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**POWER OR EMPOWERMENT?
AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE FUNDING OF ZAMBIA HEALTH SECTOR**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to explore the influence of donor funding practices on the design of health programmes and health service delivery within Zambia's health sector. Drawing on Bourdieu's theory of capital and Freeman's stakeholder theory, the study explores power structures surrounding the design, funding and implementation of health programmes in an attempt to better understand the role of donor organisations on health service delivery. Guided by a qualitative research approach through semi-structured interviews and content analysis, the study provides important insights regarding the impact of donor influence on Zambia's health sector performance. The paradoxical nature of these findings suggests that despite the good intentions exhibited by donor organisations to empower health service delivery through funding activities, the exercise of power and influence in terms of resource allocation structures may require some balancing to ensure that the needs of other stakeholders are equally fulfilled.

Keywords: Healthcare, Bourdieu's theory, Freeman's stakeholder theory
Stakeholders, Zambia.