission and registration of some categories of students, and final approval of research proposals. Though this might appear like nominal decentralization, what matters is not the number of functions decentralized but their role in the life of an institution. Finances and examinations are very sensitive and critical areas. This means the move is not as small as may appear.

In financial management, each unit has been allowed to have its own bank account, can procure some required items and services without prior approval

of the central administration except when it involves capital items and has an accounting officer seconded to it. The money raised by the unit can also be spent by the unit to buy the permitted range of items. The head of a unit is a budget holder. With the help of the heads of departments the budget holder can prepare the budget of the unit and control the budgetary expenditures. Each unit has a budget committee that prepares the departmental budget.

For running of examinations, each school is responsible for the administration and conduct of examinations. Out of 27 tasks involved in running examinations, 13 have been devolved to schools (Appendix E). A look at the 13 tasks devolved to schools reveals that these tasks are more critical than the ones retained by the Central Academic Office. Each school now types, prints, collates, packs and is responsible for making watertight procedures for processing and handling examination question papers. The school prepares venues and invigilators for examinations pertaining to its programmes.

The academic office has retained the tasks of preparing master examination timetables and dissemination of examination regulations to students.

Going by this analysis a significant attempt has been made by the University of Zambia to decentralise this management function.

Admission of postgraduate students is also devolved to schools as is the registration of returning undergraduate and all postgraduate students. The registrar's department, through the academic office, is no longer involved in these functions.

Appendix D reflects both the old and latest decentralization of central administration functions at the University of Zambia.

1.4 The Concept of Change at the University of Zambia

When change is introduced in an organization, one of the initial things that must be done is to begin studying how the move is being interpreted by

stakeholders and implementers. For the University of Zambia, the key change agents in the decentralization of administrative and academic functions are senior administrative staff and different categories of academic or teaching staff. More than eight years have passed since the strategic plan underlined the role of decentralization of some central administrative and academic functions in managing the university. What are the views of the critical stakeholders on the of decentralising the functions? What are the individual interpretations of this management style that is closely involving units in the running of the university? Are they willing and ready to participate in its implementation? For those that were willing in 1991 do they still have the same desire to participate in implementing the increased administrative and management functions?

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Taking the four problems raised above as background issues and the University of Zambia as a case study, the research has examined four parameters:

- i. Whether or not teaching members of staff on the one hand and senior non-teaching staff on the other feel their current qualifications and experience are adequate for them to participate in the implementation of decentralized functions.
- ii. How the teaching and senior non-teaching staff have interpreted the objective of decentralizing administrative functions to their units.
- iii. The extent to which the two categories of staff mentioned above are willing to participate in implementing different management functions devolved to their units.
- iv. Whether or not there is a discrepancy between the stated form of decentralization in the *University of Zambia 1994 - 1998 Strategic Plan* and the one actually operating in the units.

3. PURPOSE OF STUDY

The main purpose of this study was to generate data on independent interpretations by senior non-teaching staff on the one hand and teaching staff on the other of the decentralization of central administration functions to units and assess their preparedness and commitment to participate in its implementation. The collected data could be used to provide a description of the staff position at the University of Zambia regarding decentralization of functions to units. The research has also attempted to examine whether or not there is a difference between the stated model of decentralization in the *University of Zambia 1994 - 1998 Strategic Plan document* and the one(s) actually operating on the ground.

4.0 OBJECTIVES

This study attempted to generate data on selected aspects of decentralization at the University of Zambia. The main objectives were:

- 4.1 To generate data on the subjective interpretations by teaching and senior non-teaching staff of the management style of decentralizing administrative functions to units.
- 4.2 To examine the commitment of the two categories of staff to the implementation of the management style of decentralising administrative functions of units.
- 4.3 To assess whether the units already have the needed experience and skills in handling of management functions.
- 4.4 To examine whether there is a discrepancy between the stated model of decentralisation in the *University of Zambia 1994 - 1998 Strategic Plan* and the one(s) operating in the units.

HYPOTHESES

1. The decentralized management style at the University of Zambia has been correctly interpreted by teaching and senior non-teaching staff.
2. Most teaching and senior non-teaching staff feel their current qualifications, and experience are not compatible with the management skills needed in carrying out decentralized functions.
3. Most teaching and senior non-teaching staff are willing to participate in the implementation of the decentralized management functions.
4. There is a discrepancy between the model of decentralization put forward by policy makers in the *University of Zambia 1994 - 1998 Strategic Plan* and the one(s) actually operating in the units.

5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is important for three reasons:

Firstly, if strategic plans are to succeed, it is important for policy makers, stakeholders and implementers to move together as the implementation of the plans proceeds. Periodic checks on people's commitment to and interpretation of what is going on regarding the change, are important aspects of feedback on the implementation process. It is equally important to regularly check on their technical preparedness to participate in the implementation process. This is because if there are serious gaps between their present knowledge, skills and attitudes and what they are supposed to have in order to participate in the implementation of the introduced change or modification of management style, arrangements can be made to bridge these gaps. This study is critical because since the intensification of decentralization in 1995 no such study has been conducted regarding the management approach.

Secondly, the study has generated empirical data on the aspects mentioned above pertaining to the decentralisation of administrative functions in the

institution. The study has brought out indications for policy makers and researchers on how further and more comprehensive decentralization of management functions are likely to proceed.

Thirdly, by comparing the stated decentralisation in the strategic plan and the one that is on the ground, the study may help policy makers and stakeholders to see whether or not there is need to synchronise the two. This is important because discrepancies between the two can create confusion and frustration among the parties concerned.

6. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY'S FRAMEWORK

The study focused on sampled schools, and other units of the university, teaching and senior non-teaching staff therein. These are the categories of staff that actively participate in planning and delivery of the devolved functions. Members of staff on part-time, sabbatical leave, temporary engagement, staff development fellows doing or awaiting to do their first postgraduate studies were not included in the population. Junior members of staff of the university were sampled only if they were shouldering responsibilities directly associated with the devolved administrative functions. The Bursar's, Registrar's and Vice-Chancellor's units were excluded from the sampling frame. This is because they are the central administration divesting central administration functions. However, they were visited for referrals.

7. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study encountered two main problems.

Firstly, the University of Zambia is still recovering from dysfunctions of red tape that is common in over-centralized bureaucracies. This drawback makes accessibility to needed data difficult. This slowed the pace at which data was collected because some offices where data resides did not easily release information. One needs to exercise much painstaking patience and tact to get what is needed.

Secondly, monitoring a phenomenon is both expensive and very involving requiring much time and financial resources. The time available for this research could only allow covering some of aspects of the exercise. So the study concentrated only on the human aspect, leaving out the other parameters that could have some impact on the policy shift. Despite this shortcoming, the study collected valuable baseline data on the sample which could be useful information to both University of Zambia policy-makers and future researchers interested in more comprehensive longitudinal studies on decentralization at the institution.

8. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Academic Office : The wing of the Registrar's Department that deals with academic affairs of students such as organising student admissions, examinations and servicing Senate Committees.

Academic staff : Here the term means Deans of Schools, Directors of institutes, Bureaux or similar bodies; all members of staff appointed on full time basis or contract appointment for teaching and research. For the purpose of this study the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Library staff will be excluded from this definition. (Adapted from UNZA 1996 Calendar)

Accountability : The requirement to be answerable for a decision taken. This leads the decision maker to demonstrate responsible action.

Administrative Units: For the purpose of this study, these are units at the University of Zambia established as support units.

- Authority** : The ability to demand obedience from someone. This attribute may be conferred by appointing powers or accrued through qualification.
- Centralization** : The retention of decision making authority by top management
- Central Administration** : Here used as a collective word for the Vice-chancellor's Registrar's and Bursar's offices.
- Decentralization** : Top management sharing decision making authority with subordinate, lower levels or other institutions.
- Department** : A teaching or research unit of a public university recognised as a component of a school or other units. (UNZA Calendar 1996).
- Delegation** : Assigning various degree of decision authority and or responsibility to subordinate or other institutions.
- Human Factor** : The attributes of personnel as they impact on management of the University of Zambia.
- Other Units** : In this study "other units" mean units at the University of Zambia that are not involved in direct teaching. These include the Library, the Bookshop, Institute of Economic and Social Research, Department of Students Affairs and Directorates.

Other Sciences Units: For the purposes of this study, these are units that offer natural, medical, engineering and agricultural sciences e.g Schools of Natural Sciences, Engineering, Mines, Medicine, Veterinary Medicine and Agricultural Sciences.

Power : The ability to get others to do what one wants them to do. Also the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will despite resistance. Weber 1947 (in Hoy 1988:76)

School : In this study, "school" shall mean "an academic unit of a public university in which teaching, study, research and learning are pursued (University Act 1999).

Senior non-teaching staff : Here the term means those persons employed by a university, other than the teaching staff, who hold administrative, professional or technical posts. For the purpose of this study Library staff fall under this definition. This is because this study involves teaching and non-teaching staff in the university. Senior non-teaching staff are sampled in this study because they are likely to hold critical roles relating to decentralization in their units.

Social sciences

academic units : Units or schools that deal with social sciences. e.g. Schools of Education, Law, Humanities, Directorate of Distance Education, Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies.

Teaching staff : All members of staff appointed on full-time basis or contract appointment for teaching and research.

Unit Managers : Here the term refers to the Head of a Unit, Heads of Departments, Financial Officer and Administrative Assistants to the Dean (where such exist).

9. **ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY**

This research report has been divided into six sections.

Chapter one looks at the background to the study. It also states the objectives, scope, rationale of the research and constraints encountered.

Chapter two proposes a conceptual and theoretical framework upon which the discussion later hinges. Reviewing the relevant literature from different parts of the world, the section draws attention to attempts at decentralization in many countries.

Chapter three explains the principles according to which data was generated, analyzed and interpreted.

Chapter four presents the findings and actual analysis.

Chapter five looks at data interpretation. A discussion of the findings is made based on the interpretation.

The last chapter recommends what the policy makers should do in the light of the findings.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 The concept of decentralization as an administrative approach in general

Decentralization, the antonym of centralization, refers to the style of governance in which top management shares decision making authority with subordinates (Kreitner 1995). The concepts of decentralization and its variants stem from human relations and behavioural organization theories. It came as part of the reaction of some scholars like Mayo, and Parker (1995), to Taylor's Scientific Management Theory.

Early in the twentieth century, Scientific Management scholar asserted that by studying a job scientifically, it was possible to determine the one best way it should be performed. They further believed that it was central administration's duty to study the job, determine the best way to perform it and then teach this way to all employees (Antony 1978). The subordinate is merely told what and how he should do it. There should be close monitoring of the subordinates performance by his superiors (Burnes 1992). This is done because the subordinate is viewed as basically unknowledgeable about the operations of the jobs. The employees need constant direction (Hoy 1991).

MacGregor, a behavioural scientist, cited by Kreitner (1995), views a typical employee as an energetic and creative individual who could achieve great things if things are devolved to him. In his famous Theory Y he asserts that work is a natural activity to people like play or rest. Contrary to classic theory, he argues that subordinates are capable of self direction. Many people are endowed with imagination, ingenuity and creativity.

Many scholars who have researched into the concept of decentralization of power and authority from central administration to their lower units have indicated that it comes in many forms. Kreitner (1995) and Antony (1978)

and authority released to subordinate units while on the other end you have least power divested. Kreitner asserts that the level of decentralization will be defined by four factors:

- How many decisions are made at lower levels in the hierarchy.
- How important are the decisions that are made at lower levels (i.e. do they impact organizational success?).
- How many different functions have been granted to lower units.
- How much does top management monitor to check up on lower level decision making.

FIGURE 1: Factors in Relative Centralisation/Decentralization

	Highly centralized organization		Highly decentralized organization
• How many decisions are made at lower levels in the hierarchy?	Very few, if any		Many or most
• How important are the decisions that are made at lower levels (i.e., do they impact organizational success or dollar values)?	←		Very important
• How many different functions (e.g., production, marketing, finance, personnel) rely on lower-level decision making?	Very few, if any		All or most
• How much does top management monitor or check up on lower-level decision making?	A great deal		Very little or none

Source: *Management 1995, Robert Kreitner P. 311.*

Sanford (1973) cited by Lungu (1980), also mentions these features. Lungu argues that centralisation and decentralisation are not dichotomies. A continuum between the two extremes gives a full picture of the phenomenon.

For various reasons different central administrations may oscillate or move their decentralization along the continuum. In his research Rondinelli (1984) discovered that some central administrations began with one approach and later shifted to another after assessing initial results (p. 10). Rondinelli, echoed by Chama (1992), comes up with more conceptualised models of decentralization. These are deconcentration, delegation, devolution and privatisation.

Rondinelli defines deconcentration as "the handing over of some amount of administrative authority or responsibility to lower levels..." (p. 10) It is a shifting of the workload from centrally located offices to staff or offices outside of central administration offices. Deconcentration gives some discretion to field agents to plan and implement programs and projects or adjust central directives to local conditions, within guidelines set by the central administration. The 1998 decentralization of running of examinations at the University of Zambia is a case in point. The academic office outlined the functions to be carried out by schools but also allowed some discretion.

Delegation according to Rondinelli involves transfer of managerial responsibility for specifically defined functions to organisations that are outside the regular bureaucratic structure and that are only indirectly controlled by the central administration. The central administration transfers to an agent specified functions and duties which the agent has broad discretion to carry out. Ultimately responsibility and accountability still remain with the central administration. In one way, it is a means of creating efficiency because goods and services are provided by an agent who is not entrapped in inefficient bureaucratic systems. Rondinelli reasserts this by saying:

It is assumed that autonomy or semi autonomy will free the organizations to which functions are delegated from the cumbersome or patronage - ridden personnel regulations, rigid and incentiveless bureaucratic pay scales and unproductive work habits frequently found in the regular civil service (p. 15).

Because of this perceived efficiency international donors favour this form of decentralization in implementing their assistance to institutions.

Devolution is a stronger form of decentralization than deconcentration and delegation. It is the granting of autonomy to a lower administrative unit. Central administration exercises only indirect supervisory control over such units. The lower units have authority to take final decision even in major matters. It is hoped that with increased power to plan and manage activities, the lower units will become highly productive (Rondinelli 1984). This is made possible by the reduced chains of consultations. This is an ideal form of decentralization for an institution that plans to engage its units in money generation ventures. Devolution can be a prelude to such moves.

Privatisation is another way of shifting responsibility from the central administration, except in this case the transferred powers and responsibilities go into private hands. These could be voluntary organisations or private enterprises. Rondinelli suggests that privatisation is the best form of decentralization when dealing with experimental or controversial projects. This obviously shields the organization against risks. Sometimes projects that are far beyond the financial strength of an institution should be put into competent private hands to finance and execute them on agreed terms. Apart from providing capital, firms come with tested technology and skills from industry, hence assist the organisation's members of staff working closely with the firm learn management and technical skills. The privatisation of parastatal firms in Zambia in the 1990s is a good case in point here. The firms which were in the

hands of the government for 20 years, have now been transferred to competent private enterprise.

2.2 The case of decentralization in education institutions in general

A World Bank paper (World Bank 1980:55) notes that the trend towards centralization can be challenged on the grounds that Ministries of Education in most countries have become overburdened with the daily administration of educational logistics. This, the study believes, is often at the expense of their policy making function. It is also noted that in many countries, Ministries of Education as central authorities have difficulties in identifying and articulating the needs of local communities. The report goes on to say that decentralizing decision making on educational matters is not easy because interest groups have occasionally resisted decentralization. Teachers and their unions, for instance have little confidence in this administrative approach. Their misgivings must be an expression of fears of dysfunctions of decentralization. The paper concludes that local authorities may not have sustainable capacity to provide services and job tenure to staff engaged in education delivery.

Gaynor (1995) believes the impact of decentralization as an administrative approach in education delivery cannot be assessed easily because there is a possibility of other changes running concurrently with it . It is difficult to distinguish the effects of other interventions, for instance alterations in the curriculum. If decentralization is adopted in education delivery, Gaynor asserts, it must be followed by impact evaluation studies. The outcome of such studies must be based on contextual dictates. Gaynor argues that before policy makers decentralize any function, they must first of all know which functions work better under decentralization and which ones work well under centralization. What this means is that decentralisation in education works better as a supplement rather than a substitute of a well designed and functioning education system.

Bloomer (1991) states that the collapse of the communist regime in Eastern Europe has tremendously weakened the validity of centralization in the

provision of public services like education. In education, decentralization is likely to be seen as desirable. Bloomer asserts that the growth of information technology which facilitates efficient collection, storage and dissemination of information within the education system has now made decentralization feasible. He also expects that decentralisation will improve the quality of education management. This is because it will encourage initiative, experiment, responsiveness and motivation in lower administrative structures. Education managers in lower structures will make decisions on the basis of greater knowledge of issues on the ground. Decentralization will release human potential among the subordinate education managers as they participate in the decision making process. When levels become capable of handling the numerous minor administrative issues, this will lead to capacity building in the system. Senior education managers will be freed from handling minute administrative tasks. They will have enough time for strategic thinking. One of the pre-requisites for effective decentralisation suggested by Bloomer is policy clarity. A well defined policy framework, explaining what should be done at which level, is an imperative. Another pre-requisite is capacity building amongst the staff shouldering the divested management functions.

In Zambia, the advent of democracy in 1991 in governing the nation seems to have sparked interest in decentralising most government institutions. By 1997, the Ministry of Education had decided to decentralise management of selected colleges and schools, by introducing Educational Boards. In a policy document released in 1997, the Ministry explains the intentions of this decentralization:

The Ministry's decision to decentralise and establish Education Boards at school, college and district levels is meant to take decision-making closer to the points of delivery, where the action is taking place. This will in turn allow for more rapid reaction and action to problems and/or opportunities that occur at these points of delivery thereby improving the learning environment and consequently the type of education provided (MOE 1997:5)

The Ministry has provided a very articulate policy framework providing guidelines on what should be done by local education managers.

2.3 **Decentralization in Universities**

Decentralization in universities in general and at the University of Zambia in particular is a recent phenomenon. It has risen out of a motivation to partly redress administrative and economic woes created by national governments' budgetary cuts and partly to cope with turbulences in the political, technological, social and economic environment. Sanyal (1995) says decentralization is a desirable management approach in universities because it makes co-ordination of educational delivery more efficient in terms of time and money. At a time when universities are becoming more cost-conscious due to funding crises created by heavy budgeting cuts by their governments, the institutions can ill afford to let top administration get bogged down in departmental management tasks, so that they can have time and or energy for strategic thinking and planning (Bosworth 1991). This is echoed by Mokoena (1999).

Other notions that make a case for decentralization in universities are that these institutions employ a large number of professionals. Since professionals are usually driven more by a sense of professional responsibility and standards than obeying directives from central administration; the necessity for external type of control is decreased (Antony 1978). Dearlove (1995) calls this phenomenon "loose coupling". Since universities employ a large number of highly skilled personnel performing largely grouped tasks in faculties, it is not workable to centralize operations. The best management approach is decentralization.

Dearlove says:

Universities tend to be bottom heavy organisations; the main basic units - the departments - are loosely coupled each to the other a university is not and just cannot be a simple bureaucratic organisation (pp 12 - 13)

Dearlove goes on to say that most important decisions about what to teach and research are made unchecked by individual members of teaching staff acting on their own initiative.

2.4 **Examples of Decentralization in Universities**

Sanyal (1995) cites examples of decentralization in universities. While some universities have been very cautious in their decentralization others seem to be more radical along the decentralization continuum. Sanyal draws examples from the United Kingdom, the United States, the Netherlands, Italy and Africa. We see different approaches coming out of his study.

In the United Kingdom, from the early 1980s, the government has been reducing financial grants to universities. The institutions have been advised to increase efficiency by generating their own revenue and improve accountability. In 1988, an Act of Parliament provided greater autonomy to universities in resource management. The rationale for this move was that resources are used more effectively if those responsible for educational services are given maximum discretion in deploying them. These moves by the government have since led to the decentralization of some central administration functions to university units as Sanyal (1995) confirms:

This restructuring of financial sources imposed great strains on management of institutions, many of them devolved budgets to departmental level either including or excluding staff salaries (p. 143).

What occurred in the United Kingdom is somewhere between Rondinelli's model of deconcentration and devolution. A remarkable decision making authority has been granted to departments in raising, controlling and spending their finances. Sanyal reports that in some U.K. universities, because of financial devolution, some units have found creative means of reducing financial dependence on the central administration for staff salaries. "the

proportion of staff not wholly financed from university funds has increased from 22 percent in 1980 to 36 percent in 1989 (Sanyal 1995: 143).

Services from support units like the library, registrar's office, computer centre and bursar's department are costed and sold to schools on the basis of the number of staff and students each school has. This has created discernible cost consciousness in the units. To create a saving the units are scrutinizing their costs more closely and there have been times when some of them have opted to look for cheaper sources outside their universities.

In the United States the situation is not very different. Due to heavy budget cuts by government, universities have had to review their management styles. Strategic planning and consequently decentralization have been adopted in universities. Again Sanyal's study cites examples of universities where some central administrative functions have been decentralized to faculties. There is an emphasis on academic units being well managed. Units have been given financial authority. They can generate their own money, come up with creative ways of making a saving from the money given to them by the central administration. Each academic unit has to pay for support services like the university library and student counseling. While the financial decentralization encourages creativity and to a certain extent self reliance by units, it has created problems in some American universities, as Sanyal reports:

While many universities have succeeded by such strategies in bringing their expenditures under control, others (Yale University and Columbia University for example) have suffered setbacks, because powerful high income generating departments wish to go their own way (Sanyal 1995: 140).

Universities where financial decentralization seems to be going well include Stanford and Indiana.

Still citing examples of decentralization in the American universities, Sanyal reports one unnamed university whose philosophy is empowerment of units and its staff. At that university there is an emphasis on good departmental management. High pay is given to departmental heads to re-emphasise the importance of good governance at that level.

For the American universities two other central administration functions are being decentralized: the devolution of management of critical information and some academic matters. These are additions to financial management decentralization, which has dominated most recent management innovations in many universities. Units that maintain good records on teaching loads, research, use of technology and support services are rewarded by being given special treatment when funds are available. For academic matters "schools usually have internal governance to deal with admissions and academic co-ordinations under a Dean" (Sanyal 1995:6a).

At the University of Nigeria, Udeala (1995) reports that academics are calling for decentralization of running university examinations. They realise that to leave the running of examinations in the hands of the central administrations allows too many hands to deal with issues of examinations. This opens loopholes for malpractices.

The University of Obafemi Awolowo in Nigeria, has decentralized to schools handling of appointments and promotions of academic staff up to the level of Lecturer 1 (Omole 1995).

While many universities have restricted decentralization to academic units, Makerere University has broken the pattern. This innovation which started in 1992, began with selected non-academic units, notably the bookshop, printshop, guest house, bakery and the university press. Others that were earmarked for decentralization were flour milling, farm and construction unit.

Passi (1994) reports that Makerere University hopes that decentralization in these units will lead to the following benefits:

- Generation of income for the university.
- Off-loading of the administrative burden from the central administration.
- Training of personnel in their respective units so that they become more responsible and take better decisions on behalf of the top management.

(p. 44).

Already some units are able to pay some staff from their own resources.

However, Albretch and Zindeman (1992) doubt the administrative ability of universities to run businesses. They suggest such tasks should be delegated to capable private companies which should run the ventures on agreed terms.

2.5 The human factor as a prerequisite to effective decentralization

What has come out from the reviewed literature is that universities are avoiding comprehensive or radical decentralization. They are cautiously divesting selected functions to units. Experience vindicates this approach. Decentralization has failed where central administrations have devolved their administrative functions to lower structures without first addressing human factors. These include capacity building, clarity of the policy shift and securing commitment from key change agents.

Rondinelli (1984) asserts that before decentralization is introduced, provision must be made for strengthening leadership and administrative capacity of the lower units that will handle the devolved functions. Policy makers should first take stock of useful knowledge and skills that already exist within the lower administrative units. To emphasise the role of the human factor in decentralization, Rondinelli suggests that central administrations should devolve functions to their lower units incrementally. More complex functions should be transferred to them later when and if they increase their

administrative capacities. In his study about the implementation of the 1969 decentralization of government functions to its lower units, Lungu (1980) discovered that one of the reasons for its failure was confusion over the meaning of decentralization. The concept was not properly understood or internalised by key change agents. This consequently created practical problems in the implementation process. Lungu noted that in addition to the problems of clarity, stakeholders views and skills were important factors:

What is more important for the implementation of the reforms (decentralisation) are the attitudes and skills of existing personnel. Most of them seem not to know what to do in the new system, let alone understand the objectives of the reform (Lungu 1980:75).

Rich (1974) notes that sometimes an employee may fail to carry out a policy not from unwillingness but because it lies beyond his capacity. It could also be that the individual has not yet developed the new skills needed to suit the changes. Regarding stakeholders views on the decentralisation, Lungu, later largely echoed by Chama (1992), both writing about decentralization in Zambia, found that the bureaucrats in the offices and the ordinary masses had negative views about the 1969 reform. Clarity of the critical aspects of decentralization is also important. A study conducted by Rondinelli about implementation of government functions in Kenya, Somalia and Tanzania observes that lack of clarity on different aspects of the decentralisation among officials at various levels of administration was one major reason decentralization failed in those countries. Fullan (1998) draws attention to the concept of subjective meaning of reforms in educational systems. He asserts that reforms will not succeed unless policy makers and implementers share the meaning of the introduced change. This is echoed by Gaynor (1998), while Ajayi (1995) calls for periodic checks on stakeholder commitments to introduced change.

2.6 Proposed direction for current and future research on management of universities

In the light of the observations raised by the reviewed literature on the influence of the human factor on decentralization, it becomes imperative for the emerging studies on university management to change their focus of study. What universities need at the moment are not panorama studies on management styles. Focused in-depth case studies on staff attitudes, perceptions and reactions are what will correctly depict the reality on the ground. Admittedly Sanyal (1991, 1995), in his works on innovation in university management has made a phenomenal contribution to literature on university management. However his work shares one weakness with that of Rondinelli. While they provide a good overview of what is obtaining in countries or universities experimenting with decentralization, they leave out many factors which are context specific. The issue of human factors referred to in the literature reviewed by this study can be better appreciated through case studies.

Case studies done by Galabawa (1993) on the University of Zambia, Mokoena (1999) on the University of Botswana and Passi (1994) on the University of Makerere hold out some promise. However a close analysis of their works show that this promise has not been fulfilled.

Though Galabawa's case study on the University of Zambia's management of resources was a good attempt to unearth strengths and weaknesses in the management system at the institution, it has a number of weaknesses:

- The study has heavily glossed over decentralization which holds so much promise for universities regarding improvement in efficiency and effectiveness in managing the institutions. The issue of decentralization is mentioned in less than one paragraph.
- On methodological grounds, the study does not explain details on how data on staff views regarding management of the institution was collected. In its

brief statement on decentralization, the study claims there was a call for decentralization by the majority of staff. But it does not show how many people were interviewed, how many called for this decentralization, or how many were against it.

The case study on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of financial management at Makerere University is a good analysis intended "to assist policy makers in their decision - making on implementing change in universities" ... (Passi 1994:3). The study makes a comparative analysis of the impact of decentralization of financial management in the institution. But the model of decentralization adopted by the university which held out remarkable promise ended up creating more problems than it solved. This case study would have been more complete if it had also investigated the common human factors that have lead to failures of decentralisation efforts in many organizations that have attempted it. In this study again, issues of stakeholder views and capacity to handle the administration approach were not addressed.

Thabo Makoena and Richard Neil (1999) have made a commendable study on strategic planning, information systems and organizational development at the University of Botswana. The study provides an evaluation of various attempts the University of Botswana has made to improve its managerial efficiency and effectiveness. The study observes that:

Resistance to change of any kind is universal in all organisations, but is highly evident in universities which by virtue of their origins and their unique control systems are particularly adverse to even the vaguest hint of any attempt to tamper with their traditional mode of collegial decision-making (Mokoena 1999:60).

This assumption, which was earlier reported by Saint (1992), needs to be confirmed through case studies. It is possible to find many deviations from this sweeping statement. For instance, Sanyal (1995) reports that in the Netherlands attempts to introduce decentralization have been gladly accepted.

The case study on the University of Botswana reports the efforts by the University to clarify the rationale for the proposed organizational change to its community. One of these proposed changes was decentralization of decision making. One major weakness of this study is the omission of empirical data on the feelings of the stakeholders towards the various aspects of organizational changes it has described. In a University that has since the beginning of the 1990s embarked on improving its managerial effectiveness and efficiency through organizational change there is need to sell its policy well to its stakeholders. It would have enhanced Mokoena's case study if it had tapped into the reactions of the stakeholders to ascertain their position. The policy makers could have been advised on the direction to take in their on-going restructuring programmes which include decentralizing decision-making in the institution.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The phenomenon of decentralization of central administration functions to units was explored through a survey. Questionnaires and interviews were administered to the sample. Content analysis of appropriate documents was employed. The descriptive research design was used.

Data Collection

Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. Two approaches were used:

- 1.1 Data on staff willingness and preparedness to participate in the implementation of decentralization in the university was generated. Data was also collected on staff subjective interpretation of the objectives of the decentralization. A 5 point Likert scale was used to give the degree of support of decentralization as a management style. Questionnaires and interviews were both structured and unstructured. Unstructured questions were used where individuals were to bring out their subjective views on decentralization especially interpretations of its objective. Two sets of questionnaires were prepared: one for teaching staff, the other for non-teaching staff (Appendices A and B respectively). One interview instrument was prepared for Administrative Assistants to the Dean, Deans, Heads of unit, Heads of department and Accounting Officers (Appendix C).
- 1.2 Data on the comparison between the stated model of decentralization and the one operating in the schools was collected through interviews and content analysis of appropriate documents, especially the following: the *University of Zambia Strategic Plan*, *University Act* and the *University of Zambia Financial Policy document*.

3.3 Sample

A sample of 200 teaching and non-teaching staff was drawn by a proportional random stratified technique. To reach this sample the following were done:

First, a sample frame for the units, departments and staff was made. Out of the 15 units in the university 5 (1/3) were taken as being a reasonable sample size. To identify the sample, the 15 units were stratified in three categories, namely, administrative units, social sciences, academic units, and other sciences academic units. To get a proportion from each category, proportionate sampling was done to get 2 units from the 5 social sciences units, 2 from the 6 other sciences units and 1 from the 4 administrative units. The sampling was done randomly.

Secondly, out of the 20 departments in the five units, 10 were sampled randomly for interviews. Five Heads of department from the social sciences units were sampled. Another five were sampled from the other sciences units.

Thirdly, staff were sampled from four categories.

- (i) Professors
- (ii) Senior Lecturers
- (iii) Teaching staff below senior lecturers
- (iv) Non-teaching staff in the senior staff category

For in-depth interviews, Heads of units, Administrative Assistants to the Dean, Accounting Officers in the units and Heads of departments were sampled.

Data Analysis

- (i) Responses for structured questions were analysed manually to bring out frequencies of the responses on the parameters that guided the study.
- (ii) Data from unstructured responses were coded and analysed by categorising information to bring out themes and participants' perspectives.

Data Interpretation

Analysed data is displayed mostly in tables. The tables display quantitative responses on willingness and the numbers of staff who feel their qualifications and experience can enable them to participate in the implementation of the decentralisation at the University of Zambia. The information in the tables was used to draw some conclusions on the position of staff regarding the decentralization at the university.

Administration of Research Instruments

Questionnaires

Questionnaires were manually distributed to the offices of the respondents. Later the filled questionnaires were manually collected from the respondents. Some were posted to the researcher using the forwarding address on the introductory letter attached to the questionnaire.

Out of the sample of 200 teaching and non-teaching staff only 140 responses were obtained. This was because of various constraints. The problems included reluctance on the part of respondents to answer the questionnaire. Some respondents misplaced their questionnaires which consequently had to be replaced, others mailed their responses which never reached the researcher.

Table 1 below summarises some of the problems.

TABLE 1

Summary of responses to the administered questionnaires

Staff Category	Questionnaire Sent	Responses Received	Non Response	Other Problems
Teaching Staff	141	105	38	(i) 4 respondents refused to fill out the questionnaires (ii) Some respondents were revisited to fill out the skipped sections.
Non-Teaching Staff	38	35	3	Two respondents were too busy to answer the questionnaire

Interview administration

Twenty three informants were to be interviewed. Only 20 were interviewed because the other three were constantly unavailable. On the average each interview lasted 30 minutes. The major problem was that for informants in busy offices the interview suffered intermittent interruptions.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

There were four parameters that guided this research, namely; clarity of the reasons for adopting decentralization as an administrative approach, staff capacity to participate in the implementation of the policy change, staff willingness to do so, and whether or not there was a discrepancy between the decentralization stated in the policy documents and the one operating in the units.

4.1 Teaching and senior non-teaching staff interpretations of reasons why the University of Zambia has decentralized some management functions to units

When asked to state what they thought were the reasons for the University of Zambia central administration divesting some management functions to units, most sampled teaching and senior non-teaching staff felt it was a way of enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in running the University. From the 140 responses received, 126 (or 90 percent) felt decentralization was adopted to improve efficiency in managing the university, 105 (or 75 percent) felt it was meant to improve effectiveness in managing the institution. Other responses were that decentralization was a way of relieving the central administration of work overload and encouraging participative management. The latter leads to improved sense of responsibility, accountability, ownership and promotes innovative thinking in the units.

There were some respondents, however, who felt decentralizing of management functions at the university was just a way of shirking responsibilities by the central administration. Table 2 shows detailed statistics of teaching and senior non-teaching staff interpretations of reasons why the University of Zambia has decentralized some central administration functions to schools and other units.

Table 2
Staff interpretation of reasons why the University of Zambia has decentralized some central administration functions to units

Perceived Reasons	No. of staff (out of 140) who saw this as a reason	%
To enhance efficiency in running the whole University	126	90
To improve effectiveness in running the University	105	75
To relieve the central administration with work overload	30	21
To encourage participative management which promotes sense of responsibility, accountability and ownership	56	40
To shirk responsibilities by the central administration	3	2
No idea, no answer	20	14

Note: More than one response was allowed.

1.1.1 Interpretations of specific functions

When asked about what they thought were the reasons for decentralizing specific functions, teaching and senior non-teaching staff gave responses as reflected in Tables 3 to 6. (Note that in all cases respondents could make more than one response).

1.1.2 Teaching and senior non-teaching staff interpretations of reasons for the decentralization of running of examination

Among the several reasons cited by the respondents were that the central administration believed schools were the proper place to co-ordinate, organize and run examinations more effectively and efficiently than the academic office. Eighty seven percent of the respondents felt the decentralization was intended to enhance effectiveness, 41 percent believed it was a way of enhancing efficiency. The other responses included relieving the academic office of work overload or the central administration using it as a way of shirking its responsibilities, while some respondents were not sure of the reasons for the approach (Table 3).

Table 3
Staff interpretation of reasons why the University of Zambia has decentralized the running of university sessional examinations to schools

Perceived Reasons	No. of staff (out of 140) who saw this as a reason	%
To enhance effectiveness	90	87
To enhance efficiency	58	41
To relieve the academic office of work overload	5	4
To increase responsibility for schools	8	6
To make schools accountable	3	2
To shirk responsibilities by the central administration	1	0.7
To restructure the university workforce	1	0.7
Not sure	20	14

Among the identified areas of efficiency were that schools would improve the delivery system. Since schools would be dealing with smaller numbers, logistics would be easier and could be attended to more quickly. This would save time involved in the handling of examinations. The examinations would be run effectively because as schools dealt with smaller groups, examination organization and co-ordination would easily safeguard against leakages and other malpractices.

4.1.3 Teaching and senior non-teaching staff interpretations of reasons for the decentralization of financial management to units

Both the teaching and senior non-teaching staff who responded to the question on the decentralization of financial management believed it was done mainly to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the management and administration of finances in the units. From the 140 respondents, 33 (or 24 percent) indicated they had no idea why it was done, 90 (or 64 percent) felt it was intended to improve efficiency in financial management, 40 (or 29 percent) thought it was meant to enhance effectiveness in the management of finances in the units. The other perceived reasons were that it was a way

of reducing pressure on the central administration in the absence of meaningful funding from the government, help units generate their own funds, relieve the bursar's department of work overload, and help units learn to appreciate their financial needs (Table 4).

Table 4

Staff interpretations of reasons why the University of Zambia has decentralized financial management to units

Perceived Reasons	No. of staff (out of 140) who saw this as a reason	%
No idea, not sure, no answer	33	24
To enhance efficiency in revenue collection and expenditure	90	64
To enhance effective financial management in units	40	29
To reduce pressure on central administration in the absence of meaningful funding from the government	1	0.7
To help units generate their own money	11	8
To help units be more responsible	5	4
To allow units, schools control their own budgets and priorities	5	4
To decongest the bursar's department of work overload	6	5
To help units appreciate their financial needs	1	0.7
To reduce misapplication and misuse of funds by others other than the intended units	1	0.7

Among the several reasons touching on efficiency were that centralization tended to be slow in responding to urgent needs in the units. Decentralization was meant to facilitate fast and efficient procurement of essential items and ensure planning for these resources. The central administration devolved some functions as a realization that only people within the units know how best to solve their problems. The approach would curb red tape and other dysfunctions of bureaucracy. Units would closely manage and administer their finances and hence monitor irregularities and inefficiencies better.

he respondents believed decentralization of financial management was also intended to improve effective administration of the finances in the units. Units know their priorities better. Whatever money they made or received, would be properly channeled to improve the educational delivery system.

4.1.4 Staff interpretation of reasons for the decentralization of student admission

Over 50 percent of the 140 respondents among senior non-teaching and teaching staff felt the idea behind giving some authority to schools in the admission of students was because these units are in a better position to make informed decisions on the selection of applicants. Eighteen percent said they had no idea why schools were given this authority, 19 percent felt it was a way of enhancing efficiency in processing the selection and two percent believed it was a way of decongesting the academic office (Table 5).

Table 5

Staff interpretation of reasons why the University of Zambia had decentralized admissions of students to schools

Perceived Reasons	No. of staff (out of 140) who saw this as a reason	%
Schools are in a better position to make informed decisions on selection of applicants	75	54
No answer, no idea	25	18
It was a way of enhancing efficiency in sorting out admissions	26	19
It was a way of preventing undeserving students from entering the university	3	2
It was a way of decongesting the academic office of excess workload	3	2
It is just a way of shirking responsibilities by the academic office	1	0.7
It was meant to make schools responsible	1	0.7

4.1.5 Staff interpretations of reasons for the decentralization of management of space to units

This was one of the decentralized functions whose devolution was not understood by many teaching and senior non-teaching staff. Fifty-eight (or

41 percent) indicated that they had no idea why units were given authority to manage and control their space. The rest gave a wide range of reasons; 40 percent felt it was done to ensure more rational and equitable allocation of office space and lecture rooms; seven percent believed it was a way of letting schools raise some funds for their operations, and four percent felt it was a way of creating a sense of ownership which would lead to responsibility. Three percent felt it was just a subtle way for the central administration to run away from its responsibilities (Table 6).

Table 6
Staff interpretation of reasons why the University of Zambia had decentralized management of space to units

Perceived Reasons	No. of staff (out of 140) who saw this as a reason	%
No answer, not sure	58	41
To ensure more rational and equitable allocation of office space, lecture rooms etc.	56	40
To create in the units a sense of ownership and belonging	5	4
To let schools and units use space to raise funds	10	7
To run away from responsibilities by the central administration	4	3
To reduce dysfunctions of bureaucracy	3	2
To make it easier for units to plan	2	1

4.1.6 Staff interpretations of the decentralization of issues pertaining to external examiners

A large number of both teaching and senior non-teaching staff were not sure why the academic office had handed over to schools the responsibility of issues of external examiners. One hundred and three respondents (or 71 percent) were not sure, 26 (or 19 percent) felt it was done to enhance efficiency in the process of getting external examiners. One said it was just a way for the central administration to run away from responsibilities and another respondent felt it was done so that there is personal relationship between the school and the external examiner.

1.7 Confirmation of responses of senior non-teaching and teaching staff to the question of interpretation of the decentralization

When interviewed to indicate whether or not senior non-teaching and teaching staff had understood the reasons the University of Zambia had decentralized some management functions, the informants gave answers reflected in Tables 7 and 8. The informants to this question were 5 Deans of Schools, the Librarian and 10 Heads of department.

Table 7: Responses of Heads of unit and Heads of department to the question of senior non-teaching staff interpretations of decentralization at University of Zambia

Decentralized Function	Reponses from the 15 informants (frequencies)		
	Yes, senior non-teaching staff have understood the reasons	No, senior non-teaching staff have not understood the reasons	Can't say
Financial Management	8	6	1
Student Registration	8	4	3
Running of Examinations	9	4	2
Admitting Students	6	4	5
Management of Space	0	6	9

With the exception of the management of space (Table 7) the majority of the informants said that most teaching and non-teaching staff had correctly interpreted the objectives of the decentralization of management functions to units (Table 7 and 8).

Table 8: **Responses of Heads of units and Heads of department to the question of staff interpretation of reasons for the decentralisation at University of Zambia**

Decentralized Function	Responses from the 15 informants		
	Yes, teaching staff have understood the reasons for the decentralization	No, they have not understood the reasons	Can't say
Financial Management	8	7	0
Student Registration	10	5	0
Running of Examinations	10	5	0
Admitting Students	9	4	2
Management of Space	9	4	2

2. **Teaching and senior non-teaching staff qualifications in relation to competence requirements for carrying out the decentralized functions**

One major pre-condition before management devolution is made is a skills audit among change agents. In most cases initiated change fails because policy makers have not done enough background work in the area of ascertaining whether or not the perceived change agents are competent enough to carry out what is being delegated to them. In trying to find out whether staff qualifications and experience matched up to the demands of the decentralized functions, this study raised questions which are addressed in the next paragraphs.

4.2.1 **Decentralized functions in which teaching staff felt their current qualifications and experience could be of great use to their units**

In an attempt to assess staff readiness to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions, the research asked the respondents to indicate the decentralized functions in which they felt their current qualifications and experience could be of great use. Table 9 reflects the responses. From 105 respondents only 12 (or 11 percent) felt they had experience and skills in management of space, 27 (or 26 percent) thought had some competencies in financial management. Most of the teaching staff felt their current qualification were largely compatible with academic tasks like curriculum development in which 89 percent expressed this.

Table 9
Decentralized functions in which teaching staff felt their current qualifications and experience could be of great use to their units

Function	No. of staff who chose this (out of 105)	%
Financial management	27	26
Course development	93	89
Running of examinations	46	44
Formulation of criteria for student admission	46	44
Management and control of space	12	11
None of the above	2	2

Consequently, when asked to indicate the decentralized functions for which they felt the University of Zambia should organize workshops to equip the teaching staff with relevant management skills, most respondents among the teaching staff indicated curriculum development (Table 10). Seventy-one (or 68 percent) expressed this view. Contrary to the traditional assumption that teaching staff have little interest in non-academic administrative tasks, 68 (or 65 percent) respondents out of 105 felt the University should organize training workshops to equip teaching staff with financial management skills.

Table 10
Decentralized functions for which teaching staff felt the University of Zambia should organize workshops to equip teaching staff with skills

Function	No. of staff (out of 105) interested in this area	%
Running of examination	37	35
Financial management	68	65
Course development	71	68
Processing of data admissions, registration and examination	46	44
Space management	25	24

When asked to indicate the workshops they would attend if the University organized skills empowerment training, a large number of the sampled teaching staff chose the workshop looking at course development and the one looking at financial

management (Table 11). Sixty-six percent chose the workshop dealing with skills in course development.

Table 11
The workshops teaching staff would attend if they were organized by the University of Zambia

Function	No. of staff (out of 105) interested in this area	%
Workshop dealing with skills in course development	69	66
Workshop dealing with budgeting skills	53	50
Workshop dealing with skills in management of space	26	25
One dealing with skills in running and handling of examinations	33	31
None of the above workshops	5	5

4.2.2 **Skills which teaching staff already have that can help their units execute the decentralized functions**

As a way of assessing the capacity of units to handle the decentralized functions, a skills check on major decentralized functions was done. Respondents were asked to state the specific skills they thought would be useful to their department or unit in carrying out decentralized functions. The picture obtained depicted a dearth of the needed skills. From the 105 teaching staff, only 27 (or 26 percent) gave specific skills in curriculum development; 10 of these stated that they had skills in curriculum review and evaluation, 17 had skills in developing or designing courses. Fifty three respondents (or 51 percent) merely indicated they felt they had knowledge of curriculum development. They did not specify their skills. Twenty four respondents (or 23 percent) did not respond to the question.

When asked for skills in handling university sessional examinations 10 (or 10 percent) felt they had no skills, 31 (or 30 percent) indicated no skills, 16 (or 15 percent) stated they had supervisory skills in handling examinations, 20

(or 19 percent) felt they had skills in running examinations but did not specify. Twenty eight (or 27 percent) respondents specified skills that were not related to functions of decentralization.

For financial management, there was a large number of respondents that did not specify the competencies they thought would be of use in the department. Seventy-three (or 70 percent) indicated nothing or actually showed they had no competencies in financial management. Twenty one (or 20 percent) felt they had some basics in financial management accounting generally. Three (or 3 percent) stated had procurement skills, six (or six percent) indicated had budgeting skills and one respondent (one percent) had computer skills on spread sheets and database creation.

For management of space 75 (or 71 percent) from the 105 sampled teaching staff did not indicate any specific skills, 21 (or 20 percent) felt they had some basics on space management. Five (or 5 percent) specified skills that were not related to decentralization.

2.3 **Skills check among senior non-teaching staff**

When asked to indicate their specific skills in financial and space management, the sampled senior non-teaching staff gave similar responses to the ones received from the teaching staff. Among the 35 respondents 19 did not indicate any competencies related to financial management, five felt they had budgeting skills and nine had basics in accounting in general. For space management a wide range of skills was given. One indicated skills in space audit, another one had space marketing skills, 12 had administrative and managerial skills in space management. Fifteen respondents did not specify any skills in space management.

4.2.4 Decentralized functions in which senior non-teaching staff felt their current qualifications and experience could be of great use to their units

Most respondents among the sampled senior non-teaching staff felt they had no experience and skills in financial management. Among the 35 respondents, only 8 (or 23 percent) felt they had some capacity to participate in financial management. The majority of the senior administrative respondents felt their current experience and skills can be of great use in management and control of space. Twenty three (or 66 percent) out of the 35 respondents expressed this confidence (Table 12).

Table 12
Decentralized functions in which senior non-teaching staff felt their current qualifications and experience could be of great use to their units

Function	No. of staff who chose this (out of 35)	%
Financial management	8	23
Management and control of space	23	66
None of these	7	20

When asked to indicate areas of management competencies for which the University of Zambia should organize workshops for non - teaching staff, 60 percent of the respondents indicated financial management (Table 13). Only 11 percent indicated management of space. A good number felt that senior non-teaching staff should be empowered in managing academic functions as Table 13 reflects.

Table 13

Decentralized functions for which senior non-teaching staff felt the University of Zambia should organize workshops to equip non – teaching staff with management skills

Function	No. of staff who chose this (out of 35)	%
Financial management	21	60
Processing of data for admissions, registration and examination	13	37
Space management	11	31
Running of examinations	10	29
None, no answer	5	14

If the University of Zambia organized workshops, most senior non-teaching staff would prefer to attend one looking at management of space as Table 14 shows.

Table 14

The workshops senior non-teaching staff would attend if they were organized

Function	No. of staff who chose this (out of 35)	%
One dealing with budgeting skills	18	51
One looking at management of space	20	57
None of these	6	17

4.3 **Willingness of staff to participate in the implementation of decentralization at the University of Zambia**

4.3.1 **Willingness of teaching staff to participate in implementing selected management functions**

Two questions asked about staff willingness to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions. One asked respondents to rank the decentralized functions in the order of their preference of participation. If their departments came up with management teams to handle the decentralized functions, most sampled teaching staff indicated willingness to work with their preferred teams.

From the 105 respondents, 77 percent indicated they would work on the management team looking at the running of examinations (Table 15). However, a large proportion of this number expressed a weak desire to participate in the task. Among the 81 respondents who expressed interest to work with the team looking at the running of examinations, only eight indicated the team as their first choice in their ranking. Seventeen indicated it as their second choice. Fifty six placed it as their third, fourth or fifth choice (Table 15).

For the teams looking at financial decentralization, and the team looking at issues to do with admission of students and one looking at management of space, the responses were 73 percent, 74 percent and 68 percent respectively. Among the 77 who expressed interest to work with the team looking at financial management in their department 58 showed weak interest as seen in their ranking. These indicated the team as their third, fourth or fifth preference. The team looking at issues to do with admissions of students attracted fair interest as 50 percent of the respondents expressed strong interest. These chose the team as their first or second preference (Table 15).

The least preferred team among the sampled teaching staff was the team looking at management of space. From the 71 respondents who expressed interest to work on this team, 62 (or 87 percent) indicated it as their third, fourth or fifth preference.

The most popular team as expressed by the ranking was the team dealing with curriculum development. From the 98 respondents who expressed interest to work on this team, 63 (or 64 percent) indicated it as their first or second choice.

Table 15
Ranking of willingness of teaching staff to participate in implementing selected management functions

Total responses 105

Management team	As 1 st choice	As 2 nd choice	As 3 rd choice	As 4 th choice	As 5 th choice	Total	%
Team looking at planning of examinations	8	17	32	14	10	81	77
Team looking at financial decentralization in the department	19	17	15	23	3	77	73
Team dealing with course development	63	14	12	6	3	98	93
Team looking at issues of student admission	10	27	20	19	2	78	74
Team looking at management of space	3	6	4	11	47	71	68

Willingness to participate in the implementation of decentralized functions was also gauged by respondents indicating the number of hours they were prepared to devote to the activities of their preferred teams. From the 105 sampled teaching

staff, 23 (or 22 percent) indicated that they were only prepared to devote four hours per month to work with their preferred team. Nine percent indicated five hours, 16 percent were prepared to put in six hours, 18 indicated eight hours, 17 chose ten hours per month. The rest did not commit themselves to any amount of time, one of them clearly indicating that he/she would participate in management tasks only if it attracted extra remuneration (Table 16).

Table 16

Expression of commitment to work on the management teams by teaching staff expression in hours per month

Number of Hours per Month	Number of Responses out of 105	%
4 hours	23	22
5 hours	9	9
6 hours	16	15
8 hours	18	17
10 hours	17	16

3.2 Willingness of senior non-teaching staff to participate in implementing selected management functions

Among the senior non-teaching staff the team looking at financial management attracted more interest (Table 17). From the 35 respondents, 22 (or 63 percent) indicated the team as their first preference with only three (or nine percent) choosing it as their second choice. For the team looking at management of space only eight (or 23 percent) indicated it as their first preference.

Table 17**Expression of senior non-teaching staff willingness to participate in the implementation of decentralized functions**

Function	No. of respondents out of 35		Total	%
	As first choice	As second choice		
Financial management	22	3	25	77
Management of space	8	16	24	74

Most of the senior non-teaching staff were only prepared to devote four hours per month to work with their preferred management teams. Twenty from the 35 respondents indicated four hours, six indicated five hours and one indicated six hours. No one was prepared to devote more than six hours per month to the work of the preferred management teams (Table 18).

Table 18**Choice of hours to reflect preparedness by senior non-teaching staff to participate in decentralization**

Hours Per Month	Responses out of 35	%
4 hours	20 responses	57
5 hours	6 responses	17
6 hours	1 response	3
8 hours	0	0
10 hours	0	0

As a way of cross checking staff willingness to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions Heads of department and Heads of units were interviewed. Tables 19 and 21 confirm that although teaching staff are interested in the implementation of the decentralization functions, the majority at the moment have only a mild interest in participating in the implementation of the decentralized functions.

When asked about what they thought were the views of teaching staff in the units regarding their involvement in implementing selected decentralized functions, the interviewed Administrative Assistants to the Dean, Heads of departments and Heads of unit gave varied assessments.

As Table 19 shows, most sampled decentralized functions do not attract much willingness among staff regarding their involvement in implementing these functions. With an exception of registration of students and course development in which the Heads of department and Heads of unit felt their staff had shown positive interest, the rest attracted very mild interest.

Table 19
Assessment of views of teaching staff by their Heads of department and Heads of unit regarding willingness to be involved in implementing selected decentralized functions

Decentralized functions	Willingness of teaching staff as observed by their Heads of department and Heads of unit (out of 15 informants)				
	Very negative	Negative	Positive	Very positive	Can't Say
Budgeting in the unit	4	3	1	6	1
Registration of students	1	0	4	10	1
Admitting students to schools	0	0	3	7	5
Participating in course development	0	0	10	4	1
Participating in formulation of admission criteria and progression rules	0	0	4	7	4

4.3.3 The amount of co-operation unit managers receive from senior non-teaching and teaching staff regarding the implementation of the decentralized functions

Heads of department and Heads of unit were interviewed on the amount of co-operation they received from senior non-teaching and teaching staff when they were asked to participate in the implement of the decentralized functions. Tables 20 and 21 show that the co-operation is not very high. Only six informants indicated that they enjoyed full co-operation from teaching staff while seven had similar co-operation from non-teaching staff.

Table 20

Co-operation from senior non-teaching staff regarding their willingness to be involved in implementing decentralized functions as observed by their Heads of units, Heads of department and Administrative Assistants to Deans

Description of senior non-teaching staff's co-operation in implementing decentralized functions	No. of informants who responded out of 17
Full co-operation	7
Fair co-operation	3
Positive co-operation	4
Difficult to assess	2

Table 21

Co-operation from teaching staff regarding their willingness to be involved in implementing decentralized functions as observed by their Heads of department, Heads of unit and Administrative Assistants to Deans

Description of teaching staff co-operation in implementing decentralized functions	Number of informants out of 17
Full co-operation	6
Full but very selective (prefer academic functions)	4
Good co-operation	6
Very little	1

If departments formed management teams, the number of Heads of department and Heads of unit who would find it easier to involve senior non-teaching and teaching staff in the decentralization is reflected in Table 22 below.

These findings show that unit managers found it relatively easier to involve teaching staff in academic functions (Table 22). From 15 respondents, 13 said they found it easier to involve teaching staff in running of examinations, student admissions. Fourteen respondents found it easier to involve teaching staff in course development.

Table 22

The number of Heads of department and Heads of units who would find it easier to involve senior non-teaching and teaching staff in implementing decentralized functions.

Decentralized function	Number of Heads of department and Heads of units who would find it easier to involve the two groups of staff (out of 15)	
	Non-teaching staff	Teaching staff
Budget preparation	8	7
Student registration	8	7
Running of examinations	5	13
Student admission	2	13
Management of space	2	6
Course development	1	14

What can be observed here is that most unit managers also find it difficult to involve teaching staff in non-academic matters, such as management of space and budget preparation. The majority of the Heads of Department did not have senior non-teaching staff in their departments. They therefore found it difficult to assess the willingness of the senior non-teaching staff commitment to the implementation of the decentralized functions.

3.4 Frequency distribution of teaching and senior non-teaching staff responses to decentralization of selected management functions at the University of Zambia

When asked to indicate whether or not they agreed with the central administration's decision to decentralize some of the management functions to units, the majority of the respondents expressed support for the approach. From the continuum grading their degree of agreement or disagreement, (Table 23) 80 percent supported the decentralization, 15 percent could not indicate whether or not they supported the policy. However, there was notable disagreement on the decentralization of some functions. For schools processing data on admissions, registration and examinations, 72 out of 140 respondents supported the devolution, 58 disagreed. For the Directorate of Research approving postgraduate research proposals, 91 out of 140 respondents supported the idea, 39 disagreed with the policy. Sixty-three disagreed with the policy of Deans having some authority on issues of courses in their schools. Other areas where there was some notable disagreement were on schools running examinations, schools handling issues of external examiners and units processing without having to go through the central administration (Table 23).

Table 23

Frequency distribution of teaching and senior non-teaching staff responses to decentralization of selected management functions at the University of Zambia

Decentralization of function	RESPONSES OUT OF 140 RESPONDENTS				
	Agree	Totally agree	Disagree	Totally disagree	Can't say
Units preparing their own budgets.	30	102	1	3	3
Units having their own bank accounts.	30	102	0	0	0
Units having their own signatories for bank accounts.	32	97	4	2	2
Units processing payments without involving central administration.	38	85	9	3	4
Units having their own financial officers.	38	84	8	3	4
Schools running examinations.	41	72	15	11	1
Schools handling all issues of external examiners.	56	52	22	7	3
Units managing their space.	52	61	14	7	6
Units handling the initial stage of staff promotion and appointment.	36	97	4	3	0
Deans having some authority on issues of courses in their school.	37	38	32	31	8
Schools having some authority on student admissions.	57	69	4	7	1
Schools processing data on admissions, registration and examinations	39	33	36	22	10
Directorate of Research approving Postgraduate Research proposals.	55	36	26	13	9
Schools approving the research proposals of graduate studies.	57	70	3	5	4

4.4 Findings on the amount of decentralization operating in the units

In trying to find out how much decentralization units were enjoying in different decentralized functions, the managers of the units were interviewed. The informants on this question were Heads of units, Heads of departments, Administrative Assistants to Deans and Accounting Officers. The informants were asked to assess the level of decentralization by grading it (Table 24).

Table 24

Assessment of decentralization in the units by unit managers

Decentralized function	Level of decentralization in the units as graded by 17 unit managers				
	Very much	Much	Not much	Very little	Almost none
Financial management	8	6	1	1	1
Running of examinations	8	5	2	0	0
Admission of students	2	7	2	0	4
Registration of students	8	6	1	0	1
Management of space	5	5	5	0	0

These findings depict units as perceiving a high level of decentralization. In financial devolution, 14 (93 percent) of the informants indicated their units were so far enjoying high level of decentralization. For decentralization in the running of examinations, 13 (or 87 percent) felt their units had high level of decentralization. For admission of students, registration of students and management of space 12 (or 86 percent), 14 (or 93 percent) and 10 (or 67 percent) respectively, of the informants said that the decentralization was high in their units.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

A case for decentralization in universities has already been made in chapter two. In this chapter an attempt is made to analyze the findings on the four parameters that guided the data generation, and these are staff interpretation of the objectives of the management decentralization at the University of Zambia, staff preparedness to participate in the implementation of the decentralization, staff willingness to be involved in the decentralization, and whether or not there is a discrepancy between the model of decentralization in the policy document and the one(s) operating in the units.

1. Discussion of Staff Interpretations of reasons for Decentralizing some Management Functions at the University Of Zambia

The first hypothesis of this research was that the decentralized management style at the University of Zambia had been correctly interpreted by senior non-teaching and teaching staff.

The responses to the questionnaire on this question reflect a wide range of perceptions of the reasons for the decentralization. However, as already reported in chapter four, most senior non-teaching and teaching staff felt the decentralization was adopted mainly in order to enhance efficiency and effectiveness in running the whole university (Table 2). They felt the approach was meant to address the dysfunctions of bureaucracy in the institution. Decentralization had reduced intransigent bureaucratic obstacles in managing finances, running of examinations, student admissions and management of space (Tables 3,4,5,6).

1.1. Efficiency and effectiveness resulting from financial devolution

Taking financial devolution as an example of the impact of the decentralization at the University of Zambia, there is remarkable improvement in the efficiency of managing the units. The study found out that staff felt that the devolution of financial management had freed the units

from the unnecessary requirement of having all their financial transactions go through the bursar's office. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate a comparison between the centralized and the decentralized systems.

Figure 2

Process of raising a cheque in a centralized system at the University of Zambia

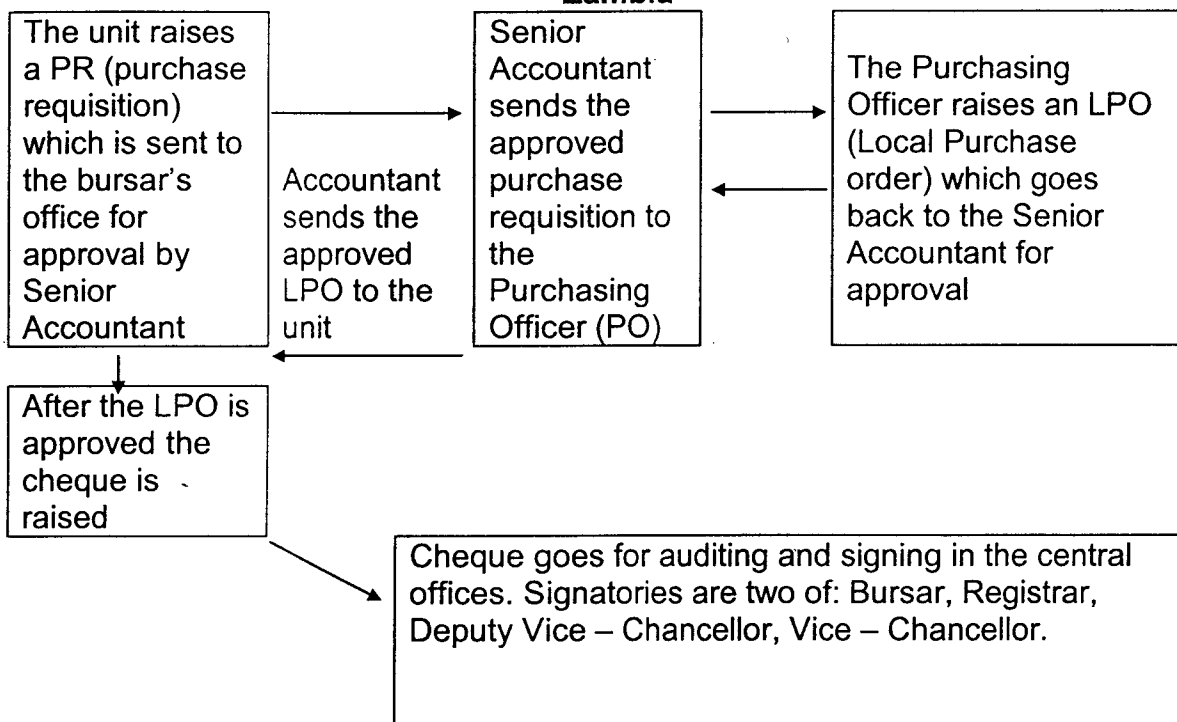
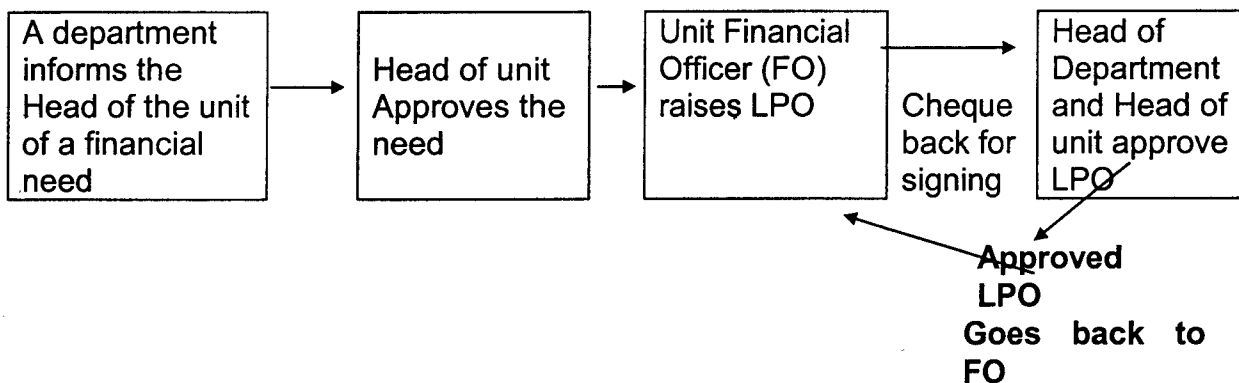


Figure 3

Process of raising a cheque in decentralized system at the University of Zambia



The process of raising a cheque in a centralized system was long. One interviewed financial officer revealed that sometimes it might take as long as two weeks to do so. In the new system of decentralized financial management, a unit can raise a cheque within a day. This is because the whole process of raising a cheque including signing is now done within the unit. In the decentralized system, the unit provides its own signatories. In the old system two of the institutions senior officers (Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Registrar and Bursar) were involved in signing cheques for even minor purchases.

When asked about how financial decentralization had helped management of their units, most heads of units echoed what their staff said. Most of them felt it had reduced delays in processing payments for critical operations. This is an economic imperative that has prepared units for income generation activities because they are able to gain customer confidence as they expeditiously attend to their needs. Thus in the School of Veterinary Medicine, procurement of drugs for customers' sick animals is now done in a timely way. In the School of Agriculture, farmers who want to have their soil samples tested quickly can have this done with minimum delays. This is because if the Department of Soils does not have chemicals for the job, procurement can be made without having to go through the long process of raising a cheque.

5.1.2. Interpretations of the objectives for devolving other functions

Devolution of the running of examinations had created efficiency in that time was being saved since there were few hands involved. Effectiveness was being achieved because the intended goal of tight security was assured. If there was any leakage, it was easy to trace it back to somebody. The Heads of department and Deans who were interviewed on this new policy, expressed satisfaction with its operation so far. There is enhanced security as schools have devised their own security measures to curb leakages of examinations. Typing is done by the individual lecturer. If it is delegated to

another person other than the lecturer concerned it is done under the direct supervision of the Head of department. The number of hands involved in preparing examinations has gone down from seven to three or four (Box 1). The decentralized approach also enhances effectiveness and efficiency because each school handles logistics for a smaller number of candidates.

BOX 1: Different arrangements of people involved in examination preparations.

- Lecturer in-charge + Head of Department + Dean.
- Lecturer in-charge + selected secretary + Dean. (where the school has no departments)

Efficiency in the devolution of student admissions is achieved because it becomes faster when schools, who already have the required database on selection requirements are involved.

The majority of the staff who responded to the questions on management of space and issues of external examiners were not sure why the central administration had devolved these functions. The most likely reason why staff could have missed the decentralization of these functions is that the nature of the tasks do not attract as much attention as do the other devolved functions.

Decentralization of examination and financial management generate more interest than that of management of space (Table 6). The effect of decentralizing issues of external examiners can be felt by very few people. It is a task that revolves around the Dean, a Head of department and the Administrative Assistant to the Dean.

5.1.3. Confirmation of Responses of Senior Non-Teaching and Teaching Staff to the Question of Interpretation of the Decentralization

When interviewed to indicate whether or not senior non-teaching and teaching staff had understood the reasons the University of Zambia had decentralized some management functions most informants affirmed that the two categories of staff had understood the objectives for the decentralization (Tables 7 and 8).

5.1.4. What Heads of unit and Heads of department believe are the reasons for decentralizing management functions at University of Zambia

The Heads of department and Heads of unit said the University of Zambia had decentralized some management functions because of the reasons reflected in Box 2.

BOX 2

Heads of unit and Heads of department interpretations of reasons the University of Zambia decentralized management functions.

- It was demanded by the Units themselves.
- It was intended to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the running of the University.
- It was seen as a way of rationalizing personnel establishments.
- It was seen as a way of helping the units raise some income.
- It was intended to make units become more responsible.
- Decentralization was to facilitate reliable planning by the units.
- In academic matters, the central administration had no choice but devolve such to schools.

Conclusion on first hypothesis

The conclusion that can be drawn from the findings is that most senior non-teaching and teaching staff understand the reasons for the decentralization of management functions at the University of Zambia. Reviewed literature shows that in any education change, clarity of reasons for the reform lays a firm foundation for the implementation of such policy shift. Clarity of change leads to co-operation between policy makers and change agents in implementing the reform. Much still needs to be done at the University of Zambia if this decentralization is to work effectively. One of the things that should be attended to quickly is decentralization skills empowerment among the staff.

5.2. Discussion of staff experience and qualifications in relation to decentralization

The second guiding hypothesis of this study was that most senior non-teaching and teaching staff at University of Zambia felt their qualifications and experience were not compatible with the skills needed in carrying out the decentralized functions in their units.

5.2.1. Decentralized functions in which teaching staff felt competent to participate

When asked to indicate the decentralized functions in which they felt their current qualifications and experience could be of great use most respondents at University of Zambia did not feel they had relevant skills (Table 9). They did not feel their current skills would enable them to participate in the management of space and finances. The majority felt their domain was curriculum development. Less than 50 percent of the respondents indicated some degree of competence in running of examinations and handling issues of student admissions (Tables 9,10, 11).

When asked to indicate their training needs most indicated that the University should empower teaching staff in financial management and

curriculum development (Table 10). What can be discerned from this response is that though a large number of the teaching staff felt they already had relevant skills in curriculum development, there were still some perceived skill needs.

When contacted for confirmation of these findings, most interviewed Heads of department and Heads of unit felt this skills need in curriculum development applied to certain categories of teaching staff especially newly appointed junior lecturers.

One of the striking observations in these findings is that only a modest number of teaching staff wanted further skills empowerment in management of space, running of examinations and processing of data for student admissions and registration (Tables 10 and 11). The only area of their skills inadequacy in which they expressed interest for skills empowerment was financial management.

What can be inferred from these findings is that while teaching staff have appreciated the reasons for decentralizing most of the administrative functions to units (Tables 23 and 8) they have only limited interest in participating in the implementation of these functions.

5.2.2. Decentralized functions in which senior non-teaching staff felt competent to participate

The majority of respondents among senior non-teaching staff felt they did not possess adequate competencies to participate in financial management in their units. Most of them felt their current qualifications and experience could be of great use in management of space in their units (Tables 12 and 13). When asked about training needs in which they felt they needed empowerment, most respondents indicated financial management and management of space (Tables 13 and 14). What can be inferred from these

findings is that although senior non-teaching staff felt they already had competencies in management of space, they still felt there was room for further skills empowerment in that area.

After cross checking with the Heads of department and Heads of unit, it was confirmed that senior non-teaching staff had some management deficiencies.

5.2.3. Conclusion on second hypothesis

The striking observation on the issue of staff competencies in relation to the implementation of the decentralized functions is the dearth of the relevant skills. According to the findings of this research, most teaching and senior non-teaching staff at University of Zambia feel their current qualifications and experience are not compatible with the management skills needed in carrying out the decentralized functions.

5.3. Discussion of staff willingness to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions

The third hypothesis that guided this research was that most teaching and senior non-teaching staff at the University of Zambia were willing to participate in the implementation of the decentralized management functions.

5.3.1. Findings on willingness of teaching staff to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions

According to the findings of this research most teaching staff are willing to participate in the implementation of the decentralized management functions (Tables 15 and 23). However, what should be taken note of is the varying degrees of willingness (Table 15). Except for participation in management of space, a good number of teaching staff have expressed good interest to be

involved in running of examinations, handling issues of student admissions and financial management. This is seen in their ranking. The majority of those who expressed moderate willingness to participate in the implementation of these functions, ranked the functions as first, second or third. There was an overwhelming willingness to participate in course development, where a large number of those who expressed interest to participate in this function ranked it as their first or second choice (Table 15).

These rankings agreed very well with teaching staff responses to the questions of skills empowerment (Table 10 and 11). While teaching staff expressed skill inadequacies in financial management, running of examinations, management of space and handling issues of student admissions, they showed good interest in skills empowerment in these areas. What can be observed from these findings is that teaching staff have an average interest to participate in the implementation of most of the decentralized functions.

As a way of cross checking staff willingness to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions Heads of department and Heads of unit were interviewed. Tables 8, 19 and 21 confirm that although teaching staff are interested in the implementation of the decentralization functions, the majority at the moment have no more than a mild interest to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions.

When asked about what they thought were the views of teaching staff in the units regarding their involvement in implementing selected decentralized functions, Heads of department and Heads of units had observed that the staff had shown more interest in registration of students and course development than they had done in the rest (Table 19).

5.3.2. Findings on senior non-teaching staff willingness to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions

The findings show that most senior non-teaching staff are willing to participate in the implementation of decentralized functions (Tables 17 and 18). Three things need to be mentioned when looking at senior non-teaching staff's interest to participate in the implementation of management functions.

One of these is that some of the non-teaching staff have no choice when it comes to participating in the implementation of the decentralized functions. The nature of their work and the job descriptions attached to their work and offices demand that they participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions. The Chief Technicians and Administrative Assistants to the Deans in the schools have no choice but to be involved in management and to some extent processing of procurements for their units' activities. Therefore, the interest the senior non-teaching staff have expressed to participate in the implementation of decentralized functions should be looked at as degree of dedication and loyalty to carry out that which is demanded by duty.

The second observation to mention regarding the senior non-teaching staff's willingness to participate in the implementation of decentralized functions is the reduced range to the decentralized tasks in which they can be expected to participate. It was irrelevant to gauge willingness of most of them in areas of academic nature especially course development, student admissions, examinations and student registration.

Thirdly, cross checking with Heads of department and Heads of unit on the degree of senior non-teaching staff willingness to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions was restrictive. Some departments do not have senior non-teaching staff. Such departments declined to make any observations on the question.

With these observations in mind, the conclusion on senior non-teaching staff willingness to participate in decentralized functions is based on their interest to be involved in management of space and financial management (Tables 17 and 18). The findings show that most staff are more interested in participating in financial management than in managing space.

In addition, the degree of interest in financial management was further expressed in the ranking; the majority had it as their first choice (Table 17). When asked to indicate the amount of time they were prepared to devote to performing decentralized functions, the majority went for the minimum number of hours (Table 18). This is a proxy of interest. Unlike the teaching staff whose devotion of time to decentralized functions was relatively spread out (Table 16), the devotion of time by senior non-teaching staff was at a minimum (Tables 18). The likely reason for this is that unlike the teaching staff who have some freedom to choose which decentralized function to participate in, non-teaching staff are usually duty bound to participate in the implementation of management functions. The amount of time teaching staff were prepared to devote to the implementation of decentralized functions was likely a reflection of their level of interest in the tasks in question.

Heads of departments and Heads of units were interviewed on the amount of co-operation they received from senior non-teaching staff when they were asked to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions. Most of them indicated that their units enjoyed good co-operation from the senior non-teaching staff (Table 20). However, departments with no senior non-teaching staff could not confidently assess the co-operation (Table 19).

5.3.3. Conclusion on third hypothesis

The findings of this research have shown that senior non-teaching and teaching staff at the University of Zambia are willing to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions. They have also

overwhelmingly agreed that decentralization is the right approach to running the University (Table 23). What must be noted however, is that the interest to participate in the implementation of the decentralized functions is not as high as their expression support in principle. It is not surprising that most Heads of departments and Heads of Units indicated that they found it difficult to involve teaching staff in carrying out non-academic decentralized functions (Table 22).

5.4. **Discussion of findings on the comparison of the decentralization in policy documents and the ones operating in the units**

The fourth hypothesis asserted that there was a discrepancy between the decentralization put forward by policy makers in the *University of Zambia Strategic Plan* and the one(s) actually operating in the units. To assess how much decentralization the units were enjoying in the units, unit managers were interviewed. Heads of units, Heads of department, Administrative Assistants to the Deans' and Accounting officers were asked to grade the decentralization of the decentralized functions (Table 24).

The findings so far show that there is a high level of decentralization in the units on most of the decentralized functions. Therefore there is no discrepancy between the decentralization from policy makers and the ones actually operating in the units.

The research further found out that schools were already performing the stated decentralized tasks relating to examinations (Appendix E). Schools typed, printed, collated packed, sealed and safely kept their examination question papers. The academic office gave schools authority to develop water-tight procedures of processing and handling examination question papers. The findings show that based on that delegated authority schools sealed loop-holes for possible leakages (Box 1 above).

For financial devolution, the informants also felt their units were exercising much of the stated decentralization. The research found out that each unit already had its own financial officer who did the books and processed payments for purchases (Figure 3 above). Each unit had come up with its own signatories as authorized by the *1997 University of Zambia Revised Financial Regulations*.

Findings on the amount of decentralization on the management of space showed that units were exercising the devolved tasks regarding management of space. Both *the University of Zambia 1994-1998 Strategic Plan* and the *1997 Revised Financial Regulations* have allowed units to use space, where they can, to generate funds for their operations. The research found out that units that had space that could be hired out or used to generate funds were doing so. Some schools hired out their classrooms to private organizations for conferences, seminars and short courses.

The School of Agriculture leases farmland to members of the University community at a fee that goes to its account. The Department of Soil Science in the same school uses its laboratories for soil tests for its clients. The School of Veterinary Medicine opens its animal clinic to clients from the general public.

Units also carried out minor repairs to their infrastructure using their own initiative and funds. At the time of the research one school had done some minor repairs to the ceiling of the office of one head of department while another school had painted some classrooms and repaired some of its chairs.

In registration of students, schools were also carrying out the decentralized function. The interviewed Heads of department and Heads of unit felt there was much decentralization in this area too (Table 18). With the help of

computers, each school conducted the registration exercise within its premises.

Some operational problems are, however, hampering smooth implementation of some functions.

One of the operational problems that recurred in most of the interviews was that in financial devolution there is very little money in the units. With little or nothing, it was not easy to appreciate the financial devolution. The financial powers which the *1997 University of Zambia Revised Financial Regulations document* and the *University of Zambia 1994-1998 Strategic Plan* have given to units will only fully work when money to spend is available. There is also need for provision of computers in some units.

The other noted operational problem was in the area of running the examinations. Most schools complained that the central administration decentralized running of the examinations to schools without accompanying financial support. It was too expensive for the schools to run examinations. They were forced to go back to the central administration for financial back up to run the examinations.

Admission and registration of students also needed material back up. Computers are needed for the exercise. There are some schools where there was an inadequate supply of computers for this exercise.

5.4.1. Conclusion on the fourth hypothesis

The findings of the research after interviewing the units' managers is that units at the University of Zambia are exercising the stated level of decentralization in the policy documents. There is no discrepancy between the decentralization in the documents and the one operating in the units. For this conclusion to be appreciated one needs to analyze critically the University of Zambia policy documents which have stated the

administration they still remain accountable to it. Annual reports have to be sent to the central administration.

Academic decentralization in the *University of Zambia 1994-1998 Strategic Plan* is shrouded in a language that conceptualizes it into deconcentration rather than devolution. The schools have to carry out their delegated powers "subject to" Senate regulations.

Decentralization of the management of facilities including space is alluded to in the *University of Zambia 1994-1998 Strategic Plan*. The 1997 University of Zambia financial regulations give guidelines on custody and disposal of University property. *The 1999 University Act reiterates the 1992 University Act* which states that all funds and assets are to be managed by the University Council. This then rules out strong forms of decentralization in managing the units at the University of Zambia.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1 CONCLUSION

This study examined staff preparedness to participate in the implementation process of the decentralization of selected management functions at the University of Zambia. There were four guiding principles; the question of clarity of the objectives for the decentralization to critical stakeholders, the preparedness of the change agents in the area of managerial competencies, their level of willingness to participate in the implementation of the decentralization, and the agreement or lack of agreement between the stated decentralization in the policy documents and the ones operating in the units.

The question of clarity of the objectives for decentralizing selected functions to units has been established. Most teaching and senior non-teaching staff understand the main reasons for the approach. However, there is need to clarify decentralization of some of the functions. The findings of the study have shown that while stakeholders understand reasons for decentralizing most of the functions, there is much speculation among the staff regarding reasons why some functions have been divested by the central administration.

A comparison of compatibility of staff experience and qualifications with the relevant competencies needed to implement decentralization in the units shows that there is considerable need for an alignment between the two. Both teaching and senior staff feel their current qualifications and experience are enough to help them participate in implementing some decentralized functions. A need for bridging-up training has been acknowledged by both categories of staff.

There is overwhelming support by both senior non-teaching and teaching staff for the decentralized functions to units. However, there is an apparent contradiction between this support and personal willingness to participate in the implementation of the functions. The overwhelming staff support as seen in their responses does not tally with their expressed willingness to participate in the implementation of the approach. Most respondents are only prepared to make a minimum commitment.

After interviewing unit managers, it has been established that units are exercising the level of decentralization stated in the policy documents. There is no discrepancy between documents and the decentralization in the units.

6.2 Recommendations

Against the background of a highly dynamic international environment in general and the Zambian one in particular, the University of Zambia has no choice but to intensify decentralization of a number of management functions. However, it will help the institution if the following recommendations are seriously noted:

- 6.2.1. Since key stakeholders in the University highly appreciate and support decentralization as an administrative and management approach, the central administration should devise and adopt strategies to sustain it.
- 6.2.2. According to the findings of this research most key stakeholders who are not in administrative positions such as Dean or Head of Department overwhelmingly support the University of Zambia's decision to intensify decentralization as an administrative approach but do not have a corresponding willingness to participate in the decentralized functions. The recommendation here is that the central administration initiates strategies to motivate interest in its staff. One such strategy is to regularly communicate to the university community the positive impact of the decentralization on the management of the university.

6.2.3. A large number of staff have acknowledged a need for skills empowerment in various decentralized functions. Since the present management practice of the university is to involve a large number of its staff in the running of the institution, skills empowerment is crucial.

There is need to embark on training programmes in key competence areas, especially the following:

- Management skills such as public relations, planning, organizing, controlling and co-ordinating. At the University of Zambia, these functions are performed by a large number of both teaching and non-teaching staff. What varies is their degree of involvement.
- In addition to the above, staff will need basic bookkeeping skills. They will need to appreciate the accounts involved in departmental transactions. Administrative Assistants to the Dean, Heads of department, Deans and other Heads of unit should be included in this category. Financial skills empowerment for these, will increase the capacity of the units to handle financial decentralization.
- Newly appointed junior lecturers will need skills empowerment in course development.
- Computer literacy is a necessity for a large number of senior non-teaching and teaching staff. This is because an institution that adopts decentralization as a management approach must also improve its data collection, processing and dissemination strategies. Computer literacy therefore becomes a necessity.

6.2.4 To address the need for skills empowerment the University of Zambia will find it helpful to consider the following:

- Conduct in-house training for staff.
- Make full use of workshops on university management organized by International Organizations such as the United Nations Educational and Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Association of African Universities (AAU), the International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP). The British Council, the Netherlands Organization for International Co-operation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) and the German Foundation for International Development (DSE) also support programmes on management of universities.

6.2.5. Reviewed literature on decentralization advises that devolution should be done incrementally, increasing it as staff readiness and preparedness grow. With this advice in mind, this research recommends that before the University of Zambia embark on the next phase of decentralization, staff readiness and preparedness be improved.

6.2.6. Longitudinal studies on the impact of decentralization on the institution's management practice should be initiated by the University Council. The studies should cover a long period, and should be focused on both achievements and failures. There is need for top management to periodically examine how much decentralization is being implemented by the change agents in the units. Both Senate and Council should be calling for periodic updates on decentralization in the selected functions this research has addressed. Council and Senate will then assess whether or not the objective of decentralization in the university is being met. These longitudinal studies should also continue to monitor staff interest in participating in the implementation of the decentralized functions. If the interest is low, the central administration should motivate it through workshops. Currently, as this research has established, teaching staff have shown very little interest in

non-academic management functions such as space management. The university should find ways to address this observation. The outcome of these longitudinal studies should be communicated to all stakeholders. While the announced achievements will help the stakeholders see the viability of decentralization at the University of Zambia, its failure will stimulate extra effort.

2.7. The University of Zambia Council has decided to conduct a job evaluation exercise (Times of Zambia, 22 May 2000). The exercise will include an assessment of the current staffing structure with a view to examining whether or not there is need for staff recruitment, retraining or redeployment. In the light of what this research has found out regarding staff competencies, this report recommends that the terms of reference for the evaluation exercise should include conducting a comprehensive skills audit of staff; skills unique to the current decentralization in the University.

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APPENDIX A
SURVEY INSTRUMENT
(FORTEACHING STAFF)

SEX.....	STATUS
AGE: 24 – 34	1. Professor []
35 – 44	
45 – 54	2. Senior Lecturer []
55 – 64	
Over 64	
DEPT.....	3. Other levels []
SCHOOL /UNIT.....	

NOTE:

- (a) Please do not write your name on the Questionnaire.
- (b) The Questionnaire covers both old and new decentralization.
- (c) Answer questions in appendix A. Appendix D may merely be used for reference as NOTES.

What is your considered view in respect of decentralization of the following central administration functions to schools/units?

1. Units/schools preparing their own budgets.
 1. Totally agree []
 2. Agree []
 3. Can't say []
 4. Totally disagree []
 5. Disagree []
2. Schools/units having their own bank accounts.
 1. Totally agree []
 2. Agree []
 3. Can't say []
 4. Totally disagree []
 5. Disagree []
3. School/units providing their own signatories to their bank accounts.
 1. Totally agree []
 2. Agree []
 3. Can't say []
 3. Totally disagree []
 4. Disagree []
4. Schools/units to process payments for recurrent expenditures without involving central administration.
 1. Totally agree []
 2. Agree []
 3. Can't say []
 4. Totally disagree []
 5. Disagree []
5. Schools running examinations.
 1. Totally agree []
 2. Agree []
 3. Can't say []
 4. Totally disagree []
 5. Disagree []

6. Schools to handle all issues pertaining to external examiners.
- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |
7. Schools being given power to manage and control infrastructure with their premises.
- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |
8. School/units participating in the initial stages of appointments and promotions of their staff.
- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |
9. The Dean deciding on the courses students should take, those from which they may be exempted and their continuation or discontinuation in school programmes.
- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |
10. In consultation with the Board to Studies, the Dean having authority over all that relates to the structure and content of course in his school.
- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |

16. If your department came up with management teams to handle some administrative functions, what would be your order of preference in choosing the teams you would work with. (Put the number in the boxes).

1. The team looking at running of examinations []
2. The one looking at financial decentralization in the department. []
3. The one dealing with course development and administration. []
4. The team looking at issues to do with admission of students and actual admission of students. []
5. The one looking at management of space. []
6. None of the above. []

17. How much time per month would you be prepared to devote to the job of the task teams.

1. 4 hours []
2. 5 hours []
3. 6 hours []
4. 8 hours []
5. 10 hours []

18. If workshops were organized to give staff further training in skills needed in the decentralization process which one(s) would you like to attend (you can choose more than one).

1. The one dealing with budgeting skills. []
2. The one dealing with skills in running and handling examinations. []
3. The one looking at skills in course development. []
4. The one looking at management of space. []
5. None of these. []

19. In which of the following decentralized functions do you believe your current qualifications and experience can be of great use to your unit/dept. (You can choose more than one).

1. Financial management. []
2. Running of examinations. []
3. Course development. []
4. Formulation of criteria for student admission. []
5. Management and control of space. []
6. None of the above. []

20. Which of the above functions do you think should not be handled by academic staff.

(a)
.....
.....

(b) Reasons for your answer

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

21. How often have you been involved in the following since you joined the University of Zambia?

1. Preparing departmental budgets.

- (a) more than 5 times []
- (b) 3 - 5 times []
- (c) less than 3 times []

2. Planning revenue generating ventures.

- (a) more than 5 times []
- (b) 3 - 5 times []
- (c) less than 3 times []

3. Processing of student admission applications in your school.

- (a) more than 5 times []
- (b) 3 - 5 times []
- (c) less than 3 times []

4. Formulating or changing course contents.

- (a) more than 5 times []
- (b) 3 - 5 times []
- (c) less than 3 times []

22. Have you been involved in supervising the process of preparing sessional examinations since this function was decentralized to schools?

- Yes []
- No []

23. For which of the following decentralized functions do you think the University should run workshops to equip teaching staff with skills

- 1. Running of examinations []
- 2. Financial Management []
- 3. Space Management []
- 4. Processing of data for admission, registration and examination []
- 5. Course development []

24. What skills do you already have that can help your unit execute the following decentralized functions

FUNCTION	SKILLS
1. Running of examinations	
2. Financial Management	
3. Space Management	
4. Processing of data for admission, registration and examination	
5. Course development	

25. What in your opinion are important reasons why the University of Zambia is decentralizing some central administration functions to schools and units

- 1.
.....
.....
.....
- 2.
.....
.....
.....

3.
.....
.....
.....

26. Why are the following functions decentralized to schools/unit?

1. Running examination
.....
.....

2. Financial management
.....
.....

3. Handling of issues of external examiners
.....
.....

4. Management of space
.....
.....

5. Admission of students as explained in Appendix D
.....
.....

Thank you very much for your assistance in answering the questions.

APPENDIX B
SURVEY INSTRUMENT
(SENIOR NON – TEACHING STAFF)

SEX.....

- AGE: 24 – 34
 35 – 44
 45 – 54
 55 – 64
 Over 64

DEPT.

SCHOOL /UNIT.....

SALARY SCALE :.....

What is your considered view in respect of decentralization of the following central administration functions to schools/units?

1. Units/schools preparing their own budgets.

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |

2. Schools/units having their own bank accounts.

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |

3. School/units providing their own signatories to their bank accounts.

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |

4. Schools/units to process payments for recurrent expenditures without involving central administration.

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |

5. Schools running examinations.

- | | | |
|----|------------------|-----|
| 1. | Totally agree | [] |
| 2. | Agree | [] |
| 3. | Can't say | [] |
| 4. | Totally disagree | [] |
| 5. | Disagree | [] |

6. Schools to handle all issues pertaining to external examiners.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

7. Schools being given power to manage and control infrastructure with their premises.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

8. School/units participating in the initial stages of appointments and promotions of their staff.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

9. The Dean deciding on the courses students should take, those from which they may be exempted and their continuation or discontinuation in school programmes.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

10. In consultation with the Board to Studies, the Dean having authority over all that relates to the structure and content of course in his school.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

11. In consultation with the Board of Studies, the Dean having authority over all that relates to the structure and content of course in his school.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

12. Schools having authority to reject or accept applications for students admissions to programmes offered in that school.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

13. Schools, instead of the Computer Centre, centrally processing student data regarding admission, registration and examinations.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

14. The Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies approving research proposals and selecting graduate students on behalf of Senate.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

15. Schools approving research proposals of graduate students.

- 1. Totally agree []
- 2. Agree []
- 3. Can't say []
- 4. Totally disagree []
- 5. Disagree []

16. If your department came up with management teams to handle some administrative functions, what would be your order of preference in choosing the teams you would work with. (put the number in the boxes)

- 1. The one looking at financial Decentralization in the department []
- 2. The one looking at management of space []
- 3. None of these []

17. How much time per month would you be prepared to devote to the job of the task teams

- 4 hours []
- 5 hours []
- 6 hours []
- 8 hours []
- 10 hours []

18. If workshops were organized to give staff further training in skills needed in the decentralization process which one(s) would you like to attend (you can choose more than one)

- 1. The one dealing with budgeting skills []
- 2. The one looking at management space []
- 3. None of these []

19. In which of the following decentralized functions do you believe your current qualifications and experience can be of great use to your dept/unit.

- 1. Financial management []
- 2. Management and control of space []
- 3. None of these []

20. Which of the above functions do you think should not be handled by non-teaching staff:

(a)

(b) Reasons

21. How often have you been involved in the following since you joined the University of Zambia

1. Preparing departmental budgets
 - (a) less than 3 times []
 - (b) 3 – 5 times []
 - (c) more than 5 times []
 - (d) Not at all []

2. Planning revenue generating ventures
 - (a) less than 3 times []
 - (b) 3 – 5 times []
 - (c) more than 5 times []
 - (d) Not at all []

3. Preparing departmental budgets
 - (a) less than 3 times []
 - (b) 3 – 5 times []
 - (c) more than 5 times []
 - (d) Not at all []

22. For which of the following decentralized functions do you think the University should run workshops to equip non-teaching staff with skills

1. Running of examinations []
2. Financial management []
3. Space management []
4. Processing of data for admission, registration and examination []
5. Course Development []

23. What skills do you already have that can help your unit execute the following decentralized functions

What skills do you have in:	Write down your skills
Financial management	
Management of space	

24. What in your opinion are reasons why the University of Zambia is decentralizing some central administration functions to schools and units

.....

.....

.....

25 Why are the following functions decentralized to schools/unit

1. Running examinations

.....
.....

2. Financial management

.....
.....

3. Handling of issues of external examiners

.....
.....

4. Management of space

.....
.....

5. Admission of students as explained in Appendix D

.....
.....

Thank you very much for your assistance in answering the questions.

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

(FOR HEADS OF UNITS, HODS, AADS AND ACCOUNTING OFFICERS)

SEX.....	STATUS
AGE: 24 – 34	1. Head of Unit []
35 – 44	
45 – 54	
55 – 64	
Over 64	
DEPT.....	2. Head of Dept []
SCHOOL /UNIT.....	3. AAD []
	4. Financial Officer []

SECTION A: FOR SCHOOLS

1. How much do you regard your unit as having decentralization in the following areas.

1.1. **Financial Management**

- (a) Very much []
- (b) Much []
- (c) Not much []
- (d) Very little []
- (e) Almost none []

1.2 **Running of examinations**

- (a) Very much []
- (b) Much []
- (c) Not much []
- (d) Very little []
- (e) Almost none []

1.4. **Registration of students**

- (a) Very much []
- (b) Much []
- (c) Not much []
- (d) Very little []
- (e) Almost none []

1.5. **Management of space**

- (a) Very much []
- (b) Much []
- (c) Not much []
- (d) Very little []
- (e) Almost none []

2. What do you think is the view of most teaching staff of their involvement in the following.

2.1. **Budgeting in the unit**

- (a) Very negative []
- (b) Negative []
- (c) Very positive []
- (d) Positive []
- (e) Can't say []

2.2. **Registration of students**

- (a) Very negative []
- (b) Negative []
- (c) Very positive []
- (d) Positive []
- (e) Can't say []

2.3. **Admitting students to schools**

- (a) Very negative []
- (b) Negative []
- (c) Very positive []
- (d) Positive []
- (e) Can't say []

2.4 **Participating in course development**

- (a) Very negative []
- (b) Negative []
- (c) Very positive []
- (d) Positive []
- (e) Can't say []

2.5. **Participating in formulation of admission criteria and progression rules**

- (a) Very negative []
- (b) Negative []
- (c) Very positive []
- (d) Positive []
- (e) Can't say []

SECTION B : FOR UNITS OTHER THAN SCHOOLS

1. How much do you regard your unit as having decentralization in the following area

1.1 **Financial management**

- (a) Very much []
- (b) Much []
- (c) Not much []
- (d) Very little []
- (e) Almost none []

FUNCTION	TICK
1. Preparing budgets for the units	
2. Management of space	
3. Registration of students	
4. Processing admissions of students	
5. Running of examinations	
6. Handling issues of external examiners	

5. What in your opinion are the reasons for decentralizing the following functions to units?

1. Financial Management
.....
.....
2. Running of examinations
.....
.....
3. Registration of students as explained in Appendix D
.....
.....
4. Admitting of students as explained in Appendix D
.....
.....
5. Management of infrastructure within their premises
.....
.....
6. Course development
.....
.....
.....
7. Approval of Research Proposal for Postgraduate students as explained in Appendix D.
.....
.....
.....

6. If the University was to organize short courses, workshops and seminars to equip staff with skills in implementing decentralization in the university, what skills do you think the following would need in the stated functions.

1. Senior – non teaching staff in your unit

FUNCTION	SKILL
1. Financial Management	
2. Management of space	

2. Teaching staff in your unit

FUNCTION	SKILL
1. Financial Management	
2. Management of space	
3. Registration of space	
4. Admission of students	
5. Running of examinations	
6. Approval of postgraduate proposals	
7. Course development	

7. What skills do you think these two categories of staff in your unit already have in the stated functions

1. Senior – non teaching staff in your unit

FUNCTION	SKILL
1. Financial Management	
2. Management of space	

2. Teaching staff in your unit

FUNCTION	SKILL
1. Financial Management	
2. Management of space	
3. Registration of space	
4. Admission of students	
5. Running of examinations	
6. Approval of postgraduate proposals	
7. Course development	

APPENDIX D

DECENTRALISATION OF CENTRAL ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTIONS TO SCHOOLS AND OTHER UNITS

For a long time now the University of Zambia has involved schools and other units in execution of the following administrative functions.

A. STUDENT ADMISSIONS

Subject to Senate control over admission requirements schools decide on all matters pertaining to the admission of students to their schools. After the academic office has sorted the application forms, they are sent to schools for them to make their selections. Each school makes a selection which has to be defended at a Senate Admissions Committee meeting. Apart from admitting first applicants, schools have delegated authority to accept or reject applications from returning students who want to change quotas or schools.

The latest added tasks include each school doing its own data processing of information such as biodata. This exercise which previously was centrally done by the Computer Centre, calls for skills such as computer literacy and efficient record keeping.

B. STUDENT REGISTRATION

While the central administration does administrative registration, schools handle academic or course registration. In the past all schools joined the academic office in one place to do registration. Currently, there is geographical decentralisation. Each school does the registration in its premises using its own facilities such as computers.

C. POSTGRADUATE REGISTRATION, ADMISSIONS AND RESEARCH PROPOSAL

While schools do the course registration, preliminary selection of students and the initial approval of research proposals, the final stages of these functions have been decentralised to the Directorate of Research and Graduate Studies which carries them out on behalf of Senate.

Each school has delegated power to approve or reject the main proposal document. What is forwarded to the Board of Graduate Studies is the one page summary of the student's approval proposal.

D. STUDENT INFORMATION PROCESSING

Previously, student information pertaining to examination, admission and registration was centrally done by the Computer Centre. This has been decentralised to schools. Schools have to produce their own examination marksheets and attendance slips. For admission and registration, each school processes the student bio-data on its computers.

E. DEVOLUTION REGARDING COURSES IN THE SCHOOL

Subject to the general control of Senate, the Dean decides on the courses students take, those from which they may be exempted and their continuation or discontinuation in school programmes. In consultation with the Board of Studies, the Dean has authority over all that relates to the structure and content of courses and consequently can decide on initiation, change, or termination of courses in any discipline in his school. This is one of the oldest decentralised functions. The latest development is that this has been re-emphasized in the 1994-1998 strategic plan.

F. MANAGEMENT OF SPACE

Each school/unit has for a long time been given powers to control certain office spaces, classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories and other infrastructure seen fit for their operations. This will continue. In some cases some school/units are using these to raise some revenue for themselves. They have also been carrying out minor repairs to the same.

G. STAFF APPOINTMENTS AND PROMOTIONS

Each unit has an appointment and promotions committee comprising the Head of the unit and Heads of Departments. The committee does preliminarily stages close to establishing a "prima facie" case before the central administration and council ratifies or objects to the recommendation. There are future plans to give more powers to units regarding recruitment of junior staff.

H. RUNNING OF EXAMINATION

Each school is now responsible for the administration and conduct of university examinations pertaining to it. Most of the tasks that used to be done by the academic office are now done by schools. These include typing, packing, sealing, safe keeping of examination question papers and scripts. Preparing and

safe keeping of attendance slips and marksheets. It is also now the responsibility of each school to handle the invitation, travel arrangements, receiving and upkeep of external examiners. Honorarium and other allowances are to be by each concerned school. It is the responsibility of the school also to publish the approved sessional examination results.

I. FINANCIAL DEVOLUTION

- Each unit has been allowed to have its own bank account. Signatories for these accounts come from within the unit;
- Each unit can procure some items and services without prior approval of the central administration except when it involves capital items;
- Each unit has a budget committee that helps Head of the unit prepare its budgets;
- The Head of unit is a budget holder with the following financial powers:
 - (a) In charge of all financial matters in their schools/units and ensure that financial regulations are adhered to by their accounting officer.
 - (b) Be the first signatories on all accounts under their control.
- The second signatories on all accounts in the unit are from within the school/unit;
- Each school/unit has been given a professional financial officer whose duties, interlia, is to write books of accounts.

APPENDIX E DEVOLVED FUNCTIONS
SCHOOLS: GUIDELINES AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY IN RUNNING
EXAMINATIONS

1. Each School is responsible for the administration and conduct of University examinations pertaining to it.
 2. The examination questions in each School is submitted to respective Deans who will take personal responsibility of getting questions typed (on diskettes) and kept safely.
 3. Just before examination the concerned Dean in each particular School will print out one copy of question papers of each examinable course for supervised photocopying, packing sealing in labelled envelopes and provide the necessary security.
 4. Sealed envelopes containing question papers are to be returned to respective Dean for safe keeping until the day of examination.
 5. Alternatively and as the most desired arrangement, examination questions for each course in the School be prepared, typed collated, duplicated, printed, photocopied, packed, sealed in labelled envelopes and kept safely by the concerned lecturer until the day of the examination.
 6. Deans are free to delegate the job of supervising the processing of examination questions to a named member of academic staff in the School at the level of Head of Department or Assistant Dean.
- NB: Each School is free to develop water tight procedures/ways of processing and handling examination question papers.

7. Internal arrangements be made by each School (if desirable) to have a timetable for photocopying/duplicating/collating examination question papers.
8. The Chief Invigilators and other invigilators shall be appointed by Deans.
9. Each School is responsible for identifying and preparations of examination venues and should liaise with Properties Office to ensure that the necessary furniture and sitting arrangements are put in place.
10. Each School shall ensure that sitting arrangements for students in examination rooms is done in an orderly manner. It is recommended that seats in each roll be numbered and that corresponding numbers be written on cards to be randomly picked by students at the front of each roll as they take their seats. The number on a particular card will direct the student where to sit in any given roll.
11. Schools shall be responsible for preparation, custody, and administration of attendance slips and mark sheets.
12. Responsible for postage of Examination question papers to External Examiners. Invitation, travel arrangements, receiving and upkeep of External Examiners honorarium and other allowances shall be paid by each concerned School. Deans to identify and appoint External Examiners in liaison with the Vice-Chancellor.

ACADEMIC OFFICE (examination section): GUIDELINES AND AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

1. Responsible for the proper administration and conduct of University examinations generally.
2. Responsible for ensuring compliance with examination regulations and ensuring that these are known to students and academic staff.
3. Preparation of Master Examination Time-Tables for main, deferred and supplementary examinations.
4. Monitoring the conduct and administration of examinations by the Schools to ensure accountability, fairness, professionalism and maintenance of examinations ethics.

Source: Academic Office