

**THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC
EXAMINATIONS IN ZAMBIA: A CASE STUDY OF THE EXAMINATIONS
COUNCIL OF ZAMBIA, 2005 – 2010**

BY

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration

THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

LUSAKA

2012

DECLARATION

I, Daka, Eliphas hereby declare that this dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment for the award of the Degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration, is original, it is entirely my own work except where reference to other source has being indicated. I further certify that the document has not previously being presented for a Degree to this university or any other University/ Faculty.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my children, Mwenya, Thandi, Bartholomew and my dear wife Priscilla Mwaba Daka.

APPROVAL

This dissertation by Daka, Eliphas is approved as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Educational Administration of the University of Zambia

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

BETUZ	-	Basic Education Teachers Union
ECZ	-	Examinations Council of Zambia
EMCS	-	Electronic Marks Capture system
GCE	-	General Certificate of Education
MOE	-	Ministry of Education
NAS	-	National Assessment Survey
OL	-	Ordinary Level
PEO	-	Provincial Education officer
SC	-	School Certificate
SCH	-	School
SESTUZ	-	Secondary Teachers Union of Zambia
TEVET	-	Technical Education, Vocational and Entrepreneurial Training
ZNUT	-	Zambia National Union of Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Examiners absenteeism and negative job attitude are a major problem confronting the Examinations Council of Zambia. Over the years, the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) has progressively experienced a low turnout of trained examiners during marking sessions. The Council considers the wealth of experience the examiners obtain by consistently participating in marking as an important factor for continuous improvement of the quality of marking. The study investigated factors that predispose examiners to absenteeism at School Certificate and General Certificate of Education marking sessions and the need for improved examiner attendance.

The study comprised twenty four males and sixteen female examiners giving a total of forty respondents. Five Examinations Council of Zambia subject specialists were also interviewed. The main instruments used in the collection of data were Examinations Council of Zambia official reports, questionnaires, interview guides, focus group discussions and observation methods. The study employed the triangulation technique.

The overall findings of the research indicate that examiner absenteeism at marking sessions is a consequence of low marking rates paid to examiners, selective payment of subsistence allowances to examiners, poor accommodation standards, non involvement of examiners by ECZ in the decision process, poor working relationships between ECZ officials and examiners among others.

In view of the findings, the researcher made the following recommendations; that reasonable marking rates should be paid to examiners and on time, ECZ must consider paying subsistence allowances to all examiners, funding must be increased to the Council to make it more viable and able to deal with emerging challenges confronting it.

Further recommendations were the need for the provision of adequate transport refunds payable to examiners and the general improvement of marking venues by making them more habitable. It was also established that the Examinations Council of Zambia must accord recognition to its long-serving examiners by instituting awards of excellence and issuance of letters of commendations to deserving examiners. The findings also established that, examiners engaged in public examinations assessment need to demonstrate more commitment, transparency, responsiveness and

professionalism in view of the strategic role they play notwithstanding the various sociological challenges confronting them.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the Study

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) was established by an Act of Parliament number 15 of 1983 (ECZ, 2009). The Council became operational as a parastatal legal entity in January 1987. The function of conducting examinations and certification that are today handled by the Council were being handled by the Department of Examinations and Psychological Services as a government department under the Ministry of Education. The Examinations Council has a mandate to set and conduct examinations for the Republic of Zambia, award Certificates to successful candidates who pass examinations, promote international recognition of qualifications conferred by the council. The Council approves or rejects appointments of examiners, supervisors, invigilators and other persons connected with examinations. However, before the enactment of the Act of 1983, the Ministry of Education and Culture under the examinations section used to conduct examinations. The Examinations Council of Zambia became fully operational in 1987 as a semi autonomous public institution (E.C.Z, 2009). Prior to its establishment, the University of Cambridge local syndicate in the United Kingdom was the examining and awarding body. However, the syndicate's examinations catered for many countries and consequently it was not easy for such examinations to reflect the needs of Zambia. The country was subject to a curricula, syllabi and regulations of the syndicate with very little say in the administration and policy of the syndicate's examinations, thus the establishment of the Examinations Council of Zambia.

Therefore, the integrity of any education system and the qualifications thereof, lies in the conduct of national public examinations. Examinations act as a tool of evaluation for the education system of any nation. They, for instance, provide the teacher and the students with information on the effectiveness of the system. Further, public examinations provide analysis of the results by revealing aspects of the learning situation. Analysis of examinations assists in revealing students weaknesses and strengths. Institutional performance is also assessed through examinations and results can be used in finding solutions to the problems each institution may be facing. Furthermore, the information provided by responses in an examination can lead to adjustment in the teaching methods,

organisation of the syllabus and curriculum change to ensure that overall intellectual development of the student is more adequately catered for (MOE, 1977).

The Examinations Council of Zambia, therefore, is mandated to manage and administer examinations in Zambia in pursuant to the following objectives:

- a) To ensure proper conduct and security of examinations at all levels.
- b) To monitor and control the proper conduct, administration and management of examinations in conjunction with the Ministry of Education.
- c) To seal loopholes likely to cause examination irregularities.
- d) To ensure smooth processing of results.
- e) To ensure that all examinations fees are collected on time and are properly accounted for.
- f) To uphold the credibility both locally and internationally of examinations conducted by the Examinations Council of Zambia.

The Policy context of ECZ is in line with the Ministry of Education policy guidance, and is in pursuant to the National policy of the education document of 1996, (Educating Our Future) which articulates three main policies that are specifically relevant to the operations of the council as outlined below:

1. To seek evidence that the curriculum, which is comprehensive, balanced, integrated, diversified and relevant to the real needs of the pupil and society, is well understood, taught and learnt pursuant to vision 2030;
2. To ensure that pupils master essential literacy and numeracy skills in lower and middle basic education;
3. To implement a comprehensive programme of school based pupil assessment and feedback that should be an integral part of the teaching and learning process in every school (ECZ, 2009).

The driving force of the vision of the Examinations Council of Zambia is its mission statement which reads; ‘The Examinations Council will provide an effective and efficient system for setting and conducting assessments of comparable international standards’ (ECZ, 2009:4). Furthermore, the Examinations Council of Zambia has the following goals as articulated in its service Charter of 2009;

1. Develop and use appropriate assessment schemes including formulation of examinations syllabi.
2. Improve efficiency and effectiveness in the general management and conduct of assessments and examinations.
3. Enhance the institutional capacity to effectively and efficiently discharge the core functions.
4. Issue certificates on time and continuously enhance authenticity features of certificates through security printing that addresses the challenges brought about by the emerging technologies.
5. Conduct empirical and applied research that provides diagnostic information on the education system performance in order to influence evidence based decision making and enhance professional advisory services to other organisations on assessment, testing and research
6. Develop a robust institutional support service delivery system that ensures efficient and effective conduct of assessments.
7. Develop a proactive institutional framework and mechanisms for educating, informing and communicating to the stakeholders and the general public on critical issues of the Examinations Council.

Therefore, the Examinations Council of Zambia on behalf of the Republic of Zambia manages grades 7 composite exams, Junior Secondary School grade 9 leaving Examination, the Joint School Certificate grade 12 and General Certificate of Education (GCE). The Council also manages Teacher Education Examinations for accredited institutions of learning at tertiary level. The Examinations Council of Zambia also conducts spot checks in various examinations centres across the country.

Public examinations are a means to maintaining or improving the general standard of quality in any programme. It is from this background that this study was conducted to investigate the Management and Administration of Examinations by the Examinations Council of Zambia at Certificate/GCE O Levels in the light of declining participation of examiners at marking sessions for the period 2005 to 2010.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The Examinations Council of Zambia has over the years trained many examiners at School Certificate and General Certificate of Education levels to manage the marking of examinations which is quite critical. However, despite the huge sums of money directed towards the training exercise, the numbers of trained examiners both new and old do not match the turn-out at marking sessions which is quite low. It is for this reason that this study sought to investigate the problem.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the Management and Administration of examinations amid declining numbers of examiners at marking sessions for the period running 2005-2010 and further establish factors contributing to low participation in the marking exercise.

1.4 Research objectives

The specific objectives of this research were to;

- i. Determine how many examiners had been trained from 2005 to 2010.
- ii. Evaluate the general attendance of examiners at marking venues.
- iii. Identify factors that made grade 12 examiners shun the marking sessions.
- iv. Suggest possible solutions that ECZ could effect to attract more examiners for marking.

1.5 Research questions

The following research questions guided the study:

- i. How many examiners were trained from 2005 to 2010?
- ii. How had the general trend of examiners' attendance at marking venues been?
- iii. What factors made grade Twelve (12) examiners shun the marking exercise?
- iv. What were the possible solutions to ensuring that more examiners participate in the marking exercise?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study may provide solutions for the Examinations Council of Zambia which could enable it to attract and retain examiners at grade 12 and General Certificate of Education (GCE) marking sessions. Furthermore, the research may offer an opportunity to the Ministry of Education to liaise with the Examinations Council of Zambia on how best examiners plight could be managed and administered without having to experience low turnouts at marking sessions. In addition a more positive relationship could be cultivated between the examiner and the Examinations Council of Zambia.

1.7 Delimitations of the study

The study was limited to the Ministry of Education Teachers who are trained examiners at School Certificate and General Certificate of Education and the Examinations Council of Zambia officers.

1.8 Limitations of the study

Limitations related to the study were inadequate finances and limited time and the fact that the study was a case study; the research confined itself to the Examinations Council of Zambia and a few examiners. This means that the findings had to be generalised to the entire population under probe. Ghosh (1982:228), states that the Case study method has some limitations and difficulties which makes research work a challenge to the researcher. A Case study gives false generalisation of the situation and has proved to be difficult in the collection of historical data and is subject to chances of making errors in selection of the case. The researcher also had difficulties

in accessing key people at ECZ as most of them were out of the station most of the time putting logistics in place for the school certificate examinations and others were out of the country on tour of duty. However, the researcher managed to obtain the data from ECZ officers on their return to the station from their tour of duty.

1.10 Organisation of the study

Chapter one has given a synopsis of the study which include the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, research objectives, significance of the study, delimitations of the study, limitations, operational definitions and the overall organisation of the study. Further an attempt has been made to explain certain concepts that are used in the study in order to make them clear to the reader.

The second chapter review significant literature document on examinations and the image portrayed on individual and the national development as well as their management and administration by the Examinations Council of Zambia.

Chapter three discuss the methods of data collection used in the study. The Chapter is divided into ten sections under the following headings: overview, research design, instruments, study population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection procedure, validity and reliability of the instruments, data entry, data analysis and ethical considerations.

Chapter four presents the findings of the study, while chapter five discusses the findings. The sixth chapter deals with the conclusion and recommendations. The chapter ends with suggestions for future research. The subsequent pages consist of the references and appendices.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Overview

The chapter explored significant literature documented on examinations as well as their management and administration by the Examinations Council of Zambia.

The statement below validates the significance of examinations as quoted in a copy of the Post Newspaper of September, 26th 2011 page, 17.

2.1 Role of examinations and their significance

'Jets grounded for college exams'

Jets will be grounded across South Korea and anxious parents will pray while their children take annual exams that could lead them to one of the country's top universities and eventually a good job for life.

'The exams are a major event here and society scrambles to make things easier for stressed students.

During oral tests, aircrafts will be banned from taking off and landing and drivers are forbidden from sounding their horns. Police vehicles will even escort late running students to the exam rooms. Even the stock exchange are opening an hour late to reduce chances of students being caught up in traffic en-route to the exams, an annual rite of passage that can literally make or break the lives of the examinees. Exam supervisors get special training and during the exam, they are not allowed to cough, chew gum or put on strong perfume that might distract students. With the youngster's whole future at stake, some go further than trusting in toffee and forks. 'The mothers are more anxious than the children,' said Yu Mi-ran.

The benefits that accrue from passing examinations have a trickledown effect not only to individuals but to the nation at large. These entail both economic and social gains. Success in the examinations translates into a brighter future, access to formal employment and a good job for life.

In June 1928, 261 teacher trainees sat for the third grade teachers certificate (MOE, 1977). This was the first public or externally set examinations held in Zambia. Since that time public examinations have assumed an ever growing importance and today they play a dominant role in the concerns of the public, in the lives of students and teachers and in the academic work of the schools. The education system would be unthinkable without examinations. Countries like China that did away with externally set selection examinations quickly reintroduced them because of the educational chaos .corruption .and virtual anarchy that followed (MOE, 1992). Because of their role as gatekeepers, at higher levels of education or to wage employment, examinations are likely to remain a permanent feature of the educational landscape and their administration and management calls for professionalism. This makes it all the more necessary to ensure that their potential for making a beneficial impact on teaching and learning be exploited to the full. Ideally, examinations should serve a variety of purposes, educationally; they should foster and support the attainment of sound curriculum objectives (ECZ, 2009). Examinations sound signals to teachers and students pointing out what they should regard as the important aspects of the curriculum and the kinds of knowledge and skills that are valued, (MOE, 1977). If the examinations are well designed, managed and administered, they indicate to the public how well the systems are doing their job. In addition, examinations tell how successful schools and the education system as a whole have been meeting the objectives laid down for them. Examinations serve to assess the educational attainment of the individual students. They indicate and classify the level of competence reached by the student. The certificate that is awarded provides an objective record of the students' accomplishments in different areas of the curriculum. Examinations act as an evaluation tool, analysis of the examination results for example can reveal aspects of the learning situation which are difficult for students. Analysis can reveal their weaknesses and strengths. Furthermore, examinations help to assess the performance of each institution and the results can be used in finding solutions to the problems each institution may be facing, Furthermore, the information provided by the responses in an examination can lead to adjustment in teaching methods, organisation of the syllabuses and to change in the structure of the curriculum to ensure that overall intellectual development of the students is more adequately catered for. Public examinations are a means to maintaining or improving the general standard of quality in any programme. By having public examinations, it is possible to maintain quality and uniformity in a sustainable way for all the candidates for a particular programme to the same measurement.

Socially, examinations have an accountability function (ECZ, 2008). They provide for a regular index of performance that allows for comparison over time and comparison between schools. In this way they keep the public informed of how well schools are performing. Banda et' al (2004), states that public examinations are an effective tool for assessment, evaluation and selection. Therefore, examinations should be treated with a lot of confidence. According to the study carried out by the Ministry of Education in 1996, the purpose of examinations is to evaluate whether the education system is in fact achieving its objectives and has internal and external aspects. The external aspects relates to the evaluation undertaken to determine how effective the system is in producing graduates of the calibre expected by society. In this regard, societies interests focuses largely on the public examinations that mark the end of one stage of education and serve as selection instruments for admission to the next stage (ECZ, 2009). The grade 12 examinations is a joint examination for the school certificate (SC) and General certificate of education (GCE). The examination provides a basic qualification for higher studies and professional life. The joint school certificate and general certificate of education has a national prestige since universities, training institutions, offer further education and many professional organisations express some or all of their admission requirements in terms of the grade 12 examinations passes. The grade 12 examinations has therefore, an easily recognisable standing and currency (ECZ, 2005:3). In 2005, for example, 41,665 candidates entered the examinations, 23,850 were boys and 17,815 were girls. Net total of 40, 799 candidates sat for the examination out of which 23,221 candidates obtained school certificate of which 14,365 were boys and 8,856 were girls. A total of 16,494 candidates obtained General certificate of education (ECZ, 2007). This picture and the total candidacy exemplify the importance of National Public Examinations to the Nation and what they translate into.

2.2 Administration and Management of Examinations

The Administration and Management of Examinations by the Examinations Council of Zambia starts with the formation of the security committees at National level to oversee the proper conduct and security of examinations. The composition of the committees comprises the Director, standards and curriculum, Provincial Education officers, Zambia Police, Basic Education schools, Head Teachers Association, the three (3) Teacher Unions i.e. the Zambia National of Teachers (ZNUT), Secondary Teachers Union of Zambia, (SESTUZ), the Examinations Council of Zambia and Colleges of education Principals Association respectively.

The administration and management process further involves among others, registration of examination centres ,distributing of question papers, supervision of the examinations, invigilation of examinations, packing of scripts and payment of

penalties by those that tamper with examinations (ECZ, 2009). The process includes setting of examinations, appointment of examiners, marking of the examinations and releasing of examinations results and certification. The Council also deals with queries and appeals on results, monitors the conduct of examinations at marking centres, reports cases of examinations malpractice detected at marking centres

The above mentioned activities are undertaken in order to promote or enhance efficient and proper management and administration of examinations by the Examinations Council of Zambia.

2.3 Functions of the Council

The functions of the Examinations Council are to:

1. Conduct examinations
2. Award certificates or diplomas to candidates who pass examinations conducted by the Council,
3. Carry out relevant research in examinations.
4. Advise any public institution on the development and use of any system of testing or examining when requested.
5. Formulate syllabuses for examinations
6. Promote international recognition of qualifications conferred by the Council.
7. Approve or reject appointments of examiners.
8. Organise training courses for, or arrange for training of markers, supervisors, invigilators and other persons connected with examinations and
9. Invite any person or body either in or outside Zambia to assist the Council in the conduct of examinations.

2.4 Structure of the Council

There are ten Councillors of the Council with the Vice Chancellor of the University of Zambia presiding as chairperson (ECZ, 2008). The Council comprises the following committees,

- a) Basic Education, curriculum and Examinations.
- b) Finance and administration.
- c) School certificate curriculum and examinations
- d) Security of Examinations
- e) Teacher education Examinations
- f) Teacher education, vocational and entrepreneurship Training.
- g) Tender.

2.5 Sociological determinants of examiners absenteeism and attitude towards examinations: A historical perspective.

Examiners absenteeism and negative job attitude are major problems confronting public examining boards globally (Adewale, 2004). If high stakes assessment procedures do not have quality assurance mechanisms in place to ensure job satisfaction, fairness, and equity, then they may fail to command organizational commitment which high stakes assessment procedures require.

Absenteeism and job satisfaction are important topics in organisational research because of their many effects on the overall well being of the organisation. Satisfied employees create a positive working environment for organisations and are less likely to be absent. Because absenteeism and negative job attitude are detrimental to organisations, it is important to research the sources of absenteeism and job satisfaction.

Ajev, Patera and West (2008) define absenteeism as behaviour related to not attending work for all or part of a given time period and can occur for a number of reasons which among others include sick leave, vacation, family, medicine, leave, elder and child care, maternal/paternal leave, occupational deviance, military duty, jury duty, and other related activities or situations. Locke (1967) states that job satisfaction is a positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or experiences that is likely to affect the attendance at work. Higher job satisfaction is associated with a lower risk of absenteeism. WHO (2008) classified absenteeism into two main categories: 'involuntary and voluntary.' Involuntary absenteeism is an absence from the work place that under normal circumstances is unavoidable by the employee such as physical or psychological illness. While voluntary absenteeism is a reasonably avoidable

absence from work place and this include vacation, or voluntary choosing to be absent due to potentially unnecessary personal reasons.

In his study on job satisfaction, Locke (1967) summarised the most important values or conditions most important to job satisfaction to include:

1. Mentally challenging work with which the individual can cope successfully;
2. Personal interest in the work itself;
3. Work that is not too physically tiring;
4. Rewards for performance that is just, informative and in line with the individuals personal aspirations;
5. Working conditions which are compatible with the individuals physical needs and conditions which facilitate the accomplishment of his own goals;
6. Self esteem on the part of the employee;
7. Agents in the work place who help the employee to attain job values such as interesting work, pay and promotion whose basic values are similar to his own , and who minimize role conflict and ambiguity.

Hertzberg (1966) propounded two theories of motivation. These are the hygiene theory (hygiene factors) and motivation (motivators). The hygiene factors are extrinsic to the job and these include the company, its policies, and administration, the kind of supervision that people receive while on the job, working conditions, interpersonal relations, salary, status and security.

To Hertzberg (1966), hygiene factors do not lead to motivation but without them, there is dissatisfaction. In this connection, Hertzberg's' submissions are very essential in modern management of human capital resources because they direct a manager's attention to sets of satisfiers that can be offered to satisfy the different types of needs people have. According to Hertzberg (1966), when the maintenance and motivation factors are inadequate or

discouraging, workers tend to abandon their job for a better offer where their social needs are well catered for.

In public examinations assessment context, motivation and hygiene needs such as recognition achievement, interpersonal relations, and working conditions, possibility of growth, personal life and status of examiners seem to be poor. Hence these hardcore workforces abandon the assessment exercise in preference for more rewarding assignments. Maslow (1970) observes that human needs seem ordered in an hierarchical pattern and that man is highly motivated when these needs satisfiers are provided, while they become demotivated in their absence and he concluded that, when one set of needs is satisfied, this kind of need ceases to be a motivator. These needs include, social, esteem, security, psychological and self actualization. In the context of public examinations assessment at school certificate in Zambia, the social needs of the examiners seem to be inadequate; hence, they are highly dissatisfied with such motivation factors. These include achievement, recognition, advancement, responsibility, the work itself, personal growth and self esteem.

The individual worker will work harder when given reward or encouragement for good performance. Intrinsic theories assume that man is not an animal; he will work best if given a worthwhile job and allowed to get on with minimal supervision while the reward will come from the satisfaction in the work. Aina (1992) while commenting on Herzberg's' work on human economy, asserts that workers want to earn enough from their work to meet the needs of their families and to enjoy a rising standard of living. Secondly, they want reasonable assurance that if their performance is satisfactory, they can look forward to holding their jobs and the special benefits which accrue to them by virtue of their long term with the organisation. They want their jobs to provide the satisfaction that comes from meaningful activity. Finally markers expect that those who supervise and direct them will not infringe on their rights as human beings, and as citizens. The assertion clearly indicates that workers everywhere want more money and more job security, benefits and more satisfaction from work as well as more freedom in the work and work place (Adewale, 2004). Leadership and motivation play an important role in the performance of teachers duties because, they structure work in a way that members are motivated towards high effort, leading to high performance (Adewale, 2004).

However, the rising costs of absenteeism at marking venues and the lack of strategies to reduce involuntary absenteeism have led researchers to conclude that the prescriptions offered by management scholars to leverage employees' attitude to curb absenteeism levels have not been adequately effective. According to Avey *et al* (2008), individuals that are generally high in self concept tend to believe that they have the ability to deal with situations presented to them to arrive at success. As a result, these individuals are likely to view potential work stressors as achievable challenges rather than as disproportionately difficult.

In Zambia, public examinations assessment procedures at School Certificate and General Certificate of Education have always experienced some form of absenteeism and negative job attitude by examiners. This has negatively affected quality assurance and control in the assessment procedure. Cases of abandonment of scripts meant to be assessed midway into the assessment period, inconsistency in the assessment tasks, slow pace in the application of the assessment scheme and delayed submission of assessed scripts for vetting among other discrepant behaviours abounds. Based on this background, this study sought to determine factors that have led to declining participation of examiners in the marking exercise.

2.6 Historical background of markers in Zambia

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) at its inception in 1987 as a board took over the running of National Examinations (Sakala and Nkoya, 2009). Among the nine functions of the Examinations Council of Zambia, the Council organises training courses for, or arranges for training of examiners, markers, supervisors, invigilators and other persons' connected with examinations (Sakala and Nkoya, 2009). Until now, the examiners are trained at council expense, as the training is considered a quality assurance issue in the setting and marking of examinations. In 2008, the Council spent over K4.38 billion (USD 880 000) on the grade 12 marking related direct expenses (Sakala and Nkoya, 2009). Furthermore, Sakala and Nkoya state that these expenses went directly to the marking venues for board and lodging. Other additional expenses like the coordination and stationary also form part of the expenditure that ECZ incurs towards the management and administration of examinations at grade12 and GCE respectively.

Over the years however, the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) has progressively experienced a low turnout of trained and experienced examiners during marking sessions. The absenteeism has been most common during the marking of scripts for the Joint School Certificate and GCE Examinations, commonly referred to as grade 12 Examinations. The Examinations Council of Zambia considers the wealth of experience the examiners obtain by consistently participating in marking as an important factor for continuous improvement of the quality of marking. Participation of more experienced examiners according to Sakala and Nkoya (2009) would lead to reduced variability in marking and increased intra and inter rater reliability of the pupils scores (ECZ. 2009). Additionally, the Council has experienced poor handling of scripts and mark sheets, resulting in missing marks and hence putting the name of the Council in ridicule. On the other hand, use of inexperienced or less experienced examiners leads to increased variability in marking and reduced intra and interater reliability of pupil scores, (ECZ 2009). As a result of low turnout of experienced examiners, the Council usually has to extend the marking period leading to delayed release of results. The declining proportions of trained and experienced examiners during marking sessions reduce the gains the Council makes from its investment in the training of examiners over the years (Sakala and Nkoya, 2009). Additionally the continued training and loss of trained and experienced examiners is highly uneconomical. Some of the factors that caused examiners not to report for marking include increased responsibilities due to promotions in their jobs, change of career, morbidity and mortality (Sakala and Nkoya, 2009.2). In this light, this research is sought to bring to light information that would provide insights on the probable reasons why markers were shunning the marking exercise.

2.7 The Roles of Examiners

To assess candidates work reliability, accuracy and consistence, ECZ requires examiners to observe the following rules;

- a) All the examiners to attend the coordination meetings.
- b) During the coordination meeting examiners shall ensure that they record all agreed changes to the marking scheme.
- c) Examiners shall ensure that they understand all aspects of the marking scheme.
- d) All packets of scripts apportioned to examiners shall be checked to verify the number of scripts enclosed.

- e) Marking of scripts shall be done within the designated rooms of the marking centre.
- f) All marked scripts shall be checked that every page has been marked, all ticks have been counted and the additions are correct.
- g) Examiners shall ensure that all marks are entered on the electronic mark sheet in the EMCS.
- h) Marked scripts are put back in their tamper evident envelopes.
- i) All examiners are responsible for transcription checking.

Finally, all examiners shall ensure that the following documents are submitted to the Team Leaders;

- Marking schemes (both used and not used).
- Completed mark sheets.
- Unused mark sheets.

2.8 Rights of Examiners and Teachers

Teachers and examiners have the right to;

- (a) Prompt payment for services rendered
- (b) Training in aspects of examinations/assessment
- (c) Make suggestions for consideration (ECZ, 2009:16)

2.9 Statistics on markers attendance

The Examinations Council of Zambia research statistical findings of 2009 established that for every 3 male examiners, there was only 1 female teacher examiner, hence portraying a picture that the marking exercise was less rewarding. It was also established that seventy five percent (75 %) of the examiners were from government run learning institutions and these were followed by grant aided institutions with a record of thirteen percent (13%) while private institutions represented six percent (6 %). The report further revealed proportions of markers by year of experience, which indicated that the majority of the examiners who responded were trained not too

long ago between (2002 and 2008). However, examiners who were trained in the middle years of 1996 to 2001 were in the minority. Those trained before 1995 stood at twenty one percent (21 %). Overall, it was found that the response rate for the examiners stood very low representing percentages of thirty six percent (36 %). These low percentages were coupled with a low participation rate of those with intermediate experience who expected to form the majority in any distribution, and this therefore calls for investigations (ECZ, 2009). A cross tabulation investigation of examiners reporting for marking revealed the following findings:

Table 2.1: The year trained cross tabulated with last year of reporting for marking

		Last year of reporting marking						TOTAL
		1	2	3	4	5	6	
Year when trained	2008 to 2006	15	204	16	3	1	0	239
	2005 to 2002	11	222	45	21	10	2	311
	2001 to 1999	9	51	9	4	2	6	81
	1998 to 1996	5	47	8	3	3	3	69
	1995 to 1965	19	121	23	17	6	13	192
TOTAL		59	645	101	41	22	24	892

Source: ECZ (2009)

Inference from the report indicate that a total of fifty nine (59 %) examiners last reported for marking about a year ago, while a total of 645 examiners stated that they last reported for marking two years ago. This number represented a good blend of newly trained young and old and very experienced examiners, yet they only reported for marking two years ago. Therefore there is need to establish the cause of their staying away from marking.

2.10 Summary of literature Review

Literature review has shown that public examinations and examinations in general play an important role in the concerns of the public, in the lives of students, teachers and the academic work of the schools. Further we discovered that examinations are a means to maintaining or improving the general standard of quality in any program. In addition, the Examinations Council of Zambia considers the wealth of experience the examiners obtain by consistently

participating in the marking as an important factor for continuous improvement of the marking and increased intra and inter rater reliability of the pupil scores. However, the absence of the experienced markers results in poor handling of scripts and mark sheets which may result in the loss of marks and hence puts the name of the organisation in public ridicule. During the literature review, we found that studies undertaken by the Examinations' Council of Zambia (ECZ) revealed that low turnouts at marking centres by examiners is as a result of among others, increased responsibilities due to promotions, change of career, morbidity and mortality. We also established that ECZ spends colossal sums of money to train grade 12 examiners and that this becomes uneconomical where continued loss of trained and experienced examiners occurs through absenteeism. The cost implications of absenteeism and negative job attitude can be monumental on public examination assessment procedures. From available records, researchers in the past seem not to have looked at the root cause and the cost implications of the problems. The major areas of public examinations assessment procedures investigated in Zambia include, Examinations malpractice and leakages, performance of candidates, Gender related assessment issues, equity in assessment among others. It appears the issues of examiners absenteeism and their attitude, in spite of their pivotal roles, in the public examinations assessment seem not to have received sufficient attention. It was found that since its inception in 1987, the Examinations Council of Zambia has been organising training courses for examiners, markers, supervisors, invigilators and other persons connected with ECZ. The Examinations Council of Zambia trains examiners or markers to improve reliability of the outcome. Training examiners, according to the Council calibrates scores so that they apply the same standards to their scoring of examinees responses. However, there has been a perceived failure on the part of the organisation to significantly address issues that affect the welfare of the very workforce that is involved in the assessment process. This failure has been a recipe for absenteeism from the marking sessions by examiners. The Sakala and Nkoya report established that participation of more experienced examiners leads to reduced variability in marking and increased intra and inter rater reliability of the pupil's scores. It was further established by the Council that in the absence of experienced markers they was poor handling of scripts and mark sheets, resulting in missing marks and results which puts the name of the organisation into ridicule. We concluded further from the report that seventy five (75%) of the examiners come from government run schools. Furthermore, it has been found that a good blend of newly trained young and old and very experienced examiners a total of 645 last reported for marking in the previous

two years. The Sakala and Nkoya report outlined a summary of the conditions in the marking centres and the respective reactions that came from the examiners pointing out their perceived feelings about what deters them from attending the marking exercise.

Finally, to the Examinations of Zambia as an examining board, absence may be a category of behaviour. To the examiners' engaged in public examinations assessment, it may be a symbol of deeper feeling of hostility or perception of inequitable treatment in the job situation or it may be a social phenomenon-part of an absence culture that represents a duty to a examiners who are less perfect.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

The section describes the methods that were used in collecting data and how the data was analyzed. It also describes the research designs which were employed, the target population, sample size and sampling methods, data collection procedure as well as the instruments used and the reasons for choosing the methods.

3.2 Research Design

Data was collected using questionnaires and reading through Examinations Council of Zambia reports on examinations. A case study was chosen because the study helps to view a unit as a whole. Best and Khan (2009:295) have stated that a case study probes deeply and analyzes interactions between the factors that present status or that influence change or growth. Ghosh (1982) has stated in his book that a case study offers intensive study through which one can know precisely the factors and causes of a particular phenomenon. It is a very good method of collecting information about an individual, a family, or a group of persons. It is a kind of qualitative analysis. According to Weiss (1998:74), 'A Case study is a method of exploring and analysing the life of a social unit, be it that a person, a family, an institution, cultural group or even entire community'.

The element of typicalness rather than uniqueness is the focus of attention, for an emphasis on uniqueness would preclude scientific abstraction (Best and Khan 2009). Thus the selection of the case study needs to be done carefully to ensure that he or she is typical of those to whom we generalize. 'Even a single case study can enable a researcher to generalize to other cases that represent similar theoretical conditions' (Yin, 1998:239).

The researcher used the case study in this research because it helped him to apply the inferences or conclusions from a single unit to the unit as a whole.

3.3 Research Instruments

In this section, the aim is to discuss instruments that were employed in this study to collect both qualitative and quantitative data. The researcher used five data collection instruments namely questionnaires, interviews, observations, focus group discussions and documentary analysis by employing the triangulation technique.

3.3.1 Triangulation

The study employed triangulation as a technique. As Silverman (2000) observes, triangulation in data collection is the involving of two or more methods in the study, and it can help explain more fully the richness and complexity of data. Triangulation was initially used to refer to the use of more than one method in a given inquiry. This was to avoid a situation where research results are generated exclusively on one method. This is the view advanced by many researchers (Jennings and Graham, 1996). The assumption is that some of the methods have weaknesses and exclusive reliance on one method could be bias or even distort the research under investigation. Gay *et al* (2006, quoted in Longwe, 2009) recommends the use of triangulation and maintains that once a proposition has been confirmed by two or more independent measurement processes, the uncertainty of its interpretation is greatly reduced. Serious risks exist where recommendations are made based on single criterion which fails to consider the whole outcome of an educational process.

The study used the triangulation technique in data collection by involving the use of structured questionnaires, interview guides, observations, content analysis and focus group discussions. This was done by studying practices from more than one angle using multiple methods of data collection. Each method can reveal different aspects of empirical facts within the same site (Cohen and Marion, 1982) and Yin, (1993).

The use of combined methods of data collection was chosen because it overcomes the weaknesses associated with the use of individual methods (Mc Kernan, 1991) and helps to give a more detailed picture of the situation under study (Cohen and Mannion, 2000). It also helps to validate accounts and increases the degree of accuracy. This is also in line with what Winter (1987, 242) who points out that 'Multiple source of information are sought and used because no single source of information can be trusted to provide a comprehensive perspective on the programme. By using a combination of questionnaire interviews, observations, document analysis and focus group discussions, the researcher is able to use different data sources to validate and

cross check findings. However, each type and source of data collection instrument has strengths and weaknesses.'

3.3.2 Structured Questionnaires

Questionnaires were given to forty (40) examiners of school Certificate and General Certificate of Education. The questionnaire was divided into sections, A, and B. Section A, solicited information on examiners variables about their personal/ educational background. Section B had ten (10) questions which requested information on examiners years of marking, involvement in marking during the years under review, ECZs contractual fulfilment and possible suggestions by examiners to ECZ.

The study employed the structured questionnaire method in data collection because the method initiates a formal inquiry and helps to supplement and check data previously accumulated. The questionnaire consisted of both open and closed ended questions. The open ended questions sought to draw out facts from the respondents. Ghosh (1982) asserts that the open questionnaire is used in the cases where new facts are to be searched. This method according to Ghosh (1982) is mainly used for intensive studies of limited number of cases. In this type, the respondent is free to express his views and ideas. The closed questionnaire was meant to obtain categorised data where the respondents had no liberty to express their own judgement.

The questionnaire method of collecting data according to Best and Khan (2009) gives the person administering the instrument an opportunity to establish rapport, explain the purpose of the study and explain the meaning of items that may not be clear. The method has unique advantages and if properly constructed and administered serves as the most appropriate and useful data gathering device in research project

According to Ghosh (1982), the questionnaire method of data collection occupies an important place in social research for various reasons enumerated below:

1. The questions which are included in the list of questionnaire are standardized. The questions are real and create interest to the informants.

2. This is an indirect method of collection of data.
3. By this method, a respondent acquires some knowledge about many fields that were unknown to him/her.
4. In this method, the researcher or investigator does not have to make any administrative arrangements,
5. The method is economical.
6. Through this method a vast area and population can be studied easily.

Gay et al (2006) describes the questionnaire as a procedure that contains questions aimed at getting specific information on a variety of topics. Anderson (1998) argues and maintains that a questionnaire, if well structured permits the collection of reliable and reasonably, valid data relatively simply, cheaply and in a short space of time.

However, the questionnaire method of data collection has shortfalls (Best and Khan 2009). The methodology may prove to be a failure in cases where respondents are uncooperative and this leads to wastage of money and time. Furthermore, the prejudices and biases of the researchers reduce the value of this method. The method is also inapplicable to illiterates. The other problem that this method experience is that of illegibility and incomplete entries made to the questionnaires by the respondents.

3.3.3 Interviews

Data was also collected in this study from the Examinations Council subject specialists using interview guide (see appendix 1). Interviews in this study were used as a method of data generation during the analysis of subject panel attendance at marking venues by examiners in order to determine attendance levels. The Examinations Council subject specialists provided reports on centres capacity, number of examiners expected at the centre, number of examiners present and absent and the percentage turnout of examiners at the panel.

The study used in-depth interviews. It has been argued that interviews are one of the most important sources of information for social research. Mc Kernan (1991) reckons that interviews provide access to the content of a situation and provides the researcher with deeper meaning about the reality

being studied. The use of interview guide is seen as an important element which ensures that the same categories of information are obtained from a number of people about the phenomenon being studied (Winter, 1987). It is further argued that the interview guide provides topics or subject areas with which the interviewer is free to explore, probe, and illuminate that particular subject. Thus, the interviewer remains free to build a conversation with a particular area, question spontaneously, and to establish a conversation style but with focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined. Anderson (1990) states that an interview is a specialized form of communication between people for specific purposes associated with some agreed subject matter. He argues that, when used with care and skill, interviews are an incomparably rich source of data. One of its advantages is that the interviewer can clarify questions and probe the answers of the respondent providing more complete information than would be available in written form.

The interviews in this study created an opportunity for the ECZ specialists to describe their feelings and experiences on examiners turnout or attendance at marking sessions using their own words. The interviews also allowed the researcher to cross check data that was obtained from the structured questionnaires.

3.3.4 Observation

Observation was one of the methods of data generation that was used in the study. This method was used mainly to collect data and determine the extent of examiners turnout or attendance at marking venues. The observation method was used during the analysis of percentage turnout in subject panels, but mainly to cross check data that had been obtained from the interviews with various respondents.

However, Creswell (2003) describes observation as a method in which the researcher takes field notes on the behaviour and activities of individuals at the research site. Cohen *et al* (2000), refer to the data obtained through observation as 'live'. Similar views were expressed in Jones *et al* (2006) who states that the method entails being present in a situation and making a record of one's impressions of what takes place. There were two major advantages of using the observation method in the study. The first was that the researcher was able to conduct the study in a natural marking centre

setting without any deliberate manipulation of the natural environment. The second advantage was that the researcher was able to record the activities and behaviour of the participants as they interacted on issues relating to marking, instead of relying on secondary sources such as interviews and questionnaires.

There are several approaches to the use of observation as a research method, for example, unstructured, semi structured, and structured. Usher and Scott (1999) point out that the different approaches to observation reflect different theoretical assumptions about social personality and the generation of knowledge about it. According to the above mentioned authors, unstructured observation involves detailed recording of all that is taking place, with no prior decision being made of what is recorded. This approach of observation was used for examiners participating in the marking sessions. This involved taking the copious field notes of everything the researcher saw and heard from examiners. The aim was to use these first observations as a means of exploring the discussions with the intention of identifying possible areas the researcher could focus on as to make future amounts of data and its analysis more manageable. In most marking venues, the researcher relied on the semi structured approach. The agenda of issues under which the researcher conducted the observations consisted of topics relating to management and administration of examinations by the Examinations Council and the welfare of examiners as regards marking venues, remuneration and other related sociological factors affecting the examiners.

Another typology of observation approaches include: complete participation, participant- as – observer, observer as participant, and complete detachment (Cohen *et al*, 2000), depending on the level at which the researcher identifies with the phenomenon that is being investigated and its context. During the observations that were conducted in the study, the researcher assumed the role of observer as participant. In this approach to observation, the researcher participates in the activities of those they are observing, (Jones *et al* 2006). While the researcher did not actively take part in the marking sessions of different panels, the extended period of engagement with examiners created an opportunity for the researcher to engage and interact with them at a deeper level. The researcher was able to gain deep insight into their discussions regarding their participation at marking venues.

3.3.5 Document analysis

Document analysis is one method which was used in this study; the method is sometimes referred to as content analysis (O' Leary, 2004). It is a systematic content analysis or statement analysis (Bos *et al*, 1999). Silverman (2004) notes that content is one of the major methods in qualitative research, although according to Bos *et al* (1999) its use is relatively marginalised compared to observations and interviews. According to O' Leary (2004), the method involves the collection, review, interrogation and analysis of various forms of text as a primary source research data. The texts which the researcher analysed using this method were the various pedagogical reports produced by the Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ) and other documentaries and books produced by individuals and organisations which relate to the subject under discussion.

According to Ahuvia (2001), content analysis proceeds in three main stages, which are: selection of focal texts; coding of the focal tests, and interpreting the results of the coding. In deciding to use this method, there were three major issues to contend with. The first issue was concerned with whether to use a quantitative or qualitative approach to the content analysis. Merriam (2005) notes that some researchers take a positive approach to content analysis during which they record the frequencies of certain items (for example, words, concept, or themes) throughout the document. Berg (2004) sees such an approach as reductionist, and critiques it for focusing on only the surface meaning of the texts (manifest content), while ignoring its deeper meanings (latent content). Another researcher for whom the distinction between manifest and latent is crucial to the research process is Ahuvia (2001). Ahuvia contends that manifest content analysis only looks 'at the most obvious and straight forward meaning of a text' and the coding of the texts follows strict rules in order to enhance inter coder reliability. Ahuvia contends that manifest content analysis is appropriate for cases where there is general agreement on the meaning of the terms coded, and how to code them. This represents the traditional quantitative approach to content analysis; the researcher used both approaches to content analysis of the various documents that were investigated. In taking this decision, the researcher was heeding Bergs (2004) recommendations that both approaches be combined since whichever is appropriate depends on the unit of analysis under consideration. For example the analysis of reports on numbers of examiners reporting at each marking venue compared to the

previous reports on attendance at such venues implied a quantitative approach to content analysis.

Weiss (1998) has also noted that documentary analysis also allows the analyst to become thoroughly familiar with the materials and helps to save on time. The usefulness of documents as research tools is that, they help corroborate and strengthen the evidence gathered using other tools. He further holds that documents 'are a good place to search for answers, they provide a useful check on information gathered in an interview.' He further adds that when 'other techniques fail to resolve a question, documentary evidence can provide a convincing answer'. Another view shared by Gay et al (2006:47) about documentary evidence is that, 'a document may be any written or non-written record which exists and which may enhance the researchers overall understanding of the situation under study'.

3.3.6 Focus Group Discussions

Focus Group Discussions are known for a number of reasons as the best as the best method in data collecting. One of them is that they often bring out respondents' immediate reactions and ideas, making it possible to observe some group dynamics and organisational issues. For participants, the focus – group sessions made them feel free. Permission to use a tape recorder was sought from the group's members. The setting in which the focus group discussions were done, provided an encouraging environment for frank and open communication without any disturbances. This is also in line with the justifications given by Kemmis and Mc Targgart (1982) the purpose of focus group discussions in research studies who argues that focus group discussions help to assess needs, develop interventions, test and new ideas or programmes, improve existing programmes and generate a range of ideas on a particular subject as background information for constructing more questionnaires or interviews.

Focus group discussions were conducted on two groups of examiners from two different marking centres. The names of examiners were selected from the attendance register using purposive sampling. Each of the two focus group discussion comprised five examiners. Permission was sought from the chief markers and the centre coordinators of the marking centres.

A pre – planned script of specific issues and set goals was followed to get the required type of information. During the focus group session, the researcher

(moderator) had the responsibility of controlling the discussion without inhibiting the flow of ideas and comments. It was the job of the moderator to ensure that all group members contributed to the discussion and avoided letting one participant opinion dominate the discussion. At the same time, the moderator avoided putting words into the mouth of group members by giving leading comments.

The researcher was conscious of the challenges cited in the use of the focus group discussions by McKernan (1991) as that of sorting out what is important, interpreting ambiguous behaviour, designing persuasion and predicting behaviour and developing strategies and new ideas. After the session, it was easy for the moderator to write a short report summing up the prevailing mood in the group, illustrated with a few personal quotes about the comments made by the respondents.

3.4 Target Population

A sample size of forty (40) respondents was selected from different marking panels. The target population were School Certificate/ GCE examiners and Examinations Council subject specialists.

3.5 Research Sample and Sampling Procedure

The participants of this study consisted of forty (40) examiners specialised in grade 12 marking known as school certificate and General certificate of education and ECZ subject specialists. Questionnaires were administered to the examiners who were chosen randomly to ensure equal opportunity and representation. The five Examinations Council of Zambia subject specialists were purposively chosen. Best and Khan (2009) state that purposive sampling allows the researcher to select those participants who will provide the richest information, those who are the most interesting and those who manifest the characteristics of most interest to the researcher. Therefore the researcher adopted this approach because the participants were typical and particularly interesting and provided the richest information for the study.

Questionnaires and interview guides were developed and then used in data collection. The questionnaires were structured and consisted of open ended and closed ended questions (see appendices 2 and 4). The 2005 to 2010 period was picked because data under this period was available.

3.6 Validity and reliability of the instruments

The questionnaires were pre-tested on 15 respondents. This was done to test the comprehension, phrasing, sensitivity and length of the questionnaires.

3.7 Data entry

Upon completion of the surveys, the questionnaires were checked for consistency and completeness. SPSS (18.0) (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) data set was then created. Finally, data cleaning and verification was conducted on the sample. Statistical Analysis System (SAS) 8.12 was used to analyze the data collected.

3.8 Data Analysis

Quantitative and qualitative data analysis was used to process the data. Descriptive statistics based on computer generated tables, frequencies and percentages were used to analyse the collected data. Annual reports and other ECZ information were analysed to come up with the most significant categories.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

Ethical concerns are very important component to any social research. Cohen, *et al* (2000, 219) holds that;

Ethical concerns encountered in educational research

In particular can be extremely complex and subtle and can

Frequently place researchers in a moral predicament which

May appear quite irresolvable.

When conducting research, there are ethical issues to consider. These aimed at protecting those involved in the research some of whom were not able to represent themselves in the event that, they were misrepresented. This was particularly very important for this study since it dealt with an organisation which had both national and international reputation and aspires to maintain its integrity in the dispensation of quality results in the education circles.

Ethical concerns were taken into consideration in this study .All data collected during the study was and shall be kept strictly confidential and shall not be used for purpose other than the intended one. Consent was sought from the respondents i.e.

Examinations Council of Zambia and examiners and ensured that participants participated voluntarily.(see appendix 5). The researcher also maintained an open and honest approach and ensured that names of the respondents involved were and are protected to this end.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents findings of the study. It provides descriptive statistics on examiners bio- data, that is, sex, age, marital status, educational qualifications and examiners years of marking. Information on accommodation standards, quality of meals, and possible solutions on what the Examinations Council of Zambia should do in order to improve examiners welfare is also presented.

Respondents' Age

Table 4.1 below depicts significant group differences between the age cohorts of examiners that participated in the marking exercise. The age variable provided significant data on which age group of examiners were mostly associated with the marking exercise.

Examiners within the age cohorts 36-40 years (22.5%), and 41-45 years (22.5%) were more of the group which largely associated itself with the marking exercise. Those within age cohorts which followed were 46-50 years (15%), 31-35 years (12.5%), 61-65 years (10%), 26-30 years (7.5%), 51-55 years (7.5%) and 56-60 years (2.5%).

Table 4 .1 Respondents' Age

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
26-30	3	7.5
31-35	5	12.5
36-40	9	22.5
41-45	9	22.5
46-50	6	15
51-55	3	7.5
56-60	1	2.5
61-65	4	10
TOTAL	40	100

Source: Field data, 2011

Research Question 1

How many examiners were trained from 2005 to 2010?

The examinations Council of Zambia train examiners in order to improve reliability of the outcome. Training of examiners according to the Council calibrates scores so that they apply the same standards to their scoring of examinees responses. The training of examiners was considered a quality assurance issue in the setting and marking of examinations. The results of the analysis are in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2 Trained Examiners' for the 2005-2010.

YEAR	Number of training sessions	Month/s trained	Number trained
2005	2	May/August	530
2006	1	-----	310
2007	1	-----	289
2008	1	-----	323
2009	1	-----	327
2010	1	-----	316

Source: Field data, 2011

A total of two thousand ninety five (2095) examiners were trained for the period 2005 to 2010. The examiners are trained to mark in different subjects they are specialised in. The Council mainly trains examiners in subjects where the numbers are perceived to have declined. This training was done in order to meet the shortfall of examiners that a particular subject area might encounter and to contain the ever increasing numbers of scripts.

The training of such highly qualified staff was done at great cost, for example in 2008, the Examinations Council of Zambia spent a total of K4.38 billion (USD 880,000) on grade Twelve (12) marking and training related services. The organisation would, therefore, do better to find ways of maintaining the numbers in order to avoid training exercises year after year which was done at great cost and could prove to be counterproductive.

Research question 2

How had the general trend of examiners attendance at marking venues been?

Participation in the marking exercise was very important. The examinations Council considered the wealth of experience the examiners obtained by continuously participating in marking as an important factor for continuous improvement of the quality of marking. Participation of the more experienced examiners according to Sakala and Nkoya (2009) lead to reduced variability in marking and increased inter rater reliability of the pupils' scores. The attendance report gives the name of the centre, capacity, subject panel, number of examiners expected, and those that were present and the percentage turnout in the respective marking centres.

Table 4.3 Examiners' attendance report for the period 2005 to 2010- selected panels.

Year	Centre name	Subject panel	Centre capacity	Total expected	Present	%
2005/6	Dalice	7100com	250	217	124	57
2005/6		7110comp	250	33	22	67
2005/6	Mindolo	2044/RE	135	126	71	56
2005/6		2044/RE	135	126	78	61
2006/7	Mpelembe	2218/GEO	250	206	97	47
2006/7	ZICAS	5054/2phy	300	10	6	60
2006/7		5054/3phy	300	10	7	70
Year	Centre name	Subject panel	Centre capacity	Total expected	Present	%
2006/7	ZICAS	5070/2chem	300	13	10	73

2006/7		5070/3chem	300	13	08	61
2006/7		5124/2scie	300	138	103	75
2006/7		5124/3scie	300	148	87	58
2008/9	Mulungushi	5037/3agric	350	41	34	83
	Main	5090/2Bio	350	175	117	66
2008/9	ZCA Monze	2218/2Geo	250	206	124	55.9
		2044/1RE	250	64	33	51
2008/9	Dalice	7100/2Com	250	217	144	66
		7110/2Comp	250	33	25	74
2008/9	LIBES	4024/1Math	300	239	144	66
2008/9		4030/1Adma	300	06	2	40
2008/9		4030/2Adma	300	06	4	67
2008/9		7110/2comp	300	05	2	50
2008/9	Mpelembe	4024/2Math	300	239	161	67
2008/9	ZICAS	5054/3 PHY	300	10	06	60
2008/9		5070/2 CHEM		13	11	92
Year	Centre name	Subject panel	Centre capacity	Total expected	Present	%
2008/9	ZICAS	5124/2 SCIE	300	138	121	87.7
2008/9	ZICAS	5124/1SCIE	300	148	100	71.4

2008/9	Chainama	1121/2E	300	150	107	71
2008/9	ZASTI	6010 Art/Dgn	140	23	22	95
2009/10	Mindolo	2046/1RE	135	126	80	63.4
2009/10	Mpelembe Secondary	4024/2Math	300	133	96	72.2
2009/10	Mulungushi University	5037/1/2 Agr	105	42	20	48
				42	30	71
				42	34	81
2008/9	Mulungushi Main	5037/3agr 5090/2bio	105	41	20	48.8
				175	162	92
2009/10		5090/3bio		199	78	39.2
2009/10	ZICA Monze	2218/2 Geo	250	206	129	62.3
		2044/1 RE	250	64	47	57.8
Year	Centre name	Subject panel	Centre capacity	Total expected	Present	%
2009/10	LIBES	4030/1 ADMA	300	06	04	67
2009/10		4031/2 ADMA	300	05	04	80
2009/10		7010/2	300	230	122	53

		Com				
2009/10	ZICAS	5054/2 PHY	300	10	07	70
2009/10	Chainama	1121/2En	350	150	106	70
2009/10	ZASTI	6010/l Art	140	23	22	87

Source: ECZ, 2010

The results presented in Table 4.3 for the period 2005 and 2010 shows that the overall examiner attendance was two thousand four hundred and twenty two (2422) out of the expected four thousand and forty (4040) examiners. This represented 60% (2422/4040). Therefore, a total of one thousand six hundred and eighteen (1618) examiners were absent from the marking exercise. The ECZ report of 2009 seems to suggest that examiner participation in the marking exercise for the period under review had slightly improved in individual papers. However, the general attendance of examiners still remains a subject of concern.

Table 4.4 Respondents' Marital status

Respondents	Frequency	Percentages
Single	9	22.5
Married	29	72.5
Widow	1	2.5
Widower	0	0
Separated	1	2.5
TOTAL	40	100

Source: Field data, 2011

Table 4.4 shows marital status of examiners and reveals that the largest number of examiners 29 (72.5 %) are married followed by those that are single 9 (22.5 %), widow 1(2.5%), widower 0(0%), and separated 1(2.5%). The Table results show that more married people attend marking sessions.

Table 4.5 Respondents’ academic Qualifications

Qualifications	Male	Female	Cumulative frequency	Total %
	Frequency	Frequency		
Diploma	4	3	7	17.5
Bachelors’ Degree	20	13	33	82.5
		TOTAL	40	100

Source: Field Data, 2011

Table 4.5 shows the qualifications of respondents. The Examinations Council of Zambia’s minimum requirement of a trained examiner was a Secondary Diploma or a Bachelors’ Degree in Education in which the examiner was specialised in. In its’ 2011 edition, terms of reference document on consultants contracted to mark School Certificate and General Certificate of Education examinations, the Council states that consultants (examiners) to be contracted as grade Twelve (12) examiners shall be qualified school teachers with a minimum of three years teaching experience in the respective subject and should have a minimum qualification of a bachelors’ Degree in Education. Diploma holders would be accepted in subjects where a Diploma is the highest level of attainment. The research findings reveal that only 7 (17.5%) respondents were diploma holders and that, out of this percentage, 4 (10%) were males and 3 (7.5%) were females.

Degree holder examiners had the largest percentage standing at 33 (82.5%). Results reveal that 20 (50%) were males and 13 (32.5%) were females. The results seem to suggest that male examiners form the largest group at marking sessions.

4.6.1 Length of marking

The question solicited for information from examiners on the number of years that they had been marking. Table 4.6.2 below shows examiners years of marking.

Table 4.6.2 Examiners' Years of Marking

Years of marking	Frequency	%
1-4	13	32.5
5-9	19	47.5
10-14	4	10
15 and Above	4	10
TOTAL	40	100

Source: Field Data 2011

Results of Table 4.6.2 above show the number of years that examiners have been involved in the marking of School Certificate and General Certificate Examinations (SC/GCE). Results have revealed that the number of examiners who had been marking from 1-4 years was 13 (32.5 %). Further, results in Table 4.6.2 indicate that four 4 (10 %) of the examiners had been involved in the marking sessions from 10-14 years. The results also indicate that a further ten percent 4 (10%) of examiners indicated having been involved in marking for fifteen years and above. Reasons that may be attributed to the 4 (10 %) group could among others be that the examiners were old and retired from active employment or it could be morbidity or any factors that are beyond our scope.

4.7.1. Examiners participation in the marking (2005-2010)

Table 4.7.2 below shows the percentage of examiners that had been marking from the years under review, which was from 2005 to 2010, and respondents' that had not been involved in the marking over the same years.

Table 4.7 .2. Examiners’ Participation in Marking for the Period 2005-2010

Examiners involved/not involved in marking from 2005-2010	INVOLVED		NOT INVOLVED	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
	24	60	16	40

Source: Field Data 2011

It is worth mentioning that 24(60 %) of the respondents attended all the marking sessions from 2005-2010, while 26 (40 %) did not, reasons which among others include poor meals, average accommodation services, poor rates per script, poor public relations by ECZ officials, and the virtual failure by the examining board to seriously listen to examiners concerns.

4.8.1. Examiners’ perceptions about ECZs fulfilment of contractual obligations

Table 4.8.2 below shows respondents perceptions about the Examinations Council of Zambia’s commitment to fulfilling contractual agreements signed between the ECZ and the Examiners.

Table 4.8.2. Examiners’ perceptions about ECZs fulfilment of contractual obligations

Total respondents	Not fulfilling Number	%	Fulfilling	%	Total Percentage
40	33	82.5	7	17.5	100

Source: Field, 2011

Forty (40) respondents had different views on the matter. Thirty three (33) respondents translating into 82.5 % strongly felt that ECZ was not abiding by the agreed upon contractual conditions of services which among others include, failure to pay the allowances on time and the virtual poor public relations exhibited by the organisation with regard to examiners demands. However, only 7 (17.5 %) were very much in agreement with the view that the Examinations Council of Zambia was fulfilling contractual conditions.

4.9.1. Perceptions by gender on ECZs contractual obligations

Table 4.9.2 below shows respondent's perceptions by gender on ECZ /Examiners contractual/consultancy conditions. A total of 33 (82.5%) respondents declared that ECZ was not fulfilling contractual terms, twenty one 21 (64%) were males while females were 12 (36 %).

Table 4.9.2. Perceptions by gender on ECZs contractual obligations

	Not fulfilling contract				Fulfilling contract			
	Males		Females		Males		Females	
Total respondents	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
40	21	64	12	36	2	29	5	71

Source: Field Data, 2011

However, 2 (29 %) of the male felt that ECZ is fulfilling contractual terms, Furthermore, 5 (71%) female respondents felt that ECZ indeed was fulfilling the terms

and conditions of contract as agreed between the two parties that is, ECZ and the Examiners.

4.10.1. Accommodation standards at marking centres as perceived by examiners'

Table 4.10.2 shows the perception of respondents on the state of accommodation at marking centres. Only 2 (5 %) of the respondents indicated that accommodation standards at marking centres were very good while 11 (27.5 %) revealed that the standards of accommodation at the marking centres were good. However, the majority, 22 (55 %) of the examiners indicated that the standard of accommodation at the centres of marking could only be described as been fair. Further, 5 (12.5%) of the respondents described the accommodation standard as been poor. Therefore,

Table 4.10.2. Accommodation standards at marking centres as perceived by examiners

STANDARD	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES (%)
Very good	2	5
Good	11	27.5
Fair	22	55
Poor	5	12.5
Total	40	100

Source: Field Data, 2011

Therefore, the Examinations Council of Zambia needs to make accommodation at marking centres more appealing in order to capture the 5 (12.5 %) population of respondents.

4.11.1 Absent from marking because of the general poor state of the marking state of the marking venues.

Table 4.11.2 shows respondents reaction to the general state of the marking venues, and shows whether the state of the venues had any negative influence in their staying away from the marking exercise

Table 4.11.2. Absent from marking because of the general poor state of the marking state of the marking venues

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
YES	5	12.5
NO	1	2.5
Other reasons	2	5
No responses	32	80
Total	40	100

Source: Field Data, 2011

The results in Table 4.11.2 shows that 5 (12.5 %) of the respondents attributed their absence from the marking exercise as having been necessitated by the poor state of the marking centre. Only 1 (2.5 %) of the respondents stated that the poor state of the marking centre had no effect on their absence from the marking exercise. A further 2 (5%) of the respondents attributed their absence from marking as having been caused by other factors and not of the poor state of the marking venues.

The findings established that 32 (80%) of the respondents gave no reasons as to why they stayed away from the marking exercise. Perhaps the critical reasons are those already mentioned which have to do with allowances and that the marking exercise takes place at a time when they have to deal with other pressing issues unknown to the researcher.

4.12.1. Quality of meals served at marking venues

Table 4.12.2 below shows respondents reactions to the meals served at marking venues. The highest was that of 30 (75%) respondents. The respondents stated that the meals served at marking venues were of good quality. These were followed by 5 (12.5%) who stated that the meals served at marking centres were very good.

Table 4.12.2 Quality of meals served at marking venues

Meal quality	Frequency	Percentage
Very good	5	12.5
Good	30	75.0
Fair	2	5.0
Poor	3	7.5
Total	40	100

Source: Field Data, 2011

But 2 (5 %) of the respondents revealed that the quality of meals was of a fairer standard. However, 3 (7.5 %) of the respondents rated the meals served as being of poor quality. Though the percentage of 3 (7.5%) appears to be of little significance, the totals cumulatively overtime amount to huge figures and could have profound effect on the management and administration of the examinations exercise at marking sessions. The mere absence of a few examiners has implications on the exercise as it affects planning and increases the load of scripts that have to be marked by a few examiners thereby causing stress and reducing effectiveness and efficiency in the marking process.

Research question 3

What factors made grade twelve (12) examiners shun the marking exercise?

Examiners absenteeism and negative job attitude are major problems confronting public examining boards globally (Adewale, 2004). The overall well-being of an organization depends on satisfied employees who create a positive working environment for organizations and are less likely to be absent. Absenteeism from work can occur for a number of different reasons which include sick leave, Family medical leave, bereavement, occupational deviance and other related activities. Locke (1976) states that job satisfaction is a positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job, or experiences that is likely to affect attendance at work. Furthermore, says Locke (1976), higher job satisfaction is associated with lower risks of absenteeism. Therefore, one of the most important values or conditions conducive to job satisfaction include, working conditions which are compatible with

individuals physical needs and which facilitate the accomplishment of the work goals.

Table 4.13 depicts statistics which explain the main factors which cause examiners to be absent from the marking exercise at grade Twelve (12) school Certificates and General Certificate of Education (GCE).

Table 4.13 Factors which make grade 12 examiners to be absent from the marking sessions.

Ranking-examiners Responses		
FACTOR	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE RANKING
Poor accommodation	7	5.8
Low marking rates per script	36	30
Late payment of marking allowances	15	12.5
Subsistence allowance only paid to a few examiners	32	26.6
ECZ never listens to our suggestions	11	9.2
Poor food	2	1.7
Poor public relations by ECZ officials	2	1.7
Less care of examiners on day of arrival	4	3.3
General poor conditions offered by the entire exercise	2	1.7
Inadequate transport refund	2	1.7
No response	7	5.8
TOTAL	120	100

Source: Field Data, 2011

** The total of 120 was arrived at because question 5 of the questionnaire was asking for three (3) responses from the respondent. So 40 respondents X 3 responses = 120 responses.*

Table 4.13 reveals the concerns raised by examiners and the reasons why they did not attend the marking sessions. Highest in ranking were the respondents that felt that marking rates per scripts for School Certificate and General certificate of Education were quite low, they were 36 (30 %). Second in ranking were examiners who felt that subsistence allowance should be paid to all the examiners irrespective of the distance travelled and not to a few examiners the organisation view as been eligible. The general feeling expressed by examiners during the Focus Group Discussions conducted by the researcher were that, examiners spend days and nights away from their homes and therefore, ECZ must follow the Republic of Zambia conditions of services for public workers, henceforth should be paid the subsistence allowances for the number of days that they are away from their homes. This group represented a total of 32 (26.5 %). A further 15 (12.5 %) of the respondents stated that they shunned the marking exercise because marking allowances are paid late, this was counter-productive and contributes to examiners absence from marking. A further 7 (5.83 %) of the respondents revealed that they opted to stay away from the exercise because accommodation provided was of poor standard. However, 11 (9.2%) of the respondents accused ECZ of never listening to their suggestions. Research results have shown that 4 (3.3%) of the respondents were of the view that ECZ shows less care to examiners on the day of arrival at bus stations. This was because the chartered bus was only made to work up to 20 hours.

Furthermore, 2 (1.7%) of the respondents revealed that the food served at the marking venues is of poor quality, this was followed by a similar representation of respondents 2 (1.7%) who said that ECZ official's public relations to examiners was poor. Similarly, 2 (1.7%) of the respondents complained that the overall conditions at the marking venues are generally poor, Further, the examiners stated that ECZ did not give them adequate transport refund despite the fact that they sacrifice their own income to get to the marking venues. This group accounted for 2 (1.7%) of the participants. However, 7 (5.8 %) of the respondents gave the 'no response' answer.

Research Question 4

What were the possible solutions for ensuring that more examiners participated in the marking exercise?

In public examinations assessment context, motivation and hygiene needs such as recognition, achievement, interpersonal relations, working conditions, possibility of growth, personal life and status of examiners seem to be poor. Therefore, these factors cause the abandonment of the assessment exercise in preference for more rewarding assignment.

The results presented in Table 4.13 reveal possible solutions advanced by examiners which the Examinations Council of Zambia could adopt and apply in order to curb examiner absenteeism at marking sessions.

Table 4.14: Solutions to ensuring high turnout of examiners' during marking sessions.

Examiners Suggested areas for improvement			
s/n	Suggested action to ECZ	Frequency	%
1	All examiners must be paid subsistence allowances	31	25.8
2	Markers must be respected	2	2
3	Better script rates/timely payment	40	33
4	Markers to buy own food	3	2.5
5	Improve accommodation	17	14.3
6	Refunds to be paid on day of arrival	5	4.2
7	Pay examiners out of pocket money	4	3.2
8	Involve examiners in decision making	5	4.2
9	Send invitation letters on time	3	2.5
10	Educate examiners on importance of marking	5	4.2
11	Pay bonus to committed examiners	1	0.8
12	Ferry bus to operate 24hours	3	2.5
13	Retire very old markers	1	0.8
TOTAL		120	100

Source: Field Data, 2011

** The total of 120 frequencies was arrived at because question 10 in the questionnaire solicited for three (3) responses from each respondent. So forty 40 respondents x 3 responses gave a frequency of 120 responses.*

Results in Table 4.14 revealed the expectations of examiners from ECZ and the action that the Council should adopt and employ for it to experience high attendance levels of examiners at marking sessions. Results show that all examiners should be paid subsistence allowances 31 (25.8%), markers must be respected 2 (2%), better marking rates per script and timely payment of marking allowances 40 (33%), markers should be given money to buy their own food 3 (2.5%), improved accommodation 17 (14.3), refunds to be paid on day of arrival 5 (4.2%), pay examiners out of pocket money 4 (3.2%), involve examiners in decision making 5 (4.2%), send invitation letters on time 3 (2.5%), educate examiners on importance of marking 5 (4.2%), pay bonus to examiners 1 (0.8%), ferry bus to operate 24 hours 3 (2.5%), and retire very old markers 1 (0.8%).

The results suggest that, examiners greatest needs are better marking rates per each script marked and having all the markers get the subsistence allowances. The two concerns override any other demands raised in the category of expectations.

4.14 Views from ECZ subject specialists officials

A total of five ECZ subject specialists were interviewed on the subject under discussion. The interview was guided by the following questions;

1. How has ECZ performed for the period 2005/2010 with respect to administration and management of examinations at school certificate?
2. What in your own views has being the major success/failures in the discharge of duties by ECZ?
3. How has been examiner attendance at marking sessions?
4. What could be the cause for the low turnout of examiners at marking sessions?
5. What do you personally feel ECZ should do in order to attract more examiners for marking?

4.14.1 Responses to the Questions

The ECZ subject specialists informed the researcher that, the organization had undergone tremendous transformation in the management and administration of examinations. Prominent among such transformation was the involving of the security personnel from the police and the office of the President, parents, and the sensitization of pupils on issues pertaining to malpractices. This undertaking has helped to curb and reduce cases of malpractices. It was further revealed that the organization had scored a plus in the areas of conducting and managing examinations for the country in that, national examinations are always conducted on schedule. It was also revealed that a tax incentive for examiners which initially stood at thirty five percent (35%) on the total claims of marked scripts by examiners had been reduced to fifteen percent (15%). This means that examiners will have more money in their pockets. Another notable success as revealed by the subject specialists was the early release of examination results by the organization. The officials also disclosed that letters of invitation for examiners to take part in the marking exercise were sent early enough to examiners to make them have ample time to prepare for the exercise. Finally the officials revealed that the organization, in its quest to improve efficiency and quality in the management of examinations conducts continuous professional development sessions for its staff as a mark of excellence.

The major problems (failures) encountered by the organization as revealed by the subject specialists were lack of adequate funding from the government, which affected smooth functioning of the organization as it were. The organization also lacked capacity to prosecute cases of examination malpractices which took long to be concluded and sometimes die a natural death. It was also revealed that the organization had challenges in ensuring that examiners were paid accordingly and as would be expected.

On the subject of attendance, the officials expressed concern that there had been a noticeable decrease in numbers of examiners participation in the marking exercise. The officials attributed the decline of examiners at marking sessions to poor remunerations offered to examiners.

In order to attract more examiners for marking, the officials felt that the organization needed to improve on the conditions of services by way of giving examiners attractive incentives with respect to marking allowances and others as would be deemed necessary by the organization.

4.15 Views held by respondents' from the Focus Group Discussion

The two focus group discussions collectively gave a total of ten respondents. Findings from the discussions revealed that six 6(60%) of the examiners had been marking for a period of five to eight years, while three 3(30%) had being in the marking business for the period spanning ten years and above. However, only one 1(10%) of the examiners had been marking for a period less than five years.

The findings further revealed that all the examiners were unhappy with the kind of reception given to them by the Examinations Council of Zambia. The examiners revealed that ECZ had failed to address their concerns, notable among them were low marking allowances paid to examiners on marked scripts, non payment of subsistence allowances to all examiners and inadequate transport refunds, non payment of the Geography project marking allowances, poor accommodation facilities. These outlined concerns among others made examiners shun the marking sessions.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of research findings. The discussion of the findings follow the variables upon which data collection was based namely; the number of trained examiners, subject panel turnout, respondents age, marital status, qualifications, years of marking, participation in marking, ECZ contractual obligations, accommodation standards at marking venues, reasons advanced by respondents for being absent from marking, quality of meals at making venues and areas where ECZ is failing as felt by examiners.

5.2 Number of Trained Examiners' from 2005 to 2010 by ECZ

The Examinations Council of Zambia (ECZ), trained total of two thousand and ninety five examiners (2095) for the period 2005 and 2010. The training was undertaken by the Council in order to build capacity and to replace or fill the gaps in the panels where the numbers of examiners were perceived to have declined. The training and retraining of examiners is undertaken in order to enhance examiners skills in assessment (ECZ, 2009:19).

The subject panel turnout in Table 4.3 revealed that overall attendance of examiners had been fluctuating. For example, the 2008/9 attendance report on Agriculture sciences 5037/3, paper 3 held at Mulungushi University in Kabwe revealed that, a total of 41 examiners were expected for the marking exercise and that only 34 showed up for the exercise giving a percentage representation of 83 %, an encouraging picture, however, in the 2009/10 marking exercise only 20 examiners turned up for the exercise which gave a percentage representation of 48.8 %, thus giving a percentage decrease of 34.2%. In Monze, at Zambia College of Agriculture (ZICA) 2008/9 session Geography 2218/2 paper 2, a total of 206 examiners were expected and only 124 examiners participated in the marking exercise which translated into 55.9 % but the 2009/10 marking exercise showed a marked improvement of 63.3 % attendance as compared to the previous year giving a progression increase of 7.4 %. Therefore, given this background, research findings have revealed that, the number of examiners attending marking sessions is generally quite low. The 'absenteeism' figure of

one thousand six hundred and eighteen (1618) examiners is alarming. The implications for such low examiner turnout at marking sessions are that; there will be extra work for the examiners, which means more stress on examiners that may lead to compromising of quality and efficiency. It also means loss of both human and capital investment and a further need on the part of the Examinations Council to train more examiners.

5.3 Respondent' Age

Research findings revealed that the age cohorts of 36-40 years 9 (22.5% and 41-45years 9 (22.5 %) of examiners were the more likely groups which associated with the marking exercise. These were followed by those within the age cohorts of 46-50 years 6 (15%), 41-35 years 5 (12.5%), 61-65 years 4 (10%), 26-30 year 3 (7.5%), 51-55years 3 (7.5%) and 56-60 years 1 (2.5%). The age cohorts representing 9 (22.5%) has the energy and zeal to perform to the expectations and can easily cope with the load of scripts with minimal stress. This portfolio of examiners is a mixture of the experienced and newly trained, they are a dedicated lot who perform their job with a lot of passion and commitment. However, their representation in the marking sessions remains quite low going by the given percentages. This means, therefore, that the Examinations Council of Zambia needs to motivate the examiners by offering them attractive incentives. Research findings also revealed that 1 (2.5%) and 4 (10%) respondents were examiners that had attained retirement age. However, they constitute a vital component of the marking family though their speed levels and accuracy had slowed down due to age. To them, the marking exercise was an activity where they pass time. However, serious anomalies had occurred in the marking of scripts by this group of very old examiners. The researcher, an examiner himself encountered, a situation where the examiner in this age category could not cope with the load and pressure of work which resulted in them awarding false marks to the examinees. The team leaders were able to detect the anomaly and the scripts were assigned to another marker. The said scenario had the potential to destroy the credibility and quality of the examinations. By awarding marks to undeserving candidates makes tertiary institutions of learning admit unqualified candidates. This entails that the calibre of graduates produced in these institutions will be unproductive and of low quality thereby, affecting the total output as may be expected. Based on the above assumption, the age of an examiner significantly contributes to work output, efficiency, accuracy, reliability and speed in the marking process.

5.4 Marital Status

Research findings revealed that most of the examiners that attended the marking exercise were married. The married accounted for 29 (72.5%) and were followed by those who were single who accounted for 9 (22.5 %). It was not established whether the marital status of the respondents correlated with their desires to participate or not to in the marking exercise. However, the findings revealed that male examiners were a dominant force in the marking exercise, they accounted for a much bigger percentage than their female counterparts. The reasons could be that the male were less committed than the females who had to play mother, and perform other related house chores, hence their dismal number in the marking exercise. The other reason could be that females were more selective in as far as venues were concerned, the more appealing the venue, the higher the attendance. Because of this factor, Female markers tended to be more selective as opposed to the males about the places they had been invited to mark from.

5.5 Respondents Academic Qualifications

The research findings revealed that the respondents possessed required qualifications to mark and assess School Certificate and General Certificate of Education Examinations. Findings revealed that 33 (82.5 %) of the examiners were found to be holders of Bachelors' Degrees in Education, a very vital prerequisite. However, it was found that those holding diplomas only accounted for 7 (17.5 %) of the total respondents. The examinations Council must be proud of the fact that most of the examiners are degree holders, this is because this cadre of professionals is trainable and can adapt to changes because of the nature of the training they received at university. They also possess the required knowledge and skill in as far as marking and assessing pupils work is concerned at School Certificate. Therefore, the Examinations Council of Zambia needs to remunerate adequately these highly qualified personnel in order to attract them to attend the very important exercise of marking. However, ECZ has attached so much importance to the expenditures related to boarding and lodging as opposed to the welfare of the examiners (ECZ, 2009). According to the report findings of by Sakala and Nokya(2009), seventy five percent (75 %) of the expenses incurred by ECZ in 2008 went directly to the marking venues for board and lodging. In the light of the foregoing, motivation and job satisfaction by examiners towards the marking exercise is low.

5.6 Respondents' Years of Marking

The results revealed that 13 (32.5 %) of the respondents had the marking experience of 1 to 4 years while the cohort of 5-9 years 19 (47.5%) stated that they had marking experience of five to nine years (5-9 years). However, 4 (10 %) of the respondents had the marking experience ranging from ten to fourteen years (10-14 years). Research results also revealed that 4(10%) of the respondents had being marking for a period of fifteen years (15 years) and above. The experience that the examiners acquire from marking is very important because it carries with it the skill, knowledge as well as efficiency in the exercise and above all is a measure of quality assurance.

5.7 Respondents' involvement in the marking exercise for the period 2005-2010

Research findings revealed that respondents' involvement in the marking exercise from 2005 to 2010 that sixty percent, 24 (60 %) of the respondents took part in the marking of grade twelve (12) examinations. The revelations were consistent with the findings of the 2010 grade twelve (12) marking/attendance report by ECZ where sixty percent (60%) of the respondents took part in the marking exercise.

Results further show that 16 (40%) of the respondents did not participate in the marking exercise for the period 2005 to 2010. The percentages are also similar to those of the 2010 ECZ report findings where forty percent of the respondent were absent from the marking exercise. The reasons advanced by the respondents for shunning the exercise as revealed in Table 4.13 were that; the Examinations Council of Zambia offered poor accommodation services to examiners 7 (5.8%), results further revealed that 38 (30%) of the respondents expressed dissatisfaction with marking rates per scripts while 15 (12.5%) revealed that, marking allowances were paid late to examiners months after the release of grade twelve (12) results. More critical was the issue of subsistence allowances where 32 (26.6%) of the respondents felt that the allowance must apply to all examiners irrespective of the distance travelled. The general feeling amongst the respondents was that ECZ must not be seen to be selective in the administration of this allowance, instead, what must apply is the Republic of Zambia public service conditions where subsistence allowances are paid to officers who by virtual of their duty are spending nights away from their homes which is not the case with ECZ where allowances are only paid to examiners coming from very remote parts of the country assumed to be quite far from the line of rail. Therefore, the Examinations Council of

Zambia should be cognisant of the fact that examiners spent a number of days away from their homes and families to participate in this noble cause. It is therefore imperative that all examiners were paid subsistence allowances. This gesture could help curb absenteeism from marking by examiners. The other factors highlighted in the findings that made examiners absent themselves from the marking exercise, included poor food 2 (1.7%), poor public relations by ECZ officials 2 (1.7%), inadequate transport refunds 2 (1.7%) and the general poor state of services offered by the entire exercise which stood at 2 (1.7%) percent.

Therefore, ECZ must be seen to be concerned with issues raised by the examiners and feedback to raised concerns should be given. This would promote and cultivate a relationship of mutual understanding and could bear fruit for the Examinations Council of Zambia. Examiners also complained of less care for the examiners' welfare on the day of arrival at marking venues. It is not enough to assure examiners that there would be transport at sited bus stations to ferry examiners to the marking venues when such transport was haphazardly arranged and in many cases examiners had to dig deeper into their pockets to book a taxi to take them to the marking venues. But when refunds are requested, ECZ failed to honour the cause. This, to the examiners, was frustrating and was a recipe for absenteeism from marking. Therefore, there was need to adequately address issues relating to refunds and transport.

5.8 Solutions to ensuring a high examiner turnout during marking sessions.

Hertzberg (1966) propounded two theories of motivation, the hygiene theory (hygiene factors) and motivation (motivators). According to Hertzberg, the hygiene factors are extrinsic to the job and these include the company, its policies, and administration, the kind of supervision people receive while on the job, working conditions, interpersonal relations, salary, status and security.

To Hertzberg (1966) hygiene factors do not lead to motivation but without them, there is dissatisfaction. In this connection, Hertzberg's submission are very essential in modern day management of human capital resources because they direct managers attention to sets of satisfiers, or types of satisfiers that can be offered to satisfy the different types of needs people have. According to Hertzberg, when the motivation and maintenance factors are inadequate or discouraging, workers tend to abandon their job for a better offer where their social needs are well catered for.

Aina (1992) while commenting on Herzberg's work on 'Human Economy' asserts that, workers want to earn enough from their work to meet the needs of their families and to enjoy the rising standards of living. Secondly, the workers want reasonable assurance that if their performance is satisfactory, they can look forward to holding their jobs and to the special benefits which will accrue to them by virtue of their long term with the organization.

The findings as revealed in Table 4.13 have shown that examiners need to be motivated by paying them subsistence allowances, by making accommodation standards more appealing to examiners, involving examiners in decision making as regards the management of examinations. The council must also address issues relating to refunds, bonus payment to examiners, timely payment of allowances to examiners and so forth. Overall, over and above the Examinations Council of Zambia should motivate the examiners by addressing the most critical needs of examiners as highlighted in this report. Herzberg's findings on motivation are fundamental and application of this theory to addressing the challenges confronting ECZ with regard examiners is inevitable. As a manager of examinations, the Examinations Council of Zambia should direct its attention to sets of satisfiers that would satisfy the key needs of examiners. This is so because absenteeism and job satisfaction are important topics on the overall well-being of the organization. Satisfied employees create a positive working environment for organizations and are less likely to be absent due to the fact that, higher job satisfaction is associated with a lower risk of absenteeism as observed by the World Health Organisation report of 2008.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

This chapter presents a conclusion and recommendation drawn from the findings of the study.

The study was conducted to investigate the Management and Administration of Public Examinations in the light of declining participation at marking sessions by examiners for the period 2005-2010. The study of declining participation of examiners at marking sessions for the period under review has generated interesting findings pertaining to factors that determine examiners absenteeism. While the study is obviously limited in scope, its outcomes may prove most informative when interpreted together with those from previous studies undertaken by the Examinations Council of Zambia.

6.1 Conclusion

The findings of the study have confirmed reviewed literature that the Examinations Council of Zambia was established by an Act of Parliament of 1983 to conduct Examinations for the Republic of Zambia at School Certificate and General Certificate of Education. Research has further revealed that the Policy context that guides the operations of ECZ was in tandem with the Ministry of Education. It has further been established that the integrity of any education system and the qualifications thereof lies in the acceptable practices in the conduct of National Public Examinations and that examinations are a tool of evaluation toward the education system of any nation. Findings have disclosed that grade 12 examinations provide a basic qualification for higher studies and professional life and that professional organisations express some or all their admission requirements in terms of the grade 12 examination passes.

It has been revealed that the Administration and Management of examinations by ECZ starts with the formation of the security committees among others and subsequent appointment of examiners in order to enhance efficiency and proper management.

The research findings revealed that the Examinations Council of Zambia experienced daunting challenges in the management and administration of

examinations. Judging from the strength of the sociological factors on declining participation and attitude towards public examinations assessment at School Certificate and General Certificate of Education (GCE) obtained from this study, the improvement of the social needs of the examiners such as interpersonal relations with Examinations Council officials, working conditions, adequate and early payment of marking allowances, improved accommodation, non selective payment of subsistence allowances, ability to listen to examiners suggestions and many other factors were highly expedient. The activation of these social needs would yield lower incidences of absenteeism and would engender positive job attitude.

6.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings discussed above, the following recommendations are made:

1. All examiners should be given subsistence allowance at half rate for all the days of the marking session but be accommodated.
2. ECZ should consider paying Subsistence allowances to all examiners at half rate for all the days of the marking session but should be accommodated
3. The marking rate for scripts should be adjusted upwards to acceptable minimums and should be reviewed every year to carter for inflation. Payment to the chief examiner should be rated at the highest belt claim, deputy chief examiner at the second highest belt claim and the team leaders at their individual belts.
4. Transport refund should be adjusted to include all the fares from the Examiners place of residence to the marking centre and back not just up to the main station of the town concerned.
5. General poor state of the marking venues must be improved.
6. Examiners should be involved in decision making in the Management and Administration of Examinations.

7. Staff of ECZ needs to be more proactive, courteous, and supportive of the examiners in the course of discharging their assignments, this would boost the self-esteem of the examiners.
8. ECZ should accord more recognition to its long-serving examiners by instituting awards of excellence and issuance of letters of commendations to deserving examiners.
9. Examiners engaged in public examination assessment need to demonstrate more commitment, transparency, responsiveness, and professionalism in view of the strategic role they play notwithstanding the various sociological challenges confronting them.

6.3 AREAS OF FUTURE RESEARCH

It is evident that other factors other than the mentioned could be at play in influencing examiners who wish to participate in the marking exercise.

It is suggested that a study be designed to investigate levels of efficiency of marking within the stipulated time as set by ECZ.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ECZ SPECIALISTS.

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Title of the Research

The Management and Administration of Public Examinations in Zambia: A Case study of the Examinations Council of Zambia, 2005-2010.

1. How has ECZ performed for the period 2005/2010 with respect to administration and management of examinations?
2. What would you say, has been the organizations major success / failures in the discharging of duties as an organisation?
3. How are been examiners attendance at marking session?
4. What could you attribute the perceived decline in numbers of examiners participation in the marking exercise?
5. What do you personally think ECZ should do in order to attract more examiners for the marking exercise

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

APPENDIX 2: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EXAMINERS

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY STUDIES

Title of the Research

The Management and Administration of Public Examinations in Zambia: A Case study of the Examinations Council of Zambia, 2005-2010.

Dear Respondent,

I am a post postgraduate student in the school of education, Department of Educational Administration and Policy Studies. I am conducting a research on the perceived declining numbers of examiners at marking centres and the causes of such decline. The information that will be collected is purely for research only and will be used as such. Kindly spare a few minutes to answer this questionnaire. You are advised not to put your name on the questionnaire. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

Daka, Eliphas.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

SEX.....

AGE.....

Marital status.....

Highest qualification obtained.....

Subject specialised in..... (eg.geography, mathematics, etc)

1. How long have you been marking? Please tick or circle you answer.

[a] 1-4 years

[b] 5-9 years

[c] 10-14 years

[d] 15- above years

2. Have you been involved in all the marking sessions from 2005-2010?

[a] Yes

[b] No

3. If the answer to the above is NO'. What reasons made you miss the marking session?

[a].....

[b].....

[c].....

4. In your own view, do you think that the examination Council of Zambia is fulfilling its consultancy/contractual obligations? Use the following four point scale to describe the extent of your agreement with a tick ().

1. Very much agree

2. Agree

3. Fairly

4. Not agreeable

5. If the answer to the above question in 5 is NO, site three (3) areas where ECZ is failing in fulfilling its obligations.

[a].....

[b].....

[c].....

6. What must ECZ do to improve upon the above stated failures in question 5? Suggest 2 reasons.

[a].....

[b].....

7. How would you rate the accommodation standards of the centres you have marked from, from 2005-2010?

[a] very good

[b] Good

[c] Fair

[d] Poor

8. If the answer in question [7] is poor, could the state of the centre have necessitated your eventual absence from the marking exercise?

[a] yes

[b]No

[c] Other reasons.

9. How would you rate the meals served at marking centres?

[a] Very good

[b] Good

[c] Poor

10. Make at least [3] suggestions as to what ECZ management should do to attract more examiners for marking.

[a].....

[b].....

[c].....

END OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you very much for your participation.

APPENDIX 3: REQUIREMENTS FROM THE EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL ZAMBIA

Title of the Research

The Management and Administration of Public Examinations in Zambia: A Case study of the Examinations Council of Zambia, 2005-2010.

1. Available data on Trained Examiners from 2005-2010.
2. Attendance registers from respective marking panels from 2005-2010.
3. Available literature (Research) on Management and Administration by the Examinations Council of Zambia.

APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND POLICY STUDIES

Title of the Research

The Management and Administration of Public Examinations in Zambia: A Case study of the Examinations Council of Zambia, 2005-2010.

1. May I know how long each one of us has been marking?
2. What are your perception about ECZs Administration and Management of Examinations?
3. What factors affect your presence at marking sessions?
4. What is the main cause of examiners absenteeism at marking session?
5. What do you think ECZ ought to do in order to improve examiner turnout for marking?

THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME

APPENDIX 5: LETTER OF PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

