

**AN INVESTIGATION OF GRADE 7 PUPILS' UNDERSTANDING OF  
NON CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN 2  
SELECTED SERENJE DISTRICT PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

**BY**

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I, NDHLOVU DUBA do solemnly declare that this dissertation represents my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or another University.

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## APPROVAL

This dissertation by Ndhlovu Duba is approved as fulfilling part of the requirements for the award of the degree of Masters in Primary Education by the University of Zambia.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my first grandson, Lushomo, and all my forthcoming grandchildren. I also sincerely dedicate the study to my husband Mr Musonda Chunga and my children; Mr and Mrs Moonde, Ipalo, Taonga and Bupe for their mutual support during the time I detached myself from the family for the purpose of the study. I further dedicate the study to the memory of my late father and mother for their unfailing love and dedication as they nurtured me before they departed to be with the Lord.

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Finally, I acknowledge my valued respondents for every contribution made to this study. I am indebted to all especially that I sought for their participation at the time they were preparing themselves for the most important examinations.

## **ABSTRACT**

The study investigated grade 7 pupils' understanding of non-Christian religions in selected primary schools in Serenje District. The study began by highlighting how the current pluralistic Zambian Religious Education has come about in order to implement and achieve objectives in the Education policy documents and also in the Constitution of Zambia.

The study was conducted in Serenje District at two primary schools. One school was situated in the District Administrative centre, hereby stated as Abesu school while the other school was situated in the outskirts of the District, hereby stated as Balulu School.

The study used the qualitative approach and case study research design in order to effectively achieve the research objectives and provide descriptive findings. In data collection, individual interviews, focus group discussions, short one-word answer exercise and lesson observation were used. The instruments for data collection were semi structured interview guides, focus group discussion guides and filling in the gaps questions. The target population was all the grade 7 pupils in Serenje District primary schools. Simple random sampling was used where all pupils of a grade seven class in a selected school were drawn as respondents.

The study was backed with Goldman's theory of religious thinking and Jean Piaget's theory on child's cognitive development. Grade 7 pupils being of ages between eleven and thirteen years were in their concrete stage of development and as such learners were only capable to make sense of concrete information. Similarly, the social environment surrounding primary schools created either a positive or a negative re-enforcement to the knowledge learners obtained in their classroom.

The findings of the study were that pupils at grade 7 in primary schools in Serenje District of Zambia, had limited, distorted and weird understanding of non-Christian religions. Findings proved that the general outcomes for Religious Education were not being achieved. It was therefore recommended that production of appropriate teaching and learning aids in form of charts, videos, models, film slides, pictures and posters to support learning needs have be maximised. Additionally, Religious Education books should adequately be supplied in rural primary schools and they should contain as much information about religions in picture form.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the background to the study. It provides the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives and research questions. Additionally, significance of the study, delimitation and limitations are also presented.

#### **1.2 Background**

Zambia is a democratic, multi-cultural and multi-religious country. The main religious traditions in the country are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Zambian traditional beliefs. Out of these four main religions in Zambia, Christianity enjoys a high status of being the dominant religion. The declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation on the 29<sup>th</sup> December 1991 has influenced further the dominance of Christianity. Despite this declaration, religions are guaranteed equal freedom of conscience, which includes freedom of thought and religion as enshrined in the preamble of the Zambian Constitution and Part III Article 19 of (GRZ, 1996).

By the 2010 demographic figures the population in Zambia was 87% Christian, 1% Muslim and Hindu and 12% Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs and others. Despite the fact that non-Christian religions are in the minimal numbers, they have been included in the primary school curriculum because they are still observed and recognised in the society. Some educators have wondered why such religions as Hinduism and Islam whose representation in Zambia was negligible should be taught in Zambian primary schools. Kabwe (1985), for example, reports that most teachers of Religious Education questioned the inclusion of these religions in the syllabus because the numbers of Hindu and Muslim pupils in Zambian schools were negligible. On the other hand, the inclusion of non-Christian religions in the primary school curriculum received positive support by others such as Simuchimba (2000) who argues that although the number of pupils from non-Christian traditions in schools is negligible, the rights of the minority were still to be respected.

The influence of religions found around the community, no matter how negligible the numbers, would still have the capacity to impact some behaviour in people. In respect to such anticipated influences it was just in order that religious pluralism in education had to be considered and hence the inclusion of non-Christian religions in the Zambian primary school curriculum.

As at now, Zambia has become more pluralistic, influencing a new dimension of Religious Education. Simuchimba (2001:109) acknowledges that “as Zambian society has developed and become more pluralistic over the years, Zambian RE has developed and passed through different stages”. Religious Education in this case responds to the prevailing pluralistic situation so that learners are helped “to appreciate and understand not only Christian values and behaviours but those of non-Christian traditions as well” (Simuchimba, 2001:109). The concern is whether the Zambian rural primary school children have enough exposure to other world religions apart from Christianity so as to understand non-Christian religions and appreciate them.

Religious Education has been taught in Zambia since the inception of Western education and has undergone different developmental stages. According to Flynn (1985) and Simuchimba (2001) the Religious Education developmental stages were the ‘denominational’ from missionary settlement up to the sixties; the ‘ecumenical’, in the seventies; and the ‘educational’, from the eighties when new Zambian, multi-faith syllabuses were introduced as part of wider Educational Reforms started in 1977.

During the period before the Christian missionary education in Zambia, religious instruction was taught to the upcoming generation by elders in a traditional way. Each society followed its own form of ‘syllabuses. Snelson (1974:2) acknowledges that “the life of the young African was punctuated by religious experience since almost every event .... was accorded a spiritual significance”. Christian missionaries at their arrival embarked on evangelising Zambia in the Christian faith. Christian missionaries concentrated on replacing Zambian traditional beliefs with Christian values and traditions. Yambayamba (2007:13) stated that “the RI that was taught in schools even up to 1984 was for indoctrinating the learner”. Yambayamba (2007:13) further states that “the syllabus for Religious Instruction that was taught to the pupils was designed by each particular denomination”. In the same regard, Carmody (2004) stated that Religious Education followed denominational lines during the

missionary education. During this period, Religious Education was organised according to particular mission societies settled in particular areas and Religious Education was an instructional method to indoctrinate pupils in particular belief systems. The concern of this study was that understanding of a particular religion was not a factor in this form of Religious Education. Hence the need to seek the understanding of non-Christian religions by primary school learners, especially those in the rural areas.

Christianity, Islam and Hinduism have remained as exotic religions to the indigenous Zambian educational system. This has promoted pluralism in the Religious Education offered at primary school level as well. Simuchimba (2007) points out that Zambia had increasingly become a plural and multi-faith society since the second half of the nineteenth century when Europeans and Asians arrived with new religions. In the advent of the emerging pluralism, teaching of world religions has to facilitate understanding in order for pupils to appreciate and respect other peoples' belief systems. It is in this light that an investigation is being carried out on the understanding of non-Christian religions in Religious Education in selected Serenje District primary schools.

The 1977 National Educational Reform aimed at creating an education system which was properly attuned to and more fully met the needs and aspirations of Zambians (MoE, 1977). Religious Education was considered and made pluralistic as it included the major religions found in Zambia, namely Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Zambian Traditional beliefs and some aspects of Humanism. Similarly, the 1996 education policy document for Zambia, *Educating our Future*, set goals of producing a learner capable of being animated by a personally held set of civic, moral and spiritual values, demonstrating free expression of one's own ideas and exercising tolerance for other people's views; appreciating Zambia's ethnic cultures, customs and traditions, and upholding national pride, sovereignty, peace, freedom and independence (MoE, 1996). The aims reflected in the education policy documents led to Religious Education being considered as educational and pluralistic. Carmody (2004) stated that Religious Education was no longer supposed to be indoctrinating but educationally and professionally taught. Similarly, this research endeavoured to find out grade 7 pupil's understanding of non-Christian religions in Religious Education in selected Serenje District primary schools.

The grade 1 – 7 syllabus has its general outcome for Religious Education as to develop in learners spiritual and moral values. Religions reflected in the syllabus include the non-Christian religions (Islam, Hinduism and Indigenous Zambian traditional beliefs) (CDC, 2003). The implication of these goals and the general outcomes is that learners in urban and rural parts of Zambia need to have an understanding of the main religions that are found in the nation with Christianity being the dominant religion. It was this background that led the researcher to find out the understanding of non-Christian religions by grade seven pupils in a rural primary school set up.

For the purpose of this study some outcomes were selected as a guide to show that at the end of grade seven, pupils were expected to have gained knowledge and understanding not only of Christianity but also of other world religions. The following were some selected outcomes which depicted areas where understanding of non-Christian religions was sought.

#### **General Outcomes for Grades 1 – 7.**

- Develop moral and ethical qualities rooted in a spiritual dimension.
- Develop an understanding of the functions of social institutions and roles of the individuals and groups of different cultural settings in both the past and the present.

At grade 2

#### **General Outcome**

- Develop an understanding of spiritual and moral values.

#### **Specific Outcomes**

2.2.1 Name different religions in Zambia.

2.2.2 Mention places where members of different religions worship (eg. Church, Mosque, Temple).

2.2.3 Discuss different ways of praying.

At grade 3

#### **General Outcome**

- Develop an understanding of spiritual and moral values.

### **Specific Outcomes**

- 1.2.1 Mention occasions which community members celebrate.
- 1.2.2 Explain the importance of these occasions.
- 1.2.3 Describe what happens at Muslim and Hindu festivals.
- 1.2.4 Describe other religious festivals

At grade 4

### **General Outcome**

- Develop an understanding of spiritual and moral values.

### **Specific Outcomes**

- 1.2.9 Discuss traditional and religious teaching about life after death.

At grade 5

### **General Outcome**

- Develop an understanding of spiritual and moral values.

### **Specific Outcomes**

- 5.2.3 Describe how other children are taught their religion.
- 5.2.4 Illustrate how young Zambian Christians today learn about traditional teachings and practices of their particular churches.
- 5.3.1 Mention examples from the Bible of history, letters, sermons, songs and parables.
- 5.3.4 Describe the Holy writings of the other religions.
- 5.3.5 Compare the main teachings of the New Testament to other religions.

At grade 6

### **General Outcome**

- Develop an understanding of spiritual and moral values.

### **Specific Outcomes**

- 4.3.1 Describe how people pray and worship in Zambia today.
- 4.3.2 Recall some religious proverbs and stories used in Zambian traditions.
- 4.3.3 Describe different kinds of prayers and Worship by people in traditional Zambian life.
- 6.2.5 Compare and contrast Christian happiness to other religions.

At grade 7

### **General Outcome**

- Develop an understanding of spiritual and moral values.

### **Specific Outcomes**

- 1.2.2 Discuss the values of marriage.
- 1.2.3 Discuss the qualities of a marriage partner.
- 7.2.6 Discuss religious teachings about marriage.

## **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

There are four main world religions that are found in the curriculum for the primary school course, namely; Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs. Primary schools in most rural parts of Zambia have less or no encounter of non-Christian religions outside their classroom experience. It follows that understanding of non-Christian religions in rural primary schools of Zambia may be questionable. It was in this regard that this research was conceptualised to find out rural grade seven primary school pupils' understanding of non-Christian religions.

## **1.4 Purpose of the Study**

The study was intended to investigate the understanding of non-Christian religions by grade seven pupils in two selected primary schools in Serenje District of Zambia.

## **1.5 Research Objectives**

The research attempted to achieve the following objectives:

1. To determine the understanding of non-Christian religions by grade seven pupils in Serenje District primary schools.
2. To establish the significance of understanding non-Christian religions to Serenje District primary school pupils.
3. To ascertain the teaching strategies used in Social Studies in the teaching about religions in Serenje District primary schools.

## **1.6 Research Questions**

1. What is the understanding of non-Christian regions by the grade seven pupils in Serenje District primary schools?

2. What is the significance of understanding non-Christian religions to the Serenje District primary school pupils?
3. What teaching strategies are used in Social Studies in the teaching about religions in Serenje District primary schools?

### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

The study was designed to draw attention to the understanding of non-Christian religions in rural primary schools. It is hoped that the study will attract the attention of many educationists in Zambia. The study might also prepare University and College student teachers of Religious Education for what they are likely to encounter in their profession.

### **1.8 Theoretical Framework**

Theoretical framework is intended to guide the presentation of findings, analysis and the discussion of data collected. A theoretical framework, according to Chalmer (1982), identifies research variables and clarifies relationships among the variables. The framework provides the parameters at all levels of the research appropriate to the study at hand.

A close application of children's cognitive stages and religious thinking stages of development became necessary in the study to efficiently deal with responses from primary school pupils who were in their concrete stage of development. Piaget, a well-known Swiss psychologist, proposed that every human being passes through a developmental pattern of thinking from that of an infant to an adult. The developmental pattern, Piaget (1979) claimed, had appropriate ages attached at each stage and each stage was characterised by a particular cognitive structure. The stages started with the sensori-motor at the ages of zero to two years; the second stage was pre-operational thought at the ages of two to seven years; the third stage was known as concrete operational at the ages of seven to eleven years, and finally the fourth stage was formal operational at the ages of twelve and above.

A child at birth was in the sensori-motor stage capable of mental skills which were limited to reflex actions of grasping, sucking and general body movements. Later on the child learnt to differentiate objects that were pleasant to suck from those that were not. Eventually the notion of permanence developed and children realised that objects had permanent existence.

The second stage was known as the pre-operational. In this stage the child learnt to talk and vocabulary increased gradually; the capacity and power of thinking improved also. The child learnt to represent absent objects, things or events by the use of sound and imitative actions. Children became creative and constructive in their plays. Children were egocentric, seeing everything in relation to self. As children advanced in the same cognitive development stage, they were able to conserve quantity, length, volume, etc. They were capable of classifying objects based on simple characteristics such as colour, size and shape at a time. Children observed and experimented with purpose but faced challenges with time sequence.

At the ages of 7 – 11 years, children were known to be in their concrete operation stage (middle primary school level), (Piaget, 1979). Children were able to conserve and had the capacity of reversibility in thinking. Children enjoyed learning new skills through constructive actions but had difficulties in dealing with verbal problems or abstractions. Children depended on concrete materials or real objects to make sense out of them. This study observed that most children begin and end their primary education in this cognitive development period. It was with such observation that this stage was taken into account and guided the research study.

Finally, children in the last cognitive development stage known as the formal operation stage were 12 years of age to adulthood. These children, according to Piaget (1979), were able to reason without the need for concrete materials or real objects. They were capable of dealing with more complex relations and were able to criticise an idea and put forward opinions with supportive evidence.

On the other hand, Goldman (1964) theorised ‘Religious thinking from Childhood to Adolescence.’ Before Goldman’s theory, Religious Education which was offered in England and Wales was Christian oriented. That meant that most of the school activities both in and out of the classroom were done to promote the Christian faith. With regards to Religious Education, most of the materials recommended at that time for every age group were Biblical and it was rare that non-Biblical resources were used. Thus, Goldman’s (1964) study focused on children’s ability to understand religious concepts in particular as they appeared in biblical narratives.

Like in Piaget’s cognitive development theory, Goldman (1964) observed that children and adolescents passed through the same stages of development in their religious thinking as in

their more general thinking though there was a delay in the onset of the stages in the case of religious thinking compared to general thinking. Goldman followed the same developmental stages as Jean Piaget's though he arrived at five stages of children's religious thinking. He called these stages as: Pre-Religious thought (5-7 years), the Sub-Religious thought stage one (7-8/9 years), the Sub-Religious thought stage two (8/9-11/12years), the Personal Religious thought stage one (11/12 years) and the Personal Religious thought stage two (13/14 years and above).

In the Pre-Religious thought, children were incapable of distinguishing relevant from irrelevant details in the Bible stories. Religious thinking was "unsystematic and fragmentary" due to a lack of reversibility of thought; children were unable "to work back from an inconsistency to check on the evidence in the light of conclusions reached" (Goldman, 1964: 52).

In the Sub-Religious thought phase one, children were considered to be in transition between intuitive and concrete religious thinking. This phase was characterized by a child breaking out of the limitations of intuitive modes of thought. During this stage, "the child saw the necessity of a different process of thinking, but had not developed enough skills or insights to execute it" (Goldman, 1964: 54).

In the third stage of Sub-Religious thought phase two, children were in the concrete stage in which they successfully employed inductive and deductive logic, limited to "concrete situations, visual experiences and sensory data" (Goldman 1964: 55). Here children employed operational modes of thinking in formulating responses but still focused on concrete features of the story.

The concrete stage was followed by a second transitional stage in which children gradually began to employ more advanced inductive and deductive logic and abstract modes of thought. The advanced modes of thinking were sometimes distracted by concrete elements in situations that children seemed unable to comprehend. Whereas, children at the concrete stage would cite a specific wrongdoing as the basis of fear, at this stage they were more likely to offer a generalized statement for doing wrong. My study particularly employed the third and fourth stages of Goldman's theory of religious thinking as most grade seven pupils were in the age range of 11 to 14 years.

The fifth and final stage, the Personal Religious thought phase two was for the ages of fourteen years and above. Children in this stage had the capacity to think in abstract, hypothetically and deductively without interference from concrete elements in a given situation. Reversibility now operated at the propositional level and children were able to achieve consistency by exploring the implications of particular statements and tracing them back to the original argument (Goldman, 1964).

Grade seven pupils being of ages between eleven and thirteen years, were in the concrete stage of development and as such learners were only capable to make sense with concrete information. This was in agreement with Berk (2005:242) who said that children in their concrete stage “think in an organised, logical fashion only when dealing with concrete information that they can perceive directly.” Goldman (1964) also stated that at this stage children successfully employed inductive and deductive logic but limited to concrete situations, visual experience and sensory data. This consideration was taken into account and guided the research study.

### **1.9 Validity and Reliability**

Validity examines the extent to which the results of the study could be generalised to the real world (Achola and Bless, 1988). This study used a combination of four data collection methods. There were face to face interviews, focus group discussion, short answer exercise and a lesson observation. The combination of these methods used in the study increased reliability and validity. Multiple methods of data collection validate research because methods complement each other with no overlapping weaknesses (Brewer and Patton, 2002). Combination of methods ensures that inconsistencies are removed and thus valid and reliable data emerges (Patton, 1990).

In order to validate the findings, the researcher listened to the recordings at the end of each day so as to check for unclear material and then cross check with the respondents (Patton, 1990). While cross checking, the researcher made use of the responses for the verification of the findings.

### **1.10 Delimitation**

The study was limited to only two selected primary schools in Serenje District of Zambia. This was because the researcher was interested in having in-depth information on the matter under investigation.

### **1.11 Limitation**

The research study being qualitative depended mostly on individual and focus group interviews. Rural primary school pupils could not adequately express themselves in English which affected the quality of data collection. However, local language was employed to maximise participation of all who were selected in the sample.

### **1.12 Structure of the Dissertation**

In the introduction the background to Religious Education in Zambia has been outlined from the time of confessional up to the present experience of pluralism.

In chapter two, literature on the development of pluralism in Religious Education at global level and development of pluralism in Religious Education in Zambia has been reviewed. Literature review helped the researcher to define frontiers as Awoniyi (2011:35) states, “a thorough knowledge of related research work enables the researcher to define frontiers”.

In chapter three the research methodology used in the study is described. The study employed a qualitative approach and specifically a case study research design. Semi structured interviews, focus group discussions and a filling in the gaps exercise were administered in data collection.

As regards chapter four, data collected has been presented in accordance with the research questions and the following were the categories under which presentation was done: what is the understanding of non-Christian religions? What teaching strategies are used in Religious Education when teaching religions and what is the significance of understanding non-Christian religions?

Chapter five discusses findings following the themes that emerged from the research findings. Therefore, the headings found in the discussions are: limited understanding of non-Christian religions; the understanding of non-Christian religions viewed as insignificance; and teaching strategies in Religious Education to enhance understanding of non-Christian religions in the rural Zambian primary schools.

The final but not least chapter of the dissertation has given conclusions and recommendations.

### **1.13 Summary**

This chapter has provided the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose, the research objectives and questions. It has also given the significance, the theoretical framework, delimitation and limitations, thereby explaining the study. The next chapter reviews the literature related to the study.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents literature on the development of pluralism in Religious Education at global level and pluralism in Religious Education in Zambia. Focus was given on learners' understanding of religions in primary schools because this was significant to my study which was an investigation of grade seven pupils' understanding of non-Christian religions in Religious Education in 2 selected Serenje District primary schools in Zambia. As Kombo (2006) states, literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by other scholars and researchers. The review of literature was necessary to provide information that existed with the purpose of enhancing the study at hand. Literature review was discussed under the following headings: the development of pluralism in Religious Education at global level and pluralism in Religious Education in Zambia.

#### **2.2 Pluralism in Religious Education**

Most scholars have expressed the view that religion played a significant role in providing human life experiences. Religion is said to have answers to a number of human life's critical existential questions. According to Matsaung (1999), religion is said to permeate relationships, inform values and beliefs and to changes behaviour. To this effect, individuals and societies in most cases draw their identity, among other things, from religious practices that they adhere to. The significance of understanding religion cannot therefore, be over exemplified.

Every generation makes sure that succeeding generations acquire appropriate cultural and religious practices in order to perpetuate the way of life of a particular society. The content and methods used in the acquisition of the religious practices may differ from one society to another but the young generation always depends on the old experienced generation. Magesa (1997:24) explains that religion has "...a fundamental pattern embracing the individual and society, man and the world..." Every individual in the society in this world require some kind of acceptable principles to guide one's life without which one would be considered an outfit.

This is the reason why religion is so significant in people's lives that it cannot be ignored by any society.

Plurality of religious traditions has characterised every part of the world today. Many societies world over are becoming pluralistic as people of different races, cultures, political, and religious beliefs come to live together. People have to understand other people's religious practices within their community in order to effectively co-exist. Eck (2012:14) said that the plurality of religious traditions and cultures had characterised every part of the world. It should be noted here that pluralism can be explained in various ways. Eck explains pluralism as not just tolerance, but the active seeking of understanding across lines of differences. Tolerance according to her does not necessarily require adherents of one religion to have any knowledge of the other. In this case tolerance does not remove our ignorance of one another which in today's global village era would be very costly to allow.

Pluralism is where dialogue is allowed. Eck (2012:16) continues to explain that "the language of pluralism is that of dialogue and encounter, give and take, criticism and self-criticism." Dialogue entails that there is speaking and listening, a process that would bring out common understanding and also reveal real differences. In this study the religious pluralism being considered is that of understanding across lines of difference as Eck (2012) states. This understanding of religions is meant to help individuals as well as societies remove ignorance and prejudiced ideas. Knowledge of one another's religious traditions in a course also stop stereotyping and fearing certain religions.

Some societies have faced challenges in embracing religious pluralism. In most cases only one religion which is dominant or recognised more than the others is given attention for understanding. When favour is given to certain particular religious' traditions, misunderstanding of other religions may arise and pervert expectations from them. Many nations have religions that are dominant or indigenous with a majority of the population as adherents on one hand and on the other hand some religions within the same nation may be with a negligibly small population. It is in such cases that religious pluralism and understanding of other religions become debatable.

All in all, it is becoming clear that religious pluralism or inter-religious dialogue is being addressed by many scholars. Webster (1990:46) admits that "the friendship, respect and

understanding, the willingness to listen and learn anew which characterises inter-faith worship, are urgently needed in the multi-faith, multicultural society.” In agreement to Webster’s statement, this study endeavoured to find out the understanding of religions in the present multi-faith society.

Due to such circumstances, it is imperative that an opportunity should be granted for learners to gain understanding of religions surrounding them in their early grades in school. Webster (1990:45) states that “if youngsters have no understanding of the religions .... And politics which lie behind say, the conflicts between Jews and Muslims in the Middle East, then their education is seriously impoverished”. Many times some religions have been condemned because there has been no understanding about such religions.

Scholars have observed that religion is viewed to be always true to those practising it. Ghouse (2010) argues that religion is in the heart of the believer just as beauty is in the eyes of the beholder. This is to emphasise the fact that understanding of religions by other people is important to avoid prejudice. As children interact and learn various aspects of life in their environment, certain questions need to be clarified at the earliest possible time before they concretise wrong ideas. As such merely discussing the significance of understanding religions is not enough, but it is expedient that educators ascertain this understanding in the current and upcoming generations.

### **2.3 Pluralism in Religious Education in Britain**

Cox (1990:102) writes that “the coming to Britain of religious pluralism has caused Religious Education in schools to widen its perspective.” Other nations have had different experiences in similar terms with Religious Education.

Barnes and Kay (2002:16) report that “Religious Education changed by stages and at different speeds in different parts of the country in England and Wales”. The aims of Religious Education changed from those of being covert to being more general. The general aims stressed the importance of religion in understanding culture and in turn helped learners to find their identity and meaning in life. Barnes and Kay (2002) explained further that phenomenological or descriptive approaches were later employed in Religious Education. The approach was meant to make Religious Education more educational and responsive to the achievement of aims of pluralistic Religious Education.

The reforms in approaches used in Religious Education were an expression of how the role of Religious Education is meant to meet the religious aspirations of particular societies at particular times. To this effect, many scholars have ascribed to the fact that the most appropriate approach in Religious Education in today's pluralist society is the phenomenological one. Phenomenology of religion is an approach that tends to bring about a coherent account of the whole phenomena of religion. This study sought to establish whether Religious Education created in learners a non-judgemental attitude towards the various religious traditions they encounter in the classroom situation and outside.

Homan and King (1993) carried out research in Britain to respond to charges that multi-faith Religious Education was a confusing development. The concern was that a mishmash of Religious Education was going to lead to confusion, whether of factual knowledge or of personal identity. The other concerns were that identity was going to be compromised by the mishmash approach which gave many answers rather than one to existential questions and that spiritual values were going to be watered down. The projects, Homan and King (1993) administered were to prove whether a religious syllabus that incorporated non-Christian religions were a healthy move to primary schools in Britain.

One approach Homan and King used was to take children in their third grade in an urban school to visit a church, a mosque and a synagogue. The children were reported not to have been susceptible to confusion of the kind the concerned people most feared. Learners were given a simple grid on which recording of simple facts they observed were noted about the buildings they visited. The recordings that came out were not necessarily explicitly religious as they simply noted things such as the gentleness of the Imam, or being allowed to go upstairs in the synagogue or the picture of Mary in the church. In this way Homan and King (1993:12) noted that "tolerance and appreciation were therefore being developed as a response to objects or art and incidental features." Further, they noted that learners had the capacity to assimilate new ideas and to treat these with respect and that there was little evidence that insight of other religions than their own was confusing with previous beliefs. Instead learners learnt to respect beliefs of others accompanied by respect of their own beliefs.

It may not only be the content of the syllabus but also the methodologies used by teachers that would bring about the achievement of objectives in Religious Education. It was

discovered that multi-faith Religious Education was not in itself an influencing factor to confusion. Homan and King (1993:16) noted that it was “apparent that the knowledge, training and commitment of the teacher were as significant a factor in aspects of confusion.” Religious Education in today’s pluralist societies requires teachers who are knowledgeable, committed, well trained and professional to ensure understanding of religions by learners.

The approach Homan and King employed worked well in schools that were surrounded by communities that had adherents to various religions. The findings of Homan and King were effective in urban primary school set up because of the various religious traditions available for learners to visit. I presumed that rural primary schools which were surrounded by only one or two dominated religions might have found difficulties to carry out such an activity for the purpose of exposing learners to other religious traditions.

#### **2.4 Pluralism in Religious Education in America**

Religious pluralism in America was known to impute positive meaning to religion and at the same time encouraged appreciation of many forms of religions. It conveyed respect for the contributions that religious traditions made and continued to make to the American society. The different traditions were known to be amongst the resources for national unity and strength. Americans cherished their religious freedom and were committed, albeit imperfectly, to the ideal of pluralism (Rood, 2006).

Religion actually fostered a liberal education, scholarly inquiry and an open exchange of academic life in various learning institutions in America. Teaching of world religions in this vein could not be ignored but treasured for continued benefits. The teaching was also to be designed in such a manner that its focus was directed on learners having an understanding of world religions and be able to positively contribute to society.

Pluralism in Religious Studies marked an important advance to help students understand different types of people and their cultures. Students in such a learning environment were expected to develop an open mind and a sense of respect for other people’s religious beliefs and values. Students were also granted an opportunity to examine structures and characteristics of various religions including their own with an investigative mind and sense

of freedom. In the process, the outcome brought about citizens who were well informed to make independent and responsible decisions about their religious values (Rood, 2006).

Pluralism in Religious Studies in America started from the liberal Protestantism after Second World War. During this period, after the Second World War, Protestants viewed the study of religions as a linkage between the academic study of religion and Christian education. The Protestants' understanding was that studying different forms of religions was going to make church members better informed Christians. Aquillian (1953) acknowledged that churches had a particular interest in the State Religious Department due to the understanding that the department was a direct ally of the church and as such the academic study of religion was going to mean strengthening liberal Protestants faith. Christianity at this point was considered superior, demanding special attention in education.

Religious Studies in America was based on the understanding that religions had common essential elements and that human religiosity was a basis for social progress and peace. This idea of social progress and peace due to religiosity was drawn from the Protestant view of the church. Church, according to Protestants, was understood to be an invisible alliance of Christian saints throughout the world working more or less independently of one another but gathering cooperative momentum as time progressed (Aquillian, 1953).

Scholars like Josiah Strong in Porterfield (2001) described the alliance of Christian saints as a 'committee of churches' dedicated to scientific ways of thinking. Such scientific ways of thinking and also idealistic approach to religion and religious pluralism could only be experienced in Religious Studies (unlike Religious Education, religion in America was taught in Religious Studies). In this vein, Porterfield (2001:13) stated that "the American college classroom was an ideal space for learning and practicing religious pluralism". The development of pluralism in Religious Education in America can, thus, be traced from the time of the Protestants who desired a more understanding of other religions in order that adherents to their religion could be better informed. Similarly, pluralism in Zambia could be traced from the time Christian missionaries settled into the Zambian territory and dominated Religious Education.

Simmer-Brown (1999), reports how at one point America realised diversity in religion. At an exposition conducted in the nineteenth century in Chicago, a rainbow array of presenters

from all the major world religions was exposed. This was the first time that mainstream America really looked at the question of difference in religion (Simmer-Brown, 1999). It was at this point that America, according to Simmer-Brown (1999) realised that the superiority of Christianity was actually not obvious to everyone. Religious pluralism became a reality and an important subject to ponder on. Respect for the differences that reside in the variety of religious traditions was needed. The outcome of the exposition was that the Council of World Parliament of Religions based in Chicago began to seek how to cultivate harmony among the world's religious and spiritual communities. In turn, the cultivated harmony was to achieve a just, peaceful and sustainable world. The development of pluralism and the awareness to cultivate harmony among the world religions meant teaching world religions in Religious Studies.

The challenge posed was how religion would be studied without inviting conflict among different religious adherents. In Eccles (2013) explanation, religious programs were to be built on the interdenominational cooperation among Protestants that already existed centuries over. In his explanation Eccles (2013) did not take into account that Protestants belonged to the same faith though found in different denominations whereas religious pluralism at hand meant religions of different faiths. The two concepts would not be dealt or handled in the same way in Religious Studies.

## **2.5 Pluralism in Religious Education in the Balkan countries**

The term Balkans is a geographical designation for the south-eastern peninsula of the European continent. It is one region of Europe that contains as many different peoples in the technical sense, 'nations'. The countries that make up the Balkans include Greece, Albania, Macedonia, Bulgaria, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, Croatia and Bosnia. Most Balkan nations as listed share certain historical characteristics such as several centuries of association with the ruling Turks. Other population groups who inhabit the Balkans are members of nations which have countries elsewhere. Sometimes scholars define the Balkans as the region that was conquered and ruled by the Ottoman Turks for varying periods of time. The Turks brought the Muslim faith, which is maintained today by Turks in the region and which was adopted by some Europeans as well. The major confessions in the region were thus Catholic, Orthodox and Islamic (Wheeling Jesuit University, 2000).

Pluralism in Religious Education was one of the most contested problems in the mentioned republics. Introduction of Religious Education in the first instance was a challenge. Moe (2006) said that it was a particularly sensitive issue how the state organises the teaching of religion, and as such, the subject could easily become a focus of social conflict. Republics of the former Yugoslavia, namely Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia and Montenegro and Macedonia have had differing experiences in the development of pluralism in Religious Studies or Religious Education. Religious Education was introduced in Croatia in 1991, in Bosnia in 1994, in Serbia in 2001. These countries organised Religious Education in form of confessional religious instruction which was offered in public schools. The teaching methods used were of the religious communities which included catechism and mektebs. Classes were segregated so that the subject was offered to children of select denominations. The children were graded in the subject though the grading policies differed from country to country. The Religious Education practiced in these countries posed danger of children not having any understanding and appreciation of other religions, a state that did not facilitate religious freedom and non-discrimination as enshrined in human rights (Moe, 2006).

In Slovenia confessional Religious Education was barred from public schools, instead there was a non-confessional elective subject covering different religions. Macedonia attempted confessional instruction in 2001 to 2003 but failed. Even though legislative framework differs widely, from the Slovene and Macedonian legislation no confessional teaching in public schools is allowed (Moe, 2006). Macedonia was reported to have been in the process of planning to re-introduce a religious education subject, the form of which was still debated. Montenegro, according to Moe (2006) had not introduced Religious Education at all.

It should be noted here that Confessional Religious Education aimed at teaching religion or teaching for religion in order to create a religious identity of a believer. It aimed at imparting religious beliefs, identity and ritual participation skills from the believing insider's viewpoint (Moe, 2006). This is different from a Non-confessional Religious Education which aims at transmitting knowledge and values derived from several religions as well as non-religious ethics. Non-confessional Religious Education was offered to all children without regard to confession but Confessional Religious Education targeted children belonging to a particular religion confessed. A Non-confessional Religious Education exposed children to other

religions and an understanding of diverse religions granted the fulfilment of religious freedom.

The stated nations, apart from the well-known religious confessions of Catholic, Orthodox and Islamic, had small and new religious minorities which were to be considered in Religious Education. The challenge remained as to how Religious Education was going to represent each religion without any bias, stereotype and propaganda against other religions. Another major concern was whether a dominant church or religious community sought for much authority to shape primary school children character through Religious Education. The concern of a dominant church or religious community hindering the understanding of other religions can be sensed in the Zambian situation where a particular religion is declared a national religion. Research on the understanding of non-Christian religions in Zambian primary schools becomes imperative.

The level at which Religious Education was offered in the countries cited gives a picture that religious pluralism remained a concern in public schools. Moe (2006) writes that academic students of religion in the region shared common concerns and interests in developing and promoting school subjects that would give knowledge of many religions without committing themselves to the views of any particular religion. Religious Education in these countries would be considered as having a great need for interventional strategies in the current pluralistic society. Students' motives to opt for religious education were on the basis of personal interest to acquire new knowledge. Moe (2006:26) stated that from the research that examined the reasons students and parents chose Religious Education, the majority of children mentioned new knowledge and interest in the subject as their motives to take this subject.

## **2.6 Pluralism in Religious Education in Ireland**

The development of pluralism in Religious Education in Ireland was unique in the sense that a greater part of its primary schools were under denominational patronage. A school under denominational patronage was one that provided religious education according to the traditions, practices and beliefs of a specified religious community. Primary schools were under denominational patronage because from the establishment of the National (primary) School system in 1831 the state provided financial support to local patrons for primary school

provision as long as the patrons observed the regulations of the Commissioner of National Education (Coolahan, 2012). At that time and several generations afterwards the majority of Irish people were affiliated mainly to the Catholic Church.

Before independence, as earlier stated, the Irish national school system allowed the state to provide financial support to local patrons for primary school provision. The state favoured applications from patrons of mixed denominations and in the process “a great majority of schools were under the patronage of individual clergymen of different denominations” (Coolahan, 2012). Despite having a vast number of the schools under the control of patrons of particular denominations, control was exercised to prevent schools from proselytism in order to protect the belief systems of pupils who did not share the religious belief of the majority in the school they attended.

In the post-independence of Ireland, it is recorded that the society underwent major political, social, economic, cultural, demographic and educational change (Coolahan, 2012). Ireland gained independence from England on December 6, 1921 after a number of years’ struggle with the British Empire which ruled Ireland from the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The changes which took place included the considerations towards addressing the diversity of religious belief systems and the multicultural composition of the population.

Apart from the denominational schools that existed, certain parents of denominational beliefs preferred a multi-denominational education for their children. Furthermore, after a number of international conventions, Ireland became a signatory to the educational rights of children of which the primary school provision needed to comply and implement. Change in Denominational Patronage educational issues became imperative following the experiences of increased globalisation and multiculturalism demanding for a Religious Education that would satisfy democratic engagement. The whole aim of the change in the school patronage process was to provide the appropriate form of education for pupils and their parents in line with their beliefs and values systems (Coolahan, 2012).

Owing to the fact that Ireland had no secular or non-denominational schools, in 2011 the Department of Education and Skills encouraged establishment of such schools which would open way for further school diversity. It was recommended that the sacramental preparation or education for religious rites earlier practiced by denominational patronage schools were

not going to encroach on the time allocated for the general curriculum. This was in view that all children had the “right to receive education in Education about Religion and Beliefs (ERB)” (Coolahan, 2012:111). The state was committed to ensure that the curriculum was implemented as provided. This meant that the state had to put in place a curriculum that would encourage children understand and interpret for themselves the phenomenon of religion.

It was imperative that curriculum which would introduce world religions prevalent in the nation in a manner which would promote understanding and critical openness be designed. Possible ways for divesting patronage was also required.

## **2.7 Pluralism in Religious Education in Egypt and Tunisia**

Egypt and Tunisia were known to have had more content of the dominant religion, Islam, in their education system. “Islam is already incorporated into many aspects of Egyptian public education from Arabic language courses to social studies” (Faour, 2012). Similarly, even though Tunisian education system promoted universal values of freedom, tolerance and social justice, Islam was the only religion taught. Islam had the majority population that shaped the economic, political and cultural life in Egypt and Tunisia. Owing to this situation the two countries faced a number of challenges in reconciling education curricula that was going to promote pluralism in the teaching of religion in public schools.

The experience of pluralism in Egypt was that Christian students were taught about Christianity by teachers or priests of their own faith while Muslims were taught about Islam by Muslim teachers or sheikhs” (Faour, 2012). The text books used for the Islamic Religious Education course indicated that students in Egypt were not facilitated to develop analytical thinking skills; instead rote learning took its course. The role of the teacher in Religious Education was also a concern in Egypt because dominant teacher directed methods of lecturing were employed. On the other hand, private schools either had no Religious Education or had a social studies course that contained general information about religions. Tunisia presented a different approach to pluralism and Religious Education. The only religion that was taught in Religious Education in primary public schools was Islam. The history of Judaism, Christianity and Islam were taught in Social Studies at secondary school level.

In terms of time allocation, three hours out of thirty hours per week in Egypt and two hours per week in Tunisia were dedicated to Religious Education at primary school level. Text books used in public schools exposed students to Islamic beliefs and concepts through Arabic language and history. After the reformation of school curriculum, particularly the Islamic education curriculum, Tunisian public schools offered Islamic education that respected other religions and developed students' analytical thinking on issues related to religions. Egypt proposed a new initiative of preparing a Religious Education program that was going to focus on values that were common to Muslims and Christians. The proposed program was hoped to pave way towards democracy and pluralism in Egypt and replace the Religious Education that neither contributed to acceptance, respect and mutual understanding between faiths nor helped students develop a more profound understanding of their own faith (Faour, 2012). How to achieve the proposed ideas concerning pluralism in Religious Education remained a challenge in these states.

Faour (2012) observed that if Religious Education was to be meaningful in Egypt and Tunisia, the content, structure, methods of delivery, teaching materials, teachers' qualifications and appropriate school climate had to be potentially reformed. Admittedly a revised Religious Education program that would foster understanding and respect among different faiths was desired. Like in many other nations, a pluralistic Religious Education at primary school level becomes more ideal to meet the desired results in today's pluralistic society.

It must be noted that young people develop intellectually, physically, emotionally, socially, and spiritually. It is, therefore, important to have a Religious Education component in the school that addresses the development and education of the whole child. In a world that is truly multi-cultural and multi-faith it is important that each person values and celebrates his/her own religious heritage or commitment. With accurate information about other religions, individuals should recognize that others have religious beliefs that they value and celebrate as well (Hull, 1984). Religious and denominational intolerance will be minimised only when people are more understanding of the intrinsic worth of religious views and traditions that are not their own. An effective Religious Education program should give accurate information and demonstrate respect for all world faiths. Hull (1984:48) said that "when the society contains not one but several religions, the need for a thoughtful study of

religion becomes greater, not less. “My study observes that the role of Religious Education in a primary school has to be to endeavour to prepare pupils take an informed and thoughtful part in the present pluralistic society.

It could be concluded that pluralism in Religious Education at global level is still undergoing transformation. Each nation has its own experience in addressing pluralism in Religious Education and the developments also differ from one nation to the other. America had adopted the Protestant understanding of studying religion in addressing pluralism in Religious Education. As pluralism in Religious Education became more prominent, the teaching of world religions in Religious Education began to receive more attention. In Balkan countries pluralism in Religious Education remains a contested problem. Religious Education was not introduced in some nations and other nations employed confessional Religious Education. Other nations employed confessional Religious Education incorporating diverse religions in the school curriculum. The question still remains as to whether world religions taught in Religious Education are understood to the extent that learners appreciate and respect the religions other than those they adhere to. Ireland took the form of denominational patronage in Religious Education. As pluralism in Religious Education emerged debates began and led to reform and design of curricula that would incorporate teaching world religions in all schools.

## **2.8 Pluralism in Religious Education in Zambia**

Religious Education in Zambia has been in existence since the pre-colonial time. There were different ethnic groups with many common key features of their religious beliefs. In the pre-colonial time Religious Education was organised and learned informally. Religious knowledge was passed from one generation to another through oral tradition which differed from one community to another in the same society. Religious and moral instruction started early in life with parents as the principal agents of instruction or teachers. Parents had tasks of explaining and imparting desirable religious beliefs and moral values or observances of what community regarded as good and evil. They also had to explain how their behaviour would affect their families.

This type of education which can be referred to as Indigenous African Religious Education, was key in transmitting tribal heritage from one generation to another. Indigenous African Religious Education was all pervading in the sense that every occasion or event such as festivals, customary rites, family gatherings, planting and harvesting season, installation of a chief, funerals and marriage ceremonies, were used to teach the young some religious values. “Members of each tribe or society had some accepted core values and through ceremonies, song and dance, young people learnt about benevolent and malevolent spirits, eschatology and the methods of appeasing the spirits individually and collectively” (Kamanga. 2013:28). Through all the generations, Religious Education was considered to be an important aspect of life for the preservation of a particular society.

The development of pluralism in Zambia began when Christianity was introduced in the territory where Indigenous African religious beliefs were being practiced. Christianity was introduced in Zambia by Christian missionaries in the mid-1850s. These missionaries belonged to different Christian denominations. They planted different churches and established different mission schools in which Religious Education featured as one of the core subjects. When schools were established Religious Education or Religious Instruction was organised according to particular mission societies settled in particular areas. Christian missionaries paid no attention to Indigenous African religious beliefs they found in Zambia. The main aim of Religious Education at that time was indoctrination and not preservation of society or understanding of religion. Christianity was a new religion but became a dominant religion in Religious Education in Zambia. During this era, Religious Education was denominational and confessional with the concentration on Christian values and practices. Each denominational church managed its own schools. Carmody (2004: vii) said “division along denominational lines persisted so that Catholic schools were for Catholics and SDA schools for SDA students”. This meant that “Religious Education followed denominational lines” (Carmody, 2004: vii).

After independence, Religious Education in Zambia remained firmly in the hands of the Christian Church denominations. On the other hand, as the government endeavoured to create national unity church-run schools became more open even to students who did not belong to particular denominations. A common syllabus for Religious Education to be used in the schools emerged. The common inter-church Religious Education syllabus that emerged focused on Christianity since the Zambian population then was predominantly Christian. Fair

knowledge therefore of beliefs and practices of Christianity as one of the great world religions apart from or beyond the dominant Indigenous Zambian religion was eminently required. Snelson (1974) stated that the core curriculum was Bible Knowledge, church doctrine and morality, all of which played a role in the attainment of the missionary aims of education in that they deepened the learner's knowledge and understanding of Christianity. Snelson's observation on the missionaries aim to deepen knowledge and understanding of Christianity is useful to this study because it brings out the reason why understanding of non-Christian religions have to be investigated.

Islam came to Zambia through the migrations of Indians. As early as 1899 the history of Indians in the Eastern Province of Zambia began with the establishment of Fort Jameson as an administrative town for the British South Africa Company (Phiri, 2000). According to Phiri (2000:3) "Fort Jameson became a small centre for trade and services and within ten years there was an influx of settlers born in India. "By 1905 many Indian Muslims and Hindus began to arrive in Zambia. Some Muslims came from Senegal and Mali in West Africa and Somalia in East Africa for business networking and for religious purposes (Phiri, 2008). The other group of Muslims came to Zambia through Malawi. Islam was the first World Religion introduced in Malawi and the Yao connected Islam to the Eastern Province of Zambia among the Chewa. In the course of social interactions, some Malawian Muslims married Zambian women and Islamised them together with the children (Cheyeka, 2007). The Yao spread out and introduced Islam in the Copperbelt and other towns in the midlands of Zambia.

Since then Zambia continued to experience a culturally and religiously pluralist society. The minority and immigrant groups of various ethnic and religious origins had freedom of expression and equal share of the civic and religious rights guaranteed to them through the Zambian constitution, (GRZ, 1996). These ethnic and religious groups of immigrants coming from countries within Africa and other parts of the world entered the Zambian society at different times and with various missions.

The interaction with the foreigners who initially came from different and distinct cultural and religious backgrounds compelled the Zambian natives to find constructive ways of coexistence and mutually acceptable respectability. It was not until the Educational Reforms of 1977 that Religious Education became pluralistic when other religions such as Islam and Hinduism were included in the syllabus. The 1977 National Educational Reform aimed "to

create a system of education which is properly attuned to, and more fully meets the needs and aspirations of Zambians” (MoE, 1977: v). The policy document in this way made the Religious Education subject more pluralistic as it included the major religions found in Zambia; Zambian Traditional Religion, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and aspects of humanism and socialist ideas.

According to Carmody (2004), Zambia, in the 1980s witnessed an increased awareness of the need for Religious Education to become more open to other faith traditions such as Islam and Hinduism. As a result of the pluralism, Religious Education became Social and Moral Education to enable pupils appreciate spiritual, moral and religious values based on the four main religious traditions in Zambia; Christianity, Hinduism, Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs and Islam and from philosophy of Humanism, (MoE, 1983). The teaching of Religious Education was at this point seen in terms of fostering and promoting national unity, harmony and development as the country was becoming modernist, more democratic and pluralistic (MoE, 1983).

Zambia continued seeking to develop, like in many other countries “a well-balanced syllabus that should provide an opportunity for Religious Education learners to think more deeply and lead to an awareness of differences and an understanding of what religion is all about for them and to others” (Cox, 1990). Religious Education promotes religious literacy and understanding of different religious traditions in order that learners develop critical and analytical thinking and a positive attitude towards other people’s views on religious beliefs and values. If learners were to understand the world’s different religious beliefs and values surrounding them, at an early age, exposure to various religious dimensions in the world is required. An understanding of world religions in primary schools of Zambia, therefore, becomes cardinal in the current Religious Education provision.

## **2.9 Summary**

Literature review has shown that different societies have recognised pluralism in Religious Education. Cox (1990) said that when religious pluralism developed in Britain, Religious Education in schools widened its perspective in order to bring understanding of world religions. Rood (2006) wrote that pluralism in Religious Studies in America marked an important advance to help students understand different types of people and their cultures.

Ireland changed from the denominational patronage education to multi-denominational patronage education in order to satisfy the democratic engagement and provide pupils with appropriate Religious Education in line with their diversified belief and value systems (Coolahan, 2012). Tunisia embraced pluralism in Religious Education because it developed students' analytical thinking on issues related to religions (Faour, 2012).

The reviewed literature was useful to the study as it brought out common features in the development of pluralism in Religious Education. At global level literature reviewed suggests that Religious Education began with the confessional approach before other religions were included in the primary curriculum. Furthermore, some countries, such as Montenegro did not introduce Religious Education at all. Religious Education in Zambia was found to have incorporated most world religions in the primary school curriculum but understanding of the world religions remains questionable. It is in this vein that this study has been undertaken to investigate the understanding of non-Christian religions by grade seven learners in selected Serenje District primary schools of Zambia.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The chapter describes the research design and research methods which were used in the process of the study. The population involved, sample size used, data collection and instruments used, data analysis methods and the ethical considerations which were used are all described in the chapter.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

The purpose of the study was to investigate grade seven pupils' understanding of non-Christian religions in Religious Education in selected schools in Serenje District. To this effect, the study employed a qualitative approach. Specifically, a case study research design was used in order to find out the actual knowledge gained and thereafter provide descriptive findings of the study. A case study is basically an account of an event or problem drawn from a real situation. This method allowed the researcher to investigate the topic in a far more detail than might be possible if they were to deal with a large number of research participants (McLead, 2008). The information collected from interviews or other sources in a qualitative research approach provides a description of the behaviour. The qualitative approach and case study research design fitted very well as a research method in the study as it allowed the researcher to discuss findings in a descriptive manner. With this method employed the researcher was very confident that the findings were not only going to be detailed but also create a leeway for further research.

The case study research design has its own weaknesses such as the limitation in generalising research findings but on the other hand, findings of a study of one institution can be transferable to other institutions of similar nature. The detailed qualitative information provided was of prime advantage to give a better insight of the study for further investigation. MacLead (2008) points out that a case study method in research helps to generate new ideas that might be tested by other methods. In this case the method would not necessarily be used to generate new ideas. As McLead (2008) points out, the method assisted

to present findings in a descriptive form as the research was intended to investigate the knowledge gained by pupils.

To effectively collect data for the subject under study the research instruments used included the semi structured interview guide, focus group discussion guide and short test exercise questions. Interview guides and focus group discussion guides were preferred in order to gather specific primary information from the respondents. The research instruments were used to carry out interviews which allowed the researcher to interact with respondents on one-on-one basis. Harrel and Bradley (2009), pointed out that “interviews are discussions, usually one-on-one between an interviewer and an individual, meant to gather information on a specific set of topics.” Interviews played a cardinal role to clarify and to seek clarity directly in the course of data collection. Some scholars have argued that interviews and focus group discussions in research created problems because data obtained may not be generalised and that sensitive issues may not be adequately addressed. Despite such limitations, the method helped pupils express themselves to some extent so that their understanding of non-Christian religions was stated.

### **3.3 Research Site**

The first school under study was situated within the administration centre of the district. The community members were quite varied from households of the working class and business to ordinary self-employed people. Most pupils at this school had an enhanced environment with modern technology that exposed them to other people’s life experiences. Apart from the modern technology, foreign nationals such as Somalis and Indo-Zambians in the community practiced religious activities different from those of the Zambian nationals.

The second school was situated about seventy (70) kilometres away from the Administrative Centre of the District. The community members were mostly subsistence farmers and a few small scale business individuals owning what was locally known as *tunthemba*. Primary school teachers in this community commanded a high-status as far as being in the elite class was concerned. Solar panels or motor vehicle batteries were used as sources of power for the purpose of lighting and light electrical appliances. Lack of electrical power in most households deprived them the privilege of owning electrical appliances as would be desired. This situation rendered children in the community not to have an opportunity to see what could have been exposed to them about other people’s experiences.

### **3.4 Population**

Population is statistically the total number of members of a defined target group that the researcher intends to study or collect information on (Harrel and Bradley 2009). In this study, therefore, the population was all grade seven (7) pupils found in the two selected rural primary schools in Serenje district of Zambia.

### **3.5 Sample Size and Sampling Techniques**

A sample is a proportion of the population. It is a group that possesses all the characteristics exhibited by the rest of the population. Harrell and Bradley (2009) say that “a sample is a scientifically drawn group that actually possesses the same characteristics as the population”. In this study the sample was drawn from a population that had equally undergone seven years’ primary course in which on-Christian religions were taught. The sample comprised forty (40) grade seven (7) pupils from each of the two selected schools. The total number of respondents to the study was, therefore, eighty (80) pupils.

Purposive sampling and simple random sampling were employed in the study. Purposive sampling involves choosing respondents considered to be knowledgeable, well informed or because of their background knowledge on the topic under study (Kombo and Tromp, 2006). The researcher employed purposive sampling to ensure that information was collected from respondents that possessed it at a deeper level. The two primary schools in Serenje were selected because of their rural set up. Abesu school was situated within the district administrative vicinity while Balulu school was situated in the remote part of the district.

In the said schools, simple random sampling was employed to select the class as from which respondents were drawn. The respondents that were selected at each school comprised; two pupils who participated in one to one interviews, two groups of eight pupils were involved in focus group discussions, and twenty pupils were subjected to a short exercise. Every pupil from the selected class had an opportunity to participate in the research study. One lesson observation was done at one school.

### **3.6 Data Collection Methods**

Research instruments used were designed by the researcher before embarking on data collection. The instruments used included the semi-structured interview guides, focus group discussion guide and fill-in-the blanks exercise sheet.

The semi structured interview guide was used to interview pupils on one to one basis. This was one of the data collection instruments which was specially designed to help the researcher conduct in depth interviews in order to gain clarifications where necessary.

Focus group discussion guide was employed for the sixteen pupils in groups of eight at each school. A recording device as well as a notebook and pen were used to record the discussions. The recordings were played back to compare with written recordings and also to note down recordings down in the absence of the researcher. In confirmation with Bryman (2004), the tools were very useful in making corrections and modifications when need arose.

### **3.7 Data Analysis**

Data collected from interviews, focus group discussions and filling-in-the blanks exercise were categorised and arranged in correspondence with research questions. This was done in accordance with White (2008) who advises that data analysis is the climax of the research and it involves selecting, categorising, comparing, synthesising and interpreting the information gathered to provide explanations of the single phenomenon of interest. The data analysis process was done manually. The analysis further involved comparing the responses with the literature reviewed related to the study.

### **3.8 Ethical Consideration**

Ethics are methods, procedures or perspectives that help the researcher arrive at a decision as to how to act or react when faced with a complex challenge. Ethical considerations were undertaken in the research process. Participants had rights to dignity, privacy, freedom to withdraw from participation and the researcher also had the right to request for in depth answers.

In the first instance the researcher sought permission from the District Education Board Secretary (DEBS) to use the selected schools for the research study. Assurance of confidentiality was granted to all the respondents in the research and that no pronouns were going to be reflected in the research report. It was important to go through this procedure in order that the researcher as well as the respondents were protected from the unexpected up- arising issues.

### **3.9 Summary**

This chapter has described the research design and methods that were used in data collection. It has also explained the population, sampling, data collection instruments, data analysis and ethical considerations that were adhered to during the study. The next chapter will present the findings of the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The chapter presents findings of the research carried out in two primary schools in the rural District of Serenje. One school was selected from a peri-urban area (identified here as Abesu school) whilst the other school was selected from a rural area (identified here as Balulu school). In both schools, grade seven pupils were randomly selected for individual interviews, focus group discussions and a written exercise. The findings will be presented in themes drawn from the answers to the research questions. The research questions were: 1. What is the understanding of non-Christian religions by the grade seven pupils in the rural Zambian primary schools. 2. What is the significance of understanding non-Christian religions to the rural Zambian primary school pupils? 3. What teaching strategies are used in Social Studies to enhanced understand of non-Christian religions in Serenje District primary schools?

In order to draw data to answer the stated questions, a number of questions derived from research questions were asked to pupils in individual interviews, focus group discussion and short answers exercise. Four pupils participated in individual interviews and were identified as Wanangu and Lulu from Abesu School, Bwalya and Kunda from Balulu School. There were also four focus group discussions indicated as group 1 and group 2 in each of the two selected schools. Twenty (20) pupils from each of the selected schools, participated in a short answer exercise conducted on them.

#### **4.2 The Understanding of Non-Christian Religions**

In trying to answer the question on the understanding of non-Christian religions, grade 7 pupils who were randomly selected participated in individual interviews, focus group discussions or short answer exercise. A number of guiding questions were asked at each circumstance. In the individual interview the first question posed requested the respondents to say anything that came to their mind when they heard religions like Islam, Hinduism and Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs.

At Abesu School, Wanangu did not understand what Islam meant. After some explanation that Islam was a religion whose followers were known as Muslims, the pupil admitted that she knew about the Muslims and that they were a type of a church. On Hinduism, she said it was also a type of church, '*Hinduism ni chalichi yaba Hindu*'. She did not know much about the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs. She could not figure out anything apart from it being a church also, *chimochine lichalichi lya bantunse* (it is also a church of people of foreign origin).

Lulu at the same school responded to the question that he did not know Islam but Muslims. He said Muslims were people who prayed in a mosque and that they differed from other religions. He could not explain further as to what he meant that Islam differed from other religions. He said Hindu adherents prayed in the Temple and wore differently. "They wore", he said, "long wrappers which went round from across the chest to the shoulder", '*ba fwala insalu ishitali, ishipitile pa chifuba elo ba pisha pakupeya*'. He could not state anything about the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs even though he had heard about them in class.

On the same question, at Balulu School, Bwalya equally did not understand the name Islam but knew something about Muslims. He said a Muslim was a person that believed that when a person died one turned into another thing and that when praying they removed shoes from their feet, wore white robes and put a small hat on their head. About Hinduism, he took time to respond and said that he had made a mistake on the Muslim. He said Hinduism was the one whose members wore white robes. As for the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs, he said what he knew was that adherents in this religion prayed for money, prayed to different gods but some prayed to one God. Precisely in local language he said, '*aba pepa ifyachi kaya*', translated as 'those who pray in traditional ways'. When the pupil was asked further what he meant by praying for money, he said, '*ba fwaya ukuwina no kuchita ma business*', translated as 'they want to become rich and do business'. He further explained that all was done on exchange basis and as such the people practicing them were evil.

Kunda at this school did not know anything about Islam and had just heard about Muslim in class and could not say anything about them. On Hinduism, she expressed ignorance except for the fact that she had heard something about them in class which she could not remember. She was blank concerning Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs.

In summary on the knowledge about the three non-Christian religions (Islam, Hinduism and Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs), four of the interviewed pupils did not know what Islam was but knew Muslim as a religion. Muslim, according to them was a church just like any other church denomination for Christians. Three out of the four pupils interviewed did not have any knowledge they could share about Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs while one knew it as an 'evil' practising religion.

### **Pupils' knowledge on non-Christian religions**

In the focus group discussions, groups were requested to discuss what they knew about the non-Christian religions, namely Islam, Hinduism and the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs. At Abesu School, Group 1 discussed and came up with the following two ideas about Islam:

Some pupils insisted that Islam was different from Christianity because in Islam they believed that *umuntu nga afwa alasanguka ichintu, ichinama nangu insoka*. Muslims believed that when one died, he/she was not going to resurrect and go to heaven. They believed that when one died he/she would turn into something else like a dog or a snake unless one believed in the four things which were difficult to remember but included trust, honesty, faithfulness and love. The other pupils felt that the belief about resurrection did not justify the difference between the two because even in Christian denominations or churches some did not believe in going to heaven. *Na bena Kristu bambi tabasumina ukuya kumulu but bena kristu, so na bena ba Muslim lichalichifye talya pusana.*

Hinduism was not discussed because members showed ignorance except for one who said what she knew and the rest agreed with her. According to this pupil, Hindus believed that if one died and followed the four things which included love and trustworthiness, one would turn into a god. Hindus believed in themselves not in God. They believed that *you are god at yourself* and if you follow the four commandments you would be *god at yourself*. The four commandments included love and trustworthiness. The other two commandments were difficult to remember but were similar to the two mentioned.

On the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs, the pupils said that although in Zambia there were Muslims, Zambians believed in Christianity and they believed that when one died he/she was going to resurrect after three 3 days. They said the third day after someone died

was 'the day of paradise', the day when one who died woke up, *ubushiku bwa kulenga chitatu, bushiku bwa paradayise*. To emphasise this belief, pupils said that there was a song about paradise which was sung by Christians in their churches.

In Group 2 on the same question, one pupil said that Islam was the same as Muslim *ichi Islam echi Muslim*. Another pupil added that Muslims did not believe in human life after death and that they used a Quran. Yet another pupil said that even though Muslims did not believe that there was life after death they believed that human beings turned into something else after death and that is why they did not believe in going to heaven.

The pupil who spoke first on Islam said that Hinduism believed in a god known as a Shiva and the Diva. He continued to say that those who died became something else like a dog, an animal, a bird or an insect. The group members could neither confirm nor deny what was said. One pupil asked where the speaker got the information because they did not learn such things in class. The response was that he had heard about most of the things from watching 'Shiva' on the (TV) and listening to quiz on the (TV) also.

On Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs, one pupil mentioned that adherents believed in Christianity. The other members of the group agreed with an addition that they all prayed in church buildings, either on a Saturday or Sunday. One other pupil added that adherents to this religion believed in witchcraft and practiced divination, *bala semuka, ba sesema elyo bafwaya nemiti, bu witch doctor*. This idea did not receive support from other members of the group.

At Balulu school, on what they knew about Muslims, one pupil said *bachu Muslim balakupama pakupepa* (Muslims bow down when praying). The other members of the group confirmed the contribution. On Hindus the same pupil said that they knelt down and stretched their hands upwards when praying, *ba Hindu balemya amaboko mwiulu pa kupepa*.

A different pupil in the group said that the Indigenous Zambian religious believers prayed in the traditional way which was not known and was not understood even though teachers taught about *tibia chimuntu bantu abapepa mushila ishaishibikwa bwino bwino*.

At the same Balulu School, Group 2 members said one after the other that the believers of Islam bowed down when praying. One pupil contributed that in Hinduism, adherents sat down and raised their hands upwards when praying. The other members of the group neither confirmed nor denied the contribution. Some pupils in the group contributed that the Indigenous Zambian religious believers prayed in a traditional way according to local beliefs *aba bapepa mu fya chikaya ukulingana mufyo twasumina fwe beena Africa*. Some pupils disputed and said that these were Christians since all Zambians were Christians *aba beena Kristu, na machalichi balikwete*.

The second question asked in the individual interviews was to find out from pupils whether they had ever seen or just heard about what a Quran and the Vedas were. At Abesu School Wanangu said that she had never seen a Quran but what she knew was that a Quran was a Bible that was used by Muslims. She had never heard about the Vedas. Lulu on the same question responded that he had never heard about a Quran neither did he hear about the Vedas.

At Balulu School, Bwalya had never heard about the Quran but knew that the Vedas was the Bible used by Christians. When asked further what sacred book Hindus used if the Vedas was used by Christians, the pupil responded that Hinduism as well as Muslims used the Bible as their sacred books. Kunda responded to the question by saying that the Quran was a Bible for the Muslims but did not know the Vedas. She further said that the only scriptural book for the three religions, Muslims, Hindus and Christianity was the Bible.

In conclusion, all the pupils interviewed at both schools had the understanding that the sacred books that were used by any religion was called the Bible. Two pupils of the four interviewed knew about the Quran for the Muslims but insisted that the Quran was just another type of a Bible.

During the focus group discussion, groups were asked to discuss and come up with one answer as to what sacred books were used by each of the three non-Christian religions under study. The table below gives the answers from the groups.

Table 4.1

	Islam	Hinduism	Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs
Abesu school group 1	Quran	There was no agreement, five said the Old Testament of the Bible and the other three said the Quran.	Nothing
Abesu school group 2	Quran	The Vedas	Trees, big trees, shrines, owl ( <i>ichipuluulu</i> ) or spirits.
Balulu School group 1	Bible	Bible	All the three use the same Bible.
Balulu School group 2	Bible	Bible	Bible

On this question, Abesu School groups discussed and gave correct answers for Islam, that the sacred or scriptural book used was the Quran. The same two groups differed in answers for Hinduism. Group 1 got divided within themselves while group 2 gave the correct answer that the sacred books used was the Vedas for Hinduism. For the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs group 1 was correct to mention that there was nothing that they used as the sacred book but group 2 brought in the use of spirits. All the two groups for Balulu School gave the same answers, that the sacred books by each of the three religions under study was the Bible.

### **Pupils' knowledge on the places of worship**

The third question was directed to finding out if pupils knew the places of worship for Muslims, Hindus and the Indigenous Zambian religious belief followers or adherents. At Abesu School, Wanangu said she did not only know a mosque as a place of worship for the

Muslims but that she had in fact seen one at the shopping centre of Serenje. She was able to give directions correctly to where the mosque was situated. She did not know about the place of worship for Hindus. She admitted having heard about the place of worship for the Indigenous Zambian religious belief adherents called the church but had never seen one. Lulu responded to the question that the places of worship for the Muslims and Hindus were mosque and temple, respectively. As for the adherents of Zambian traditional religious beliefs, he had heard of their place of worship but had no chance of seeing one.

At Balulu School, Bwalya said that he had heard about the place of worship for Muslims but could not remember what it was called. When asked about the mosque, the pupil responded that he had never heard about it as a place of worship. The only places of worship he heard about were the churches and these churches were the places of worship for the Catholics and UCZ, while the kingdom hall was for the Watchtowers. As for Hinduism and the Indigenous Zambian religion, he had no idea. Kunda responded to the question by saying that there was only one place of worship which was the kingdom hall, *Ing'anda ya Ubufumu* she emphasised in local language.

In conclusion on this question, two pupils of the four interviewed knew the places of worship for Muslims and one of them knew the place of worship for the Hindus as well. The other two pupils had no idea of the places of worship for Islam and Hinduism. The two pupils could only relate a church as a place of worship for all religions. As for the place of worship for Indigenous Zambian Religious Beliefs, two pupils knew it as a church but had never seen one, and the other two pupils had no idea.

### **Pupils' knowledge on what distinguished religious believers**

The fourth question to determine the understanding of non-Christian religions by interviewing individual pupils was to find out if pupils had any knowledge about what things distinguished a Muslim, a Hindu or an Indigenous Zambian religious believer. At Abesu School, Wanangu said that members of the two religions were mostly distinguished by what they wore. She further narrated, “even normal Zambians when they became Muslims, they changed their dressing and started wearing white robes and a small hat on their heads, some even changed their names.” On the Hindus, she said, they were distinguished by the wrappers they wore and the red dot on the forehead for women. As for the Indigenous Zambian religious believers no distinguishing factors were known. Lulu was only sure of

the Muslims wearing of robes and Hindu women having a red dot on the forehead as distinguishing factors.

At Balulu School, Bwalya with a lot of uncertainty said that he had heard about Muslims wearing long white robes and a small hat on their heads. He had no idea about what distinguished the Hindus and the Indigenous Zambian religious believers. Kunda said that she had no idea as to what things distinguished the Hindus. She was sure about the Muslims, that they wore long white robes at times with sandals on their feet and that their hair was very smooth (*imishishi ishi pelekele*). She further said that some wore ordinary clothes especially when they were not praying but their hair was always very smooth.

In the final analysis the findings on this question revealed that the distinguishing factors which pupils understood well were what members of the religions wore. Wanangu, at Abesu School went further to say that even Zambians when they became Muslims changed the dressing and started wearing long robes and a hat on the head. For the Hindus pupils expressed that a red dot was put on the forehead in addition to the wrappers they wore. A new concept of 'smooth hair' came out from Kunda at Balulu School. The pupil said that a further distinguishing factor for the Muslims was their hair which was always smooth.

### **Similarities between Christianity and other religions**

In the fifth individual interview question, the researcher tried to find out if pupils could draw any similarities between Christianity and the other religions. At Abesu School, Wanangu said:

“The commandments were the same, say, if you looked at the Seventh Day Adventists (SDAs), they do not eat certain foods which were the same with Muslims. In fact, all Christians kept the commandments and Muslims also kept the commandments.”

Lulu said that there were no similarities at all. All religions were totally different in every way.

At Balulu School, Bwalya said that there could be no similarities as the religions themselves were totally different. Kunda cited the similarities found in the Roman Catholic adherents (*Ba Roma*) and the United Church of Zambia adherents (*Ba UCZ*), that they both used the same Bible. As for the other religions and Christianity there were no similarities.

On this question, pupils interviewed could not find any similarities between non-Christian religions and Christianity except for one pupil who said that the similarity was on the adherence to the commandments, especially the commandment about what type of food to eat.

### **Differences between Christianity and other religions**

The sixth and final question on individual interviews aimed to find out if pupils would draw any differences between Christianity and other religions. At Abesu School, Wanangu mentioned three differences between Christianity and Islam. She said that Muslims believed in Allah but Christians believed in God *ba chi Muslim basumina muli Allah but ifwe abena Kristu twasumina muli Lesa*. The other difference she said was that Muslims denied that Jesus was the son of God but Christians believed that Jesus was the son of God. The third difference was that *ba Muslim ba fwala fimo fine ku church na mumushi lelo ifwe abena Kristu tu fwala ama uniform pakuya ku church na ku chililo*, Muslims wore the same attire when going to church and when they were doing other jobs in the community but Christians wore uniforms when going to church and funerals and no uniforms when in the community. Another difference mentioned was that Hindus put a red mark on the forehead of a woman who was married but in other religions, they did not.

Lulu mentioned that the differences were that *abena Kristu ba sumina muli Lesa, babomfya Bible elo bala chita ubwinda mu chalichi pa kupana. Nomba aba Yuda tabasumina muli Lesa, babomfya ati chi Torah na Veda* (Christians believed in God whilst Jews did not believe in God. Christians used the Bible as their sacred book while the Hindus and the Jews used the Torah and the Vedas, respectively). When the pupil was asked further about another difference, he said that Christians went to church to have their marriages blessed and wed but he did not know how the Muslims and Hindu marriages were started *abena Kristu bopanina mu chalichi nomba ba chi Muslim naba Hindu katwishi ifyo ba mba ifyupo fyabo*. At Balulu School, Bwalya noted that the differences included the sacred books they used. He said that *abena Kristu babofya Bible but bambi katwishi efyo babofya, uku pepa abena Kristu filonfwika nomba aba bambi kwati ba Hindu bapepelela pa nkondo ne mfula*. (Christians used the Bible but other religions used bibles which were not well known. That Christians prayed in ways that were known while the Hindus prayed to go for war and prayed that it rains). Kunda cited only one difference that Muslims bowed their heads over

the desk when praying while Christians closed their eyes when praying without bowing their heads on the desk.

The knowledge shown about the differences between Christianity and other religions was drawn from varying topics. Pupils mentioned differences concerning beliefs in God, marriage practices, differences in dressing, the way prayers were done and the sacred books used.

### **Similarities and differences between non-Christian religions and Christianity**

In the focus group discussions, groups were asked to discuss the similarities and differences between Christianity and non-Christian religions. At Abesu School, one pupil in group 1 said that Christianity was a religion that believed in one God while the other religions believed in different gods. “Christians had their own God”, he said. Another pupil supported the first respondent by starting a song in which the rest of the members in the group joined and sang to re-emphasise the point, *ifwe abena Kristu twa sumina muli Lesa, bambi ba sumina mu tuntutu twa ku basa* (We Christians believe in God, others believe in things that are man-made or idols).

Another pupil further said that the other religions did not know the God the Christians believed in. According to this pupil, there were no similarities and the other members of the group echoed the answer.

The researcher insisted that the group mention at least one similarity they could remember in aspects such as love, but the group refused. Instead of contributing on the similarity, one pupil cited another difference by giving an example of how Islam allowed killing anyhow which was a sign of having no value for life and that there was no love in such action. He said *ba suminisha ukwipaya no kuipaya* (They allow killing and committing suicide.) The Indigenous Zambian beliefs were not compared to Christianity because the group agreed that these were Christians so how would they compare Christianity to Christianity?

In Group 2, one pupil said that Christians believed in life after death which other religions did not believe in. This contribution was not fully supported as another pupil said that even though Islam believed in life after death, one did not resurrect to go to heaven like it is in Christianity but that one turned into something else after death. No one mentioned any

similarity between Christianity and non-Christian religions because according to the members of the group, Christianity did not agree in anything which the other religions believed in and other religions also never believed in what Christianity believed.

At Balulu Schoolman pupil in group 1 mentioned that Christianity and Hinduism were similar except that Christianity was for Zambians while Hinduism was not for Zambians *aba bamobene, nicho abena Kristu beena Zambia but ba chi Hindu baku fyalo fimbi*. The second respondent in the group contributed that Muslim and Islam were similar religions. The pupil could not substantiate his point and other members of the group offered no comment. Further in the discussion pupils debated what a Torah was in relation to Islam and Muslim. Some learners said that the Torah and Muslim were similar while other learners said that it was Islam that was similar to Torah. When asked what they meant by Torah, one pupil said that it was another religion but did not have much information about it.

In Group 2 pupils said one after the other that similarities were found in Christianity and Hinduism even though they could not point out what things made them similar *ine ndemona ukupalana abena Kristu na bena Hindu. Na ine wine efyo ndemona*. For the differences only one pupil contributed by saying that the Torah was different from Muslim. The group did not discuss further.

On the question about the similarities and differences between non-Christian religions and Christianity, pupils were not able to cite any similarities but were able to discuss the differences. At Abesu School, pupils discussed differences between the beliefs in God while group 2 discussed differences between life after death. Group 1 at Balulu School discussed differences between the aspects of other religions being non-Zambian while Christianity was a religion that belonged to Zambians. Group 2 discussed some similarities that were found in Christianity and Hinduism but they could not substantiate their argument. Their discussion was quite limited.

### **Short answer exercise results**

Forty pupils participated in a short answers exercise to help the researcher find out further how Religious Education assisted pupils in rural primary schools of Zambia to understand non-Christian religions. At each school (Abesu and Balulu), 20 pupils were picked at random from those who did not attend either individual interviews or focus group

discussions. The questions were prepared in such a way that pupils were requested to respond individually by filling in the blank spaces.

The first question on the short answer exercise administered, pupils were requested to write the name of any religion they knew apart from Christianity. The responses were as tabulated below.

Table 4.2

S/NO	RELIGIONS	NO OF PUPILS	
		ABESU SCHOOL	BALULU SCHOOL
1.	Muslim, Hindus, Jews	07	02
2.	Muslim, Hinduism, African traditions	01	00
3.	Hinduism, Islam, Judaism,	01	02
4.	Muslims, Hindus, Islam, Buddhism, Judaism	11	13
5.	Muslims, Islam,	00	01
6.	No response	00	02

The table shows that pupils stated Muslims, Hindus, Jews, African traditions, Islam Buddhism and Judaism as religions they knew. The findings in the table revealed that out of the 40 pupils who participated in the exercise, 3 pupils had stated religions correctly, 35 pupils incorrectly stated Muslim as a religion in their response and 25 pupils combined Muslim and Islam while 10 pupils did not combine Muslim with Islam and 2 pupils indicated nothing.

The other question on the short answer exercise requested pupils to choose one religion from the religions they knew and indicate against it the place of worship. The responses were as shown in the table that follows.

Table 4.3

S/NO	RELIGION	PLACE OF WORSHIP	NO OF PUPILS	
			ABESU SCHOOL	BALULU SCHOOL
1.	Islam	Temple	02	00
2.	Muslim	Mosque	04	04
3.	Hindus	Temple	05	07
4.	Islam	Synagogue	01	00
5.	Islam	Mosque	05	00
6.	Muslims	Masjid	01	00
7.	Hindus	Synagogue	01	00
8.	Jews	Synagogue	00	01
9.	African traditions	Church	01	00
10.	Muslims	Hills	00	02
11.	Muslims	Temple	00	03
12.	No response	No response	00	03

The table showed that places of worship known by pupils were the Temple, Mosque, Synagogue, Masjid and Hills. The findings revealed that out of the 40 pupils who participated in the exercise 25 pupils correctly matched the religion with its place of worship while 11 pupils matched incorrectly and 3 pupils indicated nothing.

The next question on the short answer exercise required pupils to write what sacred books the religions they had mentioned in question (2) used when teaching their members. The tabulation below show the responses:

Table 4.4

S/NO	RELIGION	BOOK USED	NO OF PUPILS	
			ABESU SCHOOL	BALULU SCHOOL
1.	Muslim	Quran	04	00
2.	Hindus	Vedas	06	00
3.	Islam	Quran	04	00
4.	Hindus	Quran	02	00
5.	Jews	Old Testament	00	01
6.	Islam	Bible	01	00

7.	Islam	Torah	01	07
8.	Islam	Vedas	01	00
9.	Muslim	Bible	00	04
10.	African Traditions	Bible	01	00
11.	No response	No response	00	08

The sacred books that were mentioned under this question were the Vedas, Quran, Bible, Old Testament and Torah. The findings revealed that out the 40 pupils who participated in the exercise 14 pupils matched correctly the religions and the sacred books they used, 18 pupils had incorrect matching and 8 pupils indicated nothing.

In the fourth question, pupils were requested to carefully select from the many religions they knew and write the religions they learnt in Religious Education lessons. The tabulation that follows shows the responses.

Table 4.5

S/NO	RELIGIONS	NO OF PUPILS	
		ABESU SCHOOL	BALULU SCHOOL
1.	Hindus, Muslims	06	01
2.	Hindus, Islam	03	00
3.	Hindus, Muslims, Islam	10	05
4.	Muslim, African traditions	01	00
5.	Hindus	00	02
6.	No response	00	12

The responses showed that all the three non-Christian religions were mentioned even though not from one pupil. The tabulation revealed that of the 40 pupils who participated in the exercise 28 indicated one, two or three religions while 12 indicated nothing.

The next question was meant to let pupils identify pictures from slides. Pupils were asked to look at the person on the picture and identify whether the picture was of a Muslim or of a Hindu. The first seven pictures were male and female Muslims dressed in different ways. Pictures 11 to 18 were of male and female Hindus but each one of them had a red dot on their forehead.

The identification results for both schools were as captured in the following tabulation.

Table 4.6

Picture number	Correct identification		Incorrect identification		No response	
	Abesu school	Balulu school	Abesu school	Balulu school	Abesu school	Balulu school
2.	16	10	00	05	04	05
3.	14	07	01	08	05	05
4.	11	12	06	07	03	01
5.	12	13	03	07	05	00
6.	06	09	09	11	05	00
7.	06	10	10	05	04	05
8.	12	07	03	09	05	04
11.	09	05	04	11	07	04
12.	09	00	04	10	07	10
13.	10	05	05	11	05	04
14.	08	06	05	10	07	04
15.	11	03	02	10	07	07
16.	05	03	08	13	07	04
17.	06	05	07	11	07	04
18.	10	05	07	09	03	06
Totals	245		211		144	

The table showed how respondents identified the pictures of Muslims or Hindus. The findings according to the identifications of the pictures by participants revealed that there were 245 correct identifications representing 40.83%, 211 incorrect identifications representing 35.16% and 144 indicated nothing representing 24%.

In the final but not the least question pupils were requested to look at the building on the slide and identify whether the building on the slide was a place of worship for Islam religion or Hindu religion. Pictures 8, 9 and 10 were of a Mosque, the place of worship for Muslims while pictures 19 and 20 were of a Temple, the place of worship for Hindu religion. Results of the identifications were as tabulated in the table that follows.

Table 4.7

Picture number	Correct identification		Incorrect identification		No response	
	Abesu School	Balulu School	Abesu School	Balulu School	Abesu School	Balulu School
8.	02	10	13	04	05	06
9.	02	06	13	07	05	07
10.	10	05	05	12	05	03
19.	06	06	09	07	05	07
20.	10	04	05	08	05	08
Totals	61		83		56	

The table recorded the identifications of buildings of places of worship for either the Muslims or the Hindus. The findings deduced from the table shown indicated that many pupils incorrectly identified the pictures of the buildings. There were 61 pupils representing 30.5% correct identifications, 83 pupils representing 41.5% incorrect identification and 56 pupils representing 28% without any identification.

#### **4.3 The significance of understanding non-Christian religions**

Individual interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in order to find out whether the understanding of non-Christian religions was significant to rural Zambian primary school pupils. The first question for the focus group discussion was to find out if pupils found it important to learn about non-Christian religions. At Abesu School, the first pupil to speak said that it was important to learn about other religions so that they know how other people pray *chisuma pantu kusambilila amatotelo yambi*. The contribution was supported by the rest of the group members. In Group 2 on the same question one pupil said that it was very important and interesting but they got disappointed because they were not taught much to understand the interesting practices of non-Christian religions *chisuma elyo fimo filasekesha sana*. Another pupil added by saying that issues concerning marriage in non-Christian religions were interesting to learn about, *ifya pala fya marriage filawama uku sambilila*. Pupils dwelt much on these two points in the discussion.

At Balulu School, one pupil in group 1 said that it was not important because other religions taught things that were contrary to Christianity *amatotelo yambi teya kusambililapo*. When asked why, the pupil said the things were contrary to Christianity, the pupil and other members of the group could not justify the point contributed. The group maintained that the lessons on non-Christian religions were misleading Christians. In Group 2 the first pupil to contribute said that it was not important and that it was sin to God, *lubembu kuli Lesa uwatupangile*. The other pupils in the group agreed with her. One other pupil added that it was unacceptable in the society as parents always advised to stick to their faith teachings.

The findings from the group discussions on whether it was important to learn about non-Christian religions showed that there was no full realisation. Two groups responded that it was important that they learn about non-Christian religions whilst the other two groups held that it was not important because it was sin before God and that it was misleading Christians.

The question for individual interviews was directed to find out whether pupils enjoyed learning about other religions other than Christianity. At Abesu School, Wanangu responded that she liked learning about non-Christian religions. The reason given was that she wanted to know more about what they believed in and how they prayed. She also wanted to know the God the other religions worshiped. Lulu liked learning about non-Christian religions in class because he wanted to know how non-Christian religions worshiped their God, how they prayed and what scriptures they used to teach their members about their God.

At Balulu School, Bwalya said that learning about non-Christian religions was not very interesting and did not like it. On the other hand, he wanted to know about how other people in other parts of the world prayed. Practices of non-Christian religions were not in his interest and did not have any liking for them. Kunda expressed the view that it was forbidden and sin to know about what other people believed in and how they prayed. In local language she said *tacha suminishiwapo uku kutika pa fya matotelo yambi, lubembu* (It is not allowed to learn about other religions, it is sin).

Focus groups discussed the same question to find out if they enjoyed learning about non-Christian religions. At Abesu School, a pupil in group 1 said that he liked learning about non-Christian religions because he was taught about how other people understood who God was. He continued to say that gods differed in different religions. Another pupil in the group contributed that he was interested to learn that Christianity was not the only religion in the world. In group 2 one pupil said, “other religions believe other things which Christians do not like, so we do not like learning about wrong things. “The same statement was repeated by other members in the group.

At Balulu School, one pupil in group 1 said that she liked some of the things they learnt but disliked some, *fimo fisuma, fimbi tefisuma*. When asked what she disliked, a different pupil replied by saying that *bachi Islam bakwata imisango iyibipile, yakwiipaya* the Islam faith allowed killing which was bad. In Group 2, a pupil who had responded that it was not important to learn about non-Christian religions, said that he did not like learning about them because *lubembu kuli Lesa*, it was sin before God. The other members of the group did not dispute the contribution.

#### **4.4 Teaching strategies used in Social Studies in the teaching about religions**

In the quest to find out the understanding of non-Christian religions by grade seven pupils in Zambian rural primary schools, the researcher tried to establish the teaching strategies used in Social Studies in the teaching of religions. A few questions were asked in individual interviews and in focus group discussions with learners. One teacher was observed.

The first question in individual interviews requested from pupils to say what they learnt in Social Studies on non-Christian religions. At Abesu School, Wanangu pointed out two things she remembered about Muslims, which were that, Muslims married many wives and that Muslims had specific times in a year when they fasted. She did not know much about other religions even though they were taught in class. She expressed the view that it was easy for her to know about Muslims because she saw them in the community marrying many wives. Lulu remembered learning in class that Jews prayed in synagogues whilst Hindus prayed in Temples and that the sacred books for the Jews were called the Torah and the Hindus ones were called Vedas. He could not remember the other things they learnt in class. The pupil confessed, saying, “am not even sure of what I have said because these religions confuse me so I might have said things about other religions and not the religions I have mentioned.”

At Balulu School, Bwalya responded that they learnt about marriage, water and cleanliness in non-Christian religions. The pupil could not say anything more concerning the three things he had mentioned even after providing him with some clues. Kunda mentioned only one thing which she remembered having learnt in class about the Muslims that they bowed their heads over a desk when praying.

In focus group discussions on the same question, pupils in group 1 at Abesu school spoke one after the other mentioning what they learnt in class. One said they learnt about life after death, another said they learnt about marriage and yet another pupil said they learnt about different gods. As the discussion went on, prayer and sacred books used in different religions came out from different members of the group. In group 2 the first pupil to contribute said that about non-Christian religions, they learnt about resurrection, water and ashes. In response to the first pupil's contribution, the second pupil disputed the water and ashes points. Her argument was that water and ashes were embedded in the resurrection topic. She added the other topics as; marriage and prayer.

At Balulu school only two pupils in group 1 contributed to the discussion saying that they learnt about resurrection and marriage. In group 2 only one pupil said that they learnt about life after death. There was no further discussion.

In the second question pupils were asked if they had ever seen any of the places of worship somewhere or on a picture. Wanangu at Abesu school repeated that she had seen a Mosque found at the shopping centre in Serenje. Apart from that she had never seen any other places of worship for other on-Christian religions. She added that there were no books in the school that showed the places of worship of other religions. Lulu at the same school said that he had seen pictures of a Mosque for the Muslims and a Temple for the Hindus in a certain book at home.

At Balulu School, Bwalya said that the only place of worship he had seen was the United Church of Zambia building where he went for worship. He also said that he had never seen any pictures of the places of worship in question whether at school or at home. Kunda was speechless, had no idea and so did not give any response to the question.

Another question asked aimed to find out if pupils had ever seen a Muslim or a Hindu in person or in a picture. At Abesu School, Wanangu admitted having seen a Muslim in person but as for a Hindu she had seen one only on a picture. Lulu saw Muslims pass near his parents' residence at certain times.

At Balulu School, Bwalya had never seen a Muslim and a Hindu in person nor on a picture. Kunda said that she was aware of the existence of the Hindus but had never seen any in person nor in a picture. Concerning the Muslims, she narrated where and how she saw them. She said:

One day our Head teacher announced at assembly that there was going to be a film show at their home for two days, on a Saturday and Sunday. We were all free to watch the film. When we went for the film on a Saturday night, we saw two white men and one white woman with "*imishishi ishi pelekele*" smooth hair. Where I sat we discussed with my friends and concluded that the three were the Muslims we heard about in class. The film we watched had men and women who also looked like the ones showing the

film. They also had “*imishishi ishi pelekele*”. This is how I saw the Muslims in person and in the film.

The narration the pupil gave was actually about an evangelistic film show known as ‘The Jesus Film’ which some three crusaders were showing round the villages and schools.

All the pupils interviewed had never seen a Hindu but were able to give a description of how a Hindu looked like. Two pupils from Abesu School admitted having seen a Muslim in their vicinity. The other pupil from Balulu School claimed to have seen Muslims in person and also in the film that was projected at the head teacher’s residence.

### **Enhancing knowledge on non-Christian religions in Social Studies lessons**

In trying to find out how much pupils were assisted to gain more knowledge on non-Christian religions, a question on whether in Social Studies lessons, some pictures or any teaching and learning aids were shown about sacred books and places of worship of religions under study was asked in focus groups. At Abesu School, one pupil in group 1 reported that instead of learning about sacred books and places of worship they learnt more on marriage. Examples given were that in Hinduism, when one was married they put a red dot on the forehead and that in Islam polygamy of not more than four wives was allowed. No pictures were found in the books but those who watched TVs at times saw such pictures. The group discussed supporting what was contributed.

In group 2, at Abesu School, three pupils responded to the question. One pupil said that they learnt about religions in Social Studies and that the topic that was interesting and well understood was marriage. The other pupil said that lessons on marriage talked about Hindus who made a distinction when a girl got married by putting a red dot on the forehead and that on Muslims, they learnt that a man was allowed to marry four wives and treat them equally. The third pupil mentioned that sacred books and places of worship were taught but were confusing since they were never shown to them except for the Bible. The rest of the members in the group supported the contributions.

At Balulu School, group 1 pupils found it difficult to respond. After a long silence one pupil said that the school had no books where they could be shown how Bibles (sacred books) and places of worship looked like for non-Christian religions. The other members of the group echoed their friend’s response that they wished such pictures were availed to them. In group 2, one pupil expressed the view that it was not important to see picture of places of worship for non-Christian religions but for the purpose of examinations they could have appreciated if they saw them *tafyakwata inchito, nomba, mashindano!*

**Lesson observation**

One lesson was observed from Abesu School. The topic for the lesson was ‘Religious Teaching about Marriage’. In the introduction, the teacher asked the class to sing a song. She asked the class what a family was. One of the pupils said ‘people living together who are related’. The teacher refined the answer as ‘people living together as related either by marriage or by blood’. She asked another question as what marriage was. One pupil answered and said ‘marriage is when a woman and a man agree to live together faithfully and lovingly’. The teacher was satisfied with the answer and asked another question to be discussed in groups and answers to be presented to the whole class. The question was ‘what religions do you know? Write down all the religions you know.’ The following answers were presented:

Table 4.8

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4
Judaism	Kindness	Christian	Judaism
Hinduism	Love	Islam	Islam
Buddhism	Faithful	Hindu	Hinduism
Christian	Honest	Judaism	Jews
Jews	Patience	Buddhism	Christian
Muslim	Trust	African traditions	

At each group presentation, the teacher, with the involvement of the rest of the class corrected any wrong answers. For group 1 Christian, Jews, Muslim were corrected to be presented as Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Group 2 was corrected that what they had presented were the qualities of a good marriage partner and not religions. Group 3 was

corrected on Hindu to be presented as Hinduism. The same group 3 was commended and praised for the good presentation especially that they included African traditions. Group 4 was corrected on Jews and Christian to be presented as Judaism and Christianity.

After the presentations, the teacher mentioned that of all the religions presented, only four were going to be considered in the lesson as they were the ones taught in schools. The four religions were listed on the board as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity and African Traditions. The next question to be answered by whole class was what each religion taught about marriage.

On Christianity, pupils said that there was no divorce and polygamy was not allowed. There were follow-up questions on Christianity:

Question: What is polygamy?

Answer: It is where a man marries more than one wife.

Question: Who is the head in a Christian home?

Answer: God.

Question: Who gives children?

Answer: God.

On African traditions, pupils said that they did not allow a marriage without children. The teacher expanded the answer by saying that in African traditions, people were interested in children in a marriage. One pupil asked as to how many children they expected from one couple. The teacher said 'as many as twenty children'. She added an adage that African traditions believe that '*ubukulu bwankoko bakumwena kumasako*', literary translated as 'the size of a chicken is seen from its feathers'. The teacher meant that in African Traditions, a great man in the community was known by the number of children he had. Due to this, the teacher continued, any barren woman was divorced and the man remarried to have children. The other points from the teacher were that in African traditions ancestors blessed marriages and that they were happy when there were many children in a marriage. A man took dowry to the woman's parents in African traditions.

On Islam, pupils responded that men were allowed to marry more than one wife but only up to four wives as long as they were all treated equally with love and house possessions. Divorce was not allowed. One pupil questioned the teacher, 'if they are allowed to marry four wives and should be treated equally, what if all the four wives wanted to sleep with the

man at the same time’? The whole class laughed and the teacher responded by saying that ‘all the four wives will have their own houses, how the man manages, I do not know but they should be treated equally’. The teacher continued to say that in this religion a man took dowry to the woman’s family and that children took care of their parents when they were old.

On Hinduism, pupils said that in this religion a woman was the one who took dowry to the man’s family and this meant that it was a woman who married the man. The teacher added that marriage in this religion lasted until death. No divorce was allowed. If the man was misbehaving, the woman was supposed to give him more love to make him change the behaviour. Pupils murmured when the last point was stated and the teacher repeated the point by stating that the woman had to begin to cook delicious foods and talk to the man kindly.

To conclude the lesson, the teacher asked some questions to the whole class.

Question: What is divorce?

Answer: When a man and woman separate. The teacher corrected the answer by emphasising that it was the ‘husband and wife’, and not just mere ‘man and woman’.

Question: What do we call a situation where a man was married to only one wife?

Answer: Monogamy.

Question: How many are not Christians or go to a church that does not believe in Jesus here?

Answer: We are all Christians. One pupil stood up and said he was not a Christian but a Muslim. The teacher expressed some surprise and said ‘you mean you have not stopped going there?’

The lesson ended with an emphasis from the teacher that three words were learnt in the lesson which were; divorce, polygamy and monogamy.

From the individual interviews and focus discussions with learners and a lesson observation of the teacher it can be concluded that teaching strategies used in Social Studies in the teaching about religions were inadequate. Learners expressed the view that they did not see the things that they learnt in class, an indication that teaching and learning aids were not being used to enhance understanding of non-Christian religions. Unfamiliar concepts were not clarified during lesson presentations such as was the case where no clarification was given on the correction of ‘Muslim’ to ‘Islam’ as a religion in the lesson observed.

#### **4.5 Summary**

This chapter has presented the findings of the research on grade 7 pupils' understanding of non-Christian religions in Social Studies in selected primary schools in Serenje district. The study revealed that pupils in Serenje District primary schools had less or no encounter with non-Christian religions outside the classroom. The teaching strategies used in Religious Education when teaching religions did not facilitate the understanding of non-Christian religions. The study further revealed that pupils had limited and distorted understanding of non-Christian religions.

The next chapter, 'discussion of findings' will be further analysis of the findings. Findings will be discussed in line with Piaget's cognitive theory and Goldman's religious thinking theory. The reviewed literature will equally be used in discussing the findings.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the findings of the study. The purpose of the study was to investigate the understanding of non-Christian religions by grade 7 pupils in two primary schools in Serenje District, Zambia. The research objectives were: 1. To determine the understanding of non-Christian religions by the grade 7 pupils in the Zambian rural primary schools. 2. To establish the significance of understanding non-Christian religions to the Zambian rural primary school pupils. 3. To ascertain the teaching strategies used in Religious Education when teaching religions in the Serenje District primary schools.

The discussion will be done in accordance with the findings on three non-Christian religions namely; Zambian traditional beliefs, Islam and Hinduism. Data for discussion has been drawn from the emerging themes of the research findings. Therefore, the discussion will be centred around: understanding of non-Christian religions as limited and distorted in Zambian rural primary schools; understanding of non-Christian religions viewed as insignificant to the Zambian rural primary school pupils; the teaching strategies used in Religious Education fail to enhance understanding of non-Christian religions in Zambian rural primary schools.

The understanding of non-Christian religions was in part determined by what was obtaining in the community surrounding the primary schools because children were fully involved in the local religious activities. My observation was that the rural primary schools under study were surrounded by a community which practiced a mixture of Zambian Traditional beliefs and Christianity. The livelihood of these communities was filled with activities that depicted the practice of Zambian Traditional beliefs on one hand and Christian beliefs on the other. Rites of passage Ceremonies at every stage of an individual's life were characterised by traditions of Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs. The communities also celebrated various important occasions such as harvesting the first fruits.

Given this background, children in the schools under study could be understood as those with a religious background. Their lives were indwelt with an Indigenous African religious

experience while by conversion they were adherents of Christianity. The religious knowledge of respondents was, therefore, drawn from what they learnt at home, church, peers and school.

## **5.2 Limited understanding of non-Christian Religions**

The first objective was to determine the understanding of non-Christian religions by grade seven pupils in Serenje District primary schools. The study established that understanding of non-Christian religions was limited and distorted. Discussion of findings will be done here under the sub-headings of the three non-Christian religions, namely; Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs, Islam and Hinduism.

### **5.2.1 Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs**

The study established that understanding of religions was achieved through practising religious activities that qualified a particular religion. These religious activities mostly had to do with some kind of praying which was not very evident in Zambian Traditional belief systems. According to the responses on Zambian Traditional beliefs, the connection to prayer meant praying to idols. By idols here, pupils referred to practices of witchcraft and divination.

During individual interviews one of the pupils said that the Zambian traditional believers prayed for money, prayed to different gods and in ways not known to other people. The praying for money meant the mysterious type of praying with consequences or with an exchange of some evil ritual practices. This understanding shows that pluralism in Religious Education was not providing learners with balanced information which would help learners appreciate and value religious beliefs. An appropriate form of Religious Education was required to rectify statements which were as negative as the one received from the pupil interviewed.

Another pupil further said that Indigenous Zambian religious believers prayed for money because *bafwaya ukuwina no kuchita ma businesses*, translated as ‘they want to be rich and do businesses’. This statement was said with a negative expression and pupils showed how, according to them, the religion was connected to evil practices and that it was disliked by people. This indicated that understanding of Zambian traditional

beliefs was narrow and distorted. It can be further said that such a response was an indication that religions were not accurately represented in Religious Education lessons in rural primary schools of Zambia. If accurate information about non-Christian religions was presented, appreciation of their values would be expected from learners. Hull (1984) argued that an effective Religious Education should give accurate information and demonstrate respect for all world faiths.

At another instance, in a focus group discussion, Indigenous Zambian religious believers were said to be either Christians or if not they practiced witchcraft or divination and that they were witch doctors. As children discussed the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs, their expressions were such that they did not like the kind of religion. Intonation was that of despising and desiring not to have any knowledge of this type of religion. The findings therefore, revealed that pupils in these rural primary schools misunderstood Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs. The sacred or scriptural books noted in this religion were known as the big trees, shrines, owl or spirits. All this revealed how Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs were connected to evil practices and understood as weird and despised by society.

When the group discussed that the Indigenous Zambian religious believers were Christians they actually meant that on its own Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs was not a religion. One had to belong to a religion like Christianity. When asked further why they did not make mention of the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs as a religion, pupils responded that any Zambian religion was Christianity because Zambians were Christians. As such the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs were just another form of Christian religion. This indicated how limited in knowledge about the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs pupils had in rural primary schools of Zambia. All these responses were an indication that pluralism in Religious Education in Zambian rural primary schools was still a challenge.

From the lesson observation, only one group of the four included African traditional beliefs on their list when the teacher asked the class to discuss in groups and write down the religions they knew (see table 4.2, page 46). The teacher seemed not to be surprised but appreciative that at least one group had remembered and stated African traditions on their list. This similarly indicated that African traditional beliefs just as Zambian

traditional beliefs were not taken as religions. As the lesson progressed some sentiments from the teacher ridiculed the pupils. This was observed when one pupil asked as to ‘how many children were expected in an African traditional marriage’. The teacher’s response was ‘twenty’ and pupils shouted that it was not normal and fair. The teacher’s response had an exaggeration which made pupils feel estranged at the religion in question. Some kind of clarification to the answer could have cleared the pupils’ misunderstanding of the matter.

The pupils’ contributions in the lesson showed that learners had limited information on world religions for them to appreciate and value Indigenous Zambian beliefs. This was not in line with the aims of Religious Education which is meant to promote and help impart important life skills such as critical and analytical thinking and respect for other people’s beliefs and values (Ministry of Education, 1996). Teaching of religions in Religious Education lessons was important to make sure the language used was appealing and provided accurate information. When a teacher used a negative term that ridiculed learners, the religion under subject, in this case, the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs was equally negatively viewed.

It could be said here that Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs were misunderstood and misrepresented in Serenje District primary schools from the findings of the current research. The researcher agreed then with Cheyeka in Henze (2007) who correctly concluded that even though Zambia followed the Religious Education of Wales and England, Zambian traditional beliefs were not adequately dealt with in a manner to dispel ignorance and superstition and expose learners to its religious beliefs in the light of rational discussion. If learners were to develop an understanding of spiritual and moral values from Zambian traditional beliefs, “learners should be allowed to subject them to rational discussion and to learn from them”, (Cheyeka, 2007:63).

From the discussions the study established that in rural Zambian primary schools understanding of Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs was limited and weird. It should be noted that pupils carried with them religious knowledge from their homes, churches and peers to school. The situation in the rural primary schools of Zambia under study was contrary to the general outcome for grades 1 – 7 which stated that pupils were supposed

to develop spiritual and moral values as they learnt religions inclusive Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs.

### 5.2.2 Islam

The study established that Islam and Muslim were either two different religions or Islam did not exist while Muslim remained as a religion. Pupils showed some understanding when the term ‘Muslim’ was used rather than when Islam was used.

It was established in the study that Islam was not known but what was known was Muslims. Interestingly enough one pupil did not only learn about Muslims but had known Muslims in person from the community she lived. Yet when she was asked about Islam she showed ignorance of its existence. This pupil had an opportunity of interacting with members who belonged to Islam as they lived in the same vicinity. This experience enhanced the understanding of Islam when taught in class. This was how on table 4.3 number 6, (see page 47), a mention of the place of worship for the Muslims was stated as a specific Mosque, ‘Masjid’ (see Appendix D<sub>1</sub>). Masjid was a Mosque found in the town centre of Serenje as shown in the picture that follows.

(Picture of the Mosque in Serenje); (*With permission from ‘Serenje Islamic Society’*)



The interaction the pupil had with Muslims in her vicinity enhanced her understanding of the Islam religion in Religious Education lessons. It could be stated here that pupils' understanding of religions would be enhanced with some tangible aids. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, these pupils being in their concrete stage of cognitive development, they "think in an organised, logical fashion only when dealing with concrete information that they can perceive directly" (Berk, 2005:242). The aid availed to pupils help them associate the aid with what was learnt in class.

The pupil who managed to match Masjid with Islam must have associated Masjid she saw in her vicinity with what she learnt in class. There was an association from what was learnt in class to what was experienced in real life outside the classroom. This was in agreement with Fontana (1988), who said that visual association was very important in learning. He said that unfamiliar material was remembered effectively if it was associated with something already familiar. The pupil being discussed here could have understood the classroom lessons on Islam because she had an encounter outside class with the same religion.

With reference to Holm in Jackson (1984), learners' exposure to other cultural backgrounds of religions increases knowledge of such religions. Holm says that it was important, if there was to be an understanding of religions that children had to share among other things cultural backgrounds of their religions, through dress, worship and information (Jackson, 1984). Since pupils found in rural areas of Zambia lack such an exposure to cultural backgrounds of world religions other than Christianity, it was difficult for them to be assisted to understand other religions in class. It is therefore imperative that deliberate interventions are sought to allow learners have an encounter of non-Christian religions within and outside the classroom.

The study further indicated that pupils in rural Zambian primary schools equated Islam and Muslim as being both religions. They used the terms interchangeably without differentiating a religion from its followers. When asked further pupils contended that the two were the same just like Christians were the same even though their churches were different one from the other, such as United Church of Zambia (UCZ) and Pentecostals were all Christians. This meant, according to the pupils, that both 'Islam' and 'Muslim'

were religions and not that the other 'Muslim' was the follower or adherent of the religion 'Islam'.

The misunderstanding, when probed further, was that the two terms were completely different from each other as unlike the terms 'Christianity' as a religion and 'Christians' as followers or 'Hinduism' as a religion and 'Hindus' as followers. It would be concluded from the study that Islam is understood as a religion on its own separate from Muslim. The difference between the name of the religion and the followers of the religion was not assimilated.

The responses from the group discussions in the lesson that was observed showed that Muslim and Islam still posed a challenge to pupils. While some pupils indicated Islam as a religion without a mention of Muslim others indicated Islam as a religion as well as Muslim as a religion. As the teacher corrected the group presentations, Muslim was corrected to be presented as Islam. Unfortunately, the teacher did not take the opportunity to state why Muslim was wrong to be indicated as a religion. Worse still the teacher used the two terms interchangeably in the course of the lesson development. It could have been that the teacher did not fully understand the two concepts: Muslim and Islam.

Such were common mistakes which continued to mislead learners. My analysis was that the teacher teaching a lesson on world religions in religious education did not give attention to clarify challenging terms learners encountered. This could have been another source of learners having limited, distorted and weird understanding of non-Christian religions in Religious Education.

In the course of the study a new place of worship of the 'hills' was revealed. The assumption was that the pupil could have been one of those who watched the film narrated by Kunda at Balulu School. In this film there were times when actors went to the hills to pray and since pupils had concluded that the people in the film were Muslims, it was not surprising to find 'hills' *'kulupili* mentioned in the short test (see Appendix D<sub>2</sub> and D<sub>3</sub>). In this scenario, the study agreed with Geraint (2004) who advised that there was much to be gained from using resources such as pictures, posters, videos and television programmes. Deprivation of such learner support materials rendered teaching failing to achieve the intended goals.

The schools under study, especially Balulu School, did not only lack teaching and learning aids but also had a critical shortage of teachers. The school had two 1 x 2 classroom blocks but only one 1 x 2 classroom block was being used because there were only two teachers for grades one to seven classes. The two teachers concentrated teaching the lower grades while the upper grades were in most cases given group work with minimal contact time. No class timetable was followed though the teachers made sure that at least each subject was taught every week.

The community surrounding Balulu School had no other religions apart from Christianity. This meant that learners encountered non-Christian religions in class only. The school had no learner support materials such as pictures or models of places of worship for religions taught in class. Teaching and learning was in abstract of which learners at primary school level were not able to comprehend.

Table 4.6 on page 49, proved that learners correctly identified the pictures by applying the knowledge learnt only to the extent the descriptions were given. For instance, picture 1 on the following page was well attempted at both schools. Pupils were able to identify a Muslim wearing a robe and a hat on the head because that was what they expressed as having known about the Muslims. Since there was no other exposure given to pupils through teaching and learning aids, pupils could not have imagined that a Muslim would, for instance, wear a jacket (see picture 2 below). Thus other pictures of Muslims, wearing other types of clothing though with a hat (Taqiyah) on the head, were not recognised by many pupils.



(Picture 1)



(Picture 2)

### **5.2.3 Hinduism**

From individual interviews and focus group discussions the study established that pupils had fair knowledge about Hinduism as compared to the other two non-Christian religions. They were able to note some Hindu beliefs though at times they would mistake Hinduism for Islam. During their discussions it was clear that to some extent Hinduism was exposed to a number of pupils who watched some Indian movies on Television sets. Pupils discussed how that what they watched on television was what was taught in class. The connectivity facilitated the understanding of various aspects about Hinduism.

It was interesting to note that as learners discussed Hinduism, they showed interest to share their knowledge they got from watching movies. At some point pupils drew some similarity between Christianity and Hinduism although they failed to substantiate their points. The study, at this point, established that the understanding of Hinduism was that it was closer to Christianity than the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs and Islam.

Pupils at Abesu School admitted that they had never seen a Hindu in person but they were able to give descriptions of how a Hindu looked like, prayed and dressed. Mention also was made of their place of worship as the Temple and the Vedas as their sacred books. This knowledge was attributed to the Indian movies most pupils watched on television. The pupils at Balulu School had difficulties to describe a Hindu because they had never met or seen one.

### **5.3 Understanding of non-Christian religions viewed as insignificant**

From the findings, the study established that pupils did not like learning about non-Christian religions in class. A few of them did like learning about non-Christian religions only to some extent for the purpose of examinations. Pupils who did not like learning about non-Christian religions attributed their dislike to the fact that it was not allowed by their parents and that it was sin against God. Further investigations revealed that some religious teachings children receive from their homes superceded what was learnt in class.

Some Christian traditional denominations forbid their members to interact with other members from different faiths. Pupils expressed the view that it was insignificant to understand non-Christian religions because of what they were told at their homes before

coming to class. Most families forbid their children to interact with religious views which were of other faiths. The interference from parents could be noticed from some sentiments which pupils projected when asked why they did not like learning about non-Christian religions; they said *lubembu kuli lesa wa tupangile* translated as ‘it is sin against God who created us’. Such sentiments revealed that learners considered learning about non-Christian religions as against their faith.

It was questionable that pupils who considered learning of non-Christian religions not significant would learn such religions with understanding. Meanwhile, Zambia being a democratic, multi-cultural and multi-religious country, has four main religions (Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Zambian traditional beliefs) in its primary school curriculum. The grade 1 – 7 syllabus has its general outcome for Religious Education as to develop in learners spiritual and moral values drawn from the four major religions namely, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Indigenous Zambian traditional beliefs. To achieve the expected outcome, learners needed to consider learning and understanding of all the four major religions as significant.

#### **5.4 Inadequate teaching strategies used in Social Studies**

Teaching methods used in Social Studies in the teaching about religions were found to be failing to enhance the understanding of non-Christian religions in the rural Zambian primary schools. Pupils had ideas about religious teachings on marriage, prayer, places of worship and sacred books for non-Christian religions in Social Studies but without understanding. It was found that pupils could not appropriate certain information, such as places of worship and scriptural books, to particular religions correctly.

In their concrete stage of cognitive development, primary school learners required a lot of teaching and learning aids for them to assimilate and understand new concepts. The study established that pupils were not availed with any teaching and learning aids to assist them understand certain things they had never seen in their lives. It is in this vein that pupils who began learning about places of worship for religions in grade 2, as specific outcome 2.2.2 stated “mention places where members of different religions worship (eg. Church, Mosque,

Temple)”, failed to appropriate such information to particular religions when in grade 7. Topics taught in abstract could not be well understood by learners.

Religious Education in primary schools, as already alluded to, was supposed to facilitate the young generation in the understanding of world religions in today’s world of pluralism. According to Cox (1990), Religious Education should provide an opportunity to lead learners to an awareness of differences and an understanding of what religion is all about for them and for others. This meant that teaching strategies used in Religious Education were not supposed to be such that would segregate or create impartiality in religions. Presentation of lessons was not supposed to be confessional where some religions would be discriminated in preference to the other. The role of Religious Education was to facilitate understanding of all the major religions equally. Apparently teaching strategies used in Religious Education in rural primary schools in Zambia failed to facilitate understanding of non-Christian religions.

The analysis of the lesson observed portrayed that Christianity was presented in a more preferred manner on ‘teachings about marriage’ than the other religions. For instance, the teacher did not bother much to check the statements she was making about non-Christian religions. Statements made such as the twenty children an African traditional marriage expected, the belief of marrying up to four wives in Islam and the idea of a woman taking dowry to a man’s family in Hinduism, were presented without any comment from the teacher to clarify and avoid speculations from the pupils. Pupils booed at each of the statements as it was presented. Homan and King (1993:16) noted that it was “apparent that the knowledge, training and commitment of the teacher were as significant a factor in aspects of confusion.” The teacher’s positive response to such a situation was imperative.

The teacher, in the course of the lesson, asked the class if there was any one who did not believe in Jesus. When one pupil responded that he was a Muslim and did not believe in Jesus, the teacher could not accept the response. The lesson at that instance singled out Christianity as the preferred religion by the teacher. Such type of lessons, I observed, would not promote learners’ interest to understand non-Christian religions but limit their desire to gain more knowledge.

It is a notable fact that primary school learners need to be motivated in order to assimilate new religious ideas which may seem to be contrary to their initial beliefs. Religious Education teachers need to realise the fact that children in their classes possess preconceived ideas about religions. To assist these children, learn new religious ideas, a motivational force in classroom instruction would be ideal. Farrant (1998:130) says that motivational force in classroom instruction “is not achieved by dispensing knowledge but by stimulating, enthusing and guiding his pupils”. The more the teacher is able to generate strong motivation in his pupils the better they learn new ideas. All religions should be presented in an appealing, relevant and satisfying manner. It is very true that “if content is perceived to be helpful in accomplishing one’s goals, then they are more likely to be motivated (Sookdeo, 2012). Pupils would definitely find learning non-Christian religions and understand them when motivated. Pupils in the Zambian rural primary schools depend on the teacher’s facilitation of Religious Education lessons to be motivated to understand non-Christian religions or not. More effort to motivate pupils who are less exposed to non-Christian religions was required in order to facilitate pluralism in Religious Education.

Further investigations on the role of Religious Education in the understanding of non-Christian religions in rural Zambian primary schools, the study established that pupils were not adequately supported with teaching and learning aids during lessons. Pupils lamented that very little if not nothing were provided as teaching and learning aids to help them see what was being taught. Most pupils had never seen any place of worship for the non-Christian religions, not even just on a picture. Out of the pupils who participated in the study only one pupil had seen and recognised the place of worship for Islam. This pupil lived close to a Mosque and interacted with some of the members who worshipped there.

This was contrary to specific outcome 2.2.2 which stated that pupils should mention places where members of different religions worship (eg. Church, Mosque and Temple). This outcome would effectively be achieved if children were availed with teaching and learning aids so that their knowledge retention was enhanced. Geraint (2004) was right about use of learner support resources when he said that there was much gain from using resources such as pictures, posters, videos and television programmes.

Similarly, table 4.7 on pages 49 and 50 which recorded identifications of buildings of places of worship for either the Muslims or the Hindus revealed that of the total number of

identifications 61 representing 30.5% were correct identifications, 83 representing 41.5% were incorrect identifications and 56 representing 28% were left as blanks. The presentation in the table 4.7 showed that the highest number of the identifications were incorrect. The incorrect identifications could have been attributed to lack of exposure to the pictures of the buildings in the classroom during Religious Education. It could therefore be deduced that Religious Education failed to enhance understanding of non-Christian religions in Zambian rural primary schools.

In accordance with Thorndike's connectionism theory the discussion confirmed that without realising the significance of what one was learning, there could be no understanding. Pupils in the rural Zambian primary schools found no significance in learning non-Christian religions and hence no understanding was sought. Similarly, the discussion agreed with Piaget's cognitive development theory, especially on the concrete operation stage. The study confirmed the implications that without teaching and learning aids, learning failed to enhance retention and let alone understanding of what was taught.

## **5.5 Summary**

The chapter discussed the findings on the understanding of non-Christian religions as being limited, distorted and weird in the selected Zambian rural primary schools. Understanding of non-Christian religions was viewed as insignificant by pupils and teaching strategies used in Religion Education failed to facilitate understanding of non-Christian religions.

The next chapter gives conclusions and recommendations to the study.

## CHAPTER SIX

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 6.1 Introduction

The study aimed at finding out the understanding of non-Christian religions by grade seven pupils in rural Zambian primary schools of Serenje District. The non-Christian religions considered in the study were: Zambian traditional beliefs, Islam and Hinduism. Having discussed the findings of the study, this chapter presents conclusions and recommendations for further considerations.

#### 6.2 Conclusions

The following were the conclusions with regard to the objectives and the themes that emerged from the study.

The understanding of non-Christian religions by grade seven pupils in primary schools of Serenje District was limited and distorted.

The Zambian traditional beliefs were not considered as a religion on its own. The understanding was that it was one of the Christian denominations. All Zambians were understood to be Christians and therefore, no other religion was associated with Zambians. In fact Christianity was nationalised as a religion belonging to Zambians and Zambians belonging to Christianity. As such the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs were just another form of Christian denomination. This indicated the limited knowledge the grade seven pupils in primary schools of Serenje District had about the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs.

Sentiments about Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs from pupils were that if one did not belong to Christianity, he/she belonged to those who practiced undesired activities. Therefore, such non-Christian members were understood to be weird in what they did. They were known to be envious for riches and exchanged life in evil spiritual rituals for money. From the negative expression during discussions on what was known about Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs, it could be said that pupils were misled to believe that the religion had unacceptable beliefs. It would therefore be concluded that grade seven pupils in primary

schools of Serenje District's understanding of Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs was limited.

Pupils were unable to assimilate the difference between Islam as a religion and Muslim as followers of Islam. The knowledge pupils revealed was that Islam and Muslim were either two different religions or Islam did not exist while Muslim remained as a religion. During discussions pupils showed some understanding when the term 'Muslim' was used than when Islam was used.

The place of worship and the sacred or scriptural books used in Islam were equated to what was used in Christianity as Church and Bible respectively. Even when Mosque and Quran were mentioned, pupils insisted that just as there were many names of churches in Christianity so it was that a Mosque was another church for Islam. A new concept of a place of worship for Islam was revealed as the 'Hills'. Pupils could not conceptualise the differences between a Mosque and a Church, the Quran and the Bible. Learners in these primary schools in Serenje District only had a Church and the Bible in mind as religious places and scriptural books used by religions. This confirmed the limited knowledge pupils had on Islam.

Pupils' understanding of Hinduism was fair. At Abesu pupils showed some interest in knowing more about the religion. During discussions pupils at Abesu School shared in the group what they watched on television which was related to what they learnt in class on Hinduism. Pupils were curious and interested to know more about the religion. Pupils drew some similarity with Christianity even though they could not substantiate their points.

One would deduce from the discussions at Abesu School that knowledge about Hinduism was enhanced by what children watched on television at their homes. Mention was made of their place of worship as the Temple and the Vedas as their sacred books. The finding here was in agreement with Piaget's cognitive and Goldman's religious thinking theories which emphasise on the use of teaching and learning aids to be employed for children in their concrete stage.

Finally, under the objective of establishing the understanding of non-Christian religions namely; Islam, Hinduism and Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs, the discussions of

findings provided herein suggested in conclusion that in Zambian rural primary schools, pupils at grade seven had fair understanding of Hinduism, limited understanding of Islam and distorted understanding of the Indigenous Zambian religious beliefs.

As regards the objective to establish the significance of understanding non-Christian religions by grade seven pupils in rural Zambian primary schools it would be concluded that pupils did not like learning about other religions in class. A few of those who did like learning about non-Christian religions expressed the view that it was only for the purpose of examinations.

Pupils' dislike to learn about non-Christian religions was attributed to the fact that it was not allowed and that it was sin against God. The study further established that some religious teachings from children's homes superseded what was learnt in class. Children were forbidden to listen to any other religious teachings apart from Christianity. Pupils were thus found in a dilemma as to whether they had to obey and follow what their parents said or commit themselves to school and understand what was taught in class. What was learnt in class was portrayed to be contrary and against the beliefs in Christianity, the religion that learners respected. Due to these reasons pupils found no significance to understand religions that were forbidden in society.

The teaching strategies used in Religious Education failed to enhance understanding of non-Christian religions in rural Zambian primary schools. On the objective to ascertain the teaching strategies used in Religious Education in the understanding of non-Christian religions in rural Zambian primary schools, it could be concluded that pupils at the level of grade seven in Zambian rural primary schools in Serenje District were not able to appropriate information to particular religions. Topics which began to be taught at grade 2 could not be comprehended up to the time pupils reached grade seven. This could have been attributed mostly to the fact that learners were not availed the opportunity to concretise what they learnt with some form of teaching and learning aids.

Additionally, conclusions on the presentation of the lesson established that lessons were biased towards a preferred and acceptable religion at the expense of other religions. In this case Christianity was presented by the teacher, in a favourable manner while the other three world religions were presented in an inferior and negative manner. This kind of teaching

created a low self-esteem towards the non-Christian religions and hence no attention to understand them was given.

### **6.3 Recommendations**

From the conclusions provided about the study, the researcher came up with the following recommendations:

1. Learners at primary school are in their concrete cognitive development level hence production of appropriate teaching and learning aids in form of charts, videos, models, film slides, pictures and posters to support learning needs, have to be maximised.
2. Religious Education teachers to be granted opportunities to continuously receive professional development where handling of religious pluralism needs to be clarified. Appropriate teaching methods which would enhance the role of Religious Education in the understanding of religions in today's pluralistic society to be emphasised to in-service teachers.
3. High levels of professionalism to be observed by all Religious Education teachers at primary school level to avoid the temptation of proselytising and favouring Christianity during the presentation of lessons.
4. Primary school teachers to cease every opportunity and sensitise communities surrounding their primary schools about the development of Zambia as a religious pluralistic society.

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**APPENDICES**

**Appendix A**

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA**

**LUSAKA**

**THIS STUDY IS MEANT TO INVESTIGATE GRADE SEVEN PUPILS' UNDERSTANDING OF NON CHRISTIAN RELIGIONS.**

**Section A – personal details.**

1. Sex: Male  Female

2. Age: 11 yrs  12 yrs  13yrs  14+ yrs

3. What is your religious affiliation?

Evangelical/Pentecostal Christian

Catholic/Anglican Christian

Hindu

Muslim

Indigenous Zambian Beliefs

Other \_\_\_\_\_

## **Appendix B**

### **Section B – interview guide questions for individual pupils**

#### **To determine the understanding of non-Christian religions**

1. What comes in to your mind when you hear the following names of religions?
  - a. Islam
  - b. Hinduism
  - c. Indigenous Zambian Religion
2. Have you ever seen or just heard of the following books?
  - a. The Quran
  - b. The Veda
3. What are holy writings?
4. Apart from Christian holy writings, have you ever seen or heard of holy writings of other religions?
5. What do you call the places of prayer for the following religions
  - a. Islam
  - b. Hinduism
  - c. Indigenous Zambian Religion
6. Have you ever seen such places somewhere or in a picture?
7. Have you ever seen
  - a. A Muslim?
  - b. A Hindu?
8. What things distinguish
  - a. A Muslim?
  - b. A Hindu?

#### **To ascertain the role of Religious Education in the understanding of non-Christian religions**

9. What religions do you learn in Religious Education/SDS?
10. Do you like learning about other religions other than Christianity?
11. What things do you learn about in non-Christian religions in SDS?
12. What similarities do you know between Christianity and non-Christian religions?
13. What differences can you identify between Christianity and other religions?

## **Appendix C**

### **Section C – guiding questions for group discussions**

#### **To determine the understanding of non-Christian religions**

1. What do you know about the following religions?
  - a. Islam
  - b. Hinduism
  - c. Indigenous Zambian Beliefs
2. What are the holy books of these religions called?
  - a. Islam
  - b. Hinduism
  - c. Indigenous Zambian Beliefs
3. Mention the similarities and differences between Christianity and other religions.

#### **To establish the significance of understanding non-Christian religions**

4. Do you like what you learn about in non-Christian religions?
5. Do you think it is important to learn about non-Christian religions?
  - a. If your answer is yes, explain why?
  - b. If your answer is no, explain why?
6. Are there pictures or models you are shown to help you understand more about non-Christian such as:
  - a. Buildings or places of prayer
  - b. The holy books used by non-Christian religions

#### **To ascertain the role of Religious Education in the understanding of non-Christian religions**

7. What things do you learn in Religious Education about non-Christian religions?
8. How does Religious Education give you information about scriptures, places of prayer and other features of non-Christian religions?
9. What similarities and differences do you learn about in Religious Education lessons in the following religions?
  - a. Islam and Christianity
  - b. Hinduism and Christianity
  - c. Indigenous Zambian beliefs and Christianity

## Appendix D

### SECTION D

#### ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS

1. Write any religion you know apart from Christianity.

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Choose one religion you know and write the place of worship against it.

<b>Religion</b>	<b>place of worship</b>
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_____	_____
-------	-------

3. Christians use the sacred book called the Bible for teaching, write what sacred books the religions you have mentioned use for teaching

<b>Religion</b>	<b>what they use</b>
-----------------	----------------------

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Out of the religions you have mentioned, which ones do you learn about in Religious Education?

- a. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Look at the people in this picture. Identify whether the picture is of:

- a. Muslims \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Hindus \_\_\_\_\_

6. Look at the pictures of buildings for places of worship for some religions, which ones are for

- a. Islam religion \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Hinduism religion \_\_\_\_\_

AppendixD1

20

ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS

1. Write any religion you know apart from Christianity.
- a. missions
  - b. Hindu
  - c. Buddhism
  - d. Judaism

2. For each religion you have written, write the places they go for worship

Religion	place of worship
<u>Muslims</u>	<u>mosjid</u>
<u>Christians</u>	<u>church</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Christians use scriptures from the Bible for teaching, write what the religions you have mentioned use for teaching

Religion	what they use
<u>Christians</u>	<u>Bible</u>
<u>Muslims</u>	<u>Quran</u>
<u>Hindus</u>	<u>vedas</u>
_____	_____

4. Out of the religions you have mentioned, which ones do you learn about in Social Studies?

- a. vedas
- b. Muslims
- c. Hindus

5. Look at the people in these pictures. Identify

- a. Muslims 1, 2, 3, 4
- b. Hindus 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20

6. Look at the pictures of buildings for places of worship for some religions, which ones are for

- a. Islam religion 1, 2, 3, 4
- b. Hindu religion 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20

Appendix D2

10

ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS

1. Write any religion you know apart from Christianity.
- a. muslims
  - b. Hindus
  - c. Islam
  - d. Jews

2. For each religion you have written, write the places they go for worship

Religion	place of worship
<u>Hindus</u>	<u>temple</u>
<u>Islam</u>	<u>Kulupit</u>
<u>Jews</u>	<u>synagogue</u>
<u>muslims</u>	<u>Mosque</u>

3. Christians use scriptures from the Bible for teaching, write what the religions you have mentioned use for teaching

Religion	what they use
<u>Islam</u>	
<u>Jews</u>	
<u>muslims</u>	<u>Message</u>
<u>Hindus</u>	

4. Out of the religions you have mentioned, which ones do you learn about in Religious Education?

- a. Muslims
- b. Hindus
- c. Jews

5. Look at the people in this picture. Identify

- a. Muslims 1, 2, 4, 5
- b. Hindus 3, 6, 7

6. Look at the pictures of buildings for places of worship for some religions, which ones are for

- a. Islam religion 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 17, 18, 20
- b. Hindu religion 3, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 21

Appendix D3

13

**ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS**

1. Write any religion you know apart from Christianity.

a. Lia 4M

b. Hindu

c. \_\_\_\_\_

d. ISLAM

2. For each religion you have written, write the places they go for worship

Religion	place of worship
<u>Muslim</u>	<u>Mosque</u>
<u>ch</u>	_____
_____	_____

3. Christians use scriptures from the Bible for teaching, write what the religions you have mentioned use for teaching

Religion	what they use
<u>Bible</u>	<u>R</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____

4. Out of the religions you have mentioned, which ones do you learn about in Social Studies?

a. \_\_\_\_\_

b. \_\_\_\_\_

c. \_\_\_\_\_

5. Look at the people in these pictures. Identify

a. Muslims 1 2 4

b. Hindus 3 5 6 7 17

6. Look at the pictures of buildings for places of worship for some religions, which ones are for

a. Islam religion 8 10 13 18 19 20

b. Hindu religion 9 11 12 14 15 16 17 21

## Appendix E

The table that follows gives a description of each picture.

<b>PICTURE NO</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
1.	Male Muslim wearing a robe and a small hat on the head seen up to the chest.
2.	Male Muslim wearing a jacket with a small hat on the head seen up to the chest.
3.	Three female Muslims seated with wrapper covering head, neck up to chest.
4.	Group of Muslims stooped in state of worship.
5.	A male Muslim wearing a wind breaker with a small hat on the head seen up to chest.
6.	A male Muslim covering his head up to shoulders with a wrapper seen up to chest.
7.	Male Muslim wearing a jacket with a small hat on the head seen up to the chest.
13.	Female Hindu seated with crossed legs, wearing colourful jewellery and a red dot on the forehead.
14.	Young Hindu male standing with clapped hands by the chest.
15.	Female Hindu portrait wearing colourful jewellery on the head and a red dot on the forehead.
16.	Female Hindu seated with crossed legs wearing colourful jewellery on the head and wrists with red dot on the forehead.
17.	Three young Hindu boys in standing position with red dots on the forehead.
18.	Female Hindu standing wearing a long dress with colourful jewellery on the head and wrists and a red dot on the forehead. Other females seated with crossed legs.
19.	Two African Hindu young boys with red dots on their forehead holding a decorated cow.
20.	Male African Hindu portrait with a red dot on the forehead.

## Appendix F

### PICTURES FOR IDENTIFICATION

01



02



03



04



05



06



07



08



09

88



10



Adopted from: [photobucket.com/images/islam](http://photobucket.com/images/islam)

11



12



13

89



14



15



16



17

90



18



19



20



Adopted from: [photobucket.com/images/hinduism](http://photobucket.com/images/hinduism)