

## **THE CONTRIBUTION OF MUKANZUBO CULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE TO THE PROMOTION OF THE TONGA RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL HERITAGE.**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Two years after Zambia's Independence, that is 1966, the National Museum Board, a Statutory Board created by an Act of parliament Chapter 174 of the laws of Zambia, was formed. Through this Act of parliament, the Zambian Government recognised the role Culture was to play in the development of a new nation and began to explore the question of National identity. Hence, an institute to promote Zambia's culture was created, that is the National Heritage Conservation Commission (NHCC). Through the NHCC, community museums and cultural institutes like Mukanzubo Cultural Research Institute (MCRI) were founded across Zambia. This study, therefore, investigated the contribution of MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage. The objectives of the study were to explore the traditional and social values taught at MCRI and to assess the views of the traditional leaders on the contribution of the MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage. The theory that guided this study is the socialisation theory. The study employed qualitative approach using phenomenology design. Traditional and religious leaders, parents of students at MCRI and former and current students from the institute formed the sample. The study established that the girls were taught traditional and social values. They were also instructed to know and appreciate certain traditional and cultural practices. The study also revealed that the Tonga religious and cultural heritage was expressed in symbols and artefacts displayed in the institute and women collected the artefacts. The study recommended that in order to serve the core mission of transferring of the Tonga traditional religion and culture across generation, MCRI should increase the enrolment of girls. The study also recommended that MCRI should extend the enrolment of students to boys so that they equally shared and appreciated the rich cultural values taught at the cultural research institute.

Key terms: heritage, cultural heritage, religious heritage.

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Zambia got her Independence in 1964 and two years after her independence, the National Museum Board, a Statutory Board created by an Act of parliament Chapter 174 of the laws of Zambia, was formed. It was through this Act of parliament that the Government of the Republic of Zambia recognized the role culture was to play in the development of a new nation and began to explore the question of national identity. Hence, an institute to promote Zambia's culture was created, that is the National Heritage Conservation Commission (NHCC). The functions of the (NHCC) were, among others, was to conserve Zambian cultural heritage for research, education and entertainment, to control, manage and

develop National and community Museums. Through the (NHCC), some community museums and cultural institutes like Choma museum, Mukanzubo Cultural Research Institute (MCRI) and many other cultural centres were also founded across Zambia.

Geertz (1973) observed that cultural institutions needed to engage the larger population of people if they were to serve their core mission of ensuring the transfer of cultural heritage across generations. Furthermore, Geertz (1973) observed that cultural institutions were also to ensure that young people were actively involved and engaged in cultural and religious matters in order for them to embrace and look after the cultural heritage and its activities when they grew up. Additionally, these cultural institutions also had a moral obligation of protecting both tangible and intangible aspects of the religious and cultural heritage. Therefore, cultural institutes play a pivotal role in connecting peoples' beliefs and building a more cohesive open society.

In 1905, two French Jesuits named Father Joseph Moreau and Jules Torrend arrived at Chikuni in Southern Province of Zambia. The duo opened Chikuni Parish Mission which falls under Monze Diocese. Later Fr. Joseph Moreau introduced the first plough to the area and this attracted many local people to Chikuni Mission (Carmody, 1999). The Mission also attracted many missionaries to the station and one of them was Fr. Frank Wafer.

MCRI was opened in 1990 by Fr. Frank Wafer and it falls under the property of the Catholic Mission Irish known as the Jesuit Fathers. Initially it was initiated for the purpose of restoring the Tonga heritage through music recordings, producing the Tonga cultural programmes and publishing Chi Tonga books. MCRI keeps young girls of age ranging from seven to eighteen years specifically to train them the Tonga tradition and cultural heritage. Heritage are features belonging to the culture of a particular society such as traditions, language that were created in the past and still have a historical importance. The study by Wafer (2005) has revealed that the Tonga culture has a musical component in nature. Though music exists in every human society, its meaning and place is culturally determined and the function of music also differs from culture to culture. If a culture was to remain the driving force of any kind of society, something has to be done to safeguard its erosion by foreign cultures. It is for this reason that the institute was established in order to keep the Tonga tradition and religious artefacts which were dying out due to the influence of Christianity and modernity. The institute has embarked on programmes of collecting the Tonga cultural material and transferring the oral knowledge of the Tonga speaking into its literate form. It has also structures or departments that contributed to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage such as the museum, the place of religious worship, traditional musical festival, book publications and the traditional school. Furthermore, the institute runs Tonga traditional programmes and activities aimed at promoting the Tonga religious and cultural heritage such as music festivals, dances, songs and artefact exhibition. It is through such programmes that the Tonga tradition and cultural heritage is preserved (Colson,2006).

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

The Tonga speaking people of Southern Province hold various Tonga religious ceremonies and beliefs which are importance for the preservation of the Tonga cultural heritage. The notable ceremonies include the coming of age ceremony, "Nkolola", Lwiindi Gonde ceremony, rain making ceremony and the

ceremony to honour the dead. Kanene (2011) contends that during the 2009 Lwiindi Gonde Ceremony, the Provincial Minister of Southern Province was quoted in the Post News Paper of July, 2009 saying that the Government was concerned with the erosion of cultural values and any attempt to restore the cultural heritage was going to be supported by the Government. Mufuzi (2010) examined Livingstone Museum and its contribution to the Zambian history and his study focused on exhibitions that related to the historical heritage. Maambo (2008) conducted the study on the effects of Nkolola initiation ceremony on women in Monze district of Southern Province, and Raising (2001), based his study on the female initiation rites in urban Zambia, Monze inclusive. Evidence has shown that there are no studies that have been done on the traditional ceremonies under the auspices of MCRI which spearheads research and restoration of the Tonga religion and cultural heritage. From the studies that were conducted, it was evident that the Tonga traditional ceremonies were more centered on men, women and girls without considering how boys and cultural institute could contribute to the promotion of Tonga religious and cultural heritage. What is known is that the MCRI was initiated to restore the Tonga cultural heritage. However, there seemed to be insufficient information and clear documented research done on the contribution of MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage. It appears that very little is known on the MCRI's programmes aimed at promoting the Tonga religious and cultural heritages. Hence, this study therefore, investigated the contribution made by MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage.

## **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to investigate the contribution of MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage.

## **1.3 Objectives of the study**

The research sought to meet the following objectives:

1. To explore the traditional and social values taught at MCRI.
2. To assess the views of the traditional leaders on the contribution of MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage.

## **1.4 Significance of the Study**

Studies on the Tonga religious cultural heritage have been carried out by different researchers. However, none of these studies have investigated the contribution made by MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage. It is for this reason that this study becomes important because the findings would help to advance the existing knowledge and make helpful recommendations on the contribution made by the Institution to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage so that the value of religion and culture could be harnessed for the benefit of the Tonga speaking people and other people in the region and beyond. The findings might help to strengthen the growing body of knowledge already existing in the literature. The findings might also serve as a useful framework of reference for researchers, students in tertiary education, the Ministry of Chiefs and Traditional Affairs officials and other officials in related Ministries. Furthermore, the findings could be used to fill the missing gaps, which if not filled the Tonga tradition and cultural practices and their indigenous knowledge risk being

lost to invading cultures and religion. Finally, the study might add knowledge to the importance of upholding traditional values, customs and religious and cultural symbols. As the old adage states: A nation without culture is a dead nation.

### **1.5 Theoretical Framework**

This study is based on the socialisation theory. This framework, therefore, provides the analytical and interpretive lens for the analysis of the findings. The theory of socialisation is cardinal to this study because it is through socialisation that customs and traditions in each culture are passed on from one generation to another. In the study of the contribution of MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage the kind of socialisation the girls are exposed to play a fundamental role in promoting the cultural heritage among the Tonga people of Zambia. According to Giddens (2006:163) socialisation is the process whereby, the helpless infant gradually becomes a self-aware, knowledgeable person and skilled in the ways of the culture into which he/she was born.

Being a process, socialisation is something that occurs over a span of time. During the early years, young ones learn values and norms from the elderly people (Giddens, 2006). Primarily, socialisation theory, as formulated by Oetting (1999) and his associates, emphasizes the transmission of societal norms, values, traditions and customs during childhood and adolescence within society's three major socialisation agencies, family, school and small intimate peer group (Sommer, 1969).

The norms transmitted may be pro social or deviant, with pro social norms more likely to be transmitted through strong bonds to healthy families or schools. Personality traits and other personal characteristics influence negative outcomes, such as deviance or drug use, only to the extent that they interfere with socialisation.

## **2.0 LITERATURE**

A number of writers have attempted to write on the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage, but from the survey of literature it appears that there are limited studies on the contribution made by cultural institutions with regard to religious and cultural heritage preservation. The study conducted in Zambia by Mizinga (1995) revealed that there was not enough documentation on history and culture as told by the local people. The findings by Mizinga (1995) indicate that what was passed on for local history and culture, in most cases, was that which had been handed over by foreigners. Mizinga's study (1995) was relevant to the current study because it shows the roles of the museum in promoting the Zambian culture. Therefore, there is need to have documented information on culture so that the Tonga culture and indeed other cultures could be preserved. Otherwise, a nation without culture is dead (Nyambe, 2009).

### **2.1 Meaning of Religion**

Religion has been defined in a variety of ways by a myriad of individuals. It has been a subject that has historically been left for discussion by religious leaders and scholars. Religion involves beliefs and normally these beliefs involve a Supreme Being, gods and spirits. Secondly, religion involves symbols, and particularly symbolic actions. In traditional African religions, which were for the most part

developed without the help of written documents, ritual is the most important part of religion. Rituals are in some way prescribed and repeated actions and usually conveying an element of symbolism. Such actions range from shaking of hands to an elaborate pageant like musical festival or a religious service (Bourdillon, 1990).

Religion is part of everyday life and has certain elements in common such as beliefs, rituals and experience. Religion plays a significant role in the lives of people all over the world and religious practices of some sort are evident in every society. Religious beliefs, rituals and experience all helps to define what is sacred. Religious beliefs are statements which members of a particular religion adhere. Some people believe in life after death, in supreme beings or supernatural forces. Kung in Magesa (1998:34) provides one of the most comprehensive descriptions of holistic nature of traditional African life. He states that Religion is “a believing view of life, approach to life, and therefore a fundamental pattern embracing the individual and society, man and the world through which a person sees and experiences think and feels acts and suffers everything.” This means that African religion developed together with the aspects of indigenous knowledge.

## **2.2 Meaning of Culture**

Every community or ethnic group has its own culture based on their own values, beliefs and way of life. Geertz (1973) refers culture to values, beliefs, behaviour and material objects that constitutes peoples’ way of life. It is, therefore, a bridge to the past and guide to the future. Geertz further states that Culture is the product of humans interacting in groups as well as a total way of life of a society. He also states that culture could be seen as a system of thought, behaviour and values accepted by a group of people or society as it interacts with the environment. This entails that our culture affects the way humans interact socially.

Another scholar, Loftus (1984: 25) defines culture as “consisting of norms, beliefs, customs, laws, values and expectations shared by members and groups of a given society, that affect many activities and processes within that society.” Norms are an unstated expectation or explicit standard of behaviour that members of a group or human society share. Beliefs on the other hand, consist of symbolic statements about reality. It is about what is real, true or false and may be accepted without recourse to empirical facts.

Other scholars like John Mbiti stated that culture covers many things, such as the way people live, behave and act, and their physical being as well as their achievements (Mbiti,1991:7). He went further to say that culture showed itself in art and literature, dance, music, drama and the styles of building houses. It also showed in people’s clothing, in religion, ethics, morality, in the customs and institutions of the people, in their values and in their economic life. All these cultural expressions influence and shape the life of each individual in his or her society, and in turn the individual makes a cultural contribution to his or her community through participating in its life and in some cases through creative work such as the establishment of a cultural research institute such as Mukanzubo. This could mean that shared values, customs and histories of a people’s culture can shape the way a person thinks, behaves and views the world.

Additionally, United Nation Education Scientific Co-operation (UNESCO, 1996) argues that people's identity is expressed through speaking and singing indigenous traditional songs which carry with them a different world of meaning. So, culture may broadly be defined as the sum total of ways of living built up by groups of human beings, transmitted from one generation to another. Therefore, preservation of culture is important because it strengthens people's identity and their religious and cultural heritage which the current study sought to address.

### **2.3 Study of Religion and Culture in Africa**

The study done by Tilden (1975) revealed that observable aspects of religion and culture such as food clothing, celebration, religion and language are only part of a person cultural heritage. The shared values, customs and historic characteristic of culture shape the way a person thinks, behaves and views the world. A shared cultural heritage bonds the members of the group together and creates a sense of belonging through community acceptance. The study further revealed that religion and culture is more simplified when it is defined as the language, beliefs, values and norms, customs, dress, diet, roles, knowledge and skills, and all the other things that people learn that make up the way of life of any society. This study was relevant to the current study because it was founded on promotion of traditional practices and culture which the study also sought to address.

The study done in Kenya by Ochola- Ayayo (1976), in his study on traditional ideology and ethics among the southern Luo, states that among other things that girls learn at the initiation ceremony is the importance of being hospitable and generous to relatives and even to the strangers. Ochola's study is in line with the current study which sought to address the traditional and social aspects taught at MCRI. A similar study by Gittinger (1982) revealed that rites were educative because they are forums for fostering attitudes. The initiates were taught to think with the community and see the world as the community sees it. Study done in Malawi by Muntali and Zulu (2007) entitled "The Timing and Role of Initiation Rites in Preparing Young People for Adolescence and Responsible Sexual Reproductive Behaviour." The study is relevant to this current study because it shows how the initiation rites play the role of imparting knowledge on reproductive behaviour in initiates. Reproduction constitutes part of the spiritual and social education which this current study sought to address. Muntali and Zulu (2007) revealed information relevant to this current study, however, their study did not provide information on how cultural institutions contributed to imparting knowledge to adolescence on religious aspects leaving a gap on how cultural institutes promote religious and cultural heritage.

Bhugra (2004) gives more explanation on cultural identity by noting that components of cultural identity which include religion, rites of passage, language, dietary habits and leisure activities. Bhugra further revealed that culture plays a very important role in identifying the customs, values, traditions and beliefs of people in a given society. As a result, the current study has examined the role played by the MCRI in promoting the Tonga religion and cultural heritage.

### **2.4 Studies done on the Tonga religion and culture in Zambia**

The Tonga religion is based mainly on oral transmission. It is not written on paper but in peoples' hearts, minds, oral history, rituals, shrines and religious functions. The Tonga religion is endowed with a rich culture and identity which is visible and traceable in its beliefs, material objects, values, customs and traditions. The Tonga believes in the existence of the Supreme Being (Leza). God or Leza is known to exist because of what he does, he gives life, he makes rain fall and gives sun. Carmody (1992), states that traditionally, the Tonga were polygamous, cattle-herders, simple hand-ploughing agriculturalists and hunting people and their educational system were informal and gender-based. The aim of the education was primarily to socialize the boys and girls into their social roles as well as to give them skills for self-development and sustainability. Hunting birds and animals, cattle-herding were for the boys and house-keeping for the girls. Thus, these were the practices and mind-sets that the Jesuit missionaries came into contact with when they first arrived in Tonga land. Carmody's study is in line with the current study because both advocates for inclusive learning where boys and girls were all supposed to be involved in the traditional learning so as to appreciate aspects to do with the Tonga religion and culture.

It is remarkable, for instance, how the ancestral spirits (*mizimu*) serve to validate the Tonga life pattern, bind them together potentially divergent kin groups and reinforce the principal status changes of the Tonga adult. Veneration of ancestral spirits among the Tonga took various forms such as through lineage, household and personal shrines, rain shrines as well as territorial shrines through which ancestors (*mizimu*) were investigated (Colson, 2006).

Zambia as a country has many cultures probably more than the recognised number of ethnic groups. Each tribe celebrates and observes its culture in its own style at different times of the year and for various reasons (Kapwepwe, 2007). Like all pre-colonial societies in Southern Africa, the Tonga had no written history and the most important sources for Tonga history are the people themselves and their oral traditions. However, the Tonga had no kings; instead they had chiefs and headmen who presided on their spiritual matters. Many remember tales and information given to them by their parents, grandparents, or even their great grandparents, as a slogan from Mozambique states: "Our old people are our libraries," says slogan from Mozambique (Thomson, 2005). So elders were not just teachers, but also mobile libraries and encyclopaedia to be referred to by all. Ki-Zerbo (1990) further states that when an elder die in Africa, it is the library that burns.

## **2.5 Traditional Education**

The act of learning is as old as humans themselves because before schools came into existence, traditional education or the learning of the younger generation took place in the family, clan tribe and community (Taneja, 2012). The people living in Zambia had their own system of education long before Europeans came to Africa. Basically, their education was traditional and was essentially practical training, which was designed to enable members to play a useful role in society. Mwanakatwe (2013) noted that the skills of reading, writing and mathematical computations as we know them today were not part of traditional education. However, the role of traditional education was vital and, in fact, indispensable for the smooth integration of growing children into society.

This education varied from community to community, both in its content and the methodology used. It is through this education, where social obligations and inculcation of good morals, apprenticeship in practical skills and religious teaching on initiation and the Supreme Being were taught. According to Mbiti (1991) traditional education was inculcated in rituals, shrines, ceremonies and festivals. Snelson (1974:1) defined traditional education as “a condition of human survival and is the means whereby one generation transmits the wisdom, knowledge, and experience which prepares the next generation for life’s duties and pleasures.” Learning was inculcated through observation and imitation. This non-formal and informal mode of learning had the potential to produce enlightened citizens and skilled workers who could use the skills acquired from the elders for the benefit of the entire community.

Mwanakatwe (1974) underscores the gender separateness of the traditional education system. According to him, in traditional pre-colonial Zambia, boys and girls were brought up together for up to about the age of five. Thereafter, gender roles would be emphasized and they would receive education from two different ‘curricula’. The girls’ education would be handled by the women folk and would mostly take place within the home premises. Girls were taught agricultural concepts and social activities. In Tonga tradition, when girls reach puberty stage, they would be secluded for intense instruction in new responsibilities of adulthood. These included personal care, child care, respect and obedience to the husband and the in-laws. Mwanakatwe further asserted that girls spent much of their time with their grandmothers, mothers and aunties learning the skills required of them to be good wives and mothers. They fetched water and fire wood, they did all the house chores such as cooking, caring for siblings, sweeping the house, making pottery and weaving as well as taking part in agricultural activities.

## **2.6 Coming of Age Ceremony: *Nkolola***

Zambian ethnic groups traditionally still preserve their cultural heritage and identity in spite of the advents of globalisation. Among the ethnic groups which preserve its cultural heritage and identity in Zambia is the Tonga through traditional education called the Nkolola ceremony. Nkolola was a traditional ceremony that was performed or celebrated when young girls reach puberty stage. During the teaching time, elderly women teach the young girls how to care for their homes, children and husbands. This initiation ceremony was also aimed at grooming a girl into preparing her to enter womanhood, and later on alone motherhood. Nkolola covers both the seclusion of a girl at puberty and the celebration of her emergence.

Colson (2006:160) stated that during the sequence of Nkolola, a girl was moved from the status of girl *musimbi*, to that of *kamwale* or *mooye*. As for the training part itself, the girl was confined in a house, for weeks or days, where she underwent instruction about what was expected of her as a woman, and possibly as a mother. Colson further stated that the initiation ceremony was a school whereby a girl was trained to be a woman and a mother, possibly. The initiate was attended to by a younger girl called *siakamwale*. Both were rubbed with oil and red ochre, which in this context could be interpreted as a sign of joy and life. The trainers were elderly women of high reputation in society who instructed her on ways to please her husband and lectured to her on the need to conduct oneself well in society. They also lectured to her on the need to work hard, to keep her house clean and to work in the field and grow food because they believed that to hoe was good, but begging for food was bad. The ancestral spirits



were also informed accordingly through conducting this ceremony and were asked in their own way to join in the celebration.

Chama (2006) conducted a study on the Impact of the Sikenge Initiation Rite on Women in Western Province and the study revealed that Sikenge made women behave maturely, well-disciplined and produced submissive wives. Chama's study is relevant to the current study in the sense that her sample included uninitiated women. The study of Chama (2006) is in line with the current study that sought to explore the traditional and social values taught to students at MCRI.

Maambo (2015) notes that some people in Southern Province viewed initiation as a culture and an initiation school a place of socialisation. It is perceived as a safe place for women to learn about their cultural beliefs and admire and to understand their respective roles, to learn, to gain power and position through their personal relationships with their communities during the initiation ceremonies. Additionally, Maambo (2015) asserts that it is widely perceived that the initiation school serves as a useful purpose because it teaches good behaviour. However, all the studies on traditional ceremonies have not probed the moral and social benefits that could empower girls to act as agents to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage. Therefore, the current study sought to fill the missing gap.

## **2.7 The Role of the Museum**

The study done by Muloongo (2010) on radio and museum revealed that museums disseminate information through display of artefacts associated with information, mainly in permanent exhibition within the galleries. While Wafer (2005) observed that the exhibits at MCRI have taken the same direction of information dissemination ranging from photographs to actual specimen such as household utensils, animal skins and musical instruments. Apart from permanent exhibitions, the other method that museums use to disseminate information is through temporary exhibition for information and education purposes. Hooper-Greenhill (1992) noted that temporary exhibition usually focuses on a specific subject and the whole activities lasts for a limited period of time on display. He further explained that just like the permanent exhibition, this method has also caption and material on display. While this method of displaying artefacts has been used for a long time and proves to be effective, it does not address the issue of Museum visitors who are illiterate or unable to write and read in cases where the language used may even be too technical for some visitors to understand.

The study conducted in Zambia by Kashoki (1989) reviewed that society entrusted museums with the responsibility to conserve ritual objects so that they could be protected for transmission to future generations. Kashoki further notes that museums were a significant factor in attracting both local and foreign tourists to an area and can therefore be instrumental in helping the local economy in terms of supplying a passing trade as well as offering local people employment through artefacts making. The findings from Kashoki (1989) observed that objects kept in the museums were believed to have unique combination of ideas associated with it. Any damage to any of the objects meant that there was a partial disappearance or distortion of the original message it carried. Kashoki (1989) concluded that Museums should be termed as cultural institutions because they were also agents in the preservation of the religious and cultural heritage of different people. The life expectancy of an object in the museum depends on the

care given to it. Study of Kashoki (1989) is relevant to this current study because it is in line with what MCRI have done by housing Tonga artefacts in its museum.

### **3.0 METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Phenomenology research design was used in this study. This has been exemplified by German philosophers Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger in the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Cox, 1992). A descriptive phenomenology design, seek to avoid reductionism and often insisting on the phenomenology Epoch (an act of refraining from making conclusions). The phenomenology design was relevant to this study because it focused on accurately describing the totality of the Tonga tradition, culture, beliefs and attitudes, behaviour, social and moral values which are not easy to quantify. The study further opted to use phenomenology because it allowed the collection of data using structured interview guide and focused group discussion (FGD) guide where respondents were required to describe, explain and give their own opinion on the problem.

#### **3.2 Methodology**

This study used qualitative method of data collection because it was viewed to be the most appropriate I was able interact with the respondents and collect information in its natural form as well as gather corrected data on the problem under investigation.

#### **3.3 Population and Sample Size**

In this study, the population comprised the chief, village headmen, former and current MCRI students, members of staff from MCRI and the parents of students at MCRI and the targeted study sample was twenty-five (25).

#### **3.4 Research Instruments**

The data collecting tools that were used in this study were a semi-structured interview guide an observation checklist. The instruments were found to be useful in this study because they allowed the respondents to express their views freely and also provided an open discussion with the researcher and the respondents. The instruments were preferred because they served time and expense on the researcher's part. Semi-structured interview guide was useful as they helped the researcher to gather in depth information and was used to guide the researcher and to ensure consistency as well as relevancy on the questions that were asked to all the respondents. The observation check list helped the researcher to be consistent and this helped the researcher not wonder about in my observation.

#### **3.5 Data Collection Procedure**

In the current study, data was collected from chief Ufwenuka, MCRI staff, current and former students and parents who have students at MCRI. The researcher conducted interviews with traditional leaders,

the girls and MCRI staff and organized FGD with the current students and parents with students at MCRI and this enabled me to explain to the respondents any questions that required clarity.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

The data collected were analyzed based on the responses given by the respondents. Qualitative data which was obtained through interviews and FGD was categorized under identified appropriate topics or heading or themes in order to provide a rich description of the phenomena of the study.

## **4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Traditional and Social Values Taught at MCRI**

This study established that MCRI made some strides in promoting and preserving the Tonga traditional and cultural heritage. There was a general consensus by the participants, that there were Tonga religious and cultural aspects encompassed in the traditional ceremonies, festivals and artefacts. The study also established that the Tonga religious and cultural aspects were promoted in the activities conducted during traditional school, traditional ceremonies and festivals such as *nkolola*. This is supported by Mbiti (1991) who argued that ATR was found in ritual practices, traditional ceremonies and festivals. Mbiti further noted that religion was seen in beliefs, practices, ceremonies, objects, places, religious leaders, values and morals. The findings of this study on the first research objective support the theoretical framework of this study. The young girls are socialised into the ritual beliefs, ceremonies, objects, values and morals. It is through the process of socialisation that the young girls during the MCRI acquire the expected values, traditions and customs of the Tonga people. Therefore, the process of socialisation and interaction distinguishes human beings from animals which use instincts genetically wired in them to behave in certain way. Human learn to live, and it is this learning, a social process of interaction and socialisation which is a vehicle of religion and cultural transmission. Some of these ritual ceremonies and festivals are done on a family basis during the primary socialisation process, but other values are acquired through the community and MCRI training during the secondary socialisation process.

The study established that the Tonga musical festival was initiated for the purpose of reviving, promoting and preserving the Tonga tradition and culture. According to the findings collected from different participants, music was an important component of religion, ritual, celebration, work, play, and politics. Further, music could also help to create and reinforce boundaries of communities and identities. It also serves as a means to social expression that gives rise to emotions, to memories and to joys and pleasures. Additionally, music provided a link with the present and the past. It also preserves culture and helps to establish and maintain social cohesion. This is so because through music historical accounts can be shared. Through the performance of music, memories of the religious heritage and cultural heritage are celebrated in ways that relate vividly to the present. In a bid to promote the Tonga religion and culture, MCRI has broadened their programmes to include all sorts of traditional Tonga songs and poetry. This study has revealed that the Tonga musical festival plays a critical role in promoting the customs and traditions of the Tonga people. It was through the musical festival that the young girls got inducted into new sectors of the objective world of their society. This finding proves our theoretical framework of secondary socialisation that argues that during secondary socialisation the initiate is transformed from the raw product of society into the finished product. The initiate acquires values, skills,

traditions, and customs that he/she has never acquired before. During the music festival the girls were involved in singing, dancing and demonstrating before the adults the life lessons that they had acquired during the MCRI training. The girls interacted and socialised during the music festival. In other words, music concretised what the young girls were learning.

The results of the study showed that MCRI promoted the Tonga religion and culture through conducting lessons on social values. Among the social values that were infused into the traditional lessons, was respect to the Tonga religion, culture and people. As individuals learnt to appreciate and respect their culture, they became eager to defend and preserve it and to acquire such social values, individuals and communities collectively should be exposed to MCRI traditional programmes. Furthermore, the responses gathered from the former students of MCRI showed that the girls were taught discipline, honesty, personal hygiene, decent dress code and how to respect elders and all the people in the community. This is supported by Maambo (2015) who stated that the traditional school served as a useful purpose in community because it taught good morals and behaviour to the initiates.

The study also established that discipline was a vital element in the girls' life and MCRI helped in shaping the discipline of the girls that went under their traditional school. Through discipline the girls were able to complete their formal education and this helped them to excel in life by taking up various careers such as teaching and nursing. The observation was confirmed by one former student of MCRI who worked as a teacher at Charles Lwanga Basic School and was entrusted with grade 9 Final examination supervision for many years, a responsibility which required honesty and integrity especially these days when examination malpractices have become the talk of the day common. Former students of the institute used the social values learnt at MCRI to judge what was right and wrong and this helped them to avoid bad vices such as prostitution, and consequently helped in building a united community.

Additionally, the girls were trained in various skills such as knitting, sewing and pottery. This training was done as a way of helping the girls to be self-reliant when they were out of the institute. From the skill acquired, the young girls became self-reliant by setting up their own entrepreneurship jobs and this helped them to live a sustainable life. Furthermore, it helped them in keeping them away from bad vices, such as drug abuse and prostitution which could otherwise ruin their lives. The Social obligations and inculcation of good manners were usually taught by tutors and traditional leaders who had knowledge of the Tonga traditions. Furthermore, the girls were taught how to show respect to the elders, modes of greeting, giving back and receiving as well as how to extend hospitality to all the people in the community, including people with special needs, visitors and strangers. Magesa (1997:92) contends that individual also learn the traditions and patterns of life of the family, the village and the clan, through the pure curiosity of a child, but also through various forms of instruction from parents, neighbours, grandparents and peers. All these social aspects were promoted by the MCRI. Thus, to some extent the institute promoted the Tonga tradition and cultural heritage.

Further, the study established that MCRI incorporated traditional teachings in their training programmes such as forbidding the girls from fornication or indulging in sexual activities before they got married. The traditional teachings also helped to solve the negative effects of some bad cultural practices such as sexual cleansing which were unavoidable lessons as they helped reduce sexual transmitted diseases such as HIV and AIDS.

## **4.2 Views of the traditional leaders**

### **4.2.1 The Chief and Headman**

From the findings collected from the traditional leaders, the study established that the idea of enrolling girls at MCRI was good because it provided traditional education to the students. Data collected from the traditional leaders revealed that the Tonga religion was deeply rooted in people's lives. Therefore, to make it function properly in society, there were often men and women who had traditional religious knowledge and who could lead others in religious activities such as ritual practices, dances, songs and sacrifices. Such leaders are found in the African society and their knowledge of religious matters varies considerably. The study established that some of them are professionals, and therefore well trained and skilled. Others only take the lead when the need arises, otherwise living and working like ordinary people. Some are rulers and national leaders, and it is their positions which embody religious beliefs and emotions. In this case, the study has revealed that the Tonga religion is deep rooted in the staffs at the institute as a professional body. Through traditional lessons learnt at the institute, the girls were prepared for future responsibilities.

The findings established that the Chikuni Radio Station management and the traditional leaders needed to work together by having more discussions and debates on the Tonga tradition and culture heritage. This could give the stakeholders and the community an opportunity to spend their free time listening to radio programmes meant to promote and preserve the Tonga religion and culture. The study also established that MCRI contributed to the educational empowerment of girls by providing academic training through paying school fees for the girls. This enabled them to complete school and to seek employment and later shares information with others in their respective places of residence. The study established that the enrolment of students should extended to boys so that they too equally appreciate the Tonga tradition and culture. This approach will be an inclusive way of learning and more people will learn about the Tonga tradition and culture heritage.

The study also established that the artefacts displayed at MCRI are part and parcel of the Tonga religion and cultural heritage. Among the artefacts found were musical instruments such as funeral drums and flutes that were played during funerals and during special occasion such as traditional ceremonies. This is supported by Geertz (1973) who referred culture to values, beliefs, behaviour, and material objects that constitutes peoples' way of life. He further noted that culture was a bridge to the past and gave guidance to the future. Culture has many components such as religious, social and moral components. One cannot talk about the Tonga culture if the religious, social and moral aspects are not mentioned. This was also supported by Mbiti (1991) who asserted that culture was shown in art and literature, dance, music and drama. Mbiti further stated that culture included many things, such as the way people live, behave and act and the materials they designed and displayed for public scrutiny and awareness.

The study has also revealed that there was scanty or little information on the contribution of MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage. Documents are important instruments of storing important information and if various literature and documents regarding MCRI were available in book shops and schools, a number of people would read and appreciate the Tonga religious and cultural heritage. According to the chief, there were no publications available to depict the Tonga

tradition and also those that promote the Tonga religious and cultural heritage. It is evident from the study that the museum and the library department should be opened to the public for them to have interest in the institution and begins to produce materials for reading and studying concerning the Tonga religion and culture

## **5.0 CONCLUSION**

The study revealed that MCRI has made recommendable strides in the promotion as well in the preservation of the Tonga religious and cultural heritage. The findings showed that the institute had a traditional school where young girls were taught traditional and social values such as puberty rites, respect for elders, discipline and adhering to decent dress code. The girls were also taught entrepreneurship and survival skills, such as design and technology for development and sustainability. The finding revealed that the institute had religious places of worship and a museum that housed artefacts and musical instruments of the Tonga people. Further, MCRI was involved in the organisation of Tonga music concert where the Tonga tradition and cultural related activities such as dances, songs and drums were fully exhibited. The institute was also involved in the publication of Tonga literature especially those that promoted the Tonga religion and culture. Additionally, MCRI worked together with Chikuni Radio Station to disseminate discussions programme on the Tonga religion and culture.

The last objective aimed at assessing the views of the traditional leaders on the contribution made by the MCRI to the promotion of the Tonga religious and culture heritage. The findings showed that Tonga tradition and culture was expressed in symbols such as household utensils and musical instruments. The traditional leaders were engaged in the traditional education lessons that were offered at the traditional school at MCRI. The study revealed that the institute should engage a larger population of student enrolment in order to serve the core mission of transferring the Tonga tradition and culture across generation. The study also revealed that MCRI should extend the enrolment of students to boys so that they too equally share and appreciate the rich Tonga tradition and cultural values taught at the institute. Religion is important to society because it helps to regulate behaviour and it also promotes the major social values like truth, honesty, service, non-violence, love and discipline. The study recommended that MCRI should engage a larger population of student enrolment in order to serve the core mission of transferring of the Tonga religion and culture across generation. The institute should also extend the enrolment of students to boys so that they too equally share and appreciate the Tonga tradition and cultural values taught at MCRI.

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