

**THE NATURE OF THE SCHOOL – COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIP IN  
SELECTED BASIC AND HIGH SCHOOLS IN KALOMO DISTRICT**

**BY**

**KANJAMBO NKUMBWA**



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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA IN  
PARTIAL FULFILMENT FOR THE AWARD OF DEGREE OF MASTER  
OF EDUCATION IN SOCIOLOGY OF EDUCATION**

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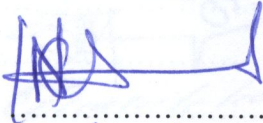
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## DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the "Nature of School-Community Relationship in Selected Basic and High Schools in Kalomo District" is my work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged.

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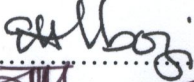
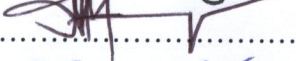

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## APPROVAL

This dissertation of Kanjambo Nkumbwa is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters of Education in Sociology of Education by the University of Zambia.

Signed		Date	23/07/2009
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## **DEDICATION**

This piece of work is dedicated to my late father, S.K. Nkumbwa

## ABSTRACT

The Ministry of Education in 1996 decentralized the education system in Zambia. The rationale behind it was to encourage community participation in provision of education. Therefore, the Ministry of Education implored schools to create close links with local communities in which they are located. However, the relationship varies from one school to another.

The focus of this study was on the nature of the school-community relationship existing in Kalomo District. The study tried to establish the basis of this relationship. In this study, school-community relationship referred to the co-operation or interaction between the school and the community.

The study had four (4) main objectives and these were:

- i) To find out the nature of the school-community relationship in Kalomo District.
- ii) To find out ways through which the community participates in the activities of the school.
- iii) To find out ways through which schools and teachers participate in the community activities.
- iv) To find out ways through which school-community relationship can be strengthened.

The study followed a descriptive research design. Interviews and focus group discussions helped to derive the respondents' opinion on the nature of the school-community relationship existing between local communities and schools in Kalomo District, and how this relationship can be strengthened.

The main findings of the study revealed that the school-community relationship in Kalomo District has gone beyond the provision of financial and material resources to include school governance. Members of the community participate in school governance

through their involvement in decision-making. Decision-making is done through various meetings that are held between schools and their local communities. Parental and community participation in school activities is mainly done through the consultative bodies such as Parent and Teacher Associations (PTAs) and School Education Boards.

The study further identified some ways that may strengthen school-community relationship. These ways were: holding regular consultative meetings, schools inviting members of the community to attend many school-related events, schools to be available for open discussion, strengthening PTAs, improving communication and sensitizing the local communities on health and environmental issues.

The study recommends that the Ministry of Education should review the existing legislations regarding the operations and membership of the PTA in order to harmonize it with the government's decentralization policy in education. This would facilitate full community participation in education. Members of the community without children in their local schools should participate fully in the school activities. Further, schools should not fail to hold PTA annual general meetings. It is through such meetings that individual members of the community take part in decision-making and interact with teachers.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

- AIDS - Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
- ASTRA - Australia Science Teachers Association
- DEBS - District Education Board Secretary
- HIV - Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- MOE - Ministry of Education
- PTA - Parent - Teacher Association
- SDA - Seventh Day Adventist
- TB - Tuberculosis
- USA - United State of America

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The issue of the school-community relationship has been the subject of many researchers for many years. Studies conducted in Australia (McInerney, 2005), South Africa (Myeko, 2000), Scotland (Martin and Tett, 1999), Canada (Cavarretta, 1998) and USA (Epstein, 1995) point to the necessity of parents and community involvement in education. The studies showed the importance of school-community relationship to the well being of a child, the community and the school.

In 1996, the Zambian government, through the Ministry of Education, came up with the national policy in education. The main objective of the national policy on education was to create partnership in education (MOE, 1997). The rationale behind the idea of partnership was to narrow the gap between the school and its community. This partnership entailed that the school should play a role in the life of its community and the community should also play a role in the life of its school.

To facilitate the creation of partnership, the education system in Zambia has been decentralized so as to involve the community in the running of the schools (MOE, 1997). Thus School Education Boards were created. School Education Boards were expected to work closely with communities. Schools, therefore, were expected to create health relationships with their local communities. Through this relationship, it was hoped that schools and communities would share their resources, services, skills and physical facilities.

The involvement of communities in education in Zambia is done through Parent-Teacher Associations (PTAs), School Education Boards and other bodies like the School Management Committees. PTA serves as a forum through which parents and teachers share ideas and experiences. Through PTAs, communities carry out projects through provision of building materials, labour, land, and money (MOE, 1997). In basic schools

parents also participate in the school health and nutrition programme through provision of labour and money.

However, scholars such as Ball (1996), Caverratta (1998), Uzzell (1999) and Sanders (2001) argue that the school-community relationship should go beyond the provision of materials and financial resources. It should also involve decision-making and direct interaction between school and communities

Following government directives, schools in Zambia have developed a relationship with their local communities. However, the nature of the relationship varies from one school to another especially when it comes to practice. Hence, the question is: What types of relationships exist between schools and communities in Zambia? The study tries to explore the nature of the school-community relationship in Kalomo District. In doing so the study tries to look at the ways through which the community participates in the affairs of the school and also ways in which school participates in the affairs of the community.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The government, through the Ministry of Education encourages schools to co-operate with their local communities (MOE, 1997). This is because it considers parents and communities as partners in development. Parents and communities have been implored to take an active role in the education of their children. Schools, too, are implored to play a role in the affairs of their local communities. Therefore, Zambian schools are expected to have a close relationship with the local communities in which they are located. However, there is a problem when it comes to practice. The relationship seems to vary from one school to another depending on the level of interaction and participation. Hence, the problem under investigation is: What is the nature of the school-community relationship existing in Kalomo District? What are the bases of this relationship?

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of the school-community relationship in Kalomo District.

#### **1.4 Research Objectives**

The following objectives guided the study:

- i) To find out the nature of the school-community relationship in Kalomo District.
- ii) To find out ways through which local communities participate in school activities.
- iii) To find out ways through which schools and teachers participate in local community activities.
- iv) To find out ways through which school-community relationship can be strengthened.

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

The following research questions guided the study:

- i) What is the nature of the school-community relationship that exists in Kalomo district?
- ii) What are the ways through which local communities participate in school activities?
- iii) What are the ways in which schools and teachers participate in community activities?
- iv) What are the ways through which school-community relationship can be strengthened?

#### **1.6 Significance of the Study**

The study is aimed at providing an understanding of the nature of the relationship existing between schools and communities in Zambia. This study is important because it gives information on the nature of school-community relationship from a Zambian perspective. This knowledge is also important, as it would be helpful to policy makers, school administrators and members of the School Education Boards and PTAs that might use the findings to build a close school-community relationship. The study, therefore, would help schools to produce a continuity of educational support for children and improve the educational delivery so that more children can learn better.

### **1.7 Delimitation of the Study**

The study was carried out in one district and six schools due to time and financial constraints. The study was specifically based on the school-community relationship. There were three high schools and three basic schools in the study.

### **1.8 Limitation**

The study should not be considered as a full representative of the whole province or country. The study was conducted to establish the nature of the relationship between the community and the school in Kalomo District. However, the findings of this study provide an insight into the nature of the school-community relationship in Zambia.

The researcher met some difficulties due to financial constraints and some of the targeted people were suspicious of the researcher thinking he was sent by the District Education Board Secretary's office. Other respondents complained that they were tired of interviews that did not benefit them.

### **1.9 Operational Definitions**

- Community – Bray (1987:11) defines community as a “group of people who share social, economic and cultural interests.” In this study community refers to a group of people living in an area in which the school is located.
- *A close relationship- A relationship in which the community participates in the activities of the school, and the school/teachers also participate in the activities of the community. In this relationship, there is interaction, co-operation and integration between the school and the community.*
- Urban area – An area with improved infrastructure and high level of economic activity. This is an area characterized by more people having access to electricity, safe water and good sanitation.
- Rural area – A remote and underdeveloped area where the main economic activity is farming. An area characterized by more people having no access to electricity and safe water, and use pit latrines.
- Peri-urban area –An area that has both the characteristics of urban and rural areas.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the literature on the concept of ‘school-community relationship,’ school-community relationship models and the nature or types of school-community relationships. The chapter also explores the challenges encountered in trying to foster school-community relations, and outlines ways of strengthening school-community relationship.

### **2.2 School -Community Relationship Concept**

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines relationship as “the way in which two or more things are connected or affect each other” (2003: 1384). Therefore, it follows that school-community relationship is a connection or link between the school and the community for the benefit of the child, the community and the school.

As for Berger (1983), school-community relationship is the co-operation among parents, teachers, administrators and the community meant to provide a system needed for continuous supportive educational programs for preparing children into productive adulthood. This is a relationship in which parents, community and the school join forces to support a child. They work as a natural team. In this relationship there is understanding of each other’s feelings and concerns between community members and teachers. There is also integration and continuity in this relationship. He further argued that communication between the community and teachers is important to sustain the relationship.

Mitrofanova (2001) and Epstein (1995) describe school-community relationship as a partnership among families, communities and schools. Partnership refers to parents and teachers’ complimentary roles in relation to the education of a child. In this partnership, schools and communities work together for the common good of the child. For Mitrofanova, this relationship is based on the connection between school and community resources. He argues that this may involve among other things the use of school and community facilities and equipment, sharing of other resources, mentoring, networking,

and shared responsibility for planning and implementation. For others like Lane and Dorfman (1997), and Davies (1991), school-community relationship is collaboration between schools and communities. According to Lane and Dorfman, this collaboration is aimed at strengthening and increasing social capital, and also increasing the ability and capacity of the community to utilize stocks of social capital.

School-community relationship, therefore, is the relationship between the school and the community. This relationship is necessitated by the fact that schools serve the community in which they are located. For schools to serve the community effectively, they must work together with their local communities. It is this working relationship that is referred to as school-community relationship.

### **2.3 School-Community Relationship Models**

Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English (2003: 1058) defines a model as a “scientific description of something.” The school-community relationship model, therefore, is a theoretical framework designed to show the school-community relationship as a concept or working system. This section, therefore, looks at four (4) models developed by Epstein (1995), Uzzell (1999), Kilpatrick et al. (2003) and Erickson (2004).

#### **2.3.1 Epstein’s Six-type School-Community Relationship Model**

The school-community relationship model developed by Epstein (1995) is based on the degree of parental involvement in the school. Epstein’s theoretical model for the parent/school/community relationship has six aspects. These are the parenting model, the communicating model, the volunteering model, the learning at home model, the decision-making model, and the collaboration-with-the community model. Each model has different objectives and produces different results.

In a parenting model, the school helps families in their support role and parents help schools to understand families while in a communicating model of relationship, the school keeps families informed on the progress of the pupils and changes to curriculum. The volunteering model of relationship aims at involving families in education and organizing support for pupils. Learning at home model aims at helping families to

become involved in the learning processes at home. The decision-making model of relationship aims at involving parents in the decision-making at school, within the administration, and in the community structure. The objective of the collaboration-with-the-community model is to coordinate resources and services for pupils, families, and school with the local business house and service providers.

Epstein's model is based on what schools could do to facilitate the involvement of parents. It puts emphasis on schools to provide support for parents to participate in learning. It does not put into consideration what schools could do for the benefit of the community. Therefore, it is a one-way type of relationship.

### **2.3.2 Uzzell's School-Community Relationship Model**

The model developed by Uzzell (1999) identifies four common aspects of school-community relationship in the area of education for environmental action in Australia. These aspects are relationship where the school is isolated from the surrounding community; the relationship where the local community is invited into the school as a resource person; where the school is a guest within the community; and the relationship where there is communication between the school and the community (or a dialogue relationship).

An isolated school-community relationship is the relationship where environmental education is only conducted in the classroom while the relationship where the community is invited into the school is characterized by partial opening of the school to the community. School as a guest relationship is a relationship where there is partial opening between the school and the community, and pupils address their activities to the community. A dialogue relationship is a relationship where there is communication and 'dialogue' between the school and the community.

However, Uzzell advocated for the dialogue relationship. In this relationship the barrier between the school and community is "to be broken down further through co-operation and through dialogue on the concrete, local environmental issues and their possible solution" (1999:411). Furthermore, in a dialogue relationship, the power is equally

shared between the school and the community. There is also the presence of the community members in the school and pupils are active in the community.

Although Uzzell acknowledges the need to identify the balance of power in the school-community relationship, however, a close examination of the description of the dialogue relationship shows that it puts more emphasis on the role of the school in the relationship than the community. He described a dialogue relationship as a situation where:

The barriers between the school and the local community should be permeable, community members are present in the school and the pupils are active in the community (1999:411).

On the other hand, the idea of equal sharing of power between the school and the community is not plausible for Zambian schools since management of schools is the responsibility of education boards. Parents also have no say on policy issues. Policy makers are responsible for policy issues (MOE, 1997).

### **2.3.3 The School-Community Relationship Model Developed by Kilpatrick and Others**

Kilpatrick et al. (2003) came up with a model similar to Uzzell's dialogue relationship that focused on improving environmental education in Australia. They called it a mature relationship model. This model is based on the assumption that the community:

Share the belief that education is the responsibility of the whole community and (they are able to) work together, drawing on the skills and knowledge of the community as a whole and experience benefits that extend beyond producing a well-educated group of people (2003:4).

Therefore, in a mature relationship, the community plays a leading role in decision-making in the school. Community members have a great control on vision setting in the school. The school is also considered as a learning centre.

Like the dialogue relationship model developed by Uzzell, the mature relationship model acknowledges the need for equality in power sharing between the school and the

community; but puts emphasis on the role of the school in the relationship than the community. For instance, Kilpatrick et al. mentioned one of the characteristics of a mature relationship as when “all groups in the community view the school as a learning centre” (2003:4). But it is also not possible for the community in Zambia to play a leading role in decision-making because there are other factors at stake. For example, management of schools is the responsibility of education boards, and parents have no say on policy issues. School administrators are responsible for implementing policy issues (MOE, 1997).

#### **2.3.4 Erickson’s Relational Models of Parent-School Relationship**

Erickson (2004) developed relational models of parent-school relationship based on parental involvement in the school. These are separation, partnership, user participant, and choice models. Separation model is based on the evident differences between the school and parents in terms of expectation and values involving unavoidable conflict. According to this model, the expectations and values of parents are different from those of the school.

The partnership model is based on the concept of equal opportunities and academic skills that are behind the concept of learning and efficiency. The user participation model recognizes parents as active citizens within a participatory democracy. Parents participate in the school through consultative bodies such as Parent and Teacher Associations. In a choice model of relationship, parents choose what they consider to be the best for their children.

On the Zambian scenario, the national policy of the government on education also allows parents and members of the community to participate fully in education (MOE, 1997). Parents mainly participate in the affairs of the school through PTA. Parents, too, choose what is best for their children in terms of the nature of the school they would like their children to be. However, unlike the separation model, schools and parents in Zambia have a common interest in education, which is to educate a child.

## **2.4 The Nature of School-Community Relationships**

Many studies that have been carried out on school-community relationship have revealed many types of school-community relationships. The study carried out by Brooks and Kavanaugh (1999) in Southern Texas, USA that focused on empowering the surrounding communities reviewed a relationship based on the community as a resource. The relationship, where the community was identified as a resource, was the common relationship in all the schools in the study. The school looks to the community for financial, material and human resources. An extension educator, Mitrofanova (2001) also acknowledges a relationship based on the community as a resource. He considers school-community partnership as a connection between schools and community resources.

The study carried out by Ball (1996) on school inclusion in USA identified seven different types of relationships based on the mode of parental involvement in the school. They were modeled around Epstein's (1995) model of school-community relationship. The first relationship is based on the communication between home and school. This is a relationship where there is an exchange of information between families and schools. The second type of relationship is based on school support for families. The support involves matters of health, development and creating conducive learning environment at home. The third type is based on family and community support for the schools. Parents and other community members may help the children and school management in school activities.

Ball's fourth type of school-community relationship is where schools offer assistance for learning at home. Schools help families to develop learning at home. Equipped with this knowledge, parents will be in the position to help in the learning of their children at school. The fifth type of relationship involves collaboration with community agencies. These community agencies provide schools with access to community and support services for children and families. The sixth type of relationship is based on community education. Schools provide learning opportunities to all members of the community regardless of age. The last one is the relationship based on the participation of parents in decision-making and management of the school. In this relationship parents and

community representatives take part in the school governing bodies, parent and teacher association and advisory committees.

Writing on the decision-making based relationship, Cavarretta (1998), who carried out a study in an area outside Chicago, shows how parents became involved in their district school. Concerned parents shared in the decision-making process that empowered families to take part in major school decisions. The study revealed that more than four hundred volunteers had been recruited by the district to work in planning teams of parents, teachers, students, community members, and administrators. Like Ball's decision-making based relationship, the relationship between the district school and the community in Cavarretta's study was based on decision-making.

However, scholars like Mehran and White (1988) argue that the effectiveness of the school-community relationship does not depend only on making decisions about the children's educational needs but also on the nature of interactions among participants in the relationship. Contrary to the views expressed by Mehran and White, Rubin and Rubin (1992) argue that school-community relations are administrative functions aiming at consolidating a community that is equal.

The results of the ten case studies that were commissioned by *Ministère de L'Éducation, du Loisir et sport* (2006) in Quebec on school-community relationship reveal that the collaboration between schools and communities depend on educational, social, and administrative issues. Educational issues focus on improving services to improve students' achievement while social issues involve co-operation between schools and community. On the other hand administrative issues are of financial nature. Three types of school-community relationships emerged from the ten case studies. These three types of school-community relationships are the shared school, the expanded school, and the networked relationships. The shared school relationship is based on corporate vision and aims at responding to administrative issues. It is also based on sharing assets.

Like the shared school relationship, the expanded school relationship is based on a corporate vision; however, it is evolved around educational issues. These educational

issues are aimed at fostering students' achievement. The expanded school type of relationship is based on the premise that the involvement of the community in the activities of the school will enhance students' well-being and learning outcome. Sanders (2001:20) describes it as a partnership where:

Links between the school and community are based on promotion of students' social, emotional and intellectual development, mentoring, job shadowing, loan of equipment or venues, and contextual learning.

Unlike the shared and expanded types of relationships, the networked school relationship is based on a development vision in response to social issues. It views school projects as community projects. The best relationship is one that has all the three characteristics since all the issues mentioned in the study are the main concerns of the education system.

In his study of the role of rural schools in community development, Miller (1995) describes the contribution of the rural school to community social capital as a partnership consisting of three-related components and these are school as a community centre, community as curriculum, and school-based enterprise. All the three elements reflect learning opportunity and experiences between school and community. School is considered as a community centre for life-long learning. It is an avenue for the delivery of a range of services. The school considers community as a curriculum. It is important to study the community in its various forms. The traditional classroom walls have to come down, and students use the community as their 'living laboratory'. School-based enterprise is aimed at developing entrepreneurial skills, and students establish a business to address the service need of the community. School-based enterprises include child day-care centres and delicatessens.

Another study which was carried out by Martin and Tett (1999) that focused on developing collaboration partnership between the school and community in Scotland revealed that most of the partnerships in Scottish schools focussed on the provision and use of school facilities. There was very little community or parental involvement with non-school agencies.

However, school-community relationships are not always confined to sharing facilities as shown by studies carried out by Ball (1996), Cavarretta (1998), and Brooks and Kavanaugh (1999). This was also confirmed by the study that was carried out in Wattle plain, Australia by McInerney (2000). He found out that the relationship was extended to educative dialogues with different members of the school and community. He stated further that the idea of power sharing and the development of democratic relationship was the centre of the school philosophy.

Discussing the issue of school-community relationship, Dunlap and Alva (1999) concluded that the successful school-community relationship had common characteristics. Among these characteristics are various involvement with families, business and community leaders; collaboration among teachers and administrators; funding from government; partnership that foster academic achievement; shared responsibility from all members; and provision for family and community. Although Delgado-Gaitan (2001) acknowledged common characteristics mentioned by Dunlap and Alva (1999), he argues that the most important factor in school-community relationship is parental involvement. He pointed out that parents linked schools to the community.

Elaborating on the issue of school-community partnership, Sadker and Sadker (1988) show how schools in America have gone beyond the immediate family to establish partnership with different community groups. In Pittsburgh, the American-Jewish committee and the urban league raised funds for schools. In Houston, architects taught students insights into the history and structure of the city's building while in St. Louis, lawyers held mock court sessions in schools to teach students about the real working of the legal systems. These examples show the type of school-community relationships existing in America.

The nature of school-community relationship varies from one area to another depending on the composition of the characteristics of the community. Parelius and Parelius (1978) have compared and contrasted school-community relationships in small towns, black ghettos, white ethnic enclaves and affluent suburbs. They indicated that school policy and programmes were influenced by social composition, cohesion and independence of the community. Their conclusion was that there was not always a simple and direct

communication between what the community wanted and the school programme and policy. Such close relationships only existed in affluent areas. Therefore, “a community of high rank cohesion and independence may secure schools that clearly reflect its distinctive values and aspirations” (Parelius and Parelius, 1978: 360).

Litwak and Meyer (1974), who conducted a study that focused on the practice of school-community relationship in Detroit, USA, revealed three positions practiced by schools. These are closed-door, open-door and balanced-door positions. This classification is based on the level of interaction between the school and the community. The closed-door position sees community involvement in the school affairs as interference. According to this position, schools are able to handle the major problems of education and therefore, there should not be community involvement in the running of the school. The community has no knowledge of what is happening in the school and parents are not trained to run schools. Community members also feel that it is not their business to run schools. The task of the parents is to provide resources.

The open-door position is based on the assumption that many of the basic education process take place in the community, that is, the family and peer groups. This school of thought prefers closer contacts between schools and their local communities. Both the school and community members have a role to play. On the other hand, a balanced door position favours both the characteristics of open and closed-door positions. The balanced door position recognizes two possible problems in the school-community relationship. If the relationship is so closer, it would weaken professional standards. On the other hand, if the relationship is too far apart and lacks co-ordination, it would cause contradictory influence to result from both sides.

For Zambian schools, the closed-door position is not plausible because the school is a creation of the community and depends on community resources for survival. Education system, too, has been decentralized as such parents should be fully involved in the education of their children (MOE, 1997); and complete open and closed-door positions are abstract ideas.

Kilpatrick et al. (2003) who conducted a research on maturing school-community relationship in rural Australia identified three levels of maturing of school-community relationship. They classified the maturity of the relationship as either early, middle or late based on who, between the school and community, initiated the relationship. An early relationship is initiated by the school while a mature one is initiated by the community. In an early relationship, decision-making is weighted towards the school while in a mature relationship it is towards the community. A mature relationship is created when the community has a greater control on vision setting and decision-making in a school.

The review of literature in this section has shown that there are different types of school-community relationships. The nature of the relationship depends on the co-operation and interaction between the school and the community. The relationship varies from one school to another and from one community to another. However, most of the studies reviewed focused on the parental involvement in the education of the child, with less focus on the involvement of the school in the community.

## **2.5 The Challenges Encountered in Trying to Foster School-Community Relationship**

There are many challenges encountered in any relationship, and school community relationship is no exception. Thus there are many factors that hinder fostering of close school-community relationship. Acknowledging the existing problem in school-community relationship, Fullan (2001:198) observes that there are many variables that can make it “more or less probable that closeness will occur” between schools and communities. Ball (1996) argues that teachers find partnership with parents difficult and feel that the curriculum demands all their time. They have no time to foster relationship with the community.

Farkas et al. (1996) reveal that the problem in communicating with the community lies in the fact that many school administrators see their role as one of informing and soliciting support instead of one of listening and responding to community. Parents are not prepared to co-operate in such circumstances. This view is supported by White-Clark and Decker (1996) who argued that in most cases barriers to community participation in the

school lay with teachers and administrators than with parents. Writing earlier, Pellegrino (1973:6) noted that “many educators want parental participation but they want it on their own term.” This makes it difficult for parents to get involved in schools.

A study carried out by Myeko (2000) on parental involvement in education in Herschel District, South Africa, reveals four factors that hinder parents from participating in education. These factors are lack of time, financial constraints, family illiteracy, and transport problems. Contrary to Myeko’s findings, Heystek and Louw (1999) argue that the major reason why parents do not participate in school activities is their negative attitude towards schools.

In another study that evaluated parental involvement in programmes in 55 primary and secondary schools in Arizona, Vandergrift and Greene (1993:19) concluded, “some parents are simply not ‘joiners’ though they may care about the education of their children.” Supporting this view, Deily (2001) mentions that most of the American public has this view. He went further to state that “Americans seem content to sit back and let the advocates, experts, and educators takeover” (2001:5). This was also observed by Smit and Liebenberg (2003) who revealed that parents believed that teachers were paid to teach their children and, therefore, it was the responsibility of teachers to take care of their children while at school.

Bray et al. (1986) state that competition between communities may cause inefficiency if communities refuse to work together especially, in such cases, the powerful will suppress the views of the powerless. Parelius and Parelius who looked at the challenges facing the relationship between schools and communities noted a similar issue. They observed that “bias is common in terms of grading, disciplinary matters, differential encouragement and curriculum placement” (1978:336). They noted that schools sometimes favoured children from affluent families and those who were influential in society.

The study carried out by Hayes and Chodkiewicz (2002) on school-community links revealed that teachers and principals did not generally perceive the community as a resource for learning. Most of the schools in their study focused on one-way relationship.

They concentrated on improving the family to support the school rather than developing the school to support families. The study also revealed that there was lack of consensus about the value and purpose of school-community links in schools. The findings of the study highlighted the narrow and limited understanding of the value of the school-community relationship among educators.

The Ministry of Education in Zambia also acknowledges a number of factors that affect school-community relationship. These factors include “poverty, restrictive education legislation, and unhelpful attitudes of teachers and education authorities to community efforts” (MOE, 1996:136). Commenting on the attitude of teachers, Brookover and Erikson stated that the attitude of some teachers had an effect on the school-community relationship. They note:

In every school, there are teachers who have the ability to organize outside pressure and collectively, teachers’ association are very capable indeed of bringing community pressure to bear on administration and board members (1975:18).

The review of literature has outlined the major challenges encountered in trying to foster the relationship between the school and the community. These problems include lack of time and communication on the part of teachers and parents, and poverty and illiteracy on the part of parents. They also include unaccountability on the part of teachers, negative attitude of parents and teachers, and restrictive education legislations.

## **2.6 Ways through which School-Community Relationship can be strengthened**

Many studies that have been conducted on school-community relationship have come up with a number of workable ways of fostering and strengthening a close school-community relationship. University of Missouri Extension (1990) documented a number of strategies for enhancing community social capital that focuses on increasing school-community relationship. These strategies include involving local business and government agencies, basing the curriculum on community issues, and expanding community organizations such as sports. As for Heystek and Louw (1999), every school must identify their needs and then provide the opportunities and structure for the

community to positively and actively get involved. Therefore, there is need to establish the most effective ways of involving parents in school.

Decker and Lemmer (1994) suggest that organizing regular meetings with parents, and informing them about the academic progress of their children could improve the co-operation between schools and community. Similarly, a study that was carried out by Myeko (2000) in South Africa reveals that the way with which schools communicate with parents is important as efforts to improve parental participation cannot succeed without effective communication with the community. He then outlines ways of engaging the parents as regular meetings with parents, a manual for parents, home-visits and newsletter.

Writing earlier, Berger (1983) and Davies (1991) stated that ways of engaging the community in school activities included using mass media, engaging teachers to incorporate suggestions of parents in the affairs of the school, encouraging communities to use school facilities, and school organizing senior citizen's party. As for Vandergrift and Greene (1993:23), the most effective ways of involving parents in school activities include establishing "a personal rapport between someone from the school and the community."

Sadker and Sadker (1988) give examples of 20 states in United States that took some measures to enhance co-operation between schools and communities by enacting parent involvement legislation. They further gave an example of California State that launched a major campaign to incorporate parents into learning process. The slogan "parents are teachers too" was printed in 12 million shopping bags in 500 stores and numerous television stations also carried the message (1988:331). Thus parents were encouraged to get involved in the learning process of their children.

What emerged from this review of literature in this section are ways of improving the school-community relationship. Among the suggested ways are strengthening of the entire community in terms of civic spirit, development of a strong community support base and effective communication between the school and the community.

## **2.7 Issues Arising from the Literature Review**

The term 'school-community relationship' has been used synonymously with the term 'school-community partnership.' Literature has also shown that school-community relationship is the interaction or co-operation between the school and the community aimed at increasing and strengthening social capital. This is the description of the school-community relationship this study has adopted.

Four models of school-community relationships have been reviewed. The models were developed in cultures outside Zambia, and they put more emphasis on parental involvement in the education of a child with less emphasis on the involvement of the school in the activities of the community. Nevertheless, they have contributed to our understanding of the school-community relationship. When we put into consideration the cultural aspects such as beliefs, ethnicity and traditional practices, the models reviewed can be adapted to Zambian situations.

The review of literature has revealed various types of school-community relationships. This has helped this study to have an insight on the types of school-community relationships. The review has also helped the current study to investigate and make results based on factual information.

However, like the models reviewed, the studies on the nature of school-community relationships were conducted in cultures outside Zambia. In addition, the studies put more emphasis on parental involvement in the education of a child with less emphasis on the involvement of the school in the activities of the community.

The current study, therefore, was aimed at investigating the nature of the school-community relationship from a Zambian perspective. Unlike the studies reviewed, this study explored both the community participation in school activities and school/teacher participation in the community activities. The emphasis is on the bases of this relationship.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter shows how the study was conducted. It describes the research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection methods and procedure, analysis and validation of data.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The study employed a descriptive research design, which is most appropriate for obtaining in-depth information from people. The study used descriptive research design because “it gives an accurate account of the characteristics of a particular phenomenon, situation, community or persons ” (Bless and Achola, 1988:42). Therefore, it used qualitative research techniques since the main idea was to get an understanding of the respondents’ point of view on the subject under research. Data, therefore, were gathered in form of words from the people.

### **3.3 Target Population**

The study was carried out in Kalomo District. Kalomo District has 5 high schools and 36 basic schools. The high schools are Kalomo, Zimba, Kabanga, Mwata, and Namwianga. Namwianga is a private school. Kabanga is a grant-aided school and is 78 km from Kalomo Town. The rest of the schools are public schools. Kalomo and Mwata High Schools are located within Kalomo town. Mwata High School is the only day school in the district. Kabanga High School is in rural area while Namwianga is 7 km from Kalomo town. Zimba High School is in Zimba Town, which is a peri-urban area and is 48 km from Kalomo town. Thirty-one of the basic schools are in rural areas. The target population was drawn from three different areas, that is, urban, peri-urban and rural areas. The idea was to assess and compare the nature of school-community relationships from the three different areas.

### **3.4 Study Sample**

The study sample was selected from three high schools and three basic schools. A basic school and a high school were selected from each area, that is rural, peri-urban and urban

areas. The sample comprised 6 head teachers, 6 deputy head teachers, 50 teachers and 60 parents. The parents included PTA chairpersons. The sample, therefore, was made up of 122 participants. Table 1 below shows the distribution of the sample.

**Table 1 Distribution of the study sample**

AREA	SCHOOL	HEAD TEACHER	DEPUTY HEAD	TEACHERS	PARENTS	TOTALS
URBAN	HIGH	1	1	10	10	22
	BASIC	1	1	10	10	22
PERI-URBAN	HIGH	1	1	10	10	22
	BASIC	1	1	10	10	22
RURAL	HIGH	1	1	5	10	17
	BASIC	1	1	5	10	17
TOTAL		6	6	50	60	122

### 3.5 Sampling Procedure

The schools were purposively sampled based on proximity and location, which are rural, peri-urban and urban areas. Purposive sampling was also used to select head teachers, deputy heads, and PTA chairpersons (or their representatives). They were purposively sampled due to the nature of their positions and therefore, they were expected to have the necessary information (Leedy and Armnod, 2001).

Random sampling was employed to select teachers. This method is unbiased as it gives opportunity to every member of the population a chance of being picked. Teachers who had been at the same school for less than a term were not considered in this study since the period was too short for them to know what went on between the school and the community. A list of teachers was prepared and by using lottery method a required number was picked.

Selection of parents was done with the help of class registers. For boarding high schools only parents/guardians of day scholars were part of the study. Class registers were picked at random and a list of names of pupils who were day scholars was prepared. The names of pupils were then clustered according to the compounds or villages they come from.

This was done to ensure the spread of the sample across a larger geographical area so as to have a wide range of characteristics of the participants.

Thereafter, five pupils were picked from each cluster using lottery method. The names of the parents corresponding to the names of the pupils selected from each cluster were listed. Then systematic sampling was employed to pick the required number of parents from the prepared list. This was done by picking every 4<sup>th</sup> parent after picking the first parent from the list. These represented the local community.

### **3.6 Research Instruments**

The study used interview schedules (see Appendices A, B, and C), audio tape recorder, and document review guide (see Appendix D). Interview schedules and tape recorder were used during interviews and focus group discussions. Document review guide was used during document review. The researcher was also a research instrument since he was the one who administered the research instruments.

### **3.7 Data Collection Methods**

Focus group discussion was employed among teachers at the four schools in urban and peri-urban areas. Focus group discussion was used since it was easy to bring teachers together. It also enables participants to discuss the issue in question with each other (Morgan, 1998). Furthermore, focus group discussion produces a much deeper understanding of the problem as one person's ideas may provoke some related thoughts and ideas in others.

Individual interviews were employed among teachers at the two rural schools, school administrators and parents. Interviews were used because the researcher wanted to have one to one interaction with the respondents. This allowed room to ask questions in any order considered appropriate and to clear up inconsistencies in responses (Bailey, 1994). It also allowed the respondent to express their individual views on school-community relationship. Interviews were employed to the teachers at the two rural schools because at the time the schools were visited the total number of members of the teaching staff was 8

for each of the two schools. For the parents it was also difficult to bring them together for a focus group discussion.

Interview schedules were used to guide the researcher during individual interviews and focus group discussions. Standard questions were used for all respondents to ensure that all participants replied to the same questions. The idea behind this was to get and analyse their individual views on the subject under investigation.

Audio tape recorder was used during the interviews and focus group discussions. The rationale behind the use of an audio tape recorder was to keep intact the participants' words and not to be distracted by having to concentrate on writing notes. Document review was used to get relevant information from the documents available in the school such as minutes for Education Boards, School Management Committee and PTA meetings, and memos. The review of documents validated the information that was gathered while literature review laid a foundation for the current study.

### **3.8 Data Collection Procedure**

A pilot study was conducted to test the instruments and expose some weakness. This improved the internal validity of the instruments. It also provided "a clear definition of the focus of the study" and helped the study to "concentrate on data collection spectrum of the projected analytical topics" (Frankland and Bloor, 1999:154). It also gave the researcher confidence. The participants in the pilot study were not part of the final study.

Data collection for the final study was done over a period of three months. Focus group discussions were held in schools. Teachers from the two rural schools, school administrators and parents were interviewed separately in their natural environment, that is, teachers, head teachers and their deputies in their schools and parents from their homes or work places. This allowed the respondents to express themselves freely to the researcher.

Consent to be tape-recorded was sought and issues of confidentiality were put into consideration. Interviews and focus group discussions started with general questions just to make respondents feel at ease.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Data analysis started during data collection exercise by arranging field notes according to the themes that emerged from the information gathered. Qualitative approach was used to analyse data. Information from audio tapes was transcribed to verify the information that was gathered. The themes were coded and categorized according to the objectives of the study.

### **3.10 Validity of Data**

The validity of data depended on triangulation of the research methods. Triangulation of research method included interviews, document review, focus group discussions, literature review and pilot study. The study was conducted in the natural settings of participants.

Participants checked document review analysis for accuracy and interpretations while the findings from literature review laid a foundation in the process of triangulation of the data in order to establish validity and reliability of the study. The pilot study was used to test the suitability of the instruments and procedure for collecting and analyzing data.

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

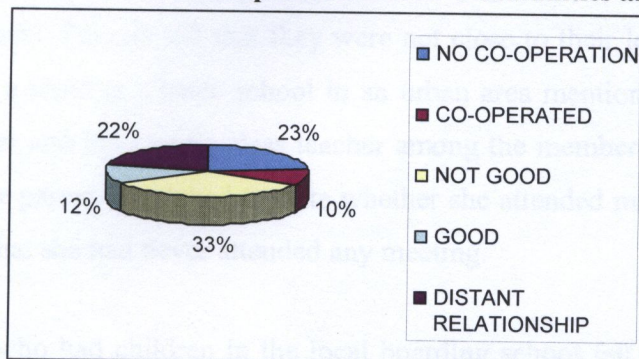
This chapter presents the findings of the study based on data that has been collected. The research phenomenon under investigation is the nature of the school-community relationship in selected schools in Kalomo District. The findings are presented according to the four objectives of the research, namely:

- The nature of the school-community relationship in Kalomo District.
- Ways through which the community participate in the activities of the school.
- Ways through which schools and teachers participate in the activities of the community.
- Ways through which the school-community relationship can be strengthened.

### 4.2 The Nature of the School-Community Relationship in Kalomo District

When respondents were asked to describe the nature of the relationship that existed between their schools and their local communities, they gave varying responses. Out of 60 parents that participated in the study, 23% said there was no co-operation, 10% said there was co-operation, 33% said the relationship was not good, 12% said it was good while 22% said it was a distant relationship. Figure 1 shows parents' responses to the question on the nature of school-community relationship.

**Figure 1 Parents' responses on the nature of school-community relationship between their communities and schools**



There were 60 parents in the study

Their description was based on the level of consultation between schools and their communities, school academic performance, school places offered to the members of the community, and on the level of participation of teachers and schools in the community activities. For instance, a PTA chairperson of an urban basic school stated that there was a distant relationship between his school and the local community because most of the teachers did not interact with members of the community. He observed that they seemed to be preoccupied with their teaching and had no time for the community.

Teachers and school administrators described the relationship as being generally good. Their responses were either good or not very good. However, they acknowledged that sometimes the relationship was strenuous. Their description of the relationship that existed between their schools and local communities was based on the level of community participation in meetings at the school, provision of financial and material resources and on the response of the community when called upon to help by the schools.

There was overwhelming evidence that there was no co-operation between some schools and their local communities. At a rural high school, the school authority and the PTA had to call for a meeting with the village headmen to discuss the issue of co-operation between the school and the community. The head teacher of a peri-urban basic school revealed that the school had to call the District Commissioner to talk to the community on the need for co-operation between the school and the community.

The interviews held with parents showed that lack of co-operation between schools and their local communities was as a result of lack of interaction between members of the community and teachers. Parents felt that they were not close to their local schools. For instance, a parent of a child at a basic school in an urban area mentioned that she only knew the head teacher and her child's class teacher among the members of the teaching staff. When the same parent was asked to state whether she attended meetings called by her school, she said that she had never attended any meeting.

Most of the parents who had children in the local boarding school felt that there was a distant relationship between their local communities and boarding schools. Members of

the local communities felt neglected as boarding schools served wider communities. Explaining the relationship between his local school and the community, one parent said that as members of the local community they were isolated from their school since the school favoured 'outsiders.' By 'outsiders' he meant people who did not belong to the local community in which the school was located.

The strenuous relationship between boarding high schools and their local communities was as a result of limited number of school places offered to the members of the local community. All the parents mentioned that the issue of school places was critical in the relationship between the school and the community. Parents felt that boarding schools had neglected the local children in preference to children from other places. Most of the local children were pushed into Open Learning. A parent lamented that how could he participate in the relationship when his community was neglected. He had this to say of the relationship:

The relationship is not really good especially when it comes to school places; I feel the local community should be given first priority. Honestly, how can I participate fully in the relationship when my community is neglected?

Another parent disclosed that she approached the school administrator at her local high school for a school place for her daughter who missed the regional cut-off point by 15 marks but the girl was not offered a place. She was pushed into Open Learning. Later, she was surprised when her sister-in-law from Livingstone was offered a place, yet she missed the regional cut-off point by 25 marks. She concluded by saying that members of the local community were not happy with what was happening at their high school.

School administrators and teachers from high schools also acknowledged the issue of school places in the relationship between schools and their communities. They admitted that most of the pupils in boarding schools were from wider communities. For example, a deputy head of a peri-urban high school revealed that the issue of school places strained the relationship between his school and the local community. He went further to mention that the local community felt that the local school was their school and members of the community were supposed to be given more places.

The interviews and focus group discussions also revealed that the closeness of the school to its local community depended on the standard of education offered at the school and on the school's performance in national examinations. All the respondents agreed that the performance of the school at Grade 9 and 12 levels was one of the major factors in the school-community relationship. Commenting on the relationship between the school and the community, a PTA chairperson at a peri-urban basic school said that although the relationship between his school and the local community was generally good it was strained by the poor academic performance of pupils. Teachers were usually blamed for poor results. Other respondents from the same community supported him.

Some parents talked highly of certain schools that were doing well academically. In such cases parents had described the relationship as good. A parent with a child in an urban basic school talked of the relationship between her school and the local community as being good. Asked to explain further on the issue, she stated that teachers were producing good results and as parents what they wanted were good results. A teacher at the same basic school mentioned that one parent bought her a good chitenge material as a token of appreciation for her child's good performance in the national examinations. She stated further that although there were some problems in the relationship between the school and the community, the good performance of the school in the national examinations helped to improve the relationship.

The respondents also said that the behaviour of some teachers and members of the community affected the relationship between the schools and their communities. Parents mentioned that some teachers spent most of their time on personal business reducing on the time that was supposed to be spent on pupils. They disclosed that teachers did not teach and that they flirted with school girls. When parents talked about it they were labeled bad people yet the community expected teachers to behave well.

Teachers also mentioned that some members of the community were not helpful to the schools. They said that some members of the community talked ill of teachers and accused them of things they had not done. They also mentioned that there was a strain in the relationship because some influential members of the community wanted to control

the happenings in schools. At a rural high school, a head teacher revealed that some members of the local community vandalized school property, and some villagers wanted to grab school land. He complained that it was such type of behaviour that had brought problems between the community and the school.

The relationship was also based on attendance of meetings at the school. Teachers argued that it was through such meetings that members of the community and teachers interacted. When the question on the nature of the school-community relationship was discussed with teachers from an urban basic school, they mentioned that parents were not co-operative since when meetings were called very few parents turned up. They said that was the reason why the school had failed to hold any PTA general meeting since 2006. This clearly shows how the mere attendance of meetings is important to the relationship.

The interviews also revealed that the relationship between schools and communities in the study was built on the commitment parents had towards the education of their children. It was this commitment that compelled them to participate in the affairs of the school. Parents attended meetings at the school, and provided financial and material resources towards the education of their children. If parents did not participate in the provision of financial and material resources then even the relationship they had with the school would be affected.

One of the participants in the focus group discussion held with teachers at an urban high school stated that his local community was good. When asked to explain further, he said that members of the local community had helped the school and when called upon to help they had always done so. He argued that meetings had never failed to take place between the school and the community. Other respondents who mentioned that there was co-operation between the school and the community supported him.

It was also found that the relationship between the school and its local community was anchored on the PTA. The closeness of the school to the community depended on how active the PTA was. It was found that the school was closer to the community where the PTA was active. On the other hand, where the PTA was weak, it was found that the

school had a distant relationship with its community. For instance, an urban high school in the study was found to have a general good relationship with the local community because of the PTA that was active. Similarly, the composition of the PTA also affected the relationship. For boarding schools where the PTAs were mainly made up of members from wider communities, there was a distant relationship between the schools and their communities. Probably this was because most of the decisions made by the schools favoured the wider communities.

When the respondents were asked to state whether there was communication between schools and their communities, they gave an affirmative answer. The level of communication varied from one school to another. They stated that it was done through memos or letters, PTA meetings, pupils, PTA executive members, and phones. When asked to state what type of information was shared between the school and the community, all the respondents mentioned issues concerning the discipline of pupils, school projects, pupils' progress, transfers of teachers, and problems faced by the school.

However, parents complained that schools did not tell them about most of the things that happened in schools especially issues that involved finances. They argued that there was a lot of secrecy on the way funds was used. Teachers and administrators also confirmed this. They mentioned that not every issue was meant for public consumption. One head teacher said that certain information had to be protected otherwise it might be used against the school.

#### **4.3 Ways through which the Community Participates in the Activities of the School**

The respondents revealed various ways in which they participated in the school activities. They did so through attendance of meetings at the school, participation in decision-making, maintenance of discipline, participation in learning and teaching, provision of financial and material resources, provision of professional and public talks, and through their involvement in sporting activities, production unit and maintenance of schools.

### **4.3.1 Attendance of Meetings**

Parents and members of the community also attended meetings held between the school and the community. All the respondents agreed that attendance of meetings between the school and the community was one way in which the community participated in the activities of the school. One parent said that just mere attendance of the meetings was very important. In situations where he was committed he sent a representative who was expected to report back on what was discussed during the meetings.

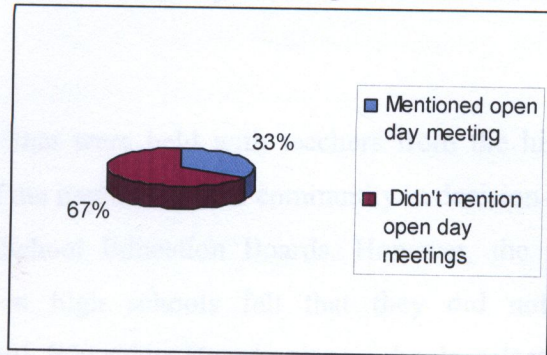
All the respondents mentioned PTA annual general, PTA executive committee and consultative meetings as some of the meetings that were held between the school and the community. PTA annual general meeting was held once in a year and usually towards the end of the year to plan for the following year. PTA executive committee meetings were held once in a term to implement and review projects in the school. Community participation in these meetings was by representation through the PTA. The local community had representatives in the PTA executive committee. Consultative meetings were held at any time when need arose. For example, at one of the schools in the study, it was revealed that the school called for a PTA extraordinary meeting in March 2008 to consult parents on the possibility of revising the fees. This was necessitated by the rising cost of things.

The respondents who were members of the PTA executive committees also mentioned School Education Board and Project Management Committee meetings as some of the meetings that were held between the school and the community. Board meetings were held once in a quarter while project management committee meetings were held when need arose to implement and review the projects in the school. Community participation in both School Education Board and Project Management Committee was by representation through their PTA representatives.

Another meeting that was held between the school and the community was open day meetings. Out of 60 parents interviewed, 33% mentioned open day meetings as some of the meetings that were held between schools and their local communities as figure 2 on page 32 shows. Those who mentioned open day meetings were parents who had children

in basic schools while none of the parents who have children in high schools mentioned it. This meant that open day meetings were not held at high schools

**Figure 2 The percentage of parents who mentioned open day meetings.**



**There were 60 parents in the study**

#### **4.3.2 Participation in Decision-Making**

One way in which members of the community were involved in school activities was by participating in decision-making. Decisions were made at different forums and levels. One of the forum through which members of the community participated in decision-making was during PTA annual general meetings.

When one of the head teachers was asked to explain further on how parents participated in decision-making, he said:

Members of the community are mainly involved in passing of resolutions during PTA annual general meetings. For example, we had a problem of phones in the school. Phones became a problem to us as children were using them for activities that were not accepted in the school. We informed the parents during the meeting. They passed a resolution that pupils should not be allowed to bring phones in the school. We are now implementing that resolution.

PTA general meetings were avenues through which individual parents participated in decision-making in the school. The participation of the community in decision-making in other meetings such as PTA executive committee, project management committee and school education board meetings was by representation as they depended on their

representatives in these bodies. It was also revealed that in most cases community members were consulted by their representatives before any major decision was taken or before going for a meeting so that community concerns could be addressed during the meeting.

The focus group discussions that were held with teachers from the high schools also confirmed the participation of the members of the community in decision-making through their representatives in the School Education Boards. However, the majority of the parents who had children in high schools felt that they did not participate in decision-making in the School Education Boards since schools selected most of the members of the School Education Boards without consulting members of the community. Therefore, they argued that board members did not represent the community but the schools that appointed them. Those who acknowledged their participation in decision-making through school boards were those who were members of the PTA executive committees since PTA chairpersons were members of the School Education Boards

#### **4.3.3 Maintenance of Discipline**

Another way in which parents and the community were involved in school activities was through their participation in maintenance of discipline in the school. Parents revealed that it was their responsibility to advise their children. Therefore, they advised their children at home on the need to behave well at all times.

The interviews also revealed that concerned members of the community usually alerted the school when they observed unbecoming behaviour in pupils. All the respondents acknowledged this. Elaborating on the issue, one head teacher of a boarding high school in peri-urban area revealed that on two occasions concerned members of the local community tipped the school that they had seen school girls being taken into one of the houses by people suspected to be their boyfriends. In both cases the school made a follow up and it was discovered that the girls were with their boyfriends. The girls involved were punished.

The findings also show that there were times when the school summoned parents over the behaviour of their children. All the respondents acknowledged that schools summoned parents of pupils who had committed serious offences. For example, one participant revealed that whenever there was a serious misconduct among pupils, the school summoned parents whose children were involved and together with teachers they would advise the children. He went further to state that there were times when parents supported the decision taken by the school no matter how painful it was. Another one added that depending on the seriousness of the issue, children were suspended from school for a number of days so that their parents could continue counselling them.

Besides participating in maintenance of discipline of pupils, parents also had an interest in the behaviour of teachers. The interviews held with parents and teachers revealed that members of the community had an interest in the discipline of teachers as well. Discussing the issue regarding the discipline of teachers, one parent who had a child at one of the high school stated:

We also monitor the behaviour of teachers. For instance, parents complained to me about the behaviour of some teachers who impregnated some pupils and then married those two months after writing their Grade 12 examinations. As a civic leader, I took up the issue with the school administration. When I realized that I was not getting any help from the school, I approached the DEBS' office and demanded for their transfers. They have since been transferred.

#### **4.3.4 Participation in Learning and Teaching**

Community participation in the activities of the school was also done through the involvement of the community in learning and teaching. When asked to explain how they were involved, parents explained that they usually asked about the welfare of their children and how lessons were going on. When they were not happy with what was going on, they approached the school authority or brought the issue to the attention of their representatives in PTA. They also discussed the issue among themselves and decided on what course of action to take as a community. For instance, at one of the basic schools in the study, parents initiated the transfer of a certain teacher who was not attending to his classes. This issue came out during the focus group discussion held with teachers from

the same school when they were discussing how parents were involved in learning and teaching in schools.

Another way in which parents were involved in learning and teaching was by supervising and helping their children at home with their homework, assignments and other school related activities. They checked children's books to see how they were progressing and made sure they attended classes. When a child was sick they immediately informed the school authority.

Parents also revealed that where there was a shortage of teachers, parents engaged either untrained teachers or those waiting to be employed by the government and paid them. This was done through PTA. Responding to the question on how the community participated in learning and teaching, one parent mentioned that they contributed money every month to pay a teacher employed by their local PTA.

Other ways through which parents participated in the learning and teaching of their children can be deduced from the following statement that was made by one of the head teachers:

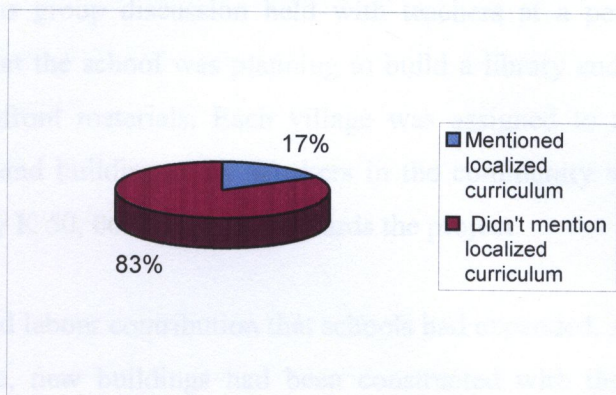
They have to support the learning of their children. They buy them uniform, books and pens, and prepare food for them. There are many ways in which they are involved.

Answering the question on how the local community participated in learning and teaching, one deputy head from a peri-urban basic school stated that parents were also involved in localized curriculum. Skilled members of the community were invited into the school to teach children on certain activities that were done in the community such as curving, basketry, weaving and broom making. All the teachers, deputy head teachers and other head teachers from the basic schools supported him. However, the teachers and administrators from the high schools did not mention it. This meant that parents were not involved in localized curriculum in high schools.

Contrary to what the basic school head teacher mentioned, out of 30 parents interviewed with children in basic schools, 17% mentioned that there were times when their children

talked about making brooms or door mats. (See figure 3). They said that Children were usually helped by their elder siblings to have the items made. Only parents with children in basic schools mentioned it. Parents with children in high schools did not mention it.

**Figure 3 The percentage of Parents who mentioned Localized curriculum**



**There were 30 parents interviewed.**

Basic school teachers and administrators revealed that once in a while parents were invited to accompany their children to school and see what went on in class. They sat with their children in class and assisting them where possible while the teacher was teaching. This was done so that parents could appreciate the trouble that teachers passed through. However, none of the parents interviewed mentioned it meaning that they were not involved.

#### **4.3.5 Provision of Financial and Material Resources**

Another way in which parents participated in the affairs of the school was their involvement in the provision of financial and material resources. All the respondents agreed that community participation was also done through the provision of financial and material resources. Parents paid school fees and project funds. Furthermore, affluent parents also made donations in terms of cash and materials such as duplicating paper to schools. At a peri-urban high school, it was revealed that one parent contributed some money towards the holding of a PTA annual general meeting and another one contributed realms of duplicating paper to the school.

Parents disclosed that the local community was also involved in infrastructure development through mobilization of upfront materials and labour. Parents provided upfront materials such as crushed stones, river and building sand. Those who could not provide labour contributed cash to enable the school mobilize the required resources. For example, during the focus group discussion held with teachers at a peri-urban basic school, it was revealed that the school was planning to build a library and parents were requested to mobilize upfront materials. Each village was assigned to mould 10,000 bricks and to ferry river and building sand. Workers in the community who could not provide labour were to pay K 50, 000 per parent towards the project.

It was through material and labour contribution that schools had expanded. At the schools in the study, for instance, new buildings had been constructed with the help of the community. At an urban high school, parents financed the construction of a wall fence and supported the construction of a laboratory while at another high school in a peri-urban area, parents had financed the construction of the girls' ablution block. On the other hand, at a rural basic school, parents contributed upfront materials and labour towards the construction of a 1 x 3 classroom block. Meanwhile a teacher's house was under construction at a peri-urban basic school with the help of the members of the community.

#### **4.3.6 Participation in Sporting Activities**

The interviews and focus group discussions revealed that parents' involvement in sporting activities was another way in which they participated in school activities. When one parent was asked to state how the community and parents participated in sports in the school, he said that as members of the community they gave moral support to school teams. He went further to say that they also allowed their children to participate in sports in the school.

Besides the co-operation and moral support given to the school teams, parents also paid sports fund while others contributed material resources. They mobilized firewood and at times contributed food towards the camping of the school teams. During one of the focus group discussions held with teachers from the basic schools, it was revealed that teachers

asked for kitchen utensils from the members of the community when they were hosting or traveling out for games. Confirming the participation of parents in sports, one head teacher from one of the high schools revealed that “one individual contributed some balls to the school football teams.”

It was also revealed that there were some members of the PTA executive committees who were attached to sports committees in schools to take care of the interest of the parents. Sometimes these same PTA members accompanied school teams when they went out for games to see the difficulties pupils passed through.

#### **4.3.7 Participation in Production Unit and Maintenance of the School**

The community mainly participated in production unit and maintenance of the schools through the payment of user fees and through their PTA representatives. However, some members of the community had made financial and material contributions towards production unit in schools. A head teacher from an urban high school mentioned that some parents had made individual contributions towards the school garden. He mentioned that one parent contributed some money to purchase chemical fertilizer. Another head teacher from a peri-urban high school stated that the piggery at his school was started with a donation from a well-wisher who donated some pigs to the school.

A PTA chairperson of a rural high school stated that parents mainly participated in production unit through their PTA representatives. He explained that PTA gave advice to the entire school on the right type of crops to grow or activities that were profitable. Teachers and some parents supported him. They acknowledged that members of the community were not directly involved in the actual operations.

Participants in the focus group discussion revealed that all the schools had a deliberate policy of maintaining schools. One participant in the focus group discussion explained the policy at his school in the following way:

There is a deliberate policy at our school whereby parents are somehow involved in the maintenance of the school. For instance, when a child breaks one window pane, that child is going to bring two window panes. This was decided by parents during one of the PTA annual general meetings so as to instill discipline in pupils.

At a rural basic school in the study, it was revealed that a local carpenter usually visited the school to repair damaged school furniture. This was done on a voluntary basis.

#### **4.3.8 Provision of Professional Advice and Public Talks**

The community also participated in the school activities through provision of professional advice and public talks. All the respondents acknowledged the participation of the community in school activity through provision of professional advice and public talks. All the respondents mentioned health personnel as members of the community who usually visited schools. There was documentation of their visits in most of the schools in the study.

At a peri-urban basic school, it was revealed that a police officer visited the school to talk about self-awareness of a girl child. There was documentation in the school of his visit. Explaining how he participated in provision of professional advice, one parent who was a security officer mentioned that he advised the school authority on security matters.

#### **4.4 Ways through which Schools and Teachers Participated in Community Activities**

When the respondents were asked to state whether teachers and schools participated in community activities, they all gave an affirmative answer. They also agreed that there were various ways in which teachers and schools participated in community programmes. Respondents mentioned that teachers' involvement in community education, social associations, community meetings, funerals, and provision of leadership in community were ways through which teachers participated in community activities. Other ways included participation in national events, counselling, and provision of professional advice and school facilities.

#### **4.4.1 Participation in Community Education**

One of the ways in which teachers participated in community activities was their involvement in community education. Teachers and pupils were engaged in community sensitization on HIV/AIDS, child abuse and human rights. Explaining how schools were involved in community education, one parent stated that there were posters in schools on HIV/AIDS, child abuse and environmental awareness. According to him that was one way in which the school participated in community education.

Individual teachers also offered assistance to members of the community who wanted to upgrade themselves academically. Such teachers offered tuitions though at a fee. Additionally, some teachers were also involved in adult education. Schools offered their classrooms, textbooks and other facilities for community education programme. This was done in all the three basic schools in the study. High schools were not involved in adult education programme.

Teachers also participated in community education through the assistance they rendered to community schools. At one of the basic schools in the study, it was revealed that whenever the school held school-based workshops and teachers' group meetings, they usually invited community teachers in the area. Teachers also gave professional advice on teaching methods to community teachers while schools provided venues and reading materials used during workshops and teachers' group meetings.

#### **4.4.2 Attendance of Community Meetings**

Teachers also participated in the activities of the community by attending community meetings. On the question of whether teachers attended community meetings, parents responded that at every community meeting there was a teacher though not every teacher attended. Some teachers resided in the community and therefore, participated in the meetings that were held in their residential areas. One parent in one of the compounds in the peri-urban area revealed that when the community held a meeting to discuss the construction of a health centre in the area teachers attended that meeting.

Teachers' attendance of certain meetings such as area development committee meetings was by representation through their supervisors. For such meetings, the community just invited heads of departments. As for teachers, it was revealed that head teachers represented them. If a head teacher were committed he/she would send either the deputy head teacher or any other teacher to represent him/her.

#### **4.4.3 Participation in Funerals**

All the respondents agreed that teachers participated in funerals that took place in their local community. Parents pointed out that some teachers visited them when they had bereavements in their families and took part in the entire programmes. During such occasions, teachers were tasked to pass announcement, read the Bible, preach, offer prayer and even to interpret.

However, teachers and parents mentioned that participation of teachers in funerals depended much on the personalities of individual teachers. There were some teachers who were naturally very active in the community and such teachers always attended funerals that took place in the community.

#### **4.4.4 Provision of Leadership in Community**

Teachers also participated in community activities through provision of leadership in the community. Parents revealed that they looked to teachers for guidance in most of their activities. For instance, teachers belonged to various religious organizations and most of them had been appointed to positions of responsibility in their respective churches.

The focus group discussion held with peri-urban high school teachers in the study revealed that one teacher at their school was a District Community Evangelist in New Apostolic Church, two teachers were Elders in SDA Church, and another teacher was a Secretary for the local Catholic Church Council.

When the question on how teachers were involved in provision of leadership in the community was discussed in one of the focus group discussions, one participant stated that "one of us is a Chairperson of Quest Committee of the Lions Club of Kalomo." This

showed that teachers also participated in community activities through provision of leadership in community associations or organizations.

#### **4.4.5 Participation in National Events**

As part of the community, teachers also participated in community programs during national events such as Tree planting, Independence Day, TB day, Malaria day, and Keep Zambia Clean Campaign. For instance, one parent said that their “school and teachers were involved in tree planting this year which is a community programme.” It was also stated that female teachers were fully involved in the whole programme during Women’s Day in the year 2008.

#### **4.4.6 Provision of Professional Advice**

Teachers also counseled and advised members of the community. Parents acknowledged that they consulted teachers for professional advice. One parent stated that when he needed guidance on what type of training his child was to take, he approached one of the teachers at his local school for advice. The teacher helped him to identify the right course for his child. Another parent revealed that when his child was not doing well academically, he approached a teacher for help. He was advised on what needed to be done and the child had improved.

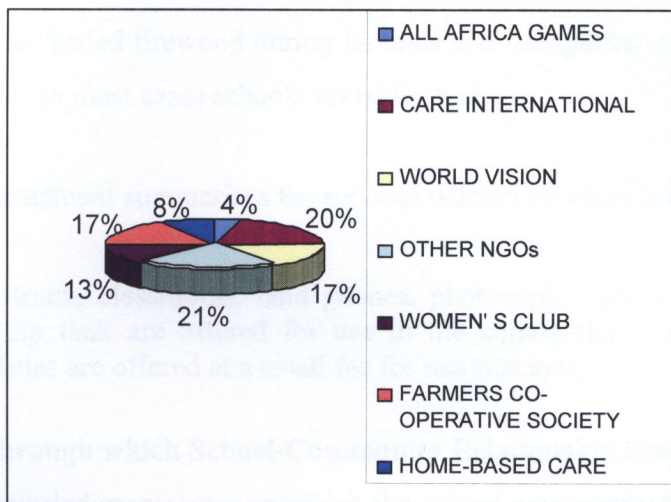
#### **4.4.7 Participation in Social Associations and Gatherings**

Another way in which teachers were involved in the community activities was through their participation in various associations or organizations as mere members. Out of 50 teachers who participated in the study, 42 said that they were involved with local football clubs at different levels. Some teachers even offered financial assistance to these clubs. Parents, too, acknowledged the participation of teachers in their local football teams.

The respondents also mentioned voluntarily, counselling and testing programme, home-based care programmes, neighbourhood health committees, 2011 All Africa Games, farmers’ co-operative societies, women’s clubs, and non-governmental organizations as some of the community associations or organizations in which teachers were involved. Out of 50 teachers in the study, 22 were involved with various

organizations in their local communities. Figure 4 shows associations or organizations in which teachers in the study were involved.

**Figure 4 Percentages of the distribution of teachers' participation in associations and organizations**



**There were 50 teachers in the study**

Another way revealed by both parents and teachers through which teachers were involved in community activities was their participation in social gatherings such as weddings, kitchen parties, and other parties. In most of these activities teachers were tasked to pass announcements and organize such activities. They were also used as masters of ceremonies in various gatherings or events.

#### **4.4.8 Provision of School Facilities**

Schools also provided the community with school facilities. All the respondents agreed that schools provided school facilities for community use. There was overwhelming evidence that the school facilities such as classrooms and transport were at the disposal of the community. The community used school facilities for community activities. For example, school halls and furniture were used for community activities such as weddings and kitchen parties though schools charged maintenance fee.

The interviews also revealed that schools were also used for community meetings especially in rural areas since they were centrally located. They also allowed various

church organizations that had not yet built their own buildings to use their classrooms for their church activities. High schools also provided transport to local communities. All the parents with children in the three high schools in the study agreed that schools provided transport to members of the community especially during bereavements. They disclosed that school trucks ferried firewood during funerals and transported mourners to and from the burial places. In most cases schools asked for fuel.

The following statement summarizes the services offered by schools to the community:

Our truck, classrooms, land phones, photocopier, sports ground and the dip tank are offered for use in the community. Some of these facilities are offered at a small fee for maintenance.

#### **4.5 Ways through which School-Community Relationship can be strengthened**

The research revealed many ways in which the school-community relationship could be strengthened. These were holding of regular consultative meetings, strengthening of the PTA, school practicing 'open door policy', improving dialogue between the community and the school, home-visits and improving the academic performance of the school. Others were sensitizing the local community, use of suggestion box and schools to be biased towards local communities.

##### **4.5.1 School to Practice 'Open Door Policy'**

When one parent was asked to suggest ways in which the relationship between the school and the community could be strengthened, he made the following suggestion:

Schools should be open to the community. Usually, members of the community condemn the school without really knowing what goes on there. It is important to be familiar with what goes on in the school. Therefore, schools should be open to members of the community if they relationship were to improve.

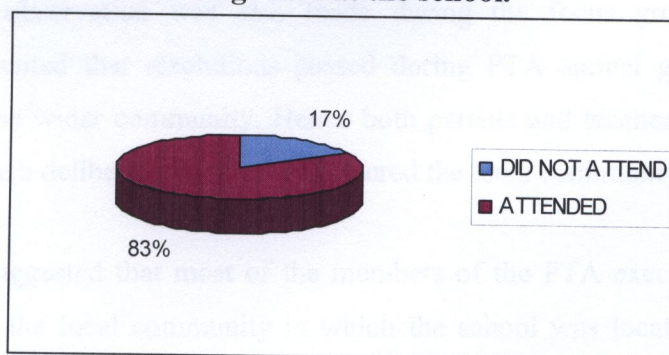
All the respondents supported the idea of 'open door policy.' Supporting the idea of 'open door policy', they stated that teachers too should be approachable. They appealed to teachers to change their attitude.

#### 4.5.2 Holding of Regular Meetings

One of the ways parents suggested that could strengthen the relationship between the school and community was holding of regular consultative meetings. All the respondents agreed that regular consultative meetings between the school and the community could enhance good school-community relationship. They said that it was through such meetings that members of the local community interacted with teachers and exchanged ideas. Differences between the school and community could also be ironed out through such meetings. Parents condemned the system where by members of the community depended mainly on the PTA annual general meeting that came once in a year. Though they acknowledged that schools usually called for PTA extraordinary general meetings for consultations, they argued that such meetings were rare and were only called when need arose.

Teachers appealed to members of the community to always attend meetings called by the school. They argued that some parents had a tendency of not attending meetings. Out of 60 parents that participated in the study, 17% acknowledged having not attended any meeting held between the school and the community, and their participation in the affairs of the schools was done through payment of school fees. The rest of the parents said they had attended one or more meetings held at schools. Figure 5 shows the responses from the parents on the question of whether they attended any meeting held at the school.

**Figure 5 Parents' responses on attendance of meetings held at the school.**



**There were 60 parents interviewed**

Holding of open day meetings was another way that was suggested by parents. Parents with children in basic schools made this suggestion. One parent who was a retired teacher wondered why schools had done away with the idea of holding open day meetings. He explained that such meetings improved the interaction between parents and teachers. None of the parents with children in high schools made this suggestion. Among the participants in the focus group discussion held with teachers, it was only those from urban and peri-urban basic schools who mentioned holding of open day meetings as one way in which the school-community relationship could be strengthened. Their counterparts from high schools and a rural school in the study never mentioned it.

#### **4.5.3 Strengthening of the PTA**

Another way that was suggested by both teachers and parents was the strengthening of the PTA executive committee so as to make it more effective. It was argued that some PTA executive members were so weak that they were controlled by the school administration. Therefore, there was need to elect people to positions of responsibility who would be truly representatives of the community. One parent said “there is need to have a vibrant PTA. This can only be achieved by electing people who are exposed.”

Parents were also concerned with the composition of the PTA executive committee in boarding schools. They mentioned that most of the members of the PTA executive committees in boarding schools were from ‘outside’. By ‘outside’ they meant the wider community. This observation was also made during the focus group discussions. Participants commented that resolutions passed during PTA annual general meetings usually favoured the wider community. Hence both parents and teachers suggested that schools should have a deliberate policy that favoured the local community.

The respondents suggested that most of the members of the PTA executive committee should come from the local community in which the school was located. Parents also called for the orientation of new members of the PTA executive committee. Discussing the same issue, one parent said “there is need to orient every new community representatives in the PTA executive committee on their role and what they need to know.”

#### **4.5.4 Improved Dialogue between the School and the Community**

Respondents said that improved dialogue was another way that could improve the relationship. It was through this dialogue that the objectives and policies of schools could be clearly understood by members of the community, and community concerns could be addressed. Both parents and teachers argued that there was need for a two-way communication system. They mentioned that there was need to improve communication between the school and community on one hand, and between teachers and parents on the other hand. Others argued that improved communication would reduce on acrimony that usually characterized most of the PTA annual general meetings.

#### **4.5.5 Use of Suggestion Box**

What also came out of the interviews was the use of suggestion box. Both teachers and parents suggested the use of suggestion box as another way through which the relationship could be strengthened. Explaining the importance of suggestion box, one teacher stated that there were some parents who for fear of being victimized could not openly criticize the school policy or decision during open meetings. He said that with a suggestion box in place many parents would participate in bridging the gap between the school and the community through suggestions dropped in the box.

#### **4.5.6 Improving the Academic Performance**

Another way that parents and teachers thought could strengthen the relationship between the school and the community was by improving the education standards and academic performance of the school. It was argued that the performance of the school in national examinations affected the relationship between the school and the community. There was overwhelming evidence that schools that performed well in national examinations were supported and applauded by members of the community despite not doing well in other areas.

#### **4.5.7 Sensitization of the Community**

The Participants in the focus group discussions felt that community sensitization was another way through which the relationship could be strengthened. It was argued that some members of the community especially those who were illiterate lacked information

on how they could participate fully in the school affairs. Participants called for awareness meetings or conferences on how the community could effectively participate in the school affairs. Some participants observed that some members of the community were not close to the school because they felt that education was the responsibility of the government of the day. Therefore, participants made the suggestion of sensitizing the local communities on the government's national policy on education.

#### **4.5.8 Home-Visits**

Parents also suggested home-visits as another way through which the relationship might be strengthened. Most of the parents held this view. They suggested that teachers should once in a while visit their pupils and see where they stayed. They argued that home-visits improved their interaction with parents and that teachers would appreciate the behaviour of certain children. Linked to the issue of home-visits was the idea of one to one discussion. The interviews revealed that one to one discussion between parents and teachers could help to strengthen the relationship. One parent said that such discussions would help to improve their relationship with teachers.

#### **4.5.9 Boarding Schools to be biased Towards the Local Communities**

Lastly, parents suggested that boarding schools should give first priority to the local children. They argued that boarding schools seemed to favour children from 'outside' leaving their children in open learning classes. This had strained the relationship between schools and their local communities. They suggested that schools should be biased towards children from the local community. One parent suggested that local children who failed to reach the regional cut-off points for boarding schools should be enrolled as day scholars in their local schools.

### **4.6 Summary of the Findings**

Local communities participated in school activities through mobilization of labour, financial and material resources. Parents and members of the community paid user fees and provided upfront materials such as crushed stones, river and building sand for infrastructure development in schools. They also provided labour in moulding of bricks

and transporting of crushed stones, river and building sand. Parents and communities also attended meetings held at the schools and participated in school governance.

Local communities and parents were also involved in school activities through their participation in sporting activities, production unit and maintenance of schools. The participation of parents and communities in these activities was mainly done through payment of user fees and PTA. Parents were also involved in learning and teaching by preparing children for school activities and monitoring their class attendance. They also supervised children's homework and helped them where possible.

Teachers participated in community activities through their involvement in community education, social gatherings and organizations. They also participated in the community activities through provision of leadership and professional advice. Schools provided the community with school facilities such as classrooms and transport. Schools facilities were at the disposal of the community.

The relationship between schools and their local communities was based on mobilization of financial and material resources, attendance of meetings, provision of labour, community participation in decision-making and academic performance of schools in national examinations. Communities were linked to their local schools by PTAs.

The ways through which school-community relationship can be strengthened include holding of regular consultative meetings, strengthening of PTAs, schools practising 'open-door policy', improving the academic performance of schools, and sensitizing the local communities.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This discussion is based on the findings of the study and literature reviewed. The discussion has been presented according to the objectives of the study.

### **5.2 The Nature of the School-Community Relationship in Kalomo District**

Literature has revealed the nature of the school community relationships practiced by schools in other countries based on the level of interaction and parental involvement in education (Ball, 1996 and Epstein 1995). The present study also acknowledges that there are different types of school-community relationships. However, in the schools in the study, it is difficult to distinguish one type of relationship from another. This is because the relationships existing between schools and their communities in the study have common characteristics regardless of their location. The characteristics are based on the level of commitment parents and teachers have towards the education of a child.

The nature of the commitment and the extent of parental involvement determine the effectiveness of the relationship. Parents are obliged to pay user fees, provide material resources, attend meetings at the school and take part in decision-making. On the other hand, teachers have also an obligation to do their job effectively. The study has established that where parents meet their obligation there is a close relationship between the school and the community. However, when members of the community fail to meet their obligation even the relationship will be strained. In most cases, the members of the community who fail to meet their obligation become passive members in the relationship.

This is the situation prevailing in the rural basic school in the study. The school-community relationship that exists in the schools in the study is also based on community as a resource. As Brooks and Kavanaugh (1999) and Chituma (2005) pointed out, the school looks to the community for financial, material and human resources. With dwindling funding from the government, Zambian schools now depend on the community for financial and material resources to bridge the gap between what the government can provide and what communities want to be provided. Members of the community provide financial resources in terms of user fees, and upfront materials for

infrastructure development. This is in line with the country's national policy on education (MOE, 1997). The school-community relationship in Kalomo, therefore, is also based on the participation of the community in provision of financial and material resources.

However, the findings of this study show that the school-community relationship existing in Kalomo District has gone beyond mobilization of financial and material resources to include decision-making. Epstein (1995) and Ball (1996) also acknowledged the school-community relationship based on the participation of the community in decision-making in the school. They pointed out that some relationships were based on decision-making. The finding is further supported by the study carried out by Cavarretta (1998) in the area outside Chicago and shows how parents participated in decision-making in their district school.

The community and parents take part in decision-making during PTA general meetings and through School Education Board, Project Management Committee and PTA. The PTA is the main body through which members of the community participate in decision-making in the school. Acknowledging community participation in decision-making in schools, Erickson (2004) mentioned that parental participation in decision-making was done through consultative bodies such as PTA. The involvement of the members of the community in decision-making through the board and the PTA is by representation. Community representatives in School Education Board and PTA make decisions on behalf of the community. Decision-making is associated with the attendance of PTA meetings.

The findings of the current study also show that there is a close relationship between the school and the community where the school involves the community in decision-making. As Fullan (2001) noted, parents will always support a system whose operation they know well. For instance, at an urban high school in the study, it was found that the school was close to the community. This was because the school involved members of the community in decision-making. The community had a sense of ownership of the school, and therefore, it was well supported by the members of the community.

Literature has shown that some relationships are based on pupils' academic success (Epstein, 1995 and Sanders, 2001). Similarly, the findings of this study indicate that the relationship between schools and their local communities is also based on academic performance of the children. In most of the schools visited the performance of pupils in the national examinations was an issue in the relationship between schools and communities. Schools that performed well in the national examinations had a generally good relationship with their local communities. Therefore, what teachers do in class is the backbone of the relationship between schools and communities. According to Kindred (1994:70), the teacher-community relationship depends on "teachers carrying out a good job." If teachers do not do their work, the image of the school in the eyes of the members of the community would be poor also.

It is worthy noting that the findings of this study indicate that urban communities participate more effectively in the school-community relationship than peri-urban and rural communities. This finding is not unusual. It is quite consistent with the findings of the National Center for Education Statistics (1994). The National Center for Education Statistics found that in America parents' involvement tended to be higher in urban and suburban than in rural areas. As Schaeffer (1992) observed, the degree of community participation in school activities is also low in socially and economically marginalized and illiterate communities. Most of the members of the community in rural areas are illiterate and poor. This situation has affected their participation in the relationship. They have left everything to teachers, PTA and a few literate parents.

A close look at the findings reveals that the relationship existing between schools and their communities in the study is a one-way relationship. It is clear, from the findings, that the relationship is mainly based on parents supporting the work of the school and not schools supporting the work of the community. The emphasis is more on what the community can do for their school and less on what the school can do for its local community. A one-way relationship is also acknowledged by Hays and Chodkiewicz (2002). They revealed that most of the schools in their study focused on one-way relationship. The relationship focused on engaging the communities to support schools.

Although teachers and schools participate in the community activities, their participation is for their survival and not really for the good of the community. This is the type of relationship Tam (2004) referred to as an opportunistic school-community relationship. In an opportunistic school-community relationship schools participate in the events taking place in the community for their survival.

It should also be recognized that members of Kalomo community have little impact on what goes on in schools. Head teachers seem to play the vital role in the relationship. Schools are reluctant to share information on programmes, working practices and finances with members of the community. This is supported by the study carried out by Chituma who concluded that “heads of schools and teachers do not express willingness to involve local communities in the management of finances” (2005:63). PTA representatives and Kalomo community at large have little impact upon the schools’ direction. The problem lies in the way regulations governing PTA is formulated. The National Education Policy on education encourages the involvement of the community in education through PTA but puts prominence on the role of head teachers (MOE, 1997).

The findings also indicate that most of the members of the community who are active in the school-community relationship are those with children in their local schools. It seems communities are linked to schools through their children. This could be because parents in Zambia mainly participate in the affairs of the school through PTA, which is a link between the school and the community. PTA is an association of parents or guardians of pupils of a particular school and the school’s teachers (Education Act of 1966). Therefore, members of the community who have no children in their local schools are not members of PTAs, yet the Ministry of Education expects all members of the community to participate in the activities of their local schools (MOE, 1997).

Nevertheless, the findings show that the situation is different when it comes to provision of labour and upfront materials for infrastructure development especially in peri-urban and rural basic schools. Most often schools just assign villages to mobilize upfront materials towards the expansion of schools. For example, at a peri-urban basic school in the study, it was revealed that each village in the local community was assigned to mould



10,000 bricks towards the building of a library at the school. All the villagers regardless of whether one had a child or not in the school were expected to take part in the activity. This is consistent with the national policy in education (MOE, 1997).

Going by the findings, the school-community relationship in Kalomo District is not yet matured. According to Kilpatrick et al. (2003), a mature relationship exists when the community is having a greater control in terms of vision settings and decision-making. Decisions should be weighted towards the community. However, decision-making in the schools in the current study is weighted towards the schools. There is almost a line between the affairs that only the school's staff is authorized to handle and those from which parental input is accepted.

The findings have also shown that there is no school in this study that is completely isolated from its community. This could be because the school system in Zambia is now focused on decentralization and community participation in provision of education (MOE, 1997). Thus communities are involved in activities of schools. However, what is evident in the relationship is the variation in the level of interaction from one school to another. According to Parelius and Parelius (1998:36), the variation depends on "social composition, cohesion and independence of the community."

In some schools the community-school links are weak. For instance, the school-community links between boarding high schools and their communities look to be weak. This could be because high schools represent the values of wider communities but out of touch with the needs of the local communities. Their contribution of the local communities to the relationship with their local boarding high schools is mainly done through the payment of user fees.

### **5.3 Ways through which the Community Participates in School Activities**

The current study has revealed many ways in which communities in Kalomo District participate in the affairs of schools. One way in which members of the community participate in the affairs of the school is through provision of financial and material resources. Parents pay user fees and provide upfront material such as burnt bricks,

crushed stones, river and building sand. This research finding seems to be consistent with what Heneveld and Crag (1996) and Schaefer (1994) identified as one of the ways through which parents and communities participate in school activities. They mentioned that the community provided financial and material resources to the school. This is also in line with the government policy in education (MOE, 1996). The government, through the Ministry of Education, introduced cost-sharing in education.

Besides provision of financial and material resources, communities participate in school activities through provision of labour. Members of the community contribute labour in moulding of bricks, transporting of crushed stones, river and building sand. This is in line with the government policy in education. The Ministry of Education also encourages communities to participate in education through “construction, expansion and maintenance of schools” (MOE, 1996:136). Participation of communities in construction and expansion of infrastructure has been manifested in upgrading of primary schools to basic school status. This has been done to include provision for grades 8 and 9 in these schools. Schaefer (1994) also encourages the participation of community in education through provision of labour.

The finding regarding the participation of the community in education through provision of labour is not unique. In Madagascar, for instance, where the government investments at primary school level have been extremely low, communities and parents contribute money, labour and materials (World Bank, 1995b). Therefore, the absence of government support leaves the school infrastructure, equipment and pupils’ supplies to the parents and communities.

The research also revealed that most of the schools in the study were built, expanded or maintained with the support of parents. This finding is supported by Bray (1986:118) who observed that “in most countries rural primary schools are built and maintained by parents.” Communities, therefore, compliment government efforts in provision of infrastructure and maintenance of schools. School construction is one of the ways outlined by Colletta and Perking (1995) through which communities can participate in the activities of the school.

Another way in which members of the community and parents participate in school activities is through attendance of various meetings held at the school. Attendance may also imply passive acceptance of decisions made by others (Schaeffer, 1994). It is in such meetings that the welfare of the school and pupils is discussed (MOE, 2002). The main meetings that are held between the school and the community are PTA annual general and consultative meetings. PTA annual general meetings are held once in a year and mainly towards the end of the year to plan for the following year. As for consultative meetings, they are held at any time when need arises.

PTA extraordinary meetings are held to consult parents on a certain issue. This is in accordance with the national policy on education. According to the national policy on education (MOE, 1997), parents have the right to be consulted by the school on matters to do with the education of their children. Consultations can also be done at an individual level. Schools ask individual members of the community to offer an opinion on certain issues.

A fourth way in which the community and parents participate in school activities is through school governance. Governance includes any activity that provides members of the community the opportunity to take part in decision-making about school programmes. According to Davies (1991), participation in school governance may include being a school board member; a participant or an active member of PTA. Decision-making is done at different forums. Heneveld and Crag (1996), and Colletta and Perking (1995) also support the participation of the community in school governance. They mentioned that the involvement of the community and parents in school governance was one way through which the community and parents participated in school activities.

In Zambian schools, members of the community participate in decision-making during PTA annual general and consultative meetings (MOE, 1997). The community also takes part in the implementation of certain decisions that have been collectively arrived at during these meetings. For instance, when parents and teachers have agreed on the amount of money to be paid as school fees, parents have to honour their obligation by paying the agreed school fees or support any decision that has been collectively made.

The study also revealed that the community was involved in school activities through its participation in learning and teaching. Parental participation in learning and teaching is one of the types of parental involvement in education as outlined by Epstein (1995) and Ball (1996). There are various ways in which the community participates in learning and teaching. Parents prepare children for school and preparations are done at home. Parents prepare food for them in case of day scholars; buy them uniform, books and pens. As Warner (1997) pointed out, the task begins at home. At home family members supervise and help their children with homework, assignments, studies and other school related activities. They also monitor the use of TV so that children have enough time to study. Parents also discuss school matters with their children, expressing their expectations and offering praise and encouragement for achievement.

Parents also monitor and make follow-ups on teachers' attendance and performance. They check children's books to see how they are progressing and get reports on teachers' attendance and performance. Writing on the same issue, Kindred (1996) indicated that parents' judgment of the school depended on reports or comments from pupils. In most cases, when parents are not happy with the performance of certain teachers, they have asked for the transfer of those particular teachers. According to Heneveld and Crag (1996), where teachers' absenteeism and poor performance are critical issues, parents can be part of the system of monitoring and supervising teachers to ensure that teachers arrive at school on time and effectively perform their duties in the classroom.

One of the ways in which communities in the study participate in school activities is through promotion of good discipline in schools. The community and parents are involved in disciplining problematic children. According to literature review, this is appropriate since pupils' problem should not be regarded as individual problems (Stone and Wehlage, 1992). There is need for a collective effort to solve pupils' problems. Furthermore, it can be argued that parents know their children better than teachers.

The current study also found that parental involvement in education tended to be higher in urban and peri-urban communities than rural communities. This is consistent with the finding of the National Center for Education Statistics (1994). The National Center for

Education Statistics found that parental involvement tended to be higher in urban and suburban communities than in rural communities. Perhaps this is because urban and suburban communities are literate and informed. They know why and how to be involved in school activities.

Close examination of the findings shows that community and parental participation in school activities is mainly done through provision of financial and material resources, and through PTA. This is consistent with the findings of Swift-Morgan (2006) who examined the form and scope of community participation in rural Ethiopia. She found that a large portion of what was characterized by community participation was monetary contributions rather than involvement in decision making or teaching and learning.

As pointed out earlier, community participation in school activities is mainly done through PTA. PTA is a forum for exchange of ideas and experiences between parents as members of the community and teachers, and mobilization of financial and material resources. It is the forum for promoting regular contacts and interactions between parents and teachers, and between the school and the community. This is what the government's national policy on education encourages (MOE, 1997). As Steyn et al. (1999:107) pointed out, PTA also helps the parents to gain an "insight into the work" that the school is doing and the environment in which their children find themselves every day. Studies conducted in other countries have also shown that PTA is the main avenue through which members of the community participate in school activities. For example, Heysteck (2004) shows how parents in South Africa participate in decision-making and management through school governing bodies that consist of parents, teachers and pupils.

In conclusion, it can be argued that the participation of members of the community is generally limited to attendance of meetings, payment of funds and provision of upfront materials without any intention to intervene in the educational procedures of other issues relating to school life.

#### **5.4 Ways through which Schools and Teachers Participate in Community Activities**

The findings of the current study have shown that there are various ways in which teachers participate in the affairs of the community. One way in which they participate is through provision of leadership in the community especially in peri-urban and rural areas. The community looks to teachers for guidance. For instance, in sports, religious and recreation activities local communities turn to teachers for guidance (Datta, 1984). This could be due to the nature of their profession that has made them understand problems; and therefore, they know how to state the problems in the language that is easily understood. Therefore, teachers lead community groups and organizations.

Apart from the provision of leadership in the community, teachers also fully participate in associations and organizations found in the community. Their possible roles in these associations and organisations are those of mobilizers, secretaries, researchers and bookkeepers. Teachers are also involved in formation of local organizations and formalization of “various decisions and actions necessary for community development” (Abeyrama and Saeed, 1982:22). They work with non-governmental organisations and government development workers in the community.

Contrary to the findings of this study, studies carried out in America show that participation of teachers in local community social organisations has decreased (Brookover and Erickson, 1975). Perhaps this is due to the fact that in America teachers often live in communities other than those in which they work. According to Brookover and Erickson, teachers in America are becoming increasingly active in state, province and national programmes.

The findings have also shown that teachers participate in developmental projects going on in communities. Teachers have a fairly sound knowledge of their local communities and can therefore be both consultants and participants in development activities in their local communities especially in rural and peri-urban areas. Teachers work together with members of the community to plan, implement, evaluate and monitor developmental

projects. As Johnston (1982) noted, participation of teachers in these programmes may include making suggestions and criticism aimed at improving the programmes.

Another way in which teachers participate in community activities is through their involvement in community education. Teachers participate in adult education. The participation of teachers in community education is also acknowledged by community education based relationship of Ball (1996). According to Ball's community based relationship, schools provide learning opportunities to members of the community regardless of the age.

Teachers also sensitize the community on HIV/AIDS, child abuse, human rights and environmental issues. The activities of the Australian Science Teachers' Association (ASTRA) give credence to the findings. Between 2004 and 2005 ASTRA funded 24 projects that investigated local issues such as water, air pollution, habitat conservation, and biodiversity (ASTRA, 2005). Teachers in Zambia can also contribute to community efforts by developing sustainable solutions to local problems.

Like teachers, schools also participate in community activities. They participate in the activities of the community through provision of school facilities such as transport, classrooms, and venues to communities. This is what the Ministry of Education (1997) expects from the Zambian schools. It implores schools to share their resources, services, skills and physical facilities with their communities and serve as a centre of service for the community. Most of the schools in the current study shared their resources with their local communities.

Literature has also shown that school facilities are at the disposal of the community. Schools provide day nurseries and library services to the community. Day nurseries are provided to mothers who work and library service to all members of the community (Bray, 1986). Writing on the ways schools participate in the affairs of the community, Olsen (1963:233) states:

The facilities of the school are used by the community to carry on desirable aspects of the community living. Facilities are available for the use of any group of the community.

Schools, especially those in rural areas, are venues for community meetings. In rural areas community meetings involving the entire community are held at schools since they are centrally located. Religious groups that have not yet built their own buildings use classrooms for their meetings.

In addition to provision of school facilities, schools provide employment to the members of the community. Local people in the community have been employed in schools as cooks, sanitary orderlies, watchmen etc. According to Bray (1986:119), “at the school secondary level, the school provides access to income-generating employment.”

Indeed schools can play a role that extends beyond the provision of education to children in the community. They act as a focus for community activity, provide experts and are a component of the community. Therefore, they are cultural centres for the community.

### **5.5 Ways through which School -Community Relationship could be strengthened**

The current study has revealed many ways in which the school-community relationship can be strengthened. One of the ways in which the school-community relationship may be strengthened is by holding regular consultative meetings between schools and communities. The issue regarding holding regular consultative meetings is supported by Decker and Lemmer (1994) and Myeko (2000). They suggested that organizing regular meetings with members of the community could improve the relationship between schools and communities. It is through such meetings that members of the local community interact with teachers and exchange ideas, and differences between the school and community can be ironed out. Meetings should be called at the date and time that is suitable to most of the members of the community.

During meetings between the school and the community, members of the community should be given opportunities to speak, make suggestions and ask questions pertaining to the welfare of the school. The Ministry of Education also supports the creation of

“brainstorming atmosphere in which parents are not afraid of speaking up” (MOE, 2001:19). Head teachers should not monopolize the discussion and discourage members of the community from getting involved in the discussion. Head teachers have dictatorial tendency and usually monopolize discussions. This has discouraged members of the community from attending meetings at the school.

The common practice where by members of the community depended mainly on PTA annual general meetings that come once in a year should be discouraged. Although schools usually call for PTA extraordinary general meetings for consultations, such meetings are rare and only called when schools want help from the community. There is need for regular consultative meetings between schools and communities for the relationship to be strengthened.

Another way in which the school-community relationship can be strengthened as revealed by this study is by inviting members of the community to attend many school-related events. This suggestion is among the ways recommended by Myeko (2000), and Decker and Lemmer (1994). The more the members of the community have contact with the school, the more they are willing to give in their time. During such events an agenda should be followed that can include an introduction of those in attendance, and a question and answer session. This improves the interaction between members of the community and teachers.

Schools should also be available for open discussion. One way in which schools can be avail themselves for open discussion with members of the community is by practising ‘open-door policy.’ This is a policy whereby members of the community can come into the school to discuss issues concerning the management of the school. Members of the community should be free to come to school and consult teachers and administrators on certain issues instead of waiting for PTA annual general meetings. This will help to reduce acrimony that characterizes PTA annual general meetings. However, schools should not be too open to the community, as it will weaken their operations.

A fourth way, through which the school-community relationship can be strengthened, is by strengthening the PTA executive committee so as to make it more effective. There is need to elect people to positions of responsibility who will be truly representatives of the community. There is also need for a vibrant PTA that will bring the school closer to its community. The Ministry of Education also supports the development of “a strong and active PTA” (MOE, 2001:19).

To create a vibrant PTA, members of the community should elect the most capable and informed representatives to serve on PTA. These should be members of the community who know how schools operate. Furthermore, community representatives in the PTA should not be elected because of the negative attitude they have against the school, as this will strain the relationship between the school and the community. In the same vein, new members of the PTA executive committee should be oriented on their role. Parents and teachers observed that some members of the PTA executive committee did not know their role and this rendered them to be ineffective in their positions.

The composition of the PTA executive committee in boarding schools was a concern to members of the local communities in the study. The PTA executive committees in boarding schools comprised people from wider communities or outsiders. Therefore, most of the resolutions passed during PTA annual general meetings usually favoured the wider community. Hence the need for boarding high schools to have a deliberate policy that favours the local community. Most of the members of the PTA executive committee should come from the local communities in which schools are located. This will bring local communities closer to their schools.

Another way in which to strengthen the relationship is by improving communication between the school and community. According to Myeko (2000), communication is the key to successful relationship. There must be an exchange of clear straightforward and helpful information between schools and communities. Providing information on a regular basis will help bridge the gap between the community and the school, and between members of the community and teachers. For Berger (1983:48) “an essential ingredient in meaningful home-school relations is the opportunity to communicate

openly.” She suggested simple newsletter, community radio and handbooks as some of the ways through which schools could communicate with the community. In this way communities will be kept up-to-date on school events. Therefore, schools will gain the support of their communities since members of the community usually support the system they know well.

The study also revealed that sensitization of the local community could help to strengthen the school-community relationship. This can be done by organizing workshops at the school to help the community with information on how they can be involved in the school-community relationship. Some members of the community feel that education is the responsibility of the government of the day and hence the need to sensitize the local communities on the government’s national policy on education. As Berger (1983) observed, parent-teacher conferences or workshops offer personal opportunity for two-way communication between parents and teachers.

Conferences offer great opportunities for teachers to talk to parents about their child’s progress in school and the general welfare of the school. It encourages communication between teachers and parents. Funds for holding such workshops or conferences can be sourced from the community. Affluent members of the community can be asked to contribute some money or items such as soft drinks towards the holding of such meetings. There will be always members of the community who will be willing to finance such activities.

Home-visits are another way through which the relationship can be strengthened; and most of the respondents held this view. According to Myeko (2000) and Berger (1983), home-visits offer teachers opportunity to observe parent and child interaction and to have one to one discussion with parents. This improves their interaction with parents and they will also appreciate the behaviour of certain children. However, home-visits are not suitable for Zambian schools due to some limitations. Zambian schools are over enrolled and in some cases understaffed. What seems to be suitable for Zambian schools is for teachers and schools inviting guardians or parents of pupils who are going counselling and those who are not doing well academically to schools to have one-to-one discussions

with them on the welfare of their children. This can be done once in a year or better still once in a term.

Another way through which the school-community relationship can be strengthened is by schools improving their academic performance especially in national examinations. Teachers have an obligation to attend to their classes and produce better results. Pupils usually tell their parents whatever goes on in the classroom (Kindred, 1994). This entails that teachers should work constantly for better results and good relations with their pupils.

In a nutshell, for the local community to get involved in their school activities and to strengthen the school-community relationship, schools should get the members of the community on board. They should co-operate with their local communities.

## **CHAPTER SIX: SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS OF THE STUDY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This last chapter constitutes a summary of the findings of the study, the main conclusion and recommendations of the study. The conclusion is made from the findings of this study and literature review.

### **6.2 Summary of the research findings of the study**

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the nature of the school-community relationship in Kalomo District. Schools may use the findings to create a close relationship. Policy makers may also use the findings to improve the policies that encourage community participation in education. The community and the school have to work together since they have a common interest of educating a child.

This study has established that the local community in Kalomo District mainly participates in the school-community relationship through PTAs. The activities of PTA vary from one school to another depending on how vibrant that particular PTA is. Through PTAs, local communities provide schools with financial and material resources. Communities provide upfront materials such as moulded bricks, crushed stones, river and building sand for infrastructure development in schools.

Furthermore, members of the community participate in infrastructure development through provision of labour in moulding of bricks, drawing of water, hauling of crushed stones, river and building sand. They also participate in decision-making in schools. On the other hand, schools and teachers participate in the relationship through provision of school facilities and leadership in the community. They also provide services such as education and professional advice; and participate in social gatherings and organisations.

Generally, there is a good relationship between schools and their communities in Kalomo District. The relationship has gone beyond mobilization of financial and material resources to involve governance. Parents are involved in school governance through their

participation in decision-making. Decisions are mainly made during PTA meetings. The study has also shown that where parents are involved in decision-making there are fewer problems since parents always support decisions they are part of. However, the study revealed that the community is mainly linked to the local school through PTA and its children who go to these schools.

### **6.3 Conclusion**

The local community should participate in the activities of their local schools. The participation of the community should not be limited to attendance of meetings, provision of funds and materials. It should be extended to the educational procedures of other issues relating to school life. Schools must share information on programmes, working practices and finances with members of the local community. This information must be communicated openly and honestly. The practice whereby schools only consult community members when they need help must be discouraged.

Schools and teachers, too, should play a leading role in community programmes. They should not only provide education to the members of the community but also share their services, skills and physical facilities with their local communities. Teachers can also contribute to the community efforts by developing sustainable solutions to local problems. Thus members of the local community are implored to involve teachers in community programmes.

Every effort should be concentrated in bringing together all communities and their local schools to work as a united team. The school and the local community should work in harmony and contribute to the development of a child, the school and the community. The relationship must be focused on supporting both the work of the community and the school. Therefore, there is need for schools to develop a two-way relationship with their local communities. Schools and teachers must have an interest in the affairs of their local communities. Parents and local communities, too, must have an interest in the running of the schools since they are also stakeholders. They should not leave the welfare of pupils to teachers only. Therefore, teachers, schools, parents and communities should forge a close relationship.

There are many reasons for developing and maintaining a close school-community relationship. The relationship improves school programmes and climate, helps to finance education, connect families and community, and provides community services. Thus, the relationship benefits the child, the school and the community.

#### **6.4 Recommendations**

- a) The study has revealed that members of the community who have no children in their local schools do not participate fully in the relationship. This is because community participation in education is mainly done through PTA. The Education Act of 1966, Cap 234 and Regulation 5, Sub-regulation 1, 2 and 3 excludes members of the community that have no children in their local schools from being members of PTA; yet PTA is a link between the school and the local community. Therefore, the government through the Ministry of Education should review all existing legislations in line with the national policy in education so as to facilitate full community participation in education.
- b) The current study has shown that there are times when school administrators make decisions without involving members of the community yet these decisions affect the welfare of a child. This strains the school-community relationship. It is, therefore, recommended that schools should involve members of the community in whatever decision school administrators want to take if that decision involves the education of pupils. Members of the community will always support decisions they are part of.
- c) Some schools have failed to hold PTA annual general meetings. Schools should hold PTA general meetings at least once in a year and PTA executive committee once in a term. It is through such meetings that individual members of the community take part in decision-making and interact with teachers.
- d) The findings of this study revealed that the issue of school places strains the relationship between local communities and their local high schools. Local communities felt that their local high schools have neglected them in preference

to wider communities. Therefore, the study recommends that local children should be given first priority when it comes to offering school places. After all schools are meant to serve local communities in which they are located. However, quality should not be compromised.

- e) The composition of the PTA executive committee in boarding schools is a concern to members of the local communities in the study. The PTA executive committees in boarding schools comprise people from wider communities or outsiders. Hence the need for the Ministry of Education to have a deliberate policy that favours the local communities in boarding high schools. At least two (2) of the members of the PTA executive committee should come from the local communities in which schools are located. This will bring local communities closer to their schools.

#### **6.4.1 Recommendations for Further Study**

The findings of this study show that poverty, unemployment, and illiteracy have an effect *on parental participation in the school activities. Hence the study recommends that a more thorough research be considered to ascertain the impact of poverty, unemployment and illiteracy on school-community relationship.*

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## **APPENDIX A**

### **Interview Schedule for Focus Group Discussion.**

**Name of the school.....**

1. For how long have you been at this school?
2. When was the last PTA annual general meeting held?
3. How was the attendance?
4. Do you have local people in the PTA executive committee?
5. Is the chairperson a local person?
6. Mention any other meeting held between your school and the local community apart from PTA annual general meetings.
7. How often are they held?
8. Who prepares the agenda?
9. Discuss ways in which the local community is involved in the School activities.
10. Are you satisfied with the way the community participates in the activities of the school? If so give reasons.
11. What measures has your school put in place to ensure that the local community participates effectively in the school activities?
12. Do you inform members of the community about what is happening in the school apart from the academic performance of the children?
13. If so, what issues do you normally inform them?
14. Discuss ways in which your school and members of the local community communicate.
15. Discuss ways through which you are involved in the community activities?
16. Are you satisfied with your participation in the activities of the community? If so give reasons for your answer.
17. In your opinion, what kind of relationship exists between your school and the local community?
18. Discuss ways in which the school-community relationship may be strengthened.
19. Which one of the ways you have mentioned do you prioritize?
20. Is there any other issue you would like to share with me?

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Interview Schedule For school Heads and their Deputies.**

**Name of the school.....**

1. For how long have you been at this school?
2. When was the last PTA annual general meeting held?
3. How was the attendance?
4. Do you have local people in the PTA executive committee?
5. Is the chairperson a local person?
6. Mention any other meeting held between your school and the local community apart from PTA annual general meetings.
7. How often are they held?
8. Who prepares the agenda?
9. Mention ways in which the local community is involved in School activities.
10. Are you satisfied with the community participation? If so give reasons.
11. What measures has your school put in place to ensure effective participation of the local community in the school activities?
12. Do you inform members of the community about what is happening in the school apart from the academic performance of the children?
13. If so, what issues do you normally inform them?
14. Mention ways in which your school and members of the community communicate.
15. In what ways, if any, are the school and teachers participate in the community activities?
16. Are you satisfied with the participation of the school and teachers in the activities of the community? If so give reasons for your answer.
17. In your opinion, what kind of relationship exists between your school and the local community?
18. Suggest ways in which the school-community relationship may be strengthened.
19. Which one of the ways you have mentioned do you prioritize?
20. Is there any other issue you would like to share with me?

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Interview Schedule for Parents.**

**Name of the school.....**

1. How many children do you have in your local school?
2. When was the last PTA annual general meeting held?
3. How was the attendance?
4. Do you have local people in the PTA executive committee?
5. Is the chairperson a local person?
6. Mention any other meeting held between your school and the local community apart from PTA annual general meetings.
7. How often are they held?
8. Who prepares the agenda?
9. Mention ways in which as a member of the local community you are involved in the school activities:
10. Are you satisfied with the way you participate in the activities of the school? If so give reasons.
11. What measures has your school put in place to ensure that you participate effectively in the school activities?
12. Does your local school inform you about what is happening in the school apart from the academic performance of the children?
13. If so, what issues do you normally inform them?
14. Mention ways in which your school communicates to you.
15. Mention ways in which you communicate to the school and teachers.
16. In what ways are the school and teachers participate in the community activities:
17. Are you satisfied with the participation of the school and teachers in the activities of the community? If so give reasons for your answer.
18. In your opinion, what kind of relationship exists between your school and the local community?
19. Suggest ways in which the school-community relationship may be strengthened.
20. Which one of the ways you have mentioned do you prioritize?
21. Is there any other issue you would like to share with me?

## **APPENDIX D**

### **Document review guide**

**Name of the school.....**

1. Frequency of PTA meetings in the past four years.
2. Records of any other consultative meetings held between the school and the community
3.
  - a). Record of any material contributions made to the school
  - b). Record of professional talks given by the community members
4. Local parents' attendance of PTA meeting.
5. Decision in which the local parents had an input.
6. Kinds of decision-making in which the community was involved.
7. What school projects, if any, are the parents involved in.
8. Any documentation of the activities of the school or teachers in community's programmes.

**APPENDIX E**

All communications should be addressed to  
The District Education Board Secretary and not to  
any individual.  
Tel: 032-65067  
Fax: 032-65018



REPUBLIC OF ZIMBABWE  
**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION**

KALOMO DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD

Zimba High School,  
Box 610141,  
ZIMBA

17<sup>th</sup> May 2008

The Education Board Secretary,  
Box 620132,  
KALOMO.

Dear Sir,

**RE: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT A STUDY IN SCHOOLS IN  
KALOMO DISTRICT**

With reference to the above stated subject, I hereby ask for permission to carry out my field work in selected schools in Kalomo District.

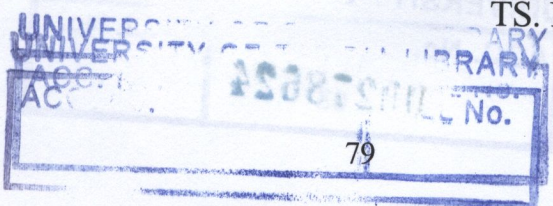
I am a teacher at Zimba High School who is taking a Masters Programme in education. The programme has a field work component which I have to complete.

Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

KANJAMBO NKUMBWA

TS. No 85451





All communications should be addressed to  
The District Education Board Secretary and not to  
Any individual.  
Tel.032-65067  
Fax 032-65018

In reply please quote

REPUBLIC OF ZAMBIA

## MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

KALOMO DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD,  
P.O.BOX 620132,  
KALOMO.

28<sup>th</sup> May, 2008

The Headteachers  
**KALOMO DISTRICT**

### **INTRODUCTORY LETTER: MR KANJAMBO NKUMBWA TS 85415**

This is to officially introduce the above named teacher who has my express permission to carry out a study in schools in Kalomo district.

Based at Zimba High School, this teacher is taking a Masters Programme in education and his fieldwork involves selected schools in this district

Please facilitate and learn more from him.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S.K. Hamilemba'.

S.K Hamilemba

**ACTING DISTRICT EDUCATION BOARD SECRETARY**  
**KALOMO DISTRICT**

APPENDIX G



**UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA  
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

Telephone: 291381  
Fax: +260-1-292702

P O Box 32379  
Lusaka, Zambia

=====

30<sup>th</sup> January, 2008

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

Dear Sir/Madam


**RE: FIELD WORK FOR M.ED STUDENTS**

The bearer of this letter Mr./Ms. KANJAMBO NKUMBWA..... computer number  
52 6003783..... is a duly registered student at the University  
of Zambia, School of Education.

The student is taking a Masters Programme in Education. The Programme has a  
fieldwork component which he/she has to complete.

We shall greatly appreciate if the necessary assistance is rendered to him/her.

Yours Faithfully

  
P. C. Manchishi (Dr.)  
**ASSISTANT DEAN (PG), SCHOOL OF EDUCATION**

cc. Dean, Education  
Director, DRGS

