



An Investigation into the Effectiveness of Student Councils in School Management: A Case of Selected Secondary Schools in Kalomo District

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Abstract- A student council also known a student union or associated student body is a curricular or extracurricular activity for students within elementary and secondary schools around the world. These councils are present in most public and private K-12 school systems across the United States, Canada, systems across the United States, Canada, Greece, Australia and Asia. Student councils often serve to engage students in learning about democracy and leadership as originally espoused by John Dewey in *Democracy and Education*, 1917. The student council helps share students' ideas, interests and concerns with teachers and school principles. They often also help raise funds for school-wide activities including school events; community projects helping schools participate in food drives fundraisers and parties. Many members learn skills that were an extension of their formal education. Student councils operate in many forms. These are representative- based and modelled loosely after the US congress, or based on Executive Branch of the United States with a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and reporter. In this form student representatives and officers are usually elected from and by the student body, although there maybe prerequisites candidly or suffrage. In elementary schools, there are typically one or two student representatives per class room and one presiding set of officers. However, many secondary schools have one set of officers per grade level. In some schools, a student council representative is assigned to each class. That person passes on requests, ideas and complaints from students in that class to the student council. In other schools, the elected class officers are automatically members of the student council. Student councils usually do not have funding authority and generally must generate their operating funds through fundraisers such as car washes and bake sales. Some councils have a budget from the school, along with the responsibility for funding a variety of student activities within a school. The purpose of the student council is to give students an opportunity to develop leadership by organizing and carrying out school activities and service projects. In addition to planning events that contribute to school spirit and community welfare the student is the voice of the student body. In order to explore the effectiveness of student councils in school management this study focused on a



survey of Five (5) secondary schools in kalomo suothern Zonal cluster. The overall objective of the study was to explore whether student councils exist in secondary schools. The specific objectives were to identify how they contribute to the smooth running of schools and establish the extent to which pupils were involved in the school events in the school events in secondary schools in kalomo District. In collecting data, a self-administered and highly structured questionnaire was employed to a total of hundred teachers from a cluster of ten secondary schools of Kalomo District. A sim-ple random sampling was used to select the respondents which included some Head teachers, Heads of department, head boys and girls, and pupils.

Keywords- Student Councils; School Management; Student Participation; Secondary Schools; Educational Leadership; Decision-Making; Student Voice; School Governance; Leadership Development; School Administration; Democratic Participation; Stakeholder Engagement; School Effectiveness; Kalomo District; Zambia.

I. Introduction

1. Background Information of the Study

Introduction

According to John Wiley and Son ltd,(2000) in a 24 page booklet questionnaire, reports a survey conducted in schools in Great Britain and Northern Ireland during 1977-8, the Survey included six groups of questions about student councils, the questions of whether the pupils who have a council see it as effective was cross tabulated with a range of other questions, in order to examine associations between student views about their council.

Of these, the one who thought their council was effective generally had positive views about their school's social academic activities, whereas the ones who said their council was ineffective generally had more negative attitudes. Some schools find that creating an effective council could considerably improve standard of behaviour, but this process has to involve further changes in the system and relationship in the school, simply introducing token council can increase students' scepticism.

Student councils

According to Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary (2007) a student council is a Representative body composed chiefly of students chosen by their classmates to organise



Social and extracurricular activities and to participate in the government of a school. The purpose of the student council is to give students an opportunity to develop

Leadership by organising and carrying out school activities and service projects.

In addition to planning events that contribute to school spirit and community welfare, the student council is the voice of the student body.

It is important to have a student council as it provides as representative structure through which students can debate issues of concern and undertake initiatives to benefit the school and wider community. It is important that they be given an opportunity to express their views on issues of concern to them in school.

Student councils instil its learners with good qualities, apart from leadership skills, others

Include confidence, humility, resilience, better time management communication skills and a sense of structure.

The composition or position in student council are president, a vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant of arms, fundraising officer, historian, boys representative and girls rep-resentatives.

Dewey (1938) 38-39 stated that in an experience, interaction occurs between an individual, objects and other people; this leads to respect for others and especially those in authority as stated by the educational philosophy essentialism. The educational thoughts of social control as he relates the principle of continuity and interaction to educational problems and challenges.

He was bearing in mind that social control does not always represent authoritarian rule but it often occurs in agreement and by the members of the group for the benefit of the entire group. This can only be possible if students are given an opportunity by their school management through student councils.

There has been effective use of democracy of education that has prevailed in Zambia since 1964, since democracy is a system of society and learning where each person is able to rise to their fullest potential, the learners must be able to express themselves fully and without reservation through their writings, arts, athletics, inventions, life



styles and especially in formulation of policies or guidelines and this is possible only if the voice of the students is heard.

According to MOE (1996), every pupil is at the stage of physical and psychological development hence the need for security, exploration and activity. The psycho-somatic changes young people experience as they grow from childhood into adolescents frequently manifest themselves in a spirit of guilelessness, altruism and idealism, a desire to make an impact in life and wish to change the world for the better. This is also the time for questioning and exploration. Through its curriculum, its organisation, its challenges and its whole ethos, the school should take account of the developments, but without in anyway exploiting the young people.

If the students are given an opportunity through councils to contribute, they would make a notable contribution through helping each other to develop 'life- skills' which equip them for positive social behaviour and for coping with negative pressures. The core set of life skills for the promotion of the health and wellbeing of students which includes decisions-making, problem –solving, creative-thinking, critical thinking effective communication, interpersonal relationships, self-awareness, stress and anxiety management, coping with pressures, self-esteem and confidence.

However, not much has been done in the context of school councils in secondary schools in the Zambian context. Hence for this study to be carried out focusing on 'An investigation into the effectiveness of student councils in school management: A case of selected secondary schools in Kalomo District.

2. Statement of the Problem

According to Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (2013), it states that in order to have a clear and focussed direction there is need to respond to internal and external requirements driven by the Government or professional bodies, the need to create and maintain the learning 'market' delineating content, delivering that content and developing students.

The above is only possible if the nation strives to have holistic students who are creative, innovative and productive, who connect to family, community, national and global

Developments, actively involved capable of learning and living with others, life-long learners and leaders and agents of change in the transformation of the society.



MOE (1996) states clearly that routines experiences in the classroom help in promoting some of life skills focusing more on the intellectual than the emotional domain.

The development of other life and social skills will depend largely on the whole ethos of the school and on its programmes of extracurricular school activities such as various sport-ing activities, clubs, societies, school debates, drama and cultural presentation, these will have a positive effect once initiated by the students themselves with the help of teaching staff.

The researchers aim is to find out how much students have been involved in the manage-ment of such programmes. As it is not known to which extent student councils are in-volved in secondary schools.

3. Research Purpose

The purpose of this study was to find out the effectiveness of student councils in the school management in secondary schools.

The research intends to find out from;

- School managers, teachers and the students, if they have a student council and how effective it was.
- The study finds out the way in which students contribute to the management of schools and some ways in which the students do so.
- The researcher intends to find out from the student representatives how they
- Contribute to the smooth running of the school.

4. Main objectives of the study

The general objective is to investigate the effectiveness of student councils in the school management in Kalomo District.

Specific objectives

- To find out the roles of student councils in secondary schools.
- To establish the students' knowledge on the school student councils.
- To determine the effectiveness of student councils in secondary schools.
- To assess management in schools with effective student councils and those without.



5. Scope of the study

The study covered 50 secondary school teachers from 5 secondary schools in Kalomo District. The study explored the effectiveness of student councils in Kalomo District. The researcher interviewed pupils through the structured interview and questionnaires and Collected secondary data from Ministry of Education documents with information of Student participation in school management, policy documents and some ratification on international Convention especially United Nations ones.

6. Significance of the study

The study on the effectiveness of student councils is very important in that students need to contribute to their learning and they need to voice out whenever they feel they are being considered by the school management. The students being the learner in this changing world need to inform those in authority how and why certain things should be considered, improved upon/or be abandoned all in all. This is only possible through their contributions in student councils. The research finding is likely to benefit both the managers and students in that whatever the case, it will be necessary to understand if the councils contribute positively or negatively to the smooth running of the schools. This is only possible if the study is able to bring out the differences between management where the councils are available and active assessing them to those that have no councils in place. The study will benefit the policy maker, school administrators and managers, teachers and the students themselves. Finally, it will give the researcher the opportunity to gain deeper knowledge in the effectiveness of student councils in school management as well as allow other researchers to continue looking at the area of the study for further researchers.

7. Organisation for the rest of the study.

This dissertation has five chapters as follows;

Chapter one looked at the introduction, background of the research problem, statement of the problem, research question and objectives, scope of the study and the significance of the study as well as the summary. In chapter two, the focus is on the Literature review related to the study.

Thereafter, chapter three considers the methodology highlighting the philosophy and the method of the research undertaken. It also describes the population, sampling, data collection tools and methods for data analysis. Chapter four looks at research findings while chapter five discusses the findings conclusion, areas of further research, limitations, suggestions and recommendations.



II. Literature Review

1. Introduction

Reviewing of related literature is an important aspect of research as it has a multifunctional role. It has been documented that it places the study in the context of earlier studies. Furthermore, it helps in identifying the existing information gaps and helps the researcher to avoid repeating previous work, (Leady and Ormrod, 1985).

To the above arguments, Kombo and Tromp (2006), added that reviewing related literature, one gets to understand previous work which helps the researcher to develop a significant problem which provides further knowledge in the field. It also helps in delimiting the research problem by portraying what has already been done and what would be useful to focus on in the current study.

The current chapter is a review of literature that is relevant to the present study. The chapter reviews related literature and it does so by tracing the history of student councils and what has been done in other countries. Finally, it will show efforts taken in Zambia through the policy documents and secondary schools in Kalomo District.

2. Theoretical Framework

This paper investigates Dewey's Democracy and Education in relation to the school curriculum. '...Dewey is seen as a pivotal thinker in relation to collaborative learning and the child as a vital voice in any learning that takes place in the classroom and beyond.' The research is based on John Dewey's theories when he concluded that students needed to be involved in their learning and not only as recipients of their education.

As a philosopher, social reformer and educator, he changed fundamental approaches to teaching and reasoning. His ideas about education sprang from a philosophy of pragmatism and were central to progressive movement in schooling. To Dewey the central ethical imperative in education was democracy (Dewey 1938).

3. Literature Leading to Student Councils in Zambia

According to MOE (1996), in Zambia the government attaches great importance to children or pupils' participation in a bid to improve the quality of education. Considering the aims and objectives of high school education, MOE (1996: 51-52) states that education should develop desirable intellectual skills and qualities such as reflective



reasoning, logical thinking, ability to concentrate, attentiveness to detail and objectivity in appraisal of evidence, and to foster creativity, imagination, resourcefulness and innovativeness, and provide occasions for their exercise.

The other objective is to provide educational experiences that will nurture skills to enable pupils to take charge of their own learning, in addition, instil a spirit of self-discipline, integrity, accuracy and hard work.

It has been noted that, the formal curriculum should cater for the some aspects of intellectual ability but should not forget the schools extra-curricular activities which give increasing levels of personal responsibility to students. The participation of pupils as members of school Boards or student councils would help to develop pupils who would participate in civil life, respect for the personal and integrity of other. The Ministry of Education Science, Vocational Training and Early Education MoESVTEE (2014:153) states that once learners realise that their views and opinions matter and that you take them seriously, they may invest in contributing more positively rather than focussing on disrupting the class or misbehaving to gain attention.

This means that students need to be given a forum to express themselves and be understood and appreciated. By creating an environment in which individuals realise their full potential, in which their rights are respected and in which they feel actively involved can only be beneficial for everyone concerned.

The above literature reviewed is in accordance to Dr. Michael Woods T.D Minister of Education and Science in Ireland who commented on Student Councils; A Voice of Students First published in 2002 by the Department of Education and Science

Ministers Forewords

The Education Act, 1998, provides for establishment of student councils intending them to play an integral and important role in the school community. Student councils provide a representative structure through which students can debate issues of concern and undertake initiatives of benefit to the school and the wider community.

Students have a voice and contribute to make to their school. It is important that they be given the opportunity to express their views on issues of concern to them in the school. It is equally important that they are listened to and encouraged to take an active part in the promoting of aims and objectives of the school. The recent establishment of student councils in many schools is a most welcome development. It is my wish to



see this happening in all of outpost primary school. I am pleased therefore, to publish these guidelines which are intended to provide practical guidance to school management, teachers and students alike in the establishment and operation of student councils. The guidelines are divided into three parts.

Part 1: describes the roles and functions of a student council.

Part 2: provides guidelines to school boards of management in accordance with section 27 of the education Act.

Part 3: provides a practical guide to students with accompanying support material.

I recognise that the student council is a relatively new concept for many schools and that there will inevitably be a learning process for all involved. Nevertheless, I am confident that through active partnership between management, concept will work effectively for the benefit of the entire school community.

Education Act. (1998)

The information to students and student councils Article 27

- States that a board shall establish and maintain procedures for the purposes of informing students in a school of the activities of the school
- The procedures established and maintained under subsection (1) shall facilitate the involvement of the students in the operation of the school, having regard to the age and experience of the students in association with their parents and teachers.
- Students of a post primary school may establish a student council and, without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1), a board of a post primary school shall encourage the establishment by students of a student council and shall facilitate and give all reasonable assistance to;
- Students who wish to establish a student council and
- Student councils when they have been established.
- A student council shall promote the interest of the school and the involvement of students in the affairs of the school, in co-operation with the board, parents, and teachers.
- The rules for the establishment of a student council shall be drawn up by the board, in accordance with such guidelines as may be issued by the Minister from time to time and such rules may provide for the elections of members and the dissolution of a student council.
- A student council, following consultation with the board may make rules governing its meetings and the business and conduct of its affairs.



This Education Act (1998) clearly brings out the idea of student councils in the Irish schools and the Minister feels it is necessary that the voices of the students be considered and appreciated at all cost. However, for such an activity to work effectively there is need to involve other stake holders such as parent, teachers, and the community at large.

Reviewing this literature help to conclude that effective school council would contribute positively to the life styles of the students and would help them to avoid being receivers only of the knowledge but make them partners in development.

Dheeray (2010) stated that leadership and the commitment of the top management need to consider school masters who must establish the context in which students can best achieve their potential through continuous improvement. For this to happen students must be involved in decision making and this can only be possible through effective student councils. It is therefore necessary that every learning institution should have a deliberate policy to accommodate learners in the management of schools.

Once the students have been accommodated, the school management need to listen to their views and take action on whatever the student councils have suggested or recommended in this way it is possible that they would appreciate the student contributions through the student councils meaning that the management and the students would work as a team, which in the Zambian, Southern Province Motto of 2019, Together Everyone Achieves More. (TEAM)

So incorporating students should be a must of any school, the Province also advocates that '...no one should be left behind...' this is a sure sign that good management requires student participation.

Lockwood (1992) reviewed that in a classroom, teacher and student teams are the equivalent of industry's front line workers. The product of their successful work together is the development of the student's capacities, interests and character. In one sense, the student is the teacher's customer, as a recipient of educational services provided for the student's growth and improvement. Viewed in this way, the teacher and the school are suppliers of effective learning tools, environment and systems to the student who is the school primary customer this makes the student to be vital without their input education becomes useless.



The school is responsible for providing for the long term educational welfare of the students by teaching them how to learn and communicate in high quality ways, how to access quality in their own work and in that of others and how to invest in their own long life and life wide learning processes by maximizing opportunities for growth in every aspect of daily life. In another sense, students through effective student councils would be seen as workers also who are likely to contribute positively to themselves, others, the community and the school management (Lockwood, 1992).

Considering Dewey (1938), he explained that education must be based upon experience if it is to accomplish its end for both the students and for society. It would only be possible if students' contributions to their learning was considered. There has been effective use of de-mocracy of education in Zambia since 1964.

Democracy being the system of society and learning where each person is able to use their fullest potential without social or financial encumbrance, without fear or intimidation.

The students must be able to express themselves fully and without reservation through art, writing, athletics or inventions. Involving them in decision making makes them realise that life is about one being free to participate in activities that affect them.

Since 1964, the Zambian government has made sure that there be freedom of association, meaning that the students should be able to form networks of meaningful and rewarding relationships with their peers, with people who share the same interests, hobbies, political or religious affiliations, but student councils need to be there to take on board everyone by 'talking for voiceless' in the school and representing them since not everyone would talk for themselves.

Democratic procedure in education is where the people are all involved in decision making. In schools, democratic systems of government usually have effective student councils in which the pupils may discuss with the managers and any members of staff any policies that affect them. Good managers or administrators must possess the high quality of leadership because like a general, they cannot win the battle by themselves. Only when there is this relationship can the schools play their role moulding the students.

If good tone or school spirit is to exist in a school, there must be a corporate spirit among the members. The Head teacher, staff and pupils must talk of "we" because they



feel they belong together. When making decisions students must be considered. (Farrant, 1991).

This is what the Ministry of Education has been expecting from students, it explains that education should involve both the formal curriculum and extracurricular activities so that no particular aspect is neglected but that the students' needs to experience that they are appreciated for and should be involved in extracurricular activities initiated by the students themselves MOE (1996).

Harper D. (2000) writes that the student voice is giving the students the ability to influence learning to include policies, programs, context and principles. From Harpers it is only cardinal to realise that if education is to benefit the students, it is only essential and necessary to involve them in important activities. Students need to be given a chance to decide on some activities that they may feel would make them and their learning beneficial, this is possible if they are made aware that they have the ability and capability to contribute and should be given opportunities through councils to contribute.

If students are simply 'bundled' with things they do not agree with, the end result would be to rebel, leading to unwanted or unaccepted behavior as they may resort to such to express themselves leading to learners who would break some rules and regulations deliberately.

Aggrawal(2004) adds that while student representatives may not participate on matters of examination, evaluation of student performance, appointment of teachers and other secret matters, their participation must be ensured in all other academic and administrative decisions taken by these bodies and they need to be considered as such.

Sarvoda (2008), having done a research on student voices, concluded that the student voices are being heard and that student voices are being recognised as an important component of shared decision making in secondary schools. With more and more high school administrators reaching out to the students, inviting them to participate in formal committees and tapping their opinions in an effort to shape educational policies.

This has led to students who are positive, goal oriented and active learner, involving learners is very important and makes them part and parcel of the system. Such students automatically tend to fit well in society knowing that they contributed their ideas to the smooth running of education systems.



Students ask for more collaboration, hands on project research and presentation. Students spoke of feeling a new level of self-confidence from giving a presentation that they wouldn't have experienced from simply taking a standardised test. Students should never be over looked, thought of more as problems but need to be nurtured.

Another scholar who did an extensive research on the concept of student voice and its im-pact on school reforms is Dana Mitra (2009) an Assistant Professor of Education Theory and Policy at Pennsylvania State. She explained that students want autonomy, relevant pedagogy, respect and collaboration and greater responsibility in school decision. The research shows by supporting the individual development of each young person with a caring community, dem-ocratic education helps them to learn about themselves, engage with the world around and become positive contributing members of society.

This is so because education should have its own aims and objectives just like other human activities, education is dynamic and the aims of education also vary from time to time, society to society, generation to generation.

This means that students at whatever level need to be involved in deciding more about their education, by appreciating their contributions through student councils. These are some of the ways to learn what students want, need, and value and consider important. The article finds that student voice activities can create meaningful experiences for youth that can help to meet fundamental developmental need especially for students who otherwise do not find meaning in their school experience.

In Zambia, Mboyonga Edward a teacher at Hillside Girls Secondary School in Chipata town researched on the role of student representative councils in curbing student riots in selected secondary schools in Chipata. He stated that according to the Ministry of Education, students don't seem to have avenues where they can vent their anger and frustration as they feel left out in matters that affect them by the school administrations" (MOE,2014).

Therefore, they have often resorted to unorthodox methods of airing out their grievances by engaging in violent riots and class boycotts. In order to curb students' riotous behaviours, public schools have been compelled to establish student representative councils to promote learners participation in school governance. However, inspite of this policy, there is dearth of scholarly literature on the subject.



The Ministry of Education defines a student council as an “elected body of students whose day to day mandate is to represent the interests of students according to the dictates of the student council constitution” (MOE, 2014: 12). They serve as students parliaments where each leader represents a constituency, such as a class or hostel in the case of boarding schools.

The students’ representatives bring out different problems affecting the general welfare of pupils in their schools. The practice of establishing student councils is a shift towards a learner centred leadership approach embedded within the democratic governance in schools.

As management model, the effects of democratic involvement of pupils can be beneficial to individual learners and the entire school community. In addition it should not just be emphasised as a model of school management, but also a means of enabling students to realise and enjoy their rights.

Several legal frameworks, both international and national levels, guide Zambia in the promotion, provision and implementation of student’s right in education. At an international arena, the country is a signatory to the United Nations Conventions on the Right of the child (UNCRC).

Article 12 of the UNCRC included a provision that introduce a right of all state parties to “recognize this right and ensure its implementation by listening to the views of the students and according to their due weight.” (UNCRC 2009: 8).

The obligation further requires that “state parties, with respect to their particular judicial system, either directly guarantee this right or adopt or revise laws so that this right can be fully enjoyed by the child” (ibid). Zambia ratified the CRC in 1991, by virtue of this ratification the country agreed to implement all obligations set out in the CRC.

Furthermore, to promote the participation of students in decision making in schools, the Education Act of 2011 mandates all the learning institutions in Zambia to establish student representative councils.

Commenting on the roles of student representative councils in school governance (Daniel 2015, Chemutai and Chimba 2014; Mwanza 2013), they discovered that student



councils were significant in appreciating the impact of students' voices in the life of the school and learners.

Mweemba (2011) recommended that administrators should allow full participation of pupils that are in student unions in order to enhance behavioural trends among pupils. In this respect it is vital and necessary that learners are given space to effectively participate in the governance of schools so that their voices are heard and considered in decision making in schools.

Such structures provide a basis for consultation with school management facilitate communication between teachers and pupils, and also serve as a resource for the provision of education opportunities and community linkages. They play a significant role in enhancing the learner involvement in decision-making in schools.

Chemutai and Chimba (2014) also opined that they are necessary for the representation, mediating conflict, class supervision and monitoring, maintaining discipline and in channelling of student grievances to the school administration for further action.

To this effect the study has suggestion that school authorities should attune to promote commitment towards learning and ownership of their schools (Rudduck and Flutter, 2000).

The importance of communicative dialogue is also at the heart of Paulo Freire's pedagogy of the oppressed in which he underscored the importance of communicative dialogue in empowering people to be involved in decision making on issues affecting their welfare (Freire, 1970). However, this can only be possible when teachers and school managers step out of their banking roles which have no room for students' voices.

The above literature is in uniform with the Zambia Education Curriculum Framework (CDC 2013;23) which states that Governance is about developing, implementing and evaluating laws, policies and rules which govern the actions of every society at all levels. It states that Governance issues are an integral part of every society and therefore should be included in the curriculum.

This means that it is important that learning institutions include activities and practices in programmes that promote good governance. If the students are to be moulded into

better leaders of tomorrow, then the student councils are to be formed and considered in schools especially secondary school.

The Government of the Republic of Zambia encourages learning that bring out the life skills which promote positive behaviour that enable individuals to deal effectively and positively with the demand and challenges of everyday life. Effective student councils are the solutions hence the study to investigate how the students are contributing to decision making to the school management.

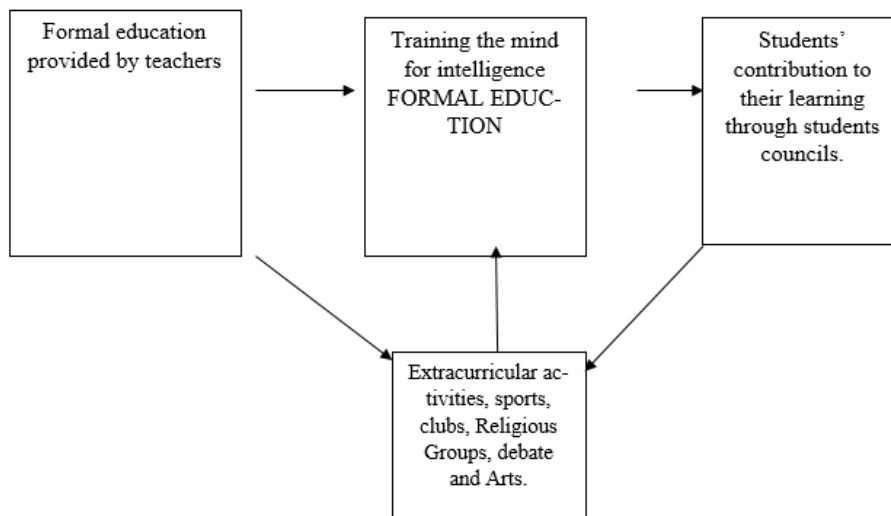


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

3. Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1

- Ho: Student councils are ineffective in secondary schools.
- H1: Student councils are effective in secondary schools.

Hypothesis 2

- Ho: Students are not given chance to make decisions in school management.
- H1: Students are given chance to make decisions in school management.



Hypothesis 3

- Ho Student issues are not handled adequately by school managers.
- H1 Student issues are handled adequately by school managers.

4. Summary

Student councils had some references in literature as stated above. Considering it being a new concept for many schools in Zambia school as can be seen from just some documents that encourage many schools to adopt learner centred approaches in all areas of teaching and learning, it is therefore, not very much pronounced in schools. Involvement of learners in the running of secondary schools is mostly through the prefects.

The literature review shows that student councils are important in learning institutions and that without them, schools would be unable to achieve their main purposes that is to help bring out learners who are positive and able to reason acceptably.

III. Methodology

1. Introduction

The chapter presents details about the design adopted which elaborates the chosen research philosophy, approaches and strategy used to sample the population and how primary data, was collected and analysed. It further explains the data collection tools that were used.

2. The Research Design

The researcher designed and used the questionnaires that were in two forms, one for the members of staff and the other for the pupil's targeting those in student councils. The study also had a structured interview (face to face interview) especially for the students not enrolled in the management to get more get more information that the questionnaires may have missed out. The Action Research methodology was also used. The study was done between June and July 2026.

The questionnaires were taken to various schools through the Deputy Head teachers or Heads of Department who gave the respondents and later collected from the same offices. The students to be interviewed were picked at random from the various senior classes preferably the Grade 12. The Head boys and Head girls were made to respond to the student's questionnaire.



3. Research Population

The possible total population of the secondary school teachers in Kalomo District is well over 2200. However, due to factors such as teachers going on vacation leave and others on maternity leave lowered the number of teachers. The estimated number of teachers was slightly above 1700 at the time of research was conducted. Being the first term of the school calendar many administrators and teachers were involved in out of school activities attending to subject associations and other Continuing Professional Development activities.

The research sample for the study was limited to selected schools drawn from five schools in Kasukwe zone Cluster (see appendix 4.) The students were also from the schools where the study was done. Together, there were fifty teachers and seventy seven students who participated in the study.

Table 1: Number of members of staff

School	Number of Respondents
Kasukwe secondary school	8
Jonathan sim secondary school	12
Sichibeya secondary school	10
Nakatala secondary school	8
Kulyabeba secondary school	12
Total	50

Below are the schools whose teachers participated in the study Jonathan sim secondary School 12 teachers, Sichibeya secondary School 10 teachers, Nakatala secondary 8 teachers, Kulyabeba Secondary School 12 teachers and kasukwe School 8 teachers. 10 students enrolled in management 5 head boys and the 5 head girls participated from the same schools.

Table 2: Structured Interview for students

School	Number of Respondents
Kasukwe secondary School	10
Jonathan sim secondary School	15
Sichibaya secondary school	12
Nakatala	15
Kulyabeba	15



Total	67

The Structured Interview was also conducted with the following participating from Kasukwe secondary School total of 15 students participated 7 boys and 8 girls, Jonathan Sim Chikanta secondary 12 students 6 boys and 6 girls, Sichibeya had 15 boys 9 were girls and 6 boys , Nakatala had 10 students 6 boys and 4 girls with 15 students from Kulyabeba Secondary school participating 6boys and 9 girls.

Together 127 respondents were used in the study.

4. Sampling Design

The study employed a purposive and simple random sampling. Purposive sampling is regarded as the non-parametric sampling in which the researcher purposively identifies respondents as the source of data. The rationale for using purposive sampling was to select key informants deemed to be informative on what the study is trying to address in this case the study focuses on secondary schools only.

Purposive sampling heavily relies on the subjective considerations of the researcher. Thus potential respondents were identified who were in possession of characteristics deemed suitable to provide required information. A total of 127 respondents were randomly sampled accessible secondary school teachers 50 and 77 students in Kalomo district Kasukwe Zonal Cluster.

5. Data Collection Methods.

Table 3

Instruments	Members of Staff	Pupils	Totals
Questionnaires	50	10	60
Interviews	00	67	67
Total	50	77	127
Literature Review			

The study used both primary and secondary collection methods. The primary data collection method was used to collect data from secondary school teachers across in the cluster in



Kalomo District using self-administered questionnaires. The researcher personally visited the secondary schools to take the questionnaires. The Deputy Head and sometimes Heads of

Department distributed the instrument and collected them, to be handed back to the research-er after a day or two. A total of seventy questionnaires were distributed to the five schools and sixty being collected.

There were instances where a few respondents did not return the instrument. During the several trips made to collect the data, the respondents claimed that they were tired of being used as respondents by so many students from various Universities leading to apathy, others filled in, in such a hurry when they saw the researcher.

This being at the time when schools had mid-term examinations and teachers were Invigilating and students writing examinations it was very difficult. The structured interview for pupils was also affected as respondents seemed to be racing against time hence the

Researcher had to consider questions that would answer the research question.

Secondary data collection was employed to ascertain some facts and the data has already been collected. This was obtained through literature such as articles, journals, books and from the internet.

Questionnaire

The general aim of the questionnaire was to gather information on the effectiveness on student councils in school management among secondary schools in Kalomo District Kasukwe Zonal Cluster. To ensure the effectiveness of the questionnaire, the researcher dis-cussed with the supervisor who helped and after some adjustments, the questionnaires were ready for

Administering. (See appendix 1 and 2.)

In order to avoid ambiguity and enhance clarity of what is required from the respondents the questionnaires had two parts. The first part focussed on demographic issues. Such as the zone, name of school, gender, age, marital status, employee work position, level of education and length in service. The second part aimed to bring out



facts about the student involvement in the running of the schools or their contributions to the school management.

Structured Interview

Interviews are questions asked orally by the researcher. Structured interviews were conducted where every informant was asked similar questions. Some of the advantages of structured

Interviews are that the information gathered is reliable as each informant is subjected to similar questions with the others and it is time saving since respondents simply answer what has been asked and the researcher can easily probe further. Interview schedule questions were used to collect information from the pupils.

6. Triangulation

More than one method was used in the data collection. This was done to compensate for the weakness of using one method and to get more accurate information.

7. Data Analysis Methods

Before the processing of the responses, the completed questionnaires were edited for completeness and consistency. Pre-coding of the questionnaire was done while data was being collected. After the collection of data was completed, emerging responses that were not catered for the initial coding were added to the code.

The coding was done to facilitate the 'yes' and 'no' answers in order to enable the researcher to use the t-Test when analysing. The organised data was interpreted on account of t-Test as this was deemed reliable and faster considering the time available. Primary and secondary data was analysed manually by the researcher.

Data used was grouped into frequency distribution to indicate variable values and the number of occurrences in terms of frequency. A frequency distribution table was used for each

Question to summarize the data from the respondents

The organised data was interpreted on account of concurrence and using a computer-based software package called Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) a software for analysing data of primary nature. SPSS is a reliable and widely used computer-based



Programme for analysing large quantities of statistical data in a short period of time. Secondary data was analysed manually by the researcher.

8. Ethical Procedures

Before the researcher interviewed any of the respondents in the school she sought for permission from the Deputy Head teachers. Thereafter explained to the would be respondents assuring them of the highest confidentiality of the responses obtained on the study. This is confirmed in the study as shown on the research data and findings, no names are mentioned in order to protect the identity of the respondents.

9. Summary

The chapter presented the methodology used in this study. The approach used for selection of respondents has been explained, methods used for data collection have been discussed and an evaluation of the methodology has been provided. The next chapter presents the analysis of data collected through the questionnaires and structured interviews.

IV. Data Collection, Presentation and Analysis

1. Introduction

In this chapter, the data collected from the questionnaires which were distributed to the selected secondary schools in Kasukwe zonal cluster in Kalomo District is presented and analysed using t- Test frequency tables. The questionnaires addressed the objectives of the study.

A total number of 60 respondents were successful interviewed out of the total of 70 questionnaires which were distributed the selection of the schools were tailored to capture the big number 50 to members of staff and 10 to pupils enrolled in management and 67 pupils were interviewed.

However, for the sake of analysis using the t-Test, the researcher picked 20 questionnaires for the members of staff and the 10 for students enrolled in management and 20 from the structured interview to use for the analysis of the findings. This was effective as the method of analysing the data necessitated that, there being three questionnaires.



The researcher used a t Test Statistical Analysis tool which is a two factor based model to Analyse the data collected using a computer software SPSS.

Table 4: Data Collection

Responses from member of staff (Questionnaires)

Sex	No.	Percentage
Male	22	44
Female	28	56
TOTAL	50	100

Of the 50 respondents 22 were males making 44% and 28 were females making the remaining 56% females. This meant the majority of respondents were females
Figure 2

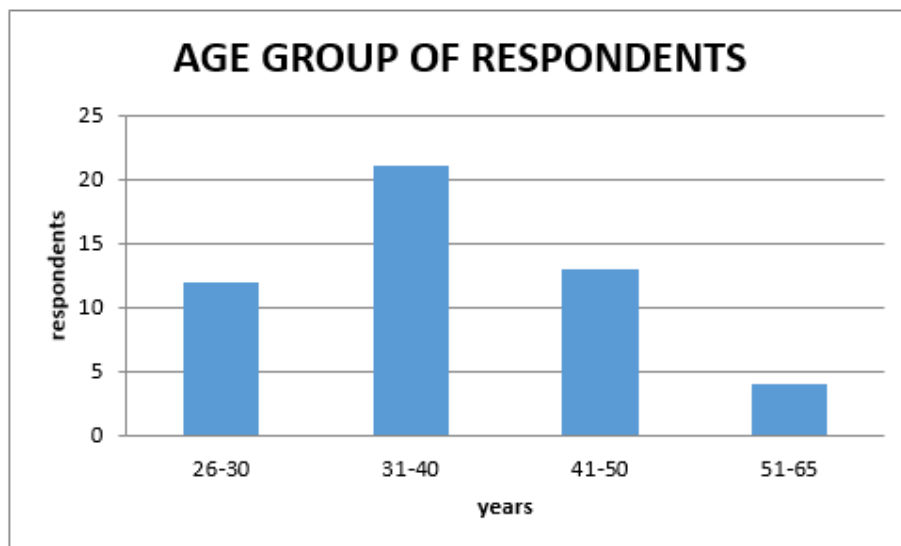


Figure shows the age group of respondents.



The respondents were falling between the ages of 31 to 40 years who made up 42% of the total sampled with 25% being in the age range of 41 to 50 years, while 24% were between the ages 26 to 30. A smaller percentage was above 50 years.

On Qualifications that is level of Education 4 respondents had masters degrees 8%, 42 had degree certificates 84% and 4 had diplomas making 8%.

Table 5

Responses from pupils enrolled in management head boys and head girls(Questionnaires)

SEX	Number of respondents	Percentage
Males	5	50
Females	5	50
Total	10	100

All the 10 responded by completing the questionnaires. The respondents were 5 boys and 5 boys doing their Grade 12 and were aged between 18 and 20 years old

Table 6

Responses by pupils (Structured Interviews)

Sex	Number of respondents	Percentage
Male	34	51
Female	33	49
Total	67	100

Out of 67 respondents 34 were boys and 33 were girls making 51% and 49% respectively sampled from the senior classes grade 10 to 12 ages ranging from 16 to 20 years.

The sample was necessitated so that the study would get information not got from questionnaires, this being possible as the researcher was able to probe further in situations where more information was needed allowing for in depth data collection.



2. Data Presentation and Analysis Finding

Structured Interview

On the knowledge on student council, the roles on student councils, channels of communications, the rights to report without intimidation, revisiting of school rules, mode of communication for people on duty and the type of issues dealt with, the researcher used a one sample t Test because they were numeric.

In terms of the effectiveness of student councils the one sample t Test generated a p value (probability value) of 0.000 at alpha value 0.05, 2 tailed, df (difference frequency) 19. This was at 95% confidence interval of the difference.

Table 7
 Results from the Structured Interviews

	Test Value = 0.05					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Knowledge on student council	17.616	19	.000	1.750	1.68	1.82
Roles of student councils	19.615	19	.000	1.800	1.74	1.86
Channel of communication	21.000	19	.000	1.050	1.02	1.08
Right to report without intimidation	15.983	19	.000	1.100	1.05	1.15
Revision of the school rules	19.615	19	.000	1.800	1.74	1.86
Mode of communication for people on duty	12.457	19	.000	1.400	1.32	1.48
Issues dealt with	12.365	19	.000	1.300	1.23	1.37

The table shows the null hypothesis on student voice in the management of school was reject-ed (p value< 0.001) showing that student voices are not considered in secondary schools.



Findings

Knowledge on student council.

The one sample t test generated a p value of 0.000 at alpha 0.05, 2 tailed, df 19 and df 9 at confidence level of 95%. This means there was statistically significant evidence to conclude that students were knowledgeable on the student councils

Structured Interviews showed that students had some knowledge on councils although most of the knowledge was on the prefects being their representatives.

Roles of student councils.

The one sample t test generated a p value on 0.000 at alpha 0.05, 2 tailed, df 19 and df 9 at confidence level of 95%. This means there was statistically significant evidence on the roles of the student councils.

Most of students who are not enrolled in management did not understand the roles per se but after probing further by the researcher the respondents showed some understanding.

Channel of communication.

The one sample t Test generated a p value of 0.000 at alpha value 0.05, 2 tailed, df 19 at confidence level of 95%. This means there was statistically significant evidence to conclude that there are channels of communication to student from the administration though students depend on other form other student councils

Students depend on the notice boards and other strategic position to get information.

Rights to report to management without intimidation

The one sample t Test generated a p value of 0.000 at alpha value 0.05, 2 tailed, df 19 at confidence level of 95%. This means the evidence leans to supporting the statistically significant evidence to conclude that students have the right to report to management without intimidate

Study and the interviews reviewed that there was less intimidation as they were free to see the Deputy head teacher, Head of Departments and the Grade Teacher



Involvement in extracurricular activities

The one sample t Test generated a p value of 0.000 at alpha value 0.05, 2 tailed df 19 and df 9 at confidence level of 95%.this means there was statistically significant evidence to conclude that students are involved in extracurricular at school.

From the interview all the pupils gave positive evidence that they were involved in some form of extracurricular of some sort such as clubs and sports.

Table4.1.2

The knowledge about student councils, roles of student council, student opinions, participation of students in the school management, consideration of student opinions by school administrators in term of effectiveness of student councils, the one sample test generated a p value of 0.000 at alpha 0.05, 2 tailed, df 9 confirms that p value<0.001 at 95%confidence interval of the difference.

	Test Value = 0.05					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Knowledge about student councils	11.129	9	.000	1.700	1.35	2.05
Roles of student councils	11.129	9	.000	1.700	1.35	2.05
Students opinions	8.573	9	.000	1.400	1.03	1.77
Participation of learners in the school	8.510	9	.000	1.300	.95	1.65
Consideration of student opinions by school Administration	9.000	9	.000	1.500	1.12	1.88

The Table above shows that the null hypothesis on student involvement in decision making is rejected as it show p value < 0.001



Table 8

ONE SAMPLE TEST

Using the t TEST on the Members of staff, considering the availability of student councils, their effectiveness, necessity of student opinion and reasons for paying attention to the student councils the one sample t Test, 2 tailed at alpha value 0.05, df 19 at 95% confidence interval, generated a p value of < 0.000

One-Sample Test T

	Test Value = 0.05					
	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Student council	13.581	19	.000	1.550	1.31	1.79
Effectiveness	12.704	19	.000	1.450	1.21	1.69
Necessity of student opinions	13.077	19	.000	1.200	1.01	1.39
Reasons	12.365	19	.000	1.300	1.08	1.59

The table shows that the p value generated 0.01 is < than the alpha 0.05 value thereby reject-ing the null hypothesis.

Findings

Availability of student councils in schools.

The one sample t test generated at p value 0.000 at alpha value 0.05, 2 tailed, df 19 at confidence level of 95%. This meant there was statistically significant evidence to conclude that student councils are relevant in secondary school.

The statistical data and the research study finding show that the student council are the in the schools although they are not following the design availed by the literature where they have the Executive comprising the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, historian and the boys and girls representatives.



Effectiveness of student councils in school management.

The one sample test generated at a p value 0.000 at alpha 0.05, 2 tailed, df 19 at confidence level of 95%. This meant there was statistically significant evidence to conclude that student council are effective.

The statistical data agreed with literature reviews the student councils are effective in most cases in that schools where pupils were trusted and given responsibilities, had a conducive learning environment and happened to be more orderly and there was respected teachers and authority.

Students opinion in the smooth running of schools

The one sample t test generated at p value 0.000 at alpha value 0.05, 2 tailed, df 19 at confidence level 95%. This meant that there was statistically significant evidence to conclude that student's opinions are necessary in the smooth running of schools.

The literature review and statistical data show that students opinions are necessary in the running of school as could be supported by Ministry of Education documents which advocated that the students be involved and listened to meaning that everything should be learner centred.

Reasons for using students opinions in decision making in school management

The one sample t test generated at p value 0.000 at alpha value 0.05, 2 tailed, df 19 at confidence level 95%, meaning that there was statistically significant evidence that the reasons for using student opinions in making decision in school management.

There is sufficient evidence that student opinion matters when it comes to running of school in that councils advocates for extracurricular activities which are the business of students as such their input is necessary.

3. Data Discussion

Confirmation of t Test using percentages as found after Data finding and analyzing

The study having interpreted the results using a t Test shows the p value which is the probability that the responses made are random (by chance) and that the differences between the expected values and that of the observed values are due to random sampling. A p value below 0.05 is generally considered STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT, while one above or greater indicates distribution is random. The study



rejected the null hypothesis that student councils were effective in Secondary Schools in Lusaka District.

(See Appendix three)

Questionnaires for members of staff:

Is there a student council at your school?

45% responded there was what the deemed student council while 55% response was that there was none.

Do you think student council would be effective?

55% thought student council would be effective if they were to be initiated in schools while 45% thought there would not be need.

Do you think student's opinions are necessary in the smooth running of the school?

80% of the members of staff felt students it was important for students to contribute by giving their suggestion and opinions on matters affecting them while 20% felt the students needed to be told what to do and were to be taught according to the planned work by their teachers or the system.

Asked to give reasons for their answer in the above question?

70%, felt that the student would help run the school and contribute positively in that they would help maintain order and prevent the unruliness and misbehaviours leading to a better environment where each one would feel part and parcel of the system although 30% felt students are to be taught and should follow rules, orders, and directives. The duty of the student was to follow.

4. Summary

The chapter considered the data collected, presented and analysed the results from the re-search finding from the derived probability values using the t Test using SPSSsoftware to de-terminate whether school management have in place effective school council or not in Lusaka District. The research instruments which addressed the objectives of the study where dis-cussed.



V. Discussion of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendation

Introduction

In this chapter, the paper looks at whether the objectives of the study have been achieved or not and what conclusions have been drawn. The recommendations arising from the study are also presented as well as suggestions for further research areas.

The research topic was to investigate the effectiveness of student councils in school management in Lusaka district.

The need to undertake the study was based on whether pupils were given the chance and privilege to be involved in the running of schools by management. Having conducted the research and considered the Literature by scholars the objective of the study were elaborated by the researcher;

The specific research objectives were as follows;

- To find out the roles of student councils in secondary school
- To establish the learners knowledge on the school student councils
- To determine the effectiveness of student council in secondary schools
- To compare management in schools with effective student council and those without

Major Findings

The roles of student councils in secondary schools.

The study revealed that schools in Kalomo had students who did not know the roles of student councils. From the responses student councils roles were a thing that most of the students did not know as the student councils were non-existent. There is need to sensitize the students on the roles they have to play in school management. The concept seemed a new idea.

However the research showed that the schools were using the prefects to represent the other students especially the head boy and the head girl. They ended up giving the roles of prefects in the school. Citing the Education Act (1998), the quoted Minister of Education and Science said that the students needed to play an important role in the management of the schools and the authorities had to listen to them.



The students' knowledge on school councils

The question which the study sought to answer was “to establish the students’ knowledge on school student councils.

The study concluded that schools did not have the actual student councils. The schools use the head boy and head girl as representatives on school boards. There is no student council executive which is not part of the prefectural body. This has rendered the idea of student councils irrelevant in that the head boy and head girl are usually part of the school system and may not bring out issues as they are supposed to be by virtue of their positions.

In addition, the whole idea is misplaced and non-existent as the meeting for Parent Teachers Associations (PTA) are not so many and are usually held in the third term. So far the current head boys/girls had not met or have not attended any meetings as they were appointed at the beginning of the term. In this case when the students had a problem, the research find out that they were free to see the Deputy Head teacher or their Grade teachers who in most cases help them or referred them to appropriate offices depending on the problem.

Determining the effectiveness of student councils in school

From the study, it is clear that the members of staff and pupils agreed that the student councils if put in place as done in other parts of the world where they are implemented would help the pupils to voice out. It was established that an effective student council would help curb some vices such as bullying, vandalisms, riotous behaviour, smoking, (drug abuse), taking of alcoholic beverages and even absenteeism and absconding of lessons.

The study discovered, the students would be helped to come up with activities that would keep them busy and events that would be of their making and liking. The student’s opinion need to be respected for them to feel part and parcel of the school. Leading to schools being better places where each one would keep check of the other.

According to Farrant 1991 and the field research it is clear that if the school spirit is to exist the school personnel needed to co-operate and consider team spirit that included the students since they are the reasons schools existed.

To assess management in schools with and those without student councils

The study showed that schools where there was collaboration between management and



students did better in terms of results, keeping the classroom clean and environment tidy. The learners were also very good in co-curricular activities such as sports, debates, scripture

unions and drama, school choir and chess. The literature by Mboyonga Edward confirms this assertion since his research showed that students who were not listened to, resorted to unorthodox methods of airing their views which included violent riots and class boycotts.

Even though there would not be any established school councils, schools where students were free to approach the headteacher, deputy-headteacher, heads of department, teacher on duty and their grade teachers, showed that listening to learners especially on issues affecting them, led to good behaviour and such students had respect and regard for authority.

The study concluded the opposite in schools where students are suppressed, ignored, punished without counselling and guidance, and such schools had a lot of them who had no interest in school and caused a lot of problems to their peers, teachers, and the top managers.

2. Conclusion

It is clear from the research findings that student councils are not done accordingly in Lusaka district. There is need to make sure the idea of student councils by making deliberate policies to encourage school managers to put in place effective student councils so that the students would have a chance to voice out their opinions, beliefs, problems and challenges. This would make them feel part and parcel of the management. Even though conclusions have been made, the researcher realised that some respondents felt that they would be cited for reporting on the managers, proving the point that students felt intimidated.

There is need of finding ways of letting students air out their views and grievances to management as denying them that had great consequences leading to graffiti were pupils insulted each other and even some teachers, vandalism being the order of the day and absconding from classes.

3. Recommendations

- Student councils comprising the president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, sergeant of arms, fundraising officer, historian, boys and girls representatives, need



to be put in secondary schools, so that they help sensitise other pupils on the rules, help raise funds for school wide activities, social events, community projects, and even organise various co-curricular or extra-curricular activities and participate in the government of the school. This would be effective instead of using head boy and head girl who are already in the system.

- There is need to explain or come up with a constitution to guide student councils especially on the roles and duties, their dos and don'ts so that there is no conflict of duties with the managers, teachers, prefects and fellow learners. Student councils need to work not in isolation but hand in hand with other committees such as the school board, Parents Teachers Association, the board of prefects, class monitors and the support staff and even the community at large. The roles need to be understood clearly.
- The Ministry of Education and other stakeholders should regularly disseminate and enforce clear guidelines on the student councils in secondary schools because from the research findings, students are rarely involved in decision making with emphasis being put in the learning from classes with extra-curricular appearing only when there are festivals such as sports without the activities being part of the everyday learning activities.

4. Limitations and Areas for Further Research

Limitations

- Financial constraints were encountered and this affected the size of the sample. A large sample could have been covered
- The timing of the research and the duration, limited the study. Some schools did not respond fully as most teachers were administering mid-term tests as they were busy invigilating and marking the tests.
- Information was being withheld, as the respondents tried to justify why they could not use students in decision making processes and the students who did not favour the management said negative things without realising that they needed to be proactive and contribute positively to the smooth running of the school.
- Difficulties at times to fulfil the interviews as scheduled due to unforeseen eventualities like bad weather and family challenges.

Areas of Further Research

- Challenges of instituting student councils in secondary schools.
- Students councils, the way to solve learners' apathy towards school and school programmes



4. Summary

The chapter has presented findings basing on the specific objectives of the study, the conclusion of the study and the recommendations arising from the study have also been listed and areas of further research suggested. The research topic;

To investigate the effectiveness of student councils in Management;
A case of selected secondary schools in Lusaka District.

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