

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Overview

This chapter includes the introduction, contextual background of the study, Statement of the problem, purpose of the study, general objective of the study, specific objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, operational definitions and theoretical framework.

1.1 Introduction

The right of the child to quality education is at the centre stage of every nation. This is so because education is perceived as a right in itself and as a means of promoting peace and respect for everyone. Education is also seen as a means of fostering peace, democracy and economic growth as well as improving health and reducing poverty. At the international front, education has been recognised by the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 as a basic right for every child in its article 26 (1). Furthermore, the World Conference on Education for All was held in Jomtien, Thailand, from 5 to 9 March, 1990 where countries re-affirmed the declaration of human rights of 1948 (UNESCO 2003a). The call for 'Education for All' (EFA) was the focus of the conference. The delegates adopted the 'World Declaration on Education for All' and a 'Framework for Action'. In December, 1993, the United Nations Resolution adopted the United Nations Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities which urges states to ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the education system.

The Salamanca statement of 1994 further re-affirmed the commitment to education for all and recognised the necessity and urgency of providing for children, youths and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system. More than 300 participants representing 92 governments and 25 international organisations met in Salamanca, Spain, from 7 to 10 June 1994 to further the objective of Education for All by considering the fundamental policy shifts required to promote the approach of inclusive education, namely enabling schools to serve all children, particularly

those with special educational needs. The Conference adopted the Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and practice in Special Needs Education and a Framework for Action. These documents are informed by the principle of inclusion, by recognition of the need to work towards 'schools for all' institutions which include everybody, celebrate differences, support learning and respond to individual needs

In April, 2000, the World Education Forum was held in Dakar, Senegal where world leaders reaffirmed the vision of the World Declaration on Education for All (Jomtien 1990), supported by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, that all children, young people and adults have the human right to benefit from an education that will meet their basic learning needs in the best and fullest sense of the term, an education that includes learning to know, to do, to live together and to be. It is an education geared to tapping each individual's talents and potential and developing learners' personalities, so that they can improve their lives and transform their societies.

It is worth noting that education opportunities have increased over the years since the adoption of these international declarations promoting the right to education. Through the international thrust for instance, governments have been encouraged to put in place policies aimed at enhancing access to education for every citizen especially the under privileged and the marginalised (Mumba, 2002). One of the major responses especially by developing countries to this international call was the introduction of Free Primary Education as a means of ensuring access to education. Over the past decade several countries in Sub-Saharan Africa have abolished Primary School tuition fees typically as part of renewed attempts to resurrect their education system which have been in decline, and even suffering reduced enrolments after the initial growth following independence (Verspoor, 2006). Whereas from the eighties up to mid-nineties, cost-sharing had been a policy promoted by international financial institutions such as the World Bank that involved households and local communities making contributions to meet overall expenses for schools. The direct and indirect costs to parents of their children's education became obstacles to their attendance and continued enrolment. The inability of parents to afford such costs fell on vulnerable children and children with special educational needs disproportionately, typically being the first to be pulled out or allowed to drop out of school (UNESCO, 2003a). Free Basic Education (FBE) was introduced in Zambia in 2002. The 2002-

2007 Strategic Plan for Education also called for the abolition of school fees (Ministry of Education, 2003). In order to ensure that all the eligible children have access to grade one, the Ministry of Education in 2007 further adopted and implemented a policy on Every Child School. The policy emphasised that no child should be turned away from enrolling into grade one. Thus, it is clear from the foregoing that the Zambian government made remarkable efforts aimed at increasing access to basic schools. Thus the introduction of Free Primary Education has seen expansion in school enrolments at primary school level. For instance in Zambia, Gross enrolment rate at the basic school level had consistently increased from 2002 which stood at 83.7 percent to 116 percent in 2009. Furthermore, the Net Enrolment Ratio in the primary education sector rose from 97 percent in 2006 to over 100 percent in 2009 (Ministry of Education, 2009). Overall, the number of pupils in basic schools (grade 1-9) increased from 2.2 million in 2004 to about 3.6 million in 2010, increasing at the annual average rate of 4.6 percent per year.

Despite these achievements however, it is not certain how much this quantitative increase in enrolment is being translated into quality of education provision. Banda, (2008) states that although the Free Primary Education was introduced with the good intentions of increasing access to education, a number of African countries have had problems regarding financing of the programme. These include Malawi, Kenya, Uganda, and Zambia due to declining economies. The Free Primary Education policy has enhanced access leading to an increase in enrolment in number of learners while bringing about decline in quality of education. Matafwali (2013) has argued that despite these remarkable achievements since the introduction of free primary education in 2002 and the implementation of the Every Child to School policy in 2007, this expansion has not corresponded with infrastructure development. This has led to inadequacy of school infrastructure as the existing schools can not correspond with the ever increasing demand at basic school level and in particular special units. Although enrolment levels have gone up at the basic school in many countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, this has defied the reality because teachers are not able to cope with the numbers and quality is compromised (UNESCO, 2004b). Additionally, the teaching and learning resources are inadequate due to insufficient funding. For example, in the Delta state of Nigeria, the intent of the UBE.UPE as declared in the policy statement that education should be free. The financial burden of government often forces parents to get involved in the funding of basic level of education. Since most of the parents are poor, the

children remain poorly equipped to learn (Kamla, 2009). Coomb (1985) points out that the typical response to the overwhelming pressure of demand for education led to scarce resources such as -classrooms, teachers, books just to mention a few-being spread thinner and thinner over more and more pupils therefore, compromising the quality of education being provided in these schools.

What is also not known is the extent to which children with Special Educational Needs have been provided with access to education and the quality of education provision in special units. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948 has recognized the right to education for every child including those with disabilities. This commitment was also reaffirmed at the Salamanca conference on Education for All held in 1994 at which states, parties, Zambia inclusive were implored to ensure access to education for children with disabilities. Most importantly, this conference adopted the Framework for Action on Special Needs Education. The purpose of the framework was to inform policy and guide action by governments, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and other bodies in implementing the Salamanca statement on principles, policy and practices in Special Needs Education (Ainscow, 1994). The Salamanca statement further re-affirmed the commitment to education for all and recognized the necessity and urgency of providing for children, youths and adults with special educational needs within the regular education system. Further, in 2000, the World Education Forum held in Dakar reaffirmed the 1990 Declaration of Education for All. In December, 1993, the United Nations Resolution adopted the United Nations Standard Rules on Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities which urges states to ensure that the education of persons with disabilities is an integral part of the education system. It must be stated here that Zambia is a signatory to all these international declarations mentioned earlier where it committed itself to strengthening its efforts to improving education in order to ensure the basic learning needs for all were met (United Nations, 1993).

1.2 Contextual Background

In understanding Zambia's commitment to providing quality education for children with disabilities, it is important to trace the historical background of education in Zambia. Education for children with special educational needs (SEN) has been in existence in Zambia for over 100 years. The first attempts to educate children with Special Educational Needs were made by

missionaries in 1905, when Mrs. Ella opened the first special school for the blind in Magwero. Later the Zambian government took over the responsibility of educating children with special needs and the Ministry of Education was mandated to take up the portfolio of special education in 1971. The first major educational policy document in Zambia pertaining to special education (Educational Reform GRZ, 1977) stated that all handicapped children like any other children are entitled to education and should receive basic and further education by full-time study. It further, stated that since the handicapped are a special case, there should be 'positive discrimination' in their favour in the provision of facilities and amenities for education purposes' (Kalabula, 2007).

The second major educational policy document, Focus on learning corresponded to the World Declaration on Education for All. The 1992 document emphasised on the mobilisation of resources for the development of school education for all children including learners with special educational needs (Ministry of Education, 1992). This development led to infrastructure expansion in the provision of special education. In 1995, there were 31 special education institutions of which 28 were at primary, one at secondary and two at tertiary. There were also 80 special education units and it is anticipated that the number of special education institutions and units could have increased over the last sixteen years (Ministry Of Education, 1996).

The third policy document, Educating Our Future from 1996 is fairly advanced compared to the previous ones. Educating our future (1996:68) contains many statements such as:

- (a) The Ministry of Education will ensure that equality of education opportunities for children with special educational needs.
- (b) The Ministry is committed to providing education of particular good quality to learners with special educational needs.
- (c) The Ministry will improve and strengthen the supervision and management of special education across the country,

The Zambian government Education policy (1996) aims at providing an equitable access to education for children with special educational needs. In striving for the realisation of this policy aspirations, supportive environment have been created such as curriculum adaptation and

modification responsive to the needs of learners with disabilities have been given primacy which have led to increased enrolments for children with disabilities in special schools and units. In 2011, Northern Province recorded highest with 29,694 while Lusaka had the lowest with 9,290 learners. The distribution of learners however, varied from one province to the other indicating that variation was due to different levels of availability of facilities (Ministry of Education, 2011).

Other recent developments in the field of Special Education have been the enactment of the Education Act of 2011 and the Persons with Disability Act of 2012 providing the legal framework for the provision of special education in Zambia. The preamble to the Education Act 2011 makes specific reference to provision for the education of persons with disabilities or special educational needs. The main objective of the Act is to give practical effect to the constitutional rights of children to education including children who have a disability or other special educational needs. It also outlines the roles and responsibilities of schools and boards of management in making appropriate provision for learners with disabilities or special educational needs (Education Act 2011, Cap 333 of the Laws of Zambia). The Act further states that educational institutions should ensure to provide learners with special educational needs with quality education in appropriately designed and well resourced educational institutions, staffed by qualified and dedicated teachers (Ministry of Education, 2011).

In 2012, Zambia amended the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 6, which repeals the Persons with Disabilities Act No. 33, Cap 65 of 1996. The amended Act covertly and systematically enhances discrimination against persons with disabilities. PART V: Sections 22 to 25 spells out the type of education system, Special education, facilities and equipment in educational institutions, education of children with disability and prohibition or refusal of admission on account of disability. Another important development in the field of Special Education is the aspiration by the Zambian Government to domesticate the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

While the Zambian government has made efforts aimed at ensuring access to education for children Special Educational Needs, the quality of education being provided especially in special units across the country remains unknown. It is important to note that the Ministry of Education acknowledges the fact that while quality is an important consideration in the education provided for all children, it is of particular importance in the education of exceptional children (Ministry of Education, 1996)

Quality is the extent to which products, services, processes and relationships are free from defects, constraints, and items which do not add value for customers. It is the ability of a product to meet a customer. Quality has also been defined as a measure of excellence or a state of being free from defects, deficiencies and significant variations. It is brought about by strict and consistent commitment to certain standards that achieve uniformity of a product in order to satisfy specific customers or user requirements (UNESCO, 2004b).

Quality in education can be perceived to be the extent to which education outcomes are relevant to societal expectations such as productivity, improved ways of doing things at individual and societal level. It is usually measured in terms of improved teacher training, curriculum and the availability of teachers and also the supply of adequate learning and teaching materials. United Nations International Children Education Fund (UNICEF, 2003a) defines quality of education by using the basic dimensions of quality which are; quality learners, quality learning environment, quality content, quality process and quality out comes. Quality is brought about by maximizing the efforts of all those responsible for the education of learners and by coordinating all the structures of the system so that centres of education at all levels are places where the highest standards of achievement are obtained by all learners.

Learners with special educational needs need education of high quality to compensate for difficulties they experience. Ministry Of Education, (1996:68) states that, 'while much depends upon the nature of the exceptionality, as well as on the facilities and resources available, the Ministry of Education is committed to ensuring that children with special educational needs can attend schools which are well resourced with adequate qualified teachers'.

At present, the educational needs of children with severe impairments are catered for through special education schools and special education units attached to regular schools. A unit is a special class attached to the mainstream school that caters for learners with disabilities for part of the school day. Under this kind of arrangement, children receive specialised teaching from special teachers. At times, children with disabilities can join their peers in certain activities depending on individuals' abilities for example, music, dance and worship. The theory behind a unit is that it facilitates social interaction between the disabled and the non disabled which in turn enables the disabled to gain valuable experiences and skills necessary in everyday living activities. When managed effectively, special unit provision is ideally placed to promote effective learning and inclusive learning.

Many African countries, including Zambia have pledged to address special education issues by formulating policies such as mainstreaming, family, community or social rehabilitation, and by showing the desire to give concrete meaning to the idea of equalising education opportunities for all children irrespective of their physical and mental conditions (Govinder,2009). Despite this interest, the dreams of the majority of children with special educational needs are a far cry from the desired policies or from the educationally correct attitudes and provisions. In spite of the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education committing itself to providing adequate special education provisions to special units and special schools, the quality of education provision particularly in special units remains unknown.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Although the Ministry of Education has committed itself to providing quality education to children with special educational needs through supply of trained and qualified teachers, use of a suitable curriculum, provision of appropriate teaching and learning materials, management, regular monitoring of schools by standards officers, good learning environment, much remains unknown on the quality of special education provision in Zambia particularly in special education units. The study therefore, sought to explore the extent to which quality of special education needs provision were being provided in special education units.

1.4 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the extent to which quality special educational needs was provided in special education units.

1.5 Objectives

1.5.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to establish the extent to which instructional materials, human resources and facilities were available in special education units.

1.5.2 Specific objectives

The study was guided by the following study objectives:

1. To assess the quality of special educational needs provision in special education units,
2. To assess the quality of management at individual school level of the provision for pupils in the special education unit.
3. To determine the roles of Standards Officers in ensuring quality special education provisions in units,
4. To assess the kind of support units received from stakeholders in ensuring provision of quality education.

1.6. Research questions

1.6.1 General question

To what extent were instructional materials, human resources, and facilities available in special education units?

1.6.2 Specific questions

The study was facilitated by the following specific research questions:

1. What is the quality of special educational needs provision in special units?

2. What quality practices of management are demonstrated at individual school level in special educational needs provision for pupils in units?
3. What are the roles of Standards Officers in quality special education provisions in units?
4. What kind of support do units receive from stakeholders?

1.7 Significance of the study

It is hoped that the findings of this study may be used by the government, head teachers, teachers and the community. The findings may also help schools where units are to map out effective strategies to improve functioning and running of special education units. The District Education Board Secretaries, head teachers and Education Standards Officers may use the findings of this research to improve ways of enhancing quality special education provision in special education units.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The study focused on eleven (11) special education units attached to main stream schools. Three (3) special education units were in Muchinga Province while the other eight (8) units from Northern Province.

1.9 Limitations of the study

The study was limited to special education units in Muchinga and Northern Provinces respectively. Data was collected from only eleven special education units and eight districts from Muchinga and Northern Provinces. The study was primarily limited by its small sample size. Therefore, the results of the study may not be generalized as the prevailing status in all special education units country wide.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

The humanistic theory as proposed by Jean Jacques Rousseau (2011) was used as a basic theoretical frame work in this study. The theory implies the fostering of the following three fundamental tenets. The first is philosophical, consisting of a conception of man and woman as an autonomous and rational beings and a fundamental respect for all humans by virtue of being endowed with freedom of will, rational thinking, moral conscience, imaginative and creative powers. The second tenet is socio-political, consisting of a universal ethics of human equality, reciprocity, and solidarity and a political order of pluralistic, just and humane democracy and the

third tenet is pedagogical which focuses on commitment to assist all individuals to realise and perfect their potentialities and to enjoy as fully as possible all the goods that make a human life as good as it can be.

The theory specifies that the ideas that human nature is essentially good, that individual behavior is autonomous and that everyone is unique: that all people are born equal and subsequent inequality is a product of circumstances in which they find themselves and that reality for each person is defined by himself or herself. Learners, for humanists, are at the centre of 'meaning-making', which implies a relativist interpretation of quality. Education, strongly influenced by learner actions, is judged central to developing the potential of the child (Darling, 1989).

The purpose of education for humanists is developing every human being to his or her maximum potential under the guidance of the instructor. Teachers have therefore, the task of ensuring that all learners benefit from the learning process. Education methods should be drafted according to the learners' interest and developmental level. Learners are unique and have therefore different needs to be met by the teacher.

In addition, a child learns because he or she is inwardly driven, and derives his or her reward from the sense of achievement that having learned something really affords. Intrinsic rewards are rewards from within oneself, rather like a satisfaction of a need. Furthermore, the humanistic approach, clearly states that education is really about creating a need within the child, or instilling within the child self-motivation. This form of education is known as child-centered, and is typified by the children taking responsibility for their education and owning their learning.

Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training (2011) in line with this theory affirms that providing quality education includes: using child-centered teaching approaches in well managed classrooms and schools and skillful assessment of approaches to facilitate learning and reduce disparities with sufficient teacher pupil time.

1.11 Operational definitions

Assessment: a process of identifying a child's strengths and weaknesses through measuring his or her ability by means of in-class assignment or a process of obtaining information that is used for making decisions on pupils, curricula, programme and education policy.

Curriculum: A prescribed programme of study for learners in institutions of learning.

Disability: restriction or limitation in ability to perform given tasks arising from impairment or condition.

Education Standards Officers or Inspectors: officials of the Ministry of Education charged with the responsibility of identifying and providing feedback on strengths and weaknesses in educational institutions so that these institutions can improve quality of education provided

Individualised Educational Programme: a written plan agreed upon by the I.E.P team describing the special educational needs of the pupils with disabilities or

Inclusive classes: an arrangement in which pupils with special educational needs learn together with other pupils in ordinary classroom.

Individuals with Exceptional Needs : legislative term for students with special needs.

Mainstreaming: a term referring to the time during which a special education learner participates in chronologically age-appropriate regular education activities, either academic or non-academic (e.g. math and reading or lunch, recess, and art).

Related Services: transport, corrective and other support services such as Speech Pathologists, Psychological services, Physiotherapy, Audiology and Social Services.

Special Education Unit: a special class or designated room equipped with special teaching and learning resources for children with special educational needs within a regular school.

Special Educational Needs: The provision of special means of access to the curriculum through special equipment, facilities or resources, modifications of the physical environment or specialist teaching.

Stakeholder: A stakeholder is anyone who has a “stake” in a program. Some examples of Stakeholders in MOE include donors, pupils, parents, policy makers, journalists/media and the private sector.

1.12 Summary

This chapter was organized into the following parts: introduction, contextual background of the study, Statement of the problem, purpose of the study, general objective of the study, specific objectives of the study, research questions, and significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, operational definitions and the theoretical framework.

Every child has a right to quality education. This is so because education is perceived as a means of promoting peace, democracy and economic growth as well as improving health and reducing poverty. Zambia is a signatory to a number of international conventions on the right to education for all children including those with special educational needs. In responding to the international call, in the year 2000 Zambia introduced the Free Primary Education and Every Child to School policies to increase access to education. While the Zambian government has made efforts aimed at ensuring access to education for children with special educational needs, the quality of education being provided especially in special units is not known.

Although the Ministry of Education has committed itself to providing quality education to children with special educational needs through the supply of trained and qualified teachers, use of suitable curriculum, provision of appropriate teaching and learning materials, management, good learning environment, regular monitoring of schools by standards officers, much remains unknown on the quality of special educational needs provision in Zambia particularly in special units hence this study. The objective of the study was therefore to investigate the extent to which quality of special educational needs was provided in special education unit.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the relevant literature on the study topic an assessment of quality special educational needs provision in special education units. The literature has been presented in line with the set objectives.

2.2 Quality Education

The vision of the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education is to provide ‘quality lifelong education for all, which is accessible, inclusive, equitable and relevant to individual, national, and global, needs’ (Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education, 2011:58). Therefore, the education system should enhance acquisition of knowledge and skills, attitudes and value system. In addition, the quality of education could be judged by the extent to education outcomes are relevant to the needs of society and expectations such as productivity and improved ways of doing things at individual and societal level.

The Ministry of Education Policy “Educating Our Future” states that, “Every school is expected to be characterized by the pursuit of excellence in the intellectual and personal development of its pupils.”(MoE.1996). Development of excellence in the pupils does not come by accident or by chance, but has to be worked on, it has to be nurtured. Bishop (1989) states that nurturing in education is the process of promoting the development of the child in a school, through the quality of teaching and learning that is conducted there. Excellence, on the other hand, means, quality of being good, to excel. Quality teaching and learning process is expected to enable learners to acquire new knowledge and skills and develop to their maximum potential. It is important, therefore, that the teaching and learning process that goes on in a school is of quality and constantly monitored, in order, to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching strategies, as well as the level of pupil learning achievement.

Quality in education implies excellence, best practice, and competence, knowledgeable and qualified (UNESCO, 2003b). The product of a school or outcome of education should, therefore, be of high quality and high standard (Ashworth, 1982). Quality determines how much and how well children learn and the extent to which their education translates into a range of personal, social and developmental benefits.

The quality of education is seen as encompassing access, teaching and learning processes and outcomes in ways that are influenced both by context and by the range and quality of inputs available. It should be remembered that agreement about the objectives and aims of education will frame any discussion of quality and that such agreement embodies moral, political and epistemological issues that are frequently invisible or ignored. Other things being equal, the success of teaching and learning is likely to be strongly influenced by the resources made available to support the process and the direct ways in which these resources are managed Savolainen, and Kaikille (2000). It is obvious that schools without teachers, textbooks or learning materials will not be able to do an effective job. In that sense, resources are important for education quality. Inputs are enabling in that they underpin and are intrinsically interrelated to teaching and learning processes, which in turn affects the range and the type of inputs used and how effectively they are employed.

The teaching and learning process is closely nested within the support system of inputs and other contextual factors. Teaching and learning is the key arena for human development and change. It is here that the impact of curricula is felt, that teacher methods work well or not and that learners are motivated to participate and learn how to learn. The actual teaching and learning processes (as these occur in the classroom) include student time spent learning, assessment methods for monitoring student progress, styles of teaching, the language of instruction and classroom organization strategies (MESVTEE, 2011).

The outcomes of education should be assessed in the context of its agreed objectives. They are most easily expressed in terms of academic achievement (sometimes as test grades, but more usually and popularly in terms of examination performance), though ways of assessing creative and emotional development as well as changes in values, attitudes and behaviour have also been

devised. The determinants of education quality are analysed according to the extent to which variables from different dimensions result in improved learning outcomes (Coburn, 2003).

2.3 Indicators of Quality Education

As indicated earlier, quality in the provision of education involves use of a suitable curriculum, supply of trained and qualified teachers, appropriate teaching/learning materials, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers, regular monitoring and assessment of schools by Education Standards Officers, and a suitable learning environment (MoE, 2003). These are indicators of quality education and have been described below:

2.3.1 Use of a suitable curriculum

Curriculum in general has been identified as one of the key areas of focus in education worldwide. Curriculum is a vital aspect in the provision of quality education. According to Matafwali (2013) the need for a good curriculum at all levels is obvious; the curriculum is a navigational device that guides the personnel in the implementation of education policies.

A suitable curriculum includes the concepts, knowledge, competences, skills, attitudes and values relevant to the needs and aspirations of learners and society (MoE 1996; MoE 1999; MoE 2000). According to Farrell, (1997). a sound curriculum must; have appropriate content, be relevant to the short term and long term needs of learners and society, and in terms of both content and process be flexible enough to accommodate diversity and individual needs of learners. Indeed the ultimate goal of education should be preparation of all learners including those with special needs for social integration and all demands of adult life including employment (Casey, 1998). The components of a balanced curriculum should include literacy, numeracy, social, physical, self-care skills and vocational skills. In other words, the curriculum should be concerned with the learners' needs and aspirations such as those of the body (physical education, sport, performing art) as well as those of the mind (Concepts, literacy, numeracy, knowledge), affective (music, dance, creative arts) and social needs (hygiene, citizenship), moral (values, attitudes) and spiritual needs (living in harmony with self, with others, with supernatural).

It must be noted that one of the goals of special education is to enable all children with special educational needs to become productive members of the community by equipping them with

survival skills and relevant pre-vocational skills, to enhance their employment opportunities and to promote self reliance (Ainscow, 1994). The curriculum for students with severe disabilities emphasises functionality. Functional skills have applications in everyday life, home living and community use. These skills should be practiced in natural environments in the presence of peers without disability. This illustrates the point made in the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994) that curriculum should be adapted to children's needs, not vice versa. Schools should therefore provide curricula opportunities to suit children with different opportunities and interests. In the light of such concerns Farrell, (1997).) states that "making such curricula provision is a complex task... it requires that the concepts of curriculum breadth, balance and relevance are carefully considered and that progress is planned and measured in ways that truly reflect the development of the individual learner".

Despite government's awareness of the need to empower persons with disabilities and extensive knowledge that not all will follow an academic curriculum, an examination of school curricular shows that the content remain very academic in nature with no elements of vocational training. Thus the empowerment of children with special needs remains largely theoretical as these are most likely to drop out of the heavily academic oriented curriculum.

Casey (1998, 176) states that "After completing their primary education almost no further opportunities for skill development or training are available...There is no provision of specialised training for people with severe learning difficulties and intellectual disabilities." Casey further states that "young persons with disabilities have very few opportunities to secure vocational training...there is a shortage of training opportunities for the population as a whole." A small number of vocational training opportunities are provided by Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Curriculum planning for children with special educational needs must consider the future aspirations of children with special needs and have clear goals in mind. All pupils, particularly those with special educational needs, need access to a range of educational opportunities and genuine choice in the directions that their education may take. The most important point is that students will experience quality education in response to their needs (Savolainen and Kaikille, 2000).

2.3.2 Supply of trained and qualified teachers

It is widely believed that good teachers are critical to student learning. A large body of academic research has produced strong evidence that teacher quality is positively related to student performance (Chait, 2010). One of the major goals of the Education Policy is to raise the achievement of students who currently fail to meet grade-level proficiency standards. Since student achievement has been shown to be largely dependent on teacher quality, the policy seeks to improve achievement by setting higher minimum teacher quality requirements. Using trained and qualified teachers is another factor which determines the quality of education. In this regard, the essential competences required in every teacher are mastery of material that is to be taught, and skill in communicating that material to pupils (MoE 1996). Both aspects cover a great array of knowledge, understanding and skills that must become integral to every teacher. Neville and Allyson (1989) study found that qualified special education teachers were guided by the professional and ethical practice standards and required ongoing attention to legal matters, along with serious professional and ethical considerations. They further stated that special education teachers who had undergone training were usually engaged in professional activities and participated in learning communities and that benefited individuals with exceptional learning needs, their families, colleagues, and their own professional growth. Related to the issues raised above is the fact that teachers must be motivated. This motivation may take different forms; for example, providing teachers with adequate and appropriate teaching/learning materials, providing good conditions of service and salaries, and improving the learning environment.

Ferguson and Ladd (1996) contends that a quality teacher is one who has a positive effect on student learning and development through a combination of content mastery, command of a broad set of pedagogic skills, and communications/interpersonal skills. Quality teachers are life-long learners in their subject areas, teach with commitment, and are reflective upon their teaching practice. They transfer knowledge of their subject matter and the learning process through good communication, diagnostic skills, understanding of different learning styles and cultural influences, knowledge about child development, and the ability to marshal a broad array of techniques to meet student needs. They set high expectations and support students in achieving them. They establish an environment conducive to learning, and leverage available resources outside as well as inside the classroom (Chait, 2010).

2.3.3 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers

The set of qualifications-related issues under discussion are concerned with ensuring a certain level of quality for those who enter the teaching field. Professional development, on the other hand, focuses on improving the ongoing practice of teaching and learning for those already serving in the schools.. In order to impact student learning, professional development must first enhance teacher knowledge and skills, then create improved classroom teaching, which finally raises student achievement. Professional development can potentially serve a variety of purposes such as remediating weaknesses in the skills and knowledge of incoming teachers, keeping teachers up to date on emerging developments in the field, or addressing the needs of such specific student populations as English-language-learners or special education students. More is known about the effects of professional development on teacher practice than on its impact on student achievement (Savolainen, and Kaikille, 2000).

Teachers of children with special educational needs have generally had limited pre-service professional training catering for learners with special educational needs and thereafter have only restricted access to existing in-service courses in special education. Limitations placed on the professional training of teachers may have an effect on their ability to develop and implement curricula appropriate to the needs and abilities of the learners. Class teachers and subject teachers in the mainstream school also need increased access, both at pre-service and in-service level to professional training in the education of children with special educational needs.

Besides teacher training, quality is also addressed through the teachers' continued professional development. This implies that there should be in – service programmes organised for teachers to enhance their competence and performance. These could be short or long term in nature. This strategy is supported by the (MoE.1996) as follows: Teacher education is a continuing process that must be extended throughout the individual's years of actual teaching. The foundation laid in the pre-service programme may be sound and adequate as a start, but it is not sufficient for life. As with other professionals, teachers have a responsibility, to themselves and to their profession, to deepen their knowledge, extend their professional skills, and keep themselves up-to-date on major developments affecting their profession. At school level professional development is done through teacher group meetings and supervised by the District Resource

Centres. Gaylord (1989) noted that appropriate teacher training for the teachers of children with special educational needs is important and should be a continuous process if the needs of children with special educational needs are to be addressed.

2.3.4 Appropriate teaching and learning materials

The availability of age appropriate teaching resources and learning materials for use in the education of children with special educational needs has been identified as an area of concern.

Teaching and learning materials can only be termed appropriate if they both meet the goals of the curriculum and assist the teacher in achieving set lesson objectives. In this way, the choice of suitable teaching/learning materials ensures quality of education delivery (Ashworth 1982). Most primary schools and in particular special education units do not have adequate teaching and learning materials like books, rulers, maps, specialized equipment, charts and many other resources needed for the provision of education. Some special schools have developed materials and resource themselves or have successfully adapted commercial programmes for use with their children. There is a need to develop structures whereby this expertise can be shared. Carmody (2004), states that education without resources is like education without a future. In this case, Carmody is alleging that quality and sustainable education cannot continue or be given without any formal documentation or resources to back it up. The use of teaching aids is very important in as far as quality special educational needs provision is concerned because they make learning concrete and meaningful. According to Bishop, (1985) the use of visual aids such as maps, charts, models, real objects, film strips, diagrams, pictures would make the teacher's verbal descriptions concrete. In addition, meaning is usually attached when learning involves aids as these are supplementary devices to learning. Quality special educational needs provision in special units therefore, requires adequate Lay (1976) asserted that In addition to regular supply of textbooks, exercise books, pens and pencils there is need to equip the special units with special material and equipment. These include educational games, and craft. It also includes play therapy equipment such as climbing frames, swings, sea-saw for gross motor development. He further stated that all special units should have material for pre-vocational skills, such as gardening, sewing, cookery and weaving. Appropriate materials and equipment should therefore, be supplied to pupils with special educational needs such as games for finger manipulation, for example plasticine, dominoes and braille board, for the visually impaired.

There is need for educational materials at all levels of education in Zambia. The government and other individual sectors need to improve in the procurement of book and other educational materials in order to improve the standard of the educational system. Therefore, there is need for teaching resources at all levels of education delivery and in particular special units in both rural and urban areas in order to facilitate the teaching and learning processes for both the teacher and the pupil respectively.

2.3.5 A suitable learning environment

A learning environment can be considered to be suitable if it has fairly modest or decent structures, classrooms with suitable materials as well as facilities for the display of pupils' work, enough space to both accommodate the maximum number of pupils with special educational needs, and allow for the use of pupil-centred methodologies with the stress on group work, projects and guided discovery (MoE 1996). There should be good sanitary conditions (water and toilets), and general surroundings must be clean. These conditions contribute to the provision of good quality education. The United Nations 'Standard Rules on the Equalisation of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities' (1993) has been adopted by most countries but issues of access and quality are still largely ignored by planners and development practitioners. The UN rules aim to secure government commitment to granting equal rights and opportunities to people with disabilities. Accessibility is a key target area for guaranteeing equal participation: changes in the physical environment would enable children with disabilities to enter school buildings, use facilities, move about in the school with ease, have access to information, and know what services are available to them. Improving access to the physical environment results in greater social equity: it enables children with disabilities to participate in social, economic and religious activities on the same level as non-disabled children, resulting in a more inclusive society

2.3.6 Individualised Education Planning (IEP)

All children have an entitlement to a broad and balanced curriculum, which is differentiated to enable children to understand the purpose of learning activities, experience levels of understanding and rates of progress that bring about success and achievement. The use of a range of strategies to differentiate work helps in meeting all children's needs. All children identified as

special educational needs must have an individualised education plan (IEP) that is designed to detail the services that they will need.” Indeed its presence can be used as a measure to determine the quality of a school’s provision for special needs pupils (Neville and Allyssn, 1989).

The IEP may specify many things but it should certainly detail the next steps to be taken in the education of the child, specify who is responsible for helping the child achieve that next goal, and how achievement will be measured. Adams, (1986) notes that it is often stated that an IEP should be SMART - specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timescale - though the author herself cautions against inflexibility. An IEP needs to be an integral part of the school’s overall arrangement for planning, assessment and record keeping. Good practice should see collaboration between staff and the pupil, and with the parents. IEPs are used to identify and allow children to make progress and experience success. All children with SEN in school are supposed to have IEPs. All pupils, wherever possible, are to be supported to enable them to share the same experiences as their peers. This support occurs, largely within the classroom. However, at times support is given to individuals or groups of small children outside the classroom by a teacher or teaching assistant (Neville and Allyson 1999).

2.4 Investing in school management

Special education presents one of the major challenges facing school leaders in this era of comprehensive school reform. Today, schools must provide children with disabilities appropriate access to the general curriculum and effective instructional support. Neville and Allyson (1989) contended that if there is one magic bullet, it is the effectiveness of investments in the quality of school (and district) management. Investments in teachers, classrooms and books are required but these would be more effective if the Ministry of Education at the same time succeeds in raising the quality of school and district management. Investing in school management is one of the most cost-effective methods to improve the quality of education. Effective school management can make the difference. A head teacher with well-developed management skills, supported by an effective district manager and inspectorate, creates a stimulating learning environment, holds the teachers accountable and reduces teacher and pupil absenteeism (Fullan, 2001).

Strengthening management does not only mean investing in the management of the school, but also investing in the district management and the inspectorate. Investments in books, classrooms, teachers and teacher training are more effective if the school is well-managed and investing in the quality of management means training, establishing an effective support structure at the district level and an effective inspection apparatus.

Educational leadership is ranked as the number one key variable associated with effective schools, but the head teacher of an effective school must be the leader for all programs within the school--including special education services. Support from head teachers has a “strong direct and indirect effects on virtually all critical aspects of teaching and learning. Head teachers, however, often feel unprepared for their roles in the administration of special programs (Bowel, 2004).

The leadership role of head teachers is crucial for improved education for learners with disabilities. In many cases schools will be led by inexperienced leaders without any practical expertise when it comes to special education. Powell (1992) claimed that head teachers were unaware that learners not only must meet eligibility criteria for placement, but must also be in need of the service. Head teachers are overwhelmed by the number, diversity, and severity of children labelled “special education.” They are also unaware of procedures to be followed when disciplining students with disabilities.

A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all learners by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community. Lack of special education preparation for school head teachers is challenging their ability to serve all learners appropriately. School management must be prepared to lead in all administrative areas, including special education, in order to reduce the separateness that has come to exist between general and special education and to create instructional programs that meet the needs of all the learners (Bishop, 1989).

Effective school leaders must understand how to mobilize their communities to tackle challenging issues and confront problems that have not been addressed successfully. By placing

effective student learning as the primary focus for all improvement efforts, head teachers need to recognise their responsibility for the education of all students. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

2.5 Other factors contributing to quality in special educational needs provision

2.5.1 The involvement of professionals and other agencies in special needs education

A range of professionals, such as psychologists, speech and language therapists, nurses, occupational therapists and physiotherapists, have an overlapping and interdependent role to play in the education and management of students with special educational needs. Pupils will often need support from such agencies as health boards, voluntary organisations, religious orders, and training and employment agencies. It is essential that Government departments, statutory agencies and voluntary organisations, all of which have an important contribution to make to the education and training of students with special educational needs, should coordinate their efforts to support such students (Mercer and Mercer, 1993)

Many children with special educational needs have a range of difficulties and the achievement of educational objectives is likely to be delayed without partnership in the child's education between all concerned. Thus support for children with special educational needs requires a concerted approach from health care professionals, social services departments, specialist support services and other providers of support services. If effective provision is to be made for children with special educational needs, it is essential that schools, health services, voluntary organisations and other agencies work very closely with each other and with parents. The child with a special educational need is likely to develop and make progress if the school where the child is and other stake holders work in partnership. Some pupils enter primary school with specialist support services specified on their Record of Needs, but in most instances these are identified at later stages. Generally, these specialists are peripatetic, although some may be based in larger special or primary schools. According to Tambull, (1982), head teachers should fulfil their responsibility to integrate the specialist professional contributions into educational programmes by:

1. agreeing, with each professional, arrangements to facilitate his or her work and that of the school,
2. providing information about the curriculum,
3. involving other professionals in the process of assessment,
4. ensuring that class teachers understand the roles of the specialists and the expectation of working together,
5. making time for class teachers and specialists to consult, with parents present when appropriate and
6. making arrangements for school staff to be guided and trained by specialists, as required.

Furthermore class teachers can get support and derive maximum benefit from the contribution of other specialists by:

1. specifying the nature of the professional guidance pupils require,
2. agreeing the priorities for individual pupils,
3. adjusting timetables to allow specialists to work with pupils when they are not distracted or missing important lessons,
4. reinforcing positive attitudes to the specialist support and
5. Integrating necessary specialist activities into the individual's work programme and reinforcing them.

According to Mercer and Mercer (1993) Collaboration at all levels facilitates the exchange of relevant information among professionals, (including health professionals,) and ensures continuity and progression in the learners' learning and pastoral care, including at key transition stages and when additional support is provided; members of support services provide much valued assistance in assessing and meeting pupils' special educational needs, particularly in providing additional information about individual needs and advice on effective ways of meeting them. A physiotherapist would help to improve individual programmes by demonstrating ways of encouraging good patterns of movement and by giving staff written guidance. An educational psychologist advises on ways of treating difficult behaviours. A speech and language therapist assesses the language of pupils and would work with groups on programmes to achieve specific objectives (Mercer and Mercer, 1993).

2.5.2 Parental involvement in the learning process

One of the strongest movements in special education recently has been that toward parental involvement practices. The current understanding is that the parents need to be placed at the center of any early intervention system and their goals and opinions addressed and honored (Turnbull, 1982). Gaining the family's trust is essential as professionals work to encourage parents to accept proven practices for their child. It is essential because the family is fundamental to the development of any child, with or without disabilities (Darling, 1989). Furthermore, the key is the ability of the parents or caregivers to relate to the child and to provide a responsive, caring environment. Most parents will provide the kind of environment their children need, and if a child is disabled, the parents will seek out professionals and learn desired methods of facilitating growth from them. Effective education authorities, schools and governing bodies consider and give guidance on the best ways of involving parents in their children's education. Arrangements are to be made covering the formal requirements to provide information about provisions in general about individual schools, to report on and discuss progress. It also involves parents in procedures related to recording and assessment of future needs, in addition to more informal measures which promote productive social relationships.

However, parents make a raft of assumptions about the way professionals work which impedes the effective involvement of parents as partners. Successful managers ensure that parents have identified points of contact that they are kept fully informed about all matters related to their children, that full account is taken of their views and that decisions are quickly followed by action (Edwards and Knight, 1994).

2.6 Monitoring and Evaluation

Zambia, like other countries have developed ways and means of monitoring the quality and standards of their education systems. In most cases, the monitoring process involves supervision by inspection of educational Institutions such as schools, colleges and other aspects of the education systems and the most common outcome of an inspection is a written report of the inspectors 'findings. The critical role of inspection as one of the dominant strategies for monitoring and improving the performance of education systems in schools cannot be over emphasized. Standards officers or inspectors contribute towards achieving the government's overall purpose and its strategic objectives of creating a smarter, healthier, wealthier, fairer and stronger Zambia (Coleman 1990).

Educating Our Future (1996), Zambia's National Policy on Education states that "the role of the inspectorate is to establish, evaluate and promote the highest standards of quality in education provision at all levels including special education units. Inspection is concerned with the improvement of standards and quality of education and should be an integral part of a school improvement program. According to Coleman (1990). in reflecting the practice of inspection by the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), Britain, a major purpose of inspection is 'to collect a range of evidence, match the evidence against statutory set of criteria, arrived at judgments known to the public. Maw (1996), in reflecting on the British Education (schools), Act 1992, noted that the role of inspection in Britain is to monitor the standards quality, efficiency, and ethos of the schools and inform the government and the general public on these matters.

In many countries including Zambia where inspectoral systems of supervision of schools are conducted, the responsibility for inspection lies with the Directorate of Standards and Evaluation. In Zambia, inspection of schools is a function over the years that has been entrusted to the Ministry Of Education in accordance with the provision of the 'Education Act, 1966 and Education Act 2011' which empowers the Minister of Education to promote the education of the people of Zambia. According to these Acts, the management and general control of the school system, in particular, is the responsibility of the Ministry of Education (Ministry of Education, 2011). The Education Acts further empowers the Minister of Education to appoint school

Inspectors or standards officers with authority to enter and inspect any school or any place at which it is reasonably suspected that a school is being conducted at any time with or without notice, and to report to the Minister with respect to the school or any aspect thereof (Ministry of Education, 2011).

2.6.1 Roles of standards officers in ensuring quality in special units.

The quality of education delivery can also depend on regular monitoring and assessment of schools. In Zambia, this is done by Education Standards Officers (i.e., Inspectors of Schools). Their responsibilities are summarised in the quotation below (MoE 1996) their principal concern is with improving teacher effectiveness and school organisation. As disseminators of good practice, standards officers stimulate teachers to examine their lesson preparation and follow, through their teaching strategies, the way they are developing or using curriculum materials, how they evaluate pupils, and how they organise the teaching session. They also advise school heads on such issues as timetabling, the effective use of teachers, and providing good leadership to all in the school.

Aiyepeka, (1987) states that the reasons for conducting inspection and monitoring is to have an overview of the quality of education based on agreed all round performance indicators of the performance of an educational institution (benchmarks) and to report back to the educational institutions to enable them plan improvement strategies, specifically; the reasons for inspection are;

1. Identify strengths and weaknesses so that schools may improve the quality of education they provide
2. ensure effective administration and management of education in schools
3. assess the teaching and learning in schools
4. improve feedback in the education system
5. create a climate for constructive change to facilitate curriculum development and its implementation
6. ensure that schools are provided with adequate resources
7. provide guidance and counseling on general professional matters
8. conduct needs assessment and address the needs appropriately

In Zambia, standards officers have an important role to play in ensuring that quality provision of education is enhanced in all schools. Ministry of Education (1997) states the following as some of the roles and functions of Standards officers:

1. To ensure that all teachers and lecturers at basic school level are inspected at least once per year.
2. To ensure that all schools and colleges are inspected at least three times a year.
3. To ensure that the recommendations made by the standards officers after inspections are carried out by the teachers, head, principals and education board authorities.

The standards assessment of schools is one of the methods of improving the quality of education. It is therefore, important for standards officers to help schools to improve the learning capabilities of pupils by paying regular and properly planned visits to all schools. According to Beeby (1966) it is through regular visits that standards officers can keep the thumb on the pulse of the school system, ensuring progress and improvement in the day-to-day education of children and proper and purposeful utilization of public funds. Standards officers are first and foremost advisors to teachers and school head teachers. They are expected to provide, by every possible means concrete and constructive advice to teachers and head teachers so that the quality of education may be improved. The attitudes and approaches of standards officers can win the respect and confidence of teachers so that they are encouraged and stimulated to improve their work (Kalabula, 2007).

Whilst in many countries the total number of teachers in the schools may have increased, there has been no corresponding increase in the inspectional and supervising staff (UNESCO, 2006). Without adequate supervision and administrative staff to keep pace with a rapidly expanding education system it is not possible to maintain satisfactory standards. There is an identified need for both in-service and pre-service training of standards officers, teachers, and head teachers in matters regarding the best practices of school monitoring. Wanga (1988) noted that there was need for a thorough in-service training of standards officers in the principles and techniques of objective supervision and evaluation and in procedures of fostering self evaluation by teachers.

It can be seen then that the development of Special Education in Zambia, as in many developing countries, was initiated by non-governmental organisations. It is also evident that there is policy to indicate good intentions by government to make provision available for the disabled. However the lack of implementation of these policies is reported by many who have done work in this area (Zindi 1997). This observation leads one to conclude that Zambia, like many other developing countries, been stronger on rhetoric than it has on practice.

2.7 Summary

This chapter was organised into five main parts namely; quality education, indicators of quality education, indicators of quality education, investing in school management, factors contributing to quality special educational needs provision and monitoring and evaluation.

The quality of education could be judged by the extent to education outcomes are relevant to the needs of society and expectations such as productivity and improved ways of doing things at individual and societal level. The Ministry of Education Policy “Educating Our Future” states that, “Every school is expected to be characterized by the pursuit of excellence in the intellectual and personal development of its pupils Quality teaching and learning process is expected to enable learners to acquire new knowledge and skills and develop to their maximum potential. It is important, therefore, that the teaching and learning process that goes on in a school is of quality and constantly monitored, in order, to evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching strategies, as well as the level of pupil learning achievement.

Quality in the provision of special educational needs involves use of a suitable curriculum, supply of trained and qualified teachers, appropriate teaching/learning materials, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers, regular monitoring and assessment of schools by Education Standards Officers, and a suitable learning environment.

Investments in teachers, classrooms and books are required but these would be more effective if the Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education at the same time succeeds in raising the quality of school and district management. Investing in school management is one of the most cost-effective methods to improve the quality of education Special education presents one of the major challenges facing school leaders in this era of

comprehensive school reform. Today, schools must provide children with disabilities appropriate access to the general curriculum and effective instructional support. If there is one magic bullet, it is the effectiveness of investments in the quality of school (and district) management.

A range of professionals, such as psychologists, speech and language therapists, nurses, occupational therapists and physiotherapists, have an overlapping and interdependent role to play in the education and management of students with special educational needs. Pupils will often need support from such agencies as health boards, voluntary organisations, religious orders, and training and employment agencies. In addition, One of the strongest movements in special education recently has been that toward parental involvement practices. The current understanding is that the parents need to be placed at the center of any early intervention system and their goals and opinions addressed and honored. Gaining the family's trust is essential as professionals work to encourage parents to accept proven practices for their child. It is essential because the family is fundamental to the development of any child, with or without disabilities. Furthermore; the key is the ability of the parents or caregivers to relate to the child and to provide a responsive, caring environment. Most parents will provide the kind of environment their children need, and if a child is disabled, the parents will seek out professionals and learn desired methods of facilitating growth from them.

The quality of education delivery depends on regular monitoring and assessment of schools. In Zambia, this is done by Education Standards Officers. The standards assessment of schools is one of the methods of improving the quality of education. It is therefore, important for standards officers to help schools to improve the learning capabilities of pupils by paying regular and properly planned visits to all schools. It is through regular visits that standards officers can keep the thumb on the pulse of the school system, ensuring progress and improvement in the day-to-day education of children and proper and purposeful utilization of public funds. Standards officers are first and foremost advisors to teachers and school head teachers. They are expected to provide, by every possible means concrete and constructive advice to teachers and head teachers so that the quality of education may be improved.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used in this study. It constitutes the research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations

3.2 Research Design

A descriptive survey design was used in conducting this research. In this study both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in data collection and analysis. A survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. Descriptive survey seeks to describe the state of affairs as it exists and can be used when collecting information about peoples' attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues (Tromp and Kombo, 2006). A survey usually involves collecting data by interviewing a sample of people selected to accurately represent the population under study. Therefore, on the basis of the above definitions, the researcher chose a descriptive survey design over other designs because it was going to permit him to collect facts and study the relationships of one set of facts to another and be able to likely produce quantifiable and if possible generalisable conclusions.

3.3 Target Population

The target population of this study comprised teachers, head teachers and pupils from 11 selected schools. Respectively standards officers from Mungwi, Kasama, Mpulungu, Mbala, Mpika and Nakonde and Kaputa districts were also part of the target population.

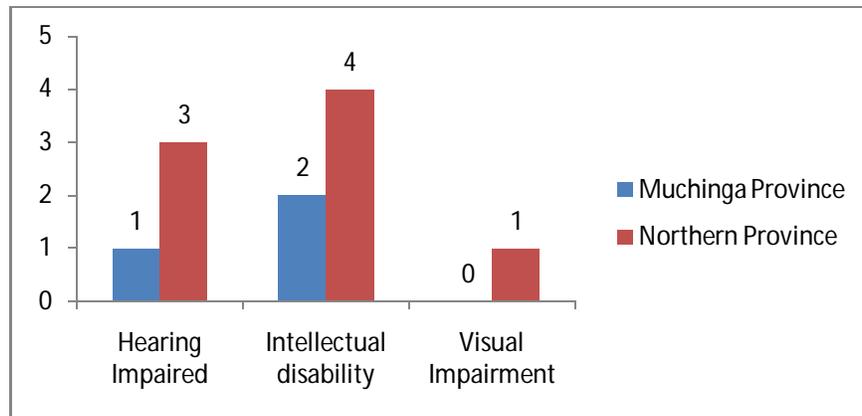
3.4 Sample Size

Sample size refers to the number of participants selected from the universe to constitute a desired sample (Bless and Craig, 1995). The total sample comprised one hundred sixteen participants, consisting twenty one standards officers, eleven head teachers, forty teachers and forty four pupils.

3.4.1 Type of disabilities

Figure 3.1 below shows the distribution of the type of disabilities that are catered for in special education units in the two provinces.

Figure 3.1: Distribution of special units by province



The figure above shows that out of the 11 special education units in Muchinga and Northern provinces four were for the hearing impaired pupils, one for visually impaired pupils and six were for the intellectually disabled pupils. Muchinga Province had one special unit for the hearing impaired, two for the intellectually disabled and none for the visually impaired learners, while Northern Province had three special units for the hearing impaired, four for the intellectually disabled and one for the visually impaired.

3.5 Sampling Procedure

3.5.1 Sampling procedure for determining participating schools

Purposive sampling was used to select the eleven schools that participated in the study

3.5.2 Sampling procedure for selecting respondents

Purposive sampling was also used to select, standards officers, head teachers and teachers that participated in the study. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that specific groups were

represented according to the researcher's discretion. This method helps target a group which is suitable to bring out rich information related to the central issue being studied for in-depth analysis (Tromp and Kombo, 2009).

3.5.3 Sampling procedure for selecting pupils

A simple random sampling was applied to select pupils in the study. This approach is appropriated as it prevents bias (Lay, 1976). The simple random technique had the advantage of allowing each pupil an equal chance of being selected for the sample and was a better way of obtaining a more representative sample of respondents for this kind of the study. In addition pupils were selected as respondents because they are also stakeholders in as far as quality of special educational needs provision was concerned.

Class registers were used in the selection of pupils. The researcher assigned numbers to all the names of pupils that appeared in the register. Thereafter, each number was written on a separate piece of paper. The pieces of paper were put in a box and a raffle was conducted by the researcher. The pieces of paper were randomly drawn from the box for each school that participated in the study. This process was consistently conducted in all the eleven schools that were sampled.

3.6 Research Instruments

3.6.1. Questionnaire for standards officers and teachers

A questionnaire was designed by the researcher to solicit an in-depth data from selected standards officers and teachers. The closed ended items in the questionnaire gave an advantage to the researcher to process data using the data processing system on a computer to generate the findings of the study. (Tromp and Kombo, 2009) suggests that in the use of a questionnaire, respondents have adequate time to give well thought of answers and a questionnaire is free from bias of the researcher. The questionnaire further enhanced free expression of unique attitudes by respondents, ensured maximum participation and was more economical in terms of time. Questionnaires for standards officers and teachers addressed appropriateness of the curriculum, availability of qualified teachers, teaching and learning materials in special units, the nature of physical facilities for learners with special educational needs, as well as monitoring of special units by standards officers and head teachers.

3.6.2. Interview guide for pupils

It was found necessary to use the interview guide to collect data from the pupils.. The questions on the interview were semi-structured to permit the respondents provide the much needed information in their own words. (Tromp and Kombo, 2009). (Tromp and Kombo, 2009).states that an interview has an advantage over the questionnaire because the language of the interview can be adapted to the ability or educational level of the person being interviewed and such misinterpretation concerning questions can be avoided.

3.6.3. Interview guide for head teachers

Interviews were used for data collection from head teachers. The use of interviews to generate data in qualitative research is widely recognised, (Powell 1992). Semi structured interviews were used with school head teachers. It is worth explaining the reasons for the use of Semi structured interviews. Its main advantage over the structured interview or the questionnaire was that it gave more latitude to respondents and interviewers and allowed them to explore issues emerging from the research. Interviews can be built around the emerging response of each interviewee rather than being bound by pre-decided issues.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

Primary data was collected through face to face interviews with the respondents. During the interviews, the researcher took notes based on the conversation between the researcher and the respondents. The interviews were used to get opinions from head teachers on the quality of special educational needs provision in special units. The questionnaires were administered to get data from Standards officers and teachers on the state of affairs. Focused group discussions were used to collect data from pupils. Secondary data was obtained from official records, reports, internet, dissertations, and books available in the libraries and from organizations such as UNDP and UNESCO where data related to the topic was obtained. The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education Headquarters Documentation Center was also used to collect data from.

3.8. Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using both qualitative and quantitative methods. Qualitative data which was collected from open-ended items in the interviews was analyzed using content analysis, as

themes and sub- themes that were emerging from the data. The quantitative data collected from closed-ended questionnaire was analysed by the use of descriptive statistics in form of percentages and frequencies. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to enhance the analysis. Computer generated tables of frequencies and percentages were used in describing variables which were presented in the form of tables, pie charts and figures. This allowed objective interpretation for valid generalisation, conclusion and recommendations for future studies. Qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis.

3.9. Ethical Consideration

Observing ethical standards during the research process ethical concerns is key in the provision of a pleasant atmosphere required for participants to answer questions with free and open minds.. This approach eliminates threats from their psychological well being. To facilitate smooth collection of data as per requirement in research, permission to conduct this study was sought from relevant educational authorities. The researcher explained to the respondents the aim of the research to all the participants and the need for their involvement before the commencement of the interviews. Participants were assured that the information obtained would be used solely for the purpose of research. The participants were also assured of high confidentiality to the information they provided. An aspect of confidentiality in research raises confidence in the participants and increases their level of participation (Lay, 1976). . In addition, the pupils had not known the researcher well. Pupils were told before the interview that they would be interviewed about the quality of special educational needs provision in the unit. They were assured that whatever they would discuss with the researcher would be treated confidentially.

Summary

The chapter was organized into the following main parts: research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedure, research instruments, data collection procedure, data analysis and ethical consideration.

A descriptive survey design was used in conducting this research. Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in data collection and analysis. A survey is a method of collecting information by interviewing or administering a questionnaire to a sample of individuals. Descriptive survey seeks to describe the state of affairs as it exists and can be used

when collecting information about peoples' attitudes, opinions, habits or any of the variety of education or social issues.

The target population of this study comprised teachers, head teachers and pupils from 11 selected schools. Respectively standards officers were selected from District Education Boards.

Sample size refers to the number of participants selected from the universe to constitute a desired sample. The total sample comprised one hundred sixteen participants, consisting twenty one standards officers, eleven head teachers, forty teachers and forty four pupils.

Purposive sampling was used to select the eleven schools as well as standards officers, head teachers and teachers that participated in the study. Purposive sampling was used to ensure that specific groups were represented according to the researcher's discretion. This method helps target a group which is suitable to bring out rich information related to the central issue being studied for in-depth analysis.

A simple random sampling was applied to select pupils in the study. This approach is appropriated as it prevents bias. The simple random technique had the advantage of allowing each pupil an equal chance of being selected for the sample and was a better way of obtaining a more representative sample of respondents for this kind of the study.

A questionnaire was used to solicit an in-depth data from selected standards officers and teachers while interview guides were used to collect data from head teachers and pupils.

Qualitative data which was collected from open-ended items in the interviews was analyzed using content analysis, as themes and sub-themes that were emerging from the data. The quantitative data collected from closed-ended questionnaire was analysed by the use of descriptive statistics in form of percentages and frequencies. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to enhance the analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study aimed at an assessment of quality special educational needs provision in special education units according to the objectives of the study. The objectives were to: establish the quality of special educational needs provision in special units; assess the quality of management at individual school level of the provision for pupils in the special education unit; determine the roles of Standards Officers in quality special education provisions in units; and assess the kind of support units received from stakeholders.

4.2 Professional qualifications of respondents

Teachers, head teachers and standards officers were asked to indicate their highest professional qualification. Table 4.1 below shows their responses.

Table 4.1: Highest professional qualifications of respondents

Qualification	Status of respondent		
	Teachers	Head teachers	Standards Officers
Certificate	17	1	-
Diploma	21	8	1
Degree	2	2	18
Masters	-	-	2
Total	40	11	21

The table above shows that out of 40 teachers who participated in the study, 2 had degrees, 21 had diplomas followed by 17 who had certificates as their highest professional qualification. The table further shows that among the head teachers 2 had degrees while the majority 8 had a diplomas and 1 had a certificate. While among the Standards Officers 2 had masters degree,18 had first degrees and 1 had their a diploma.

4.3 Indicators of quality special educational needs provision

4.3.1 Type of curriculum

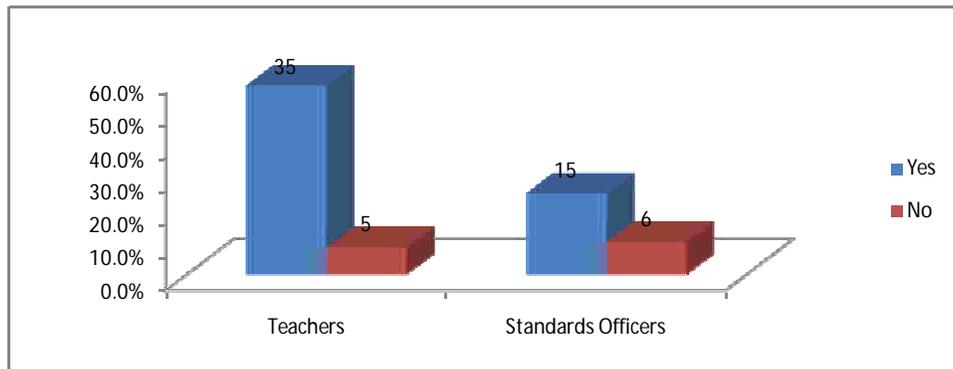
As regards to the type of curriculum, the majority of head teachers stated that special units used the general curriculum for primary schools. Head teacher of Makasa primary school reported that although units used the same general curriculum for primary schools it was modified to suit the learners with special educational needs. However, head teacher of Chila primary school said:

“to be fair and frank, we do not have any specific curriculum and that the issue of curriculum modification is one that is being looked at”. Mbulu primary school head teacher also stated that: *“ teachers from the special unit only picked bits of the general curriculum and tried to modify it to suit the needs of learners”*.

4.3.2 Relevance of the curriculum

Teachers and Standards Officers were asked to state whether the curriculum offered were appropriate. Their responses were as shown in table 4.2 below.

Table 4.1: Whether the curriculum offered was appropriate



The figure above shows that the majority of the teachers, 35 and Standards Officers, 15 indicated that the curriculum being used in units did not meet the needs of children with special educational needs. However, five of the teachers and six of the Standards Officers said that that the curriculum offered in units met the needs of learners. In an interview with head teachers, head teacher of Kaputa Primary school said:

“Curriculum relevance can be looked at in terms of how well the curriculum addresses the age appropriate needs of learners and how much it prepares them for life. Thus Pupils in the unit were grouped according to ability and that pupil ages ranged from 5-21” in order for the curriculum to be responsive to their individual needs.

When asked whether grouping pupils according to ability was effective, the head teacher from Kaputa Primary school responded that:

‘Not really, because you find that the child of say 12 is operating a mental age of a grade one. If you group them according to ability you will be able to see where he. or she falls and place them accordingly. But it is a problem because he gets there he sees that he is older than other pupils and he gets frustrated and starts the unacceptable behaviour which is not good’.

When asked to comment on the appropriateness of the curriculum and what is being taught head teacher from Musakanya special units stated said:

“We have seen that it is not appropriate, it is not giving life skills that the children in units really need. They are not getting the best skills and we want them to get the best skills. When they reach the age of sixteen, they still have not finished the work they did from grade 3... Our worry is when to let them leave School”.

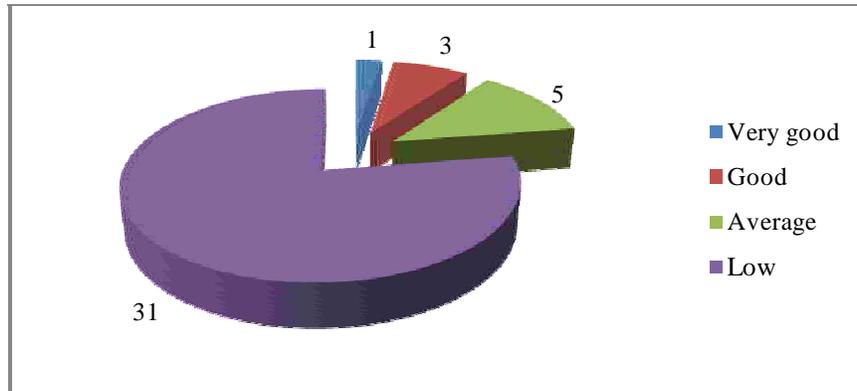
The majority of teachers also argued that an examination-oriented curriculum, fed to those who would not be taking the exam as well as to those who would, was seen as being a major problem in the curriculum.

However, interviews with pupils from six units under study stated that they felt uncomfortable learning side by side with small boys and that they preferred practical work such as cooking and knitting and not just sitting in class.

4.3.3 Competence in literacy and numeracy

Teachers were asked to indicate the competency levels of learners in numeracy and literacy. Their reactions were as shown in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Learners competence in literacy and numeracy



The figure above shows that the majority of the teachers, 31 indicated that learners' competence in numeracy and literacy was low while five said it was average and three of the teachers indicated that it was good. Only one teacher said that learners' competence in numeracy and literacy was very good.

Chinsali primary school head teacher commented that;

“ the problem of illiteracy and numeracy was an issue not only with pupils in the special unit but also in the main stream classes. If reading and numeracy levels were low in the main stream what more in the special unit ”.

Another head teacher from Chilolwa primary school stated that:

“ the problem of illiteracy and numeracy was real in all schools and in particular in special units and that is why the school has developed a strategic plan for the four years(from 2012-2013) where strategies for improving literacy and numeracy at all levels have been identified such as intensifying of monitoring teaching and learning, procurement of text

books, improving on teacher preparedness, effecting remedial work and homework and continuous assessment”.

4.3.4 Reading and writing levels

Ten out of the eleven head teachers interviewed said that reading and writing levels of many pupils were low and that some pupils were simply practicing forming/ copying letters, others were writing short sentences. However, one head teacher stated that reading and writing levels for most of the learners in the unit were good. Pupils were able to read and write sentences in Braille. The majority of the units did not seem to provide enough reading opportunities for individual learners.

4.3.5 Numeracy

When pupils were interviewed about the challenges they faced, Some pupils confessed that they found even simpler sequences too hard. At a unit for the visually impaired one pupil stated that:

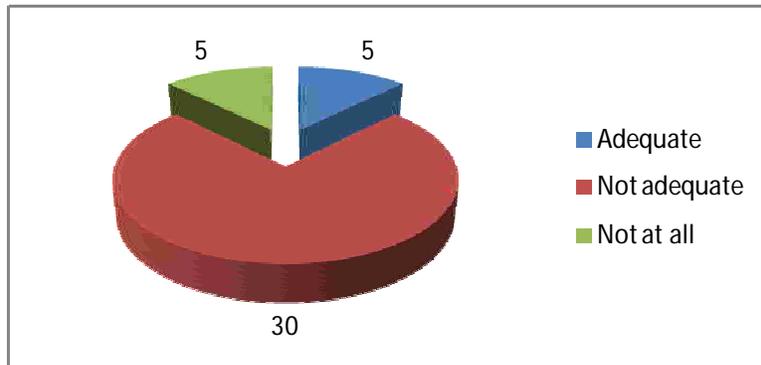
“Numeracy in Braille was not only difficult for pupils but even some of their teachers found teaching numeracy a challenge, and that there were no materials for them to use such as the calculus for calculating problems in numeracy”.

Another pupil from the same unit said that they: *“we are discouraged by friends from doing numeracy because it was too difficult and that we the blind may not even use it in life”.*

4.3.6 Acquisition of pre-vocational skills

The study further sought to establish whether the curriculum adequately prepared pupils to acquire pre-vocational skills such as gardening, sowing, knitting, cooking and woodwork just to mention a few. Teachers were asked to indicate whether pupils acquired adequate skills to use in life. Their responses were as shown in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: Whether learners acquired pre-vocational skills to use in life



From the figure above, it can be seen that majority, 30 of the teachers said that learners did not acquire adequate skills to use in life while five of the teachers indicated that learners acquired adequate skills to use in life. The rest of the teachers, five said that learners did not acquire any skills at all for use in life.

When asked to comment on learners acquiring pre-vocational skills, Chifwani primary school head teacher stated that;

"We are supposed to do some pre-vocational here, but it is a problem...I am more frustrated because we only teach them the skills which we can. I was about to ask from shops to help us ...so that we can teach them to cook rice at least. Right now they are working on sowing, knitting as well as sweeping, washing. We are trying to but we know that we are under-training."

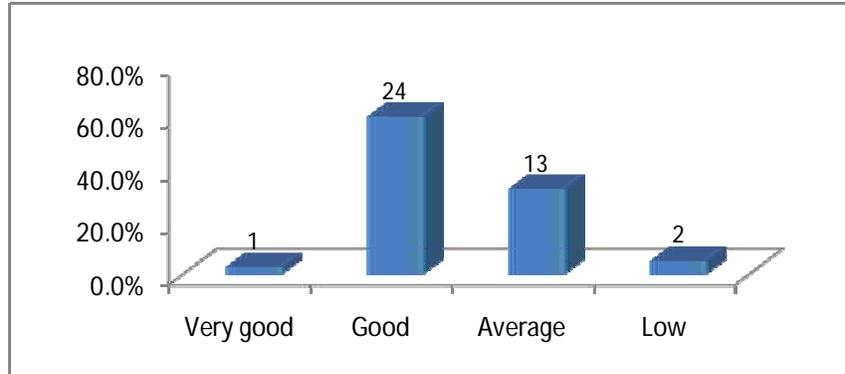
Interviewer . *"Do you feel that you have the skills to teach pre-vocational?"*

"One other problem is that we do not have the skills...it is only that it is part of the curriculum and we are trying to help them, especially those who cannot make it academically...there is no set curriculum."

4.3.7 Acquisition of social and communication skills

The study sought also to find out the levels of pupils' acquisition of social and communication skills, to this effect teachers were asked to rate the levels of acquisition of such skills by the pupils. Figure 4.4 illustrates their responses

Figure 4.4: Levels of pupils' demonstration of social and communication skills

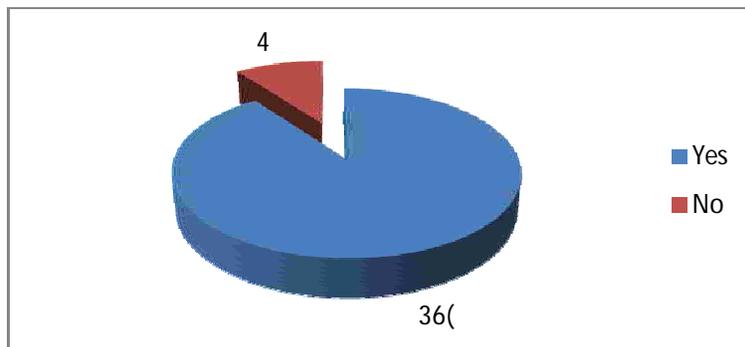


The figure above shows that the majority, 24 of teachers indicated that pupils demonstrated good acquisition of social and communication skills while 13 said it was average and two of the teachers said it was low. Only one of the teachers said pupils demonstrated low acquisition of social and communication skills.

4.3.8 Implementation of the individualized education programme

As regards to whether pupils were provided with individualised education plan, teachers' responses were as shown in the figure below.

Figure 4.5: Whether pupils were on individualised education programme



The figure above shows that the majority, 36 (90.0%) of the teachers said that pupils were not on individualised education programme while four (10.0%) said that pupils were on individualised education programme.

Head teacher of also Kaputa primary school stated that he was not aware of any child on an I.E.P unless the plan was developed by the teacher alone. Another head teacher from Makasa primary school argued that the development of the I.E.P was difficulty because of lack of partnership among key stake holders such as parents and professionals. Interviews with pupils also revealed that no child was on an individualised education plan. Pupils in all the units stated that they underwent the same class work. When asked why they were not on the I.E.P, one pupil from Mbulo special units stated that:

“When their parents were invited to attend meetings on the same on two occasions, the meetings were postponed to later dates because officials from Ministry of Health and others from Ministry of Community Development and Social Services failed to attend the meetings... our parents have since stopped responding to invitations from the school because each time they travel to the school from home they cover very long distances.”

Another pupil from Musakanya special unit commented that:

“My parents are not concerned except my grandmother who even sends me some food. My grandmother is in fact the one who encouraged my uncle to bring me to school. Father just drinks and my grandmother is too old to walk to the school”

Further, some Pupils explained that their parents were not able to visit school and meet their teachers because they were too busy.

4.3.9 Progression of pupils from grade seven to grade eight

In an interview with the head teachers, the respondents were asked to indicate whether pupils were making progress to the next level of education (grade 8). head teacher from Mbulo primary school said that in the last three years the unit for the visually impaired had been having candidates sitting for grade seven composite examinations. When asked to give the analysis, the

head teacher stated that in 2010 three boys and two girls entered and sat for examinations. All the five passed and were selected to grade 8. He further said:

“In 2011, three candidates two boys and one girl registered and sat for examinations. The three passed and were selected to grade 8. In 2012, three girls and two boys registered and sat for examinations. Out of the five, two girls and one boy passed and were selected to grade 8”

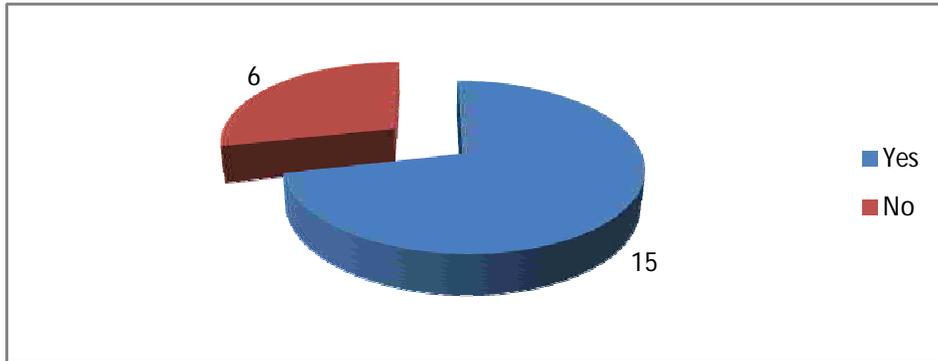
However, head teachers of Makasa and Chila primary schools said that they did not have candidates every year because it took time for their pupils to be ready for an examinations. They reported that they had never had candidates at grade 7 for a long time. When asked as to what plans the schools had for pupils who had over stayed in the unit and were over age (21 years old and above), they said that they did not have any possible answer since there were no centres for special vocation training especially for the intellectually disabled. However, head teacher of Mambwe Mission primary school said: *“once funding improves, the school intends to introduce pre-vocational skills training to prepare them for a better life though the school did not have atrained teacher in special education”*.

4.3.10 Attempts to modify the curriculum

Modifying existing general curriculum has been an effective way of meeting the needs of learners with special educational needs. It was therefore, necessary to investigate and establish whether modification to the curriculum had been done in order to meet the needs of all the children and enable them develop to their maximum potential

The standards officers were asked to indicate whether there had been attempts to modify the curriculum. Their responses were as shown in Figure 4.6 below.

Figure 4.6: Whether there had been attempts to modify the curriculum



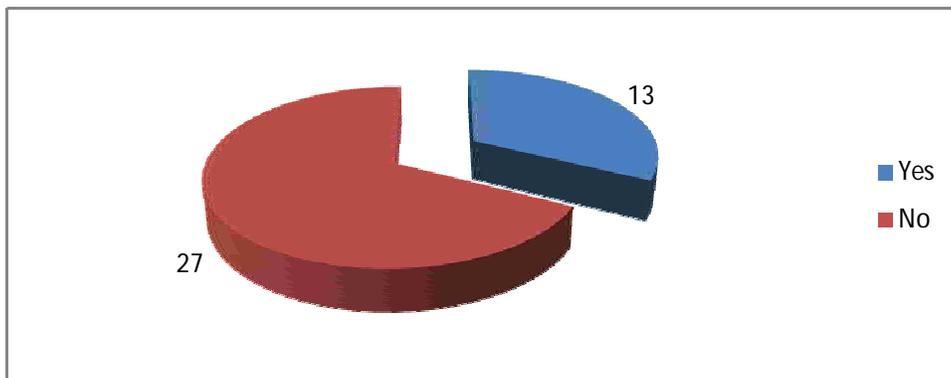
As reflected in the figure above, the majority of the standards officers, 15 stated that there had never been any attempts to modify the curriculum to suit the needs of children with special educational needs in the units while six of them said attempts to modify the curriculum had been made.

4.4 Availability of trained and qualified teachers

Teaching learners with disabilities to high standards will depend largely on the skills of their teacher. Qualified special education teachers have essential competences and mastery of materials to be taught and skills in communicating the materials to learners.

The study therefore, sought to establish whether trained and qualified teachers in special units were available Teachers were asked to indicate if they were trained and qualified to teach special education. Their responses were as shown in Figure 4.7.

Figure 4.7: Whether teachers were qualified to teach in special units



As can be seen from the figure out of the 40 teacher respondents, 13 said they had undergone training in special education while 27 did not. Therefore, the majority of respondents did not have adequate qualifications to teach effectively in the units.

Interview with head teachers and pupils also revealed that special units had inadequate qualified teachers in special education. Four pupils from Mbulu special unit of the visually impaired stated that they had four trained teachers who were totally blind and were made to run the unit. one pupil from Mbulu primary school argued that:

“The fact that one is visually impaired and trained as a teacher does not automatically make him qualified to handle children with special educational needs”.

Pupils from Mbulu special unit complained that their teachers had difficulties making and improvising teaching and learning materials such as maps and diagrams because they also depended on other teachers who were not ready to assist at the time they needed help.

Head teacher of chilolwa primary school stated that teachers who were teaching in the unit were not qualified for that field and were at times given some classes to teach in the main stream because of generally low staffing levels in schools.

Head teacher of Mbala primary schools further commented that:

“Units are not able to keep trained teachers as these can be transferred to other schools at any time. Examples are teachers who found greener pastures at regular school. In addition, special education teacher are not trained to teach specialist subjects like Art, and pre-vocational skills to children with disabilities.

4.5 Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers

As regards Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers, nine of the teachers agreed that schools were inducting teachers in special education through CPD while 31 disagreed that schools were not holding induction meetings to empower teachers with basic knowledge and skills in special education.

In an interview with head teacher of Chinsali primary school, he argued that: “*much as the school wanted to orient teachers in special education their units did not have a single qualified teacher in special education to handle that component during teacher group meetings*”.

Musakanya head teacher further, made an observation that since college curriculum now incorporates special education component he found no reason why new teachers were failing to induct other teachers.

Head teacher from Kaputa primary school said of newly qualified teachers: ‘*Nobody in initial training is prepared for the range of difficulties that children have. I think we have to acknowledge that people who come into teaching are barely prepared for the routine children who cope*’ he also pointed out the inadequacies of initial teacher training in the field of special education.

4.6 Availability of appropriate teaching and learning materials

As regards to availability of appropriate teaching/learning materials, all the head teachers and pupils interviewed stated that teaching and learning materials were not adequate for effective curriculum delivery. The study reveals that ten head teachers ascribed this to inadequate and erratic funding of special education activities while one headteacher took a more balanced view, citing both lack of resources and poor organisation of resources as major causes of failure to provide quality special educational needs.

4.7 Adequacy of physical facilities for pupils with special educational needs

As regards to adequacy of physical facilities for pupils with special educational needs, table 4.2 below shows the responses from the standards officers and teachers.

Table 4.2: Adequacy of physical facilities for pupils with special educational needs

Status of respondent	Adequate	Not adequate	Not available	Total
Standards officers	2	17	2	21
Teachers	2	31	7	40

The table above shows that out of the 21 standards officers, two said the physical facilities were appropriate and adequate, 17 said the facilities were not adequate while two said they were not available. Out of 40 teacher respondents, the majority, 31 said that the physical facilities for pupils with special educational needs were not adequate while two said that the physical facilities were adequate and seven indicated that there were no physical facilities available for learners with special educational needs.

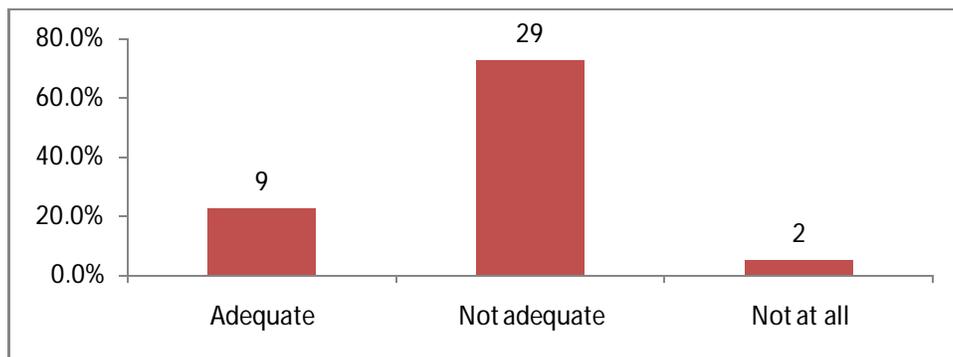
4.8 School Management Practice

The study sought to establish the school management practice. Specifically it was important to establish the administrative support provided to special units. Another important factor related to quality in special education was whether the school administration ensured that children were screened and assessed before placing them in special units. This issue was of particular relevance in order avoid arbitrary placement of pupils in special schools without assessment of their individual needs. Under school management practice, it was also important to establish whether school head teachers provided regular monitoring to teaching and learning in special education in order to ensure quality of education being offered in these special units.

4.8.1. Support to the unit by school management

Teachers were asked to indicate the adequacy of support the units received from the school management. Figure 4.9 below shows their responses.

Figure 4.8: Adequacy of support units received from school management



As can be seen from the figure above, the majority of the teachers, 29 indicated that the support the units received from the school management was not adequate while nine said it was adequate and two indicated that they did not at all receive any support from school management.

When asked to comment on support given to the unit Chifwani primary school head teacher observed that:

“The lack of clarity seems to be causing some confusion for unit staff when it comes to procurement of resources. Government is supposed to play a major role in procurement of specialized equipment such as Perkins brailers, writing frames, hearing aids because these are very expensive. However we are trying to support the units in terms of maintenance of the classrooms, providing furniture and giving the unit the special education grant when we receive school grants. We also mount pressure on the District Education Board Secretary for qualified special education teachers”.

Musakanya primary school head teacher also commented that *“as long as schools do not have adequate funding from government and other partners whatever support head teachers would give other than financial support would not be appreciated”*

4.8.2 Screening, assessment and placement

Regarding placement of pupils appropriately in their abilities, all the 11 head teachers of the eleven (11) schools where special education units were, said that they never organized or conducted screening and assessment of children before placing them accordingly.

The pupils also indicated that they had never been screened and assessed before being placed in their classes. However, during the interview, the majority of head teachers stated that it was the responsibility of head teachers to accept all the children and place them accordingly. Mambwe mission primary school head teacher state that:

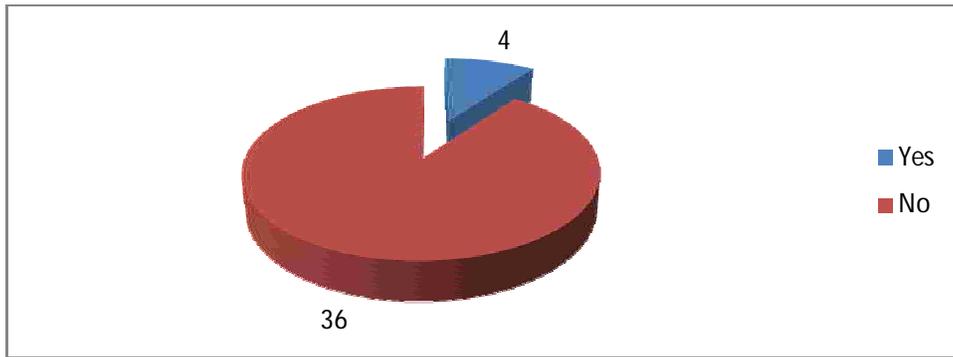
“there is no formal assessment conducted but that the head teacher in consultation with the special education teacher accepted and placed children in the unit. As long as the child showed signs of serious backwardness, physical impairments which were visible the child was enrolled in the unit

while other children were enrolled basing on the explanations from their parents though very few if any”.

4.8.3 Monitoring of teaching and learning in the unit

As regards to whether head teachers monitored teaching and learning in the unit, Figure 4.9 shows teachers reactions.

Figure 4.9: Whether head teachers monitored teaching and learning in special units



The above table shows that the majority of respondents, 36 indicated that head teachers did not monitor teaching and learning in special units while only four of the respondents agreed that head teachers monitored teaching and learning in special units. This revelation was supported by the observations made by researcher where schools did not have documentation of any kind on monitoring of teaching and learning.

4.8.4 Adequacy of funds for running the units

When asked as to whether funds for running the special education units were adequate or not , all the head teachers stated that funds were erratic and not adequate making it very difficult for head teachers in the day to day management of special units.

4.8.5 Whether special education activities are a priority in the school

Head teachers were asked to state whether they considered activities in the special unit as a priority. The majority of head teachers (10 out of 11) stated that activities in the unit were not a priority because of various challenges in the school which require prompt attention. Mbala primary school head teacher observed that

“The school has a number of assignments to fulfill to the District Education Board. The school is required to affiliate to the following Associations without fail every year: Sports Association, JETS, and subjects associations. As if this is not enough the school is expected to prepare adequately for the National examinations in terms of securing the safety of examinations materials by fitting strong grill gates to the strong room and reserve some money for the up keep of invigilators”.

Chifwani primary school head teacher said that, *‘the priority of the school was to improve results at grade 7 and grade 9 levels’*

However, the head teacher of Chila primary school agreed that activities in the unit were considered as a priority of the school. When asked how, the head teacher responded thus:

“Activities of the unit are incorporated within the school plan and annual budget. Grade 8 and grade 9 pupil pay user fees and the school receives grants. From these two sources of funds the school tries to meet some of the needs of the unit’.

4.9 Monitoring and Evaluation

The study sought to establish the roles of standards officers in ensuring quality of special educational needs provision. It was also important to establish whether standards officers were providing regular monitoring of learning and teaching in special units in order to ensure quality of education being offered in special units.

4.9.1 Roles of standards officers in special education units

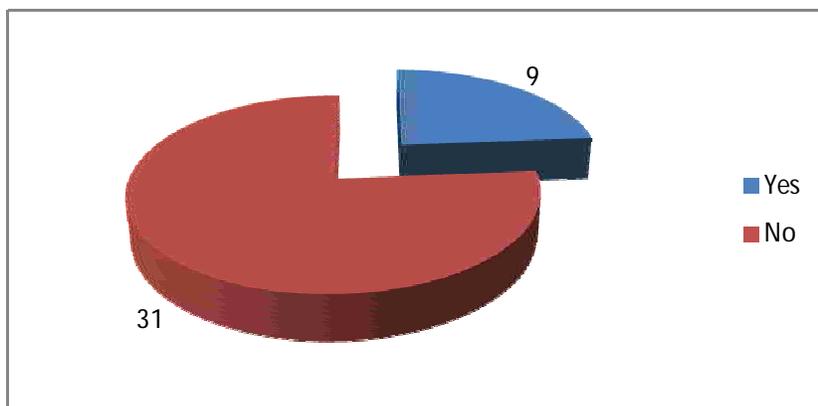
Standards officers were asked to state whether they knew and understood their roles. Their responses were that they knew and understood their roles among which were included reporting regularly to the MESVTEE on the quality of education in special education units; monitoring the performance of teachers and school management in accordance with all-round standard performance indicators; ensuring the equitable distribution of teachers by working out the curriculum based establishment and class-based staffing; carrying out regular and full panel quality assurance and standards assessment of all education institutions on a regular basis. Others

were advising on the provision of proper and adequate physical facilities in all educational institutions; ensuring that the appropriate curriculum is operational in institutions; and ensuring that there is timely provision of appropriate teaching and learning materials to all learning institutions.

4.9.2 Monitoring of special education units

Teachers were asked to indicate whether standards officers monitored special units in schools. Their responses were as shown in the figure below.

Figure 4.10: Whether standards officers monitored special units regularly



The above figure shows that the majority of teachers, 31 indicated that standards officers did not monitor the units while nine of the teachers said that the standards officers did monitor the units on a regular basis to ensure quality in special units. When pupils were asked to say if they had ever been visited by standards officers, they all said that they had never been visited. Thus interviews with pupils also confirmed the fact that standards officers did not visit the special units.

4.9.3 Frequency of monitoring special education unit

Teachers were asked to indicate the number of times standards officers monitored special units. Of the 21 teachers who responded to this issue, the majority 17 said it was not adequate while two of the teachers said it was adequate and the remaining two of the teachers said that monitoring was not done at all. other 2 said they did not monitor at all.

When head teachers were asked during the interview to comment on frequency of monitoring special units, head teacher of Mambwe Mission primary school stated that,

“Standards officers rarely visit the school and when they come to conduct monitoring they just monitor teaching and learning in main stream classes... In the last three years 2010, 2011 and 2012, the only times our schools have been visited by standards officers are during examination period when they bring and collect examinations materials...the situation should be the same in all schools”.

4.10 Factors contributing to quality in special educational needs provision

The study sought to establish the kind of support units were receiving from stakeholders to ensure quality of special educational needs provision in special units. Another important factor was to establish whether schools were working closely with professionals in ensuring that quality was enhanced through meeting individual needs of learners. It was also important to establish the involvement of parents of children with special educational needs in the learning of their children as this is also important in ensuring quality in special units.

4.10.1 Collaboration with stake holders (professionals).

The majority of head teachers stated that they were not working closely with professionals. When asked to state the reasons for not collaborating with professional, head teachers said that professionals were not easy to find and if you were to manage you needed to pay for their service in terms of allowances. Similarly, head teacher of Chifwani primary school said that most professionals had tight schedules which required a lot of patience and in most cases were not just there. However, Chila primary school head teacher had a different view and stated that,

“At my school we are working hand in hand with professionals from Ministry of health in particular specialists from the eye and ear clinics. The only problem that is there is that each time we meet with some professionals they usually demand for lunch allowance especially when you involve them in screening and assessment”.

4.10.2 Teachers' views on parental involvement in the learning process

As regards parental involvement in the learning process of their children, the majority of the teachers, 23 indicated that parental involvement in the learning of their children was not adequate while 16 said the parents were not involved at all and only one of the teacher respondent said parental involvement in the learning of their children was adequate.

4.10.3 Head teachers' views on parental involvement in the learning process

The findings from head teachers revealed that the majority of parents of children with special educational needs were not involved in the learning of their children. Head teacher of Musakanya primary observed that:

“Only one or two come in to the school for any meetings that are called or to get reports. We are made to believe that distance stops some parents visiting the school. It is a relief to some parents when they leave their children in the boarding. They expect the school to meet all the needs of their child. This is not fair at all”

Mbala head teacher stated that:

“... the parents support their children, but some are still not supporting the unit ... they still have that denial feeling ... (parents) come here and say that the child is not learning much ... some of them do not know the condition of their children ... they think that the child can learn... they do not want us to teach them gardening and stuff like that ... they want their children passing academically.

Interviews with pupils also revealed that their parents rarely checked their books to establish whether they were learning or not. When asked to state the reasons, some pupils said their homes were very far and that the only time when parents visited the school was at closing when they went to collect them and at the beginning of the term when escorting them to school. However, one pupil from Chifwani special unit stated that her parents visited the school and regularly checked the books and helped with her homework.

Another pupil from Makasa special unit said:

“My parent are very old and sick, they cannot walk to school... usually the one who is interested in my education is my brother ...He even helps me

with school work, my brother is like my father because even when there is a meeting at school, he is the one who attends and my teacher knows him very well.”

4.11 Challenges of quality special educational needs provision

The findings from head teachers and teachers revealed the following as some of the challenges of quality of special educational needs provision in special units: lack of appropriate teaching and learning materials; failure to modify the infrastructure in order to make it accessible to all the learners; inadequate class rooms for the units; inadequate qualified special education teachers; inadequate monitoring of activities in units by both standards officers and head teachers; lack of collaboration with all stake holders; inadequate and erratic funding; curriculum not meeting the needs of learners; and lack of induction meetings on special education for teachers, head teachers and standards officer.

4.12 Ways of improving quality special educational needs provision

The study also sought to find out ways of improving quality special educational needs provision and the following emerged: developing a curriculum suitable for the Zambia context and based on the Zambian Primary School Curriculum; provision of appropriate teaching and learning materials to schools by the Ministry of Education; sensitisation of parents on the importance of their participation in the learning of their children; improvement of funding to schools by Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education; engaging more qualified special education teachers in schools; collaboration with stakeholders; regular monitoring of special units by head teachers and standards officers and holding of regular induction and sensitization meetings with all stakeholders. .

4.13 Summary

The data presented in this chapter was organised into three parts that is, results from the questionnaires interviews and results from focus group discussions. The results from both questionnaires and interviews were similar and clearly showed that the majority of the respondents strongly felt that special units were not offering quality special educational needs provision. The curriculum offered in special units was not adapted to children’s needs. It did not

provide opportunities to suit children with different opportunities and interests. This fact was confirmed by the findings from both questionnaires and interviews where it was established that special units used the same general curriculum offered in the main stream without modifying or making changes to a range of educational components in a curriculum, such as content knowledge, the method of instruction, and student's learning outcomes, through the alteration of materials and programmes.

The findings also indicated that most teachers in special units did not have qualifications in special education and were not adequate. Furthermore, infrastructure in many schools such as classrooms and school surroundings were not suitable for children with special educational needs. The number of classrooms in all units was not commensurate to the pupils enrolled. Similarly, special units lacked specialised equipment such as writing frames, Perkins brailers, audiometers, computers and other teaching and learning material.

The results from the questionnaires and interviews also indicated that special units did not receive adequate support from school management. Head teachers rarely monitored activities in special units and were not considered a priority of the school. Furthermore, funding special education activities was erratic and inadequate.

The results from questionnaires and interviews also revealed that despite standards officers knowing their roles, they rarely monitored teaching and learning in special units. Similarly, collaboration between school management and other stakeholders such as professionals and parents was not adequate to enhance quality of special educational needs provision. The participants strongly recommended increased government funding towards special education, improved support to special units from school management and other stakeholder.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a discussion of the research findings in relation to the research objectives. The objectives of the study were to: assess the quality of special educational needs provision in special units; assess the quality of management at individual school level of the provision for pupils in the special education unit; and determine the roles of Standards Officers in quality special education provisions in special units and to assess the kind of support units received from stakeholders.

5.2 Quality special educational needs provision

It was evident from the results of the study that there were no significant differences in the views of standards officers, head teachers, teachers and pupils on the quality of special educational needs provision in special education units.

Appropriate curriculum is vital in the education of children. This study showed that the majority of teachers 35 and standards officers 15 indicated that the curriculum being used in special units was not appropriate as it did not meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. Five teachers and six standards officers indicated that the curriculum offered in special units met the needs of pupils. The majority of head teachers indicated that the general education curriculum was and is still the only curriculum effected in all schools for all the learners. Head teacher of Musakanya primary school stated said:

“We have seen that it is not appropriate, it is not giving life skills that the children in units really need. They are not getting the best skills and we want them to get the best skills. When they reach

the age of sixteen, they still have not finished the work they did from grade 3... Our worry is when to let them leave School”.

Mitchell (2008) stated that making appropriate adaptations or modifications to the curriculum is central to meeting the needs of individual learners in inclusive education. The necessary adaptations or modifications within the established curriculum are carried out so that pupils with special educational needs may achieve the objectives and contents generally laid down. He further states that it is a single curriculum that is, as far as possible, accessible to all learners, including those with special educational needs. Conversely, special educational needs are created when a curriculum is not accessible to all learners. Powell, (1992). contends that the objectives set for pupils attending special education establishments are the same as those for all pupils. Furthermore, establishments must have the necessary school organisation and carry out the necessary curricular diversifications in order to facilitate pupils the achievement of such objectives. Therefore, the general objectives of the different educational stages constitute the necessity for individual programmes or curricular adaptations of pupils with special educational needs, studying either in mainstream or special education establishments. Kalabula (2007) also stated that the school curriculum must seek to develop the individual learner’s potential abilities to the maximum and that the concepts in the curriculum must be spelt and be treated separately because mistakenly it is usually assumed that children with special educational needs have been considered when blanket terms such as ‘education for all’, individual pupil’s potential abilities’ are used, but which always end up marginalizing them.

Regarding whether the curriculum prepared learners to attain competence in literacy and numeracy teachers stated that learners’ competences in literacy and numeracy were low. The majority of the teachers 31 indicated that pupils’ competence in numeracy and literacy was low. Clearly the aim of the curriculum is to equip learners with necessary skills that would make them independent later in life. Literacy and numeracy are fundamental skills that would enable an individual to function independently in society (Willms, 2000).The failure by the curriculum to adequately equip learners with necessary skills such as literacy and numeracy could be one of the underlying factors behind the low progression rates of learners particular in special education units, and special education in general.

In terms of the curriculum adequately preparing learners to acquire pre-vocational skills such as gardening, sowing, knitting, cooking and woodwork just to mention a few, the findings from teachers were as follows: the majority, 30 of the teachers said that learners did not acquire adequate skills to use in life while five teachers indicated that learners acquired adequate skills to use in life. The rest of the teachers, five said that learners did not acquire any skills at all for use in life. Head teachers also said that the curriculum did not adequately address pre-vocational skills for learners with special educational needs. Farrell. (1997:18) observes that 'pre-vocational training for special needs helps the learners learn the skills they need to find employment and live as independently as possible'. Farrell further states that organisations that hire special needs employees trained in specific vocational skills find them to be as productive and responsible as any other employees. Employment empowers individuals with special needs to feel they are productive members of society just like everyone else.

In terms of the Availability and adequacy of teaching and learning materials, the majority of the respondents felt that teaching and learning materials in the special education units were not adequate. The study revealed that special education units had inadequate teaching and learning materials. The materials supplied were not only inadequate but they were also irregularly supplied if any. This contributed to the problems of inequities and disparities between learners in the main stream and those in units. The findings were inconsistent with those of Bishop, (1985) which stated that to make learning very effective it is not sufficient to utilise the factors and techniques that facilitate learning, the teachers are to create certain conditions in the classroom that may improve learning. These conditions are providing teaching and learning materials, giving the knowledge of progress and success, praising or reprimanding and guiding learning.

The use of teaching aids is very important in as far as quality special educational needs provision is concerned because they make learning concrete and meaningful. The use of visual aids such as maps, charts, models, real objects, film strips, diagrams, pictures would make the teacher's verbal descriptions concrete. In addition, meaning is usually attached when learning involves aids as these are supplementary devices to learning. Quality special educational needs provision in special units therefore, requires adequate availability of a variety of teaching aids to meet different needs of learners. The above results also confirm the observation by the Government of

the Republic of Zambia (GRZ,2006), where it was noted that the provision of educational facilities remains limited and unsatisfactory owing to the increasing pressure on educational infrastructure, poor maintenance and increase in the school-going population. In addition, the findings above are inconsistent with the views of Carmody (2004) who stated that education without resources is like education without a future. In this case, Carmody was alleging that quality and sustainable education cannot continue or be given without any formal documentation or resources to back it up. There is need for educational materials in special education units to facilitate quality special education provision in Muchinga and Northern provinces of Zambia. Furthermore, the government indicated that “improvement of quality in special units, and improvements in student performance, depended heavily on there being sufficient text books, special equipment and other teaching aids” (MoE, 1992:16). However, the results of this study further indicate that the Ministry of Education has not done much to increase the availability and adequacy of the teaching and learning materials in special units. This observation points to the fact that if special units were not supplied with adequate teaching and learning materials, most of the teachers of special education would teach theoretically as opposed to the conventional methodology of combining theory and practice. The availability of teaching and learning materials, in special units, increases learner participation. This consequently increases their motivation and minimises the abstraction associated with special education concepts. Farrell, (1997) supported this view when he observed that instructional materials in the teaching and learning of children with SEN make them to learn more and retain better what they had been taught and that it also promoted and sustained students’ interest. The government also indicated that “improvement of quality in schools, and improvements in student performance, depended heavily on there being sufficient text books, specialised equipment and other teaching aids in schools” (MoE, 1992:16).

In terms of adequacy of physical facilities for pupils with special educational needs, the study showed that the majority of standards officers 17 stated that the physical facilities were not appropriate and adequate. The majority of teachers 31 said that the physical facilities were not appropriate and adequate. In addition, shortage of classrooms was a common feature in both rural and urban schools. In almost all units surveyed, the numbers of classes were not corresponding to the numbers of classrooms. This led to some of the units to combine two

disabilities in one class to enable every class in the school to have a chance of using the few classrooms. This system did more harm than good in the sense that time was limited and the amount of work done every day did not guarantee learning having taken place. The subjects on the time-table could not be completed; congestion in the limited classrooms hindered the teachers' inability to teach effectively. Infrastructure was not yet modified to accommodate children with disabilities. For example, some classrooms were poorly lit; there were no ramps and no acoustic materials in most schools. This situation made the learning environment somewhat hostile to pupils with disabilities. These findings were in agreement with those mentioned by Sweetly (2004) and Government of India (1994) as having been experienced in Indonesia and India. Savolainen, (2000) also pointed that in Finland infrastructure was unsuitable to children with disabilities.

Further, Chaiti, (2010) contended that a good provision of education must take into account the environment in which pupils learn. Both the teacher and the pupil must be free to do their work properly. Any growth at the cost of physical facilities (environment) short-lives the victory of education system. According to Mitchell (2008), all educational establishments must meet the hygienic, acoustic, habitability and security conditions stipulated in the legislation in effect. The places devoted to instruction must have ventilation and natural lighting. They will also have to possess the necessary architectural conditions to facilitate access, movement and communication, in accordance with what is laid down in the legislation with regard to promotion of accessibility and elimination of barriers.

Furthermore the above results confirm the observation by the Government of the Republic of Zambia (2006), where it was noted that the provision of educational facilities remains limited and unsatisfactory owing to the increasing pressure on educational infrastructure, poor maintenance and increase in the school-going population.

In terms of qualification of teachers in special education units, the study revealed that there was inadequacy in the number of qualified teaching staff in special units which prompted head teachers to rely on teachers who were not qualified to teach children with special educational needs. As indicated in figure 4.8, out of the 40 teacher respondents, 13 said they had undergone

training in special education while 27 did not. In addition, four pupils from Mbulu special unit of the visually impaired stated that they had four trained teachers who were totally blind and were made to run the unit. one pupil from Mbulu primary school argued that:

“The fact that one is visually impaired and trained as a teacher does not automatically make him qualified to handle children with special educational needs”.

Head teacher from Kaputa primary school said of newly qualified teachers:

‘Nobody in initial training is prepared for the range of difficulties that children have. I think we have to acknowledge that people who come into teaching are barely prepared for the routine children who cope’

He also pointed out the inadequacies of initial teacher training in the field of special education.

The findings were therefore consistent with Kalabula (2007) study which found that many teachers of children with special educational needs were not able to meet the needs of their learners adequately because of several practical and technical problems one of which is limitation in the teacher’s talent and skills. In discussing the importance of qualified special education teachers Neville and Allyson (1989) further observed that qualified special education teachers were guided by the professional and ethical practice standards and required ongoing attention to legal matters, along with serious professional and ethical considerations, qualities which teachers without training in special education lacked . They further stated that special education teachers without any training in special education never engaged themselves in professional activities or participated in learning communities and that disadvantaged individuals with exceptional learning needs, their families and colleagues.

As regards Continuing Professional Development (CPD) meetings of teachers, nine of the teachers agreed that schools were inducting teachers in special education through teacher group meetings, while 31 disagreed that schools were not holding Continuing Professional Development meetings to empower teachers with basic knowledge and skills in special education. In an interview with head teacher of Chinsali primary school, he argued that:

“much as the school wanted to orient teachers in special education, their units did not have a single qualified teacher in special education to handle that component during teacher group meetings”.

Ministry of Education (1996) observes that teacher education is a continuing process that must be extended throughout the individual's years of actual teaching. The foundation laid in the pre-service programme may be sound and adequate to equip teachers with appropriate skill to be used in meeting the needs of all the pupils. Teachers have a responsibility, to themselves and to their profession, to deepen their knowledge, extend their professional skills, and keep themselves up-to-date on major developments affecting their profession.

As regards provision of individualised educational programme, this study showed that the majority, 36 out of 40 teachers said that pupils were not on individualised education programme. All the pupils who were interviewed stated that they were not on the individualised education plan. One pupil from Mbulu special unit said that:

“When their parents were invited to attend meetings on the same on two occasions, the meetings were postponed to later dates because officials from Ministry of Health and others from Ministry of Community Development and Social Services failed to attend the meetings... our parents have since stopped responding to invitations from the school because each time they travel to the school from home they cover very long distances.”

Adams. (1986).) observed that all children identified as having special educational needs must have individualised education plan (IEP) designed to detail the services that they will need and that its presence can be used as a measure to determine the quality of a school's provision for special needs pupils. Neville and Allyson (1999) stated that IEPs are important to pupils with special educational needs in that they are used to identify and allow pupils to make progress and experience success. All pupils with special educational needs whenever, possible are to be supported to enable them to share the same experiences as their peers.

5.3 Management of special education units

As regards whether activities in the units were a priority in the school ten head teachers out of eleven head teachers stated that activities in the special units were not a priority while one head teacher agreed that activities in the unit were considered as a priority of the school. The findings were consistent with Miske and Dowd (1998) who stated that Educational leadership is ranked as the key variable associated with effective schools and that the head teacher of an effective school

must be the leader for all programmes within the school including special education services. Govinder, (2009) also contended that supervision has the potential to serve two purposes; accountability and professional development. Head teachers are expected to ensure instructional leadership is in place by helping teachers grow through the use of a variety of resources for example, professional workshop may be organised by the school. Head teachers are expected to evaluate every teacher periodically. Based on classroom observations and other data these evaluations are supposed to reflect the extent to which teachers have mastered a set of practices or performance standards deemed essential by the school. Fullan (2001) also argued that effective head teachers must be familiar with available resources to support the diverse needs of students, families, and staff members. Successful leaders need to know how to access additional support as required ensuring appropriate education for all students.

As regards whether head teachers monitored teaching and learning in special units, the majority of teachers indicated that head teachers did not monitor teaching and learning in special units. Miske and Dowd (1998) contended that it was the responsibility of effective head teachers to monitor regularly teaching and learning in the school to ensure success for all pupils in the school including pupils with special educational needs.

As regards screening and assessment of learners before placing them appropriately, head teachers stated that learners were just enrolled in the special unit without any formal assessment. Kalabula (2007:18) observed that “identification and assessment has been a thorny problem for some time”. He further, observed that there are some handicapped children who have not been identified. This problem may continue unless definite measures are taken to set up machinery which will operate on a permanent and regular basis to identify such children. Identification and assessment will help the individual children whose handicaps might have gone undetected.

In terms of management collaboration with professionals and other agencies the study revealed that the majority of head teachers were not working closely with professionals and other agencies in the running of schools and in particular special units. This is inconsistent with the views of Fullan (2001), who asserts that effective collaboration is built on a foundation of excellent interpersonal communication skills and that head teachers must model two-way communication

by seeking information from staff members, families, students, and others as well as disseminating information to these constituencies. According to Fullan (2001) relationships are essential in all successful change initiatives. If relationships improve, things get better. If they remain the same or get worse, ground is lost. ‘Thus school leaders must be consummate relationship builders with diverse people and groups’ (2001, 5). Effective head teachers need well-honed skills that enable them to work collaboratively with learners, families, school professionals, and community leaders to ensure that effective educational programmes are provided. A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

5.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

The study has shown that standards officers were knowledgeable of their roles in special educational needs provision in special units some of which included:

1. Monitor the performance of teachers and school management in accordance with all-round standard performance indicators.
2. Ensure the equitable distribution of teachers by working out the curriculum based establishment and class-based staffing.
3. Carry out regular and full panel quality assurance and standards assessment of all education institutions on a regular basis.
4. Advise on the provision of proper and adequate physical facilities in all educational institutions.
5. Ensure that the appropriate curriculum is operational in institutions.
6. Ensure that there is timely provision of appropriate teaching and learning materials to all learning institutions.

The above findings were consistent with that of Ministry of Education (1996) which states that , inspectors contribute towards achieving the government’s overall purpose and its strategic objectives of creating a smarter, healthier, wealthier, fairer and stronger and that the role of the inspectorate is to establish, evaluate and promote the highest standards of quality in education provision. In addition, Maw (1996) states that in reflecting on the British Education (schools), Act 1992, noted that the role of inspection in Britain is to monitor the standards, quality,

efficiency, and ethos of the schools and inform the government and the general public on these matters.

As regards whether standards officers monitored special education units regularly, the study revealed that standards officers were not monitoring activities in special education units. As reflected in figure 4.11, the majority of teachers, 31 indicated that standards officers did not monitor the units while nine of the teachers said that the standards officers did monitor the units on a regular basis to ensure quality in special units. When pupils were asked to state if they had ever been visited by standards officers, they all said that they had never been visited. Thus interviews with pupils also confirmed the fact that standards officers did not visit the special units. Head teacher of Mambwe Mission primary school stated that,

“Standards officers rarely visit the school and when they come to conduct monitoring they just monitor teaching and learning in main stream classes.... In the last three years 2010, 2011 and 2012, the only times our schools have been visited by standards officers are during examination period when they bring and collect examinations materials...the situation should be the same in all schools”.

Beeby (1966), observed that monitoring of teaching and learning by standards officers play a critical role in the improvement of standards and quality of education and should be an integral part of a school improvement programme. Ministry of Education (1997) also states that Education Inspectors are officials of the Ministry of Education charged with the responsibility of identifying and providing feedback on strengths and weaknesses in educational institutions so that these institutions can improve quality of education provided and the achievements of their learners, and who may inspect any educational institution - pre-school, primary, secondary or college, public or private. Thus, the absence of monitoring and evaluation in most of the special units visited clearly puts the issue of quality to test.

5.5 Support from stakeholders

As regards the nature of support the units were receiving, the study revealed that special education units were receiving support from government in form school grants. The units acknowledged that they received a 5% apportionment of school grants for special education from

the government. The government also distributed teaching and learning materials to the units. However, the support was erratic and not adequate. In addition, units occasionally received support from Non-Governmental Organisations, especially from faith based organization in terms of food stuffs, sports equipment and learning materials. Tambull (1982) observed that support for children with special educational needs requires a concerted approach from health care professionals, social services departments, specialist support services and other providers of support services. If effective provision is to be made for children with special educational needs, it is essential that schools, health services, voluntary organisations and other agencies work very closely with each other and with parents.

5.5.1 Involvement of professionals in the learning process

As regards professionals getting involved in the learning process of pupils with special educational needs, the findings from head teachers revealed that professionals were not involved in the learning process. Ten out of eleven head teachers stated that professionals were not involved in the learning process. The majority of head teachers stated that they were not working closely with professionals. When asked to state the reasons for not collaborating with professional, head teachers said that professionals were not easy to find and if you were to manage you needed to pay for their service in terms of allowances. Similarly, head teacher of Chifwani primary school said that most professionals had tight schedules which required a lot of patience and in most cases were not just there. However, one head teacher indicated that professionals were working closely with the school and were involved in the learning process. , Chila primary school head teacher who had a different view stated that,

“At my school we are working hand in hand with professionals from Ministry of health in particular specialists from the eye and ear clinics. The only problem that is there is that each time we meet with some professionals they usually demand for lunch allowance especially when you involve them in screening and assessment”.

Tambull, (1982) observed that head teachers were responsible for integrating specialist professional contribution into educational programmes and in particular the education of learners with special educational needs. In addition, Mercer and Mercer, (1993) contended that

collaboration at all levels facilitates the exchange of information among professionals and ensures continuity and progression in the learner's learning.

5.5.2 Parental involvement in the Teaching process

In terms of parental involvement in the learning of their children, standards officers, head teachers, teachers and learners revealed that parents were not actively involved in the learning of their children. The majority of the teachers, 23 indicated that parental involvement in the teaching of their children was not adequate while 16 said the parents were not involved at all and only one of the teacher respondent said parental involvement in the learning of their children was adequate. Head teacher of Musakanya primary observed that:

“Only one or two come in to the school for meetings that are called or to get reports. We are made to believe that distance stops some parents visiting the school. It is a relief to some parents when they leave their children in the boarding. They expect the school to meet all the needs of their child. This is not fair at all”

Darling (1989) observed that parent participation in the special education decision making process is vitally important. The most important way parents can ensure they are involved in the learning of their children is through the individualised education (IEP) process. The process requires team work through the IEP team. This group is charged with making educational decisions for students with disabilities. Parents are a critical part of this team, which addresses issues such as eligibility, evaluation, program development, and placement of a child in special education programs. Freiberg (2007) observed that despite their importance in education decision making, parents sometimes feel overwhelmed by the number of professionals they are likely to meet in trying to be involved in the learning process of their children. He further states that parents are in fact key in the IEP process and may believe that other IEP team members perceive them as less knowledgeable about teaching, less important than the educators in the meeting, devalued as members especially if they are stay home parents and obstacles to the decision making process, especially if they disagree with the professionals or unrealistic in their expectations of the school.

5.6 Summary

The main purpose of this chapter was to discuss the findings of the study which was focused on the quality of special educational needs provision in special units. The discussion was that the provision of quality education in special units of Muchinga and Northern provinces was not feasible because of failure by relevant authorities to modify the curriculum to meet the needs of learners with special educational needs. Other factors that inhibit quality provision in special units are: increased enrolments, irregular and inadequate provision of teaching and learning materials, inadequate qualified teachers in special education, absence of in-service activities (CPD) in schools, erratic and inadequate funding, lack of specialized equipment and unsuitable schools environments. These challenges had negative impact on education delivery. The impacts included: low quality education delivery, low numeracy and literacy levels, learners graduation without vocational skills and low progression rate to higher grades such as grades 7 and 9.

Furthermore, lack of adequate support from school management, irregular monitoring visits to special units by head teachers and standards officer was seen to be impeding quality provision in special units. Collaboration among schools, professionals and parents was considered to be significant in the provision of quality special educational needs.

In order to meet the needs of all learners there was need for schools to modify the curriculum and infrastructure in schools and work closely with relevant professionals and parents of children with special educational needs. The study further indicated that there was need for regular and adequate funding to enable the FBE policy and other education policies bear the intended results.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations drawn from the findings of the study. The study was conducted to assess the quality of special educational needs, provision in special education units in Muchinga and Northern Provinces. The study, therefore, was aimed at establishing the quality of special educational needs provision in special units, assessing the quality of management at individual school level of the provision for pupils in the special education unit, determining the roles of Standards Officers in quality special education provisions in units and assessing the kind of support units were receiving from stakeholders. The conclusions and the recommendations are based on the research findings of the said subject from respondents. The sample target of the respondents was 40 teachers and 44 pupils, 21 standards officers and 11 head teachers. The teachers and standards officers responded to a questionnaire while head teachers and pupils were interviewed.

6.2 Conclusion

As far as the indicators of quality education and other factors, which are outlined in this study, are concerned, not a single special unit in Muchinga and Northern provinces provided what may be referred to as satisfactory or good quality education. The findings of the study revealed that the quality of special educational needs provision in special units left much to be desired. Generally, special education units were not providing quality special educational needs for learners in special units. According to the findings, teaching and learning materials for effective curriculum delivery were inadequate. These materials included text book, Braille papers, and equipment such as writing frames, Audiometers, and computers. Special education units did not have adequate qualified teachers to meet the needs of children with special educational needs adequately. Most teachers (27 out of 40) indicated that they lacked training in special education and felt it contributed greatly to their failure to effectively deliver the curriculum. Despite efforts by Ministry of Education to introduce inclusive education in Zambia, infrastructure was not yet modified to accommodate children with disabilities. For example, there were no ramps, no rails

along the corridors and no acoustic materials in most schools. Doors in most school buildings did not allow wheel chairs to pass. This situation made the learning environment somewhat hostile to pupils with special educational needs. On average, special education units in Muchinga and Northern provinces had only one class.

Lack of effective supervision and support of activities in special units by school head teachers contributed greatly to units not adequately providing to children with special educational needs. Head teacher failing to monitor activities in units meant that quality provision of education was not guaranteed. Good management practices where head teachers were to consider all sections of the school equitably were lacking in schools where special units were found.

The roles of standards officers cannot be over emphasised. That of ensuring quality curriculum delivery at all levels. The study reviewed that lack of knowledge and skills in special education were major challenges for standards officers. This greatly impacted negatively on monitoring of special education units. Despite standards officers showing to know and understand their roles in special educational needs provision, they never monitored special education units. Furthermore, the results of the study also indicated that the level of participation in education by stakeholders was low making it difficult for the school and teachers in particular to meet the needs of children with special educational needs accordingly. Inadequate and erratic funding to schools was another challenge in the provision of quality special education in special units. Lack of induction meetings on special meetings for teachers, head teachers and standards officers also contributed to failure to meet the needs of learners in special units.

6.3 Recommendations

In order to improve the quality of special educational needs provision in special education units, the following recommendation were made.

1. The Ministry of education should provide appropriate teaching and learning materials to special education units.
2. Government should improve funding schools and in particular special schools and special education units.

3. The Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training, and Early Education should distribute graduate teachers in special education equitably to all schools.
4. Schools managements should collaborate with stake holders in the running of special units.
5. Standards officers should regularly conduct monitoring visits of special units to ensure that standards are maintained in schools.

6.4 Recommendations for future research

The following were identified as areas of possible future research:

1. To assess the practicability of decentralising identification and assessment of special needs in rural areas of Zambia.
2. To assess the roles of Teacher Education in the provision of special education at district level.
3. To replicate this study in all the provinces of Zambia.

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Appendices

Appendix i

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STANDARDS OFFICERS

1. Name of District Education Board: _____
2. Gender: male () female ()
3. Highest professional qualification: Primary teachers' Certificate (), Primary Teacher' Diploma (), Secondary Diploma (), Bachelor' degree (), Masters Degree (), others specify _____
4. Years of experience as a standards officer: below 5 years (), 6-10 years (), 11-15 years () 16 years and above ().
5. What are the roles of standards officers in schools particularly special education units?

6. Have you attended any training or workshop to get more knowledge and skills in special education? Yes () No ()
7. If the answer to question 2 is yes, when was the training or workshop held? _____
8. How often do you monitor teaching and learning in special units? _____
9. When did you last conduct institutional monitoring at the school where the special education unit is? _____
10. What type of curriculum is being offered in special units? _____
11. Do you think the curriculum meets the basic needs of learners in the unit? Yes () No (), explain your answer.
12. What support is the Ministry of Education giving to special units? _____
13. Do you think the support from Ministry of Education is adequate? (Yes) (No)
14. What are your views on pupils' enrolment, attendance, completion and academic performance?

15. Do you work with other stakeholders in ensuring quality special educational needs provisions in Special Education Units? (Yes) (No)

16. If the answer to question 11 is yes, what kind of collaboration do you experience?

17. How do you ensure quality of management in schools with special education units? _____

18. Do you think the special unit is giving quality education? (Yes) (No)

19. What suggestions can you give for improving quality special education needs provision in special units? _____

Appendix ii

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR HEAD TEACHERS

Section 1: Demographic data

1. Name of school: _____
2. Gender: male () female ()
3. Highest academic qualification: grade 9 () grade 12 ()
4. Highest professional qualification: Primary teachers' Certificate (), Primary Teacher' Diploma (), Secondary Diploma (), Bachelor' degree (), Masters Degree (), others specify

5. Years of teaching experience: below 5 years (), 6-10 years (), 11-15 years () 16 years and above ().

Section 2: Provisions for learning

6. How many classrooms are there in the school? _____.
7. How many classrooms are for the unit? _____
8. How many pupils are enrolled in the unit? _____
9. What type of disabilities does the unit provide for?
10. What are your views on the following?
 - (a) Teaching and learning materials for the special units.
 - (b) Suitability of infrastructure in the school in relation to learners with special educational needs.
 - (c) Collaboration with professionals and other stakeholders.
 - (d) Parental involvement in the learning process of their children.
 - (e) Qualifications of teachers teaching pupils with special educational needs.
11. What curriculum does the unit follow? _____
12. Do you think the curriculum meets the basic needs of learners in the unit? Explain your answer.
13. Is the time for teaching and learning enough?
14. Do standards officers conduct institutional and teacher monitoring of the school?

Section 3 Leadership and Management

15. What criteria are used in allocating pupils to the unit? _____

16. Who assigns pupils to the school unit? _____
17. Who manages the special education unit in the school? _____
18. Where does the school get the funds for the running costs of the unit?
19. Are the funds enough to run the unit?
20. Do you consider activities in the unit as priority in the school planning and budgeting?
21. What support does the unit receive from stakeholders?
22. What challenges do you encounter in running the unit?
23. What suggestions do you have for improving special education needs provision in your school? _____

Appendix iii

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Section one: Demographic Information.

1. Name of school (Special unit): _____
2. Gender: Male () Female ()
3. Age: 20-30 years (), 31-40 () 41 and above ()
4. Highest academic qualifications: grade 9 () grade 12 ()
- 5 Highest professional Qualification
 - a) Certificate ()
 - b) Diploma: ()
 - c) bachelor's degree: ()
 - d) masters degree: ()
 - e) others specify: () _____
6. Years of teaching experience,

Below 5 years (), 5-10 () 11-15 (), 16-20 () 21 years and above ()

Section 2 Teaching and learning materials

Indicate with a tick ()

7. Do you teach in the special unit? Yes () No ()
8. If the answer to question 7 is yes, how long have you been teaching in the unit?

Less than 5 years () 5-10 years () 11 years and above ()
9. How is your work load in terms of teaching and preparation of working documents?

Too much () moderate () light ()
10. Indicate with a tick in the appropriate box below to the extent to which you agree with the following statement:

	Adequate	Not adequate	Not at all
Availability of teaching and learning materials			
Teaching and learning time adequate			
The unit has adequate and appropriate			

physical facilities for pupils with special educational needs			
Parental involvement in the learning process of their children			
Acquired skills by pupils help them in life			
Support to the unit from school management			

11. What curriculum do you use in the unit? _____
12. Do you think the curriculum meets the basic needs of the learners? Yes () No ()
13. Do standards officers monitor the special education unit? Yes () No ()
14. (a) if yes how often? _____
 (b) If no why? _____
15. Does the unit provide training in special needs for the mainstream through In-Service Teacher training through teacher group meetings? YES () No ()
16. If the answer is No why? _____
17. Are there pupils who are on the individualized education programme? Yes () No ()
18. What support does the unit receive from?
 (a) Government _____
 (b) Community _____
 (c) Line Ministries _____
 (d) Non-governmental Organizations _____
19. How do you rate the quality of special education units' education outcomes on the scale of 1-4? 1=very good, 2 = good, 3 average, 4 = low

	1	2	3	4
a. learners' competence in numeracy and literacy				
b. learners develop personal attitudes and skills, work independently and in groups				
c. achieve targets in their individual education plans				

(IEPs)				
d. pupils make progress to the next stage of the education				
e. pupils demonstrate levels of social and communication skills which enable progression				

20. Do you think the special education unit is offering quality education? Explain.

21. What suggestions can you give for improving special education provisions in the unit?

Appendix iv

Interview Guide for Pupils

Demographic

School/ Unit: _____

Type of disability: _____

Gender: Females () Males()

1. Do you use learning materials in all subjects?
2. Are you given homework regularly?
3. Where you assessed before placing you in a class?
4. Do you learn every day?
5. Are you all able to read and write?
6. What problems do you face in learning numeracy?
7. How would you describe the school environment for your learning?
8. Does the head teacher visit your class to check how teaching and learning are going?
9. Has your class ever been visited by standards officers?
10. How are your parents involved in your learning?
11. What other people are involved in your learning?.