RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN ZAMBIA:
TOWARDS RELIGIOUS LITERACY, RELIGIOUS
PLURALISM AND LIBERALISM

BY

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A dissertation submitted to the University of Zambia in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of
Master of Education in Religious Studies (M.Ed. RS)

The University of Zambia
Lusaka

November, 2013
Dedication

This work is dedicated to my late mother, amama anya Chulu Getrude Tiwonechi Kamanga and all saints in my family who, having worked so hard to see me through, answered God’s call before they could see the fruit of their labour, and to my wife Loveness Shwandi-Kamanga and children (Tiwonechi and Malambo Tatumbikika) for their unwavering love and support.
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Declaration

I, Gilbert Kamanga, hereby declare that the work herein is my own, and that all the works of other persons used have been duly acknowledged, and that the work has not been presented at the University or indeed another institution for similar purposes.

Signature:................................................................. Date:........................................
Approval

This dissertation of Gilbert Kamanga has been approved as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education in Religious Studies (M.Ed. RS) by the University of Zambia.

Examiners' signatures:

Signature: ................................................................. Date: ..............................................

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Acknowledgements

May I start by expressing my sincere gratitude to the University of Zambia Staff Development Office for awarding me the fellowship to undertake this study. Special thanks go to my supervisor, Dr. M. Simuchimba, for his invaluable advice and guidance. To all members of the Department of Religious Studies, I highly treasure your mentorship and inspiration. The support rendered by Dr. A. Cheyeka, Mr. J. Chita, Ms. N. Mwale, Mrs. A. Mwesa, and Mr. B. Katongo deserve special mention. Furthermore, I am indebted to all the participants in my study - whose names I have withheld for ethical reasons, for their invaluable contributions. All colleagues from the M.Ed. RS - 2011 cohort, you made this academic journey an interesting one. To my father, adada Christopher Simeon Changa Kamanga, I will always endeavour to uphold your wise counsel. And to the entire family, thank you for believing in me and for your continued support and encouragement, nawonga chomena.
**Abbreviations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ATR</td>
<td>African Traditional Religion</td>
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<tr>
<td>CDC</td>
<td>Curriculum Development Centre</td>
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<td>CRE</td>
<td>Christian Religious Education</td>
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<td>GRE</td>
<td>General Religious Education</td>
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<td>GRZ</td>
<td>Government of the Republic of Zambia</td>
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<td>HRE</td>
<td>Hindu Religious Education</td>
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<td>IRE</td>
<td>Islamic Religious Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>MESVTEE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education, Science, Vocational Training and Early Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Ministry of Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>OMoE</td>
<td>Ontario Ministry of Education</td>
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<td>RE</td>
<td>Religious Education</td>
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<td>RE 2044</td>
<td>Religious Education Syllabus 2044</td>
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<td>RE 2046</td>
<td>Religious Education Syllabus 2046</td>
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<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>Religious Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRE</td>
<td>Special Religious Education</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRI</td>
<td>Special Religious Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZTR</td>
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Abstract

The study sought to ascertain whether the values promoted by the two Zambian senior secondary school RE syllabuses were in conformity with the promotion of religious pluralism and liberalism, and whether they could promote the attainment of religious literacy which is a tenet of modern RE. The objectives of the study were to: explore the teaching methods and approaches used in RE; ascertain whether religious literacy is attainable through the current Zambian RE syllabuses; and establish the values promoted by RE in the light of increasing religious pluralism and liberalism in the country. The study used the case study design which employed the qualitative strategy in order to effectively address the issues raised by the research questions. The methods of data collection included in-depth semi structured interviews, lesson observations and document analysis, using the semi structured interview guides, focus group discussion guide, lesson observation checklist and document analysis checklist, respectively. The target population included all teachers and pupils of RE in the selected schools and the RE Curriculum Specialist from CDC. Both simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques were used to select the respondents. The findings of the study were that Zambian RE continues to be poorly handled, and teachers mostly employed teacher-centred methods. The findings also indicate that pupils were exposed to Christianity and though, not adequately covered, Islam, Hinduism and Zambian Traditional Religion. Consequently, the current Zambian RE syllabuses are deficient in attaining religious literacy. The study further revealed that the Zambian RE syllabuses promote values related to religious pluralism and liberalism. Respect for others, love, awareness, and tolerance are among the main values promoted by RE which directly relate to the values of religious pluralism and liberalism. Based on the findings above, the study recommends that: RE should to be revised so that the subject is made more liberal, critical and educational; and RE teachers should go beyond teaching for examinations if the subject is to contribute to the promotion religious literacy.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, objectives and research questions. The significance of the study, delimitation, limitations, and operational definitions have also been presented.

1.1 Background

Zambia is a liberal, multi-cultural and multi-faith country, with among the main religious traditions, Christianity, Zambian Traditional Religion(s), Islam, Hinduism and the Baha’i Faith. The country is officially Christian, as per declaration found in the preamble of the Zambian constitution, though Part III Article 19 recognises and guarantees the freedom of conscience, which includes freedom of thought and religion (GRZ, 1996). This religious outlook has greatly influenced the education sector, from historical times, with Religious Education (RE) enjoying a relatively good status on the school curriculum. Although RE is an academic subject like any other, it has for a long time been considered different by many including those in the teaching fraternity. This has led to different teaching methods being employed, some of which have led to indoctrination and confessionalism in class.

Western education was introduced to Zambia by Christian missionaries who used the school as an agent of evangelisation and conversion. Religious Instruction (RI), the precursor of RE, was thus at the core of the curriculum and enjoyed high status with the highest number of contact hours. With the passage of time, the aims of RE have changed as the case was during the 1977 Education Reforms when the syllabuses were changed to conform to the philosophy of Zambian Humanism. Currently, the policy which underpins education in Zambia is given in the 1996 document,
‘Educating Our Future.’ Though not explicitly stated, RE’s goals of religious literacy, religious pluralism and liberalism are implied in the policy document, which states that the Ministry of Education has set the 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).

With the reintroduction of multi party-politics in Zambia in 1991, came a renewed emphasis on various liberties and RE has undergone even more changes. Today, RE is an optional subject at Senior Secondary School with three to four periods of forty minutes each per week while at the Junior Secondary School level, it is compulsory with three periods per week although there are indications that it may become optional going by the integration with other subjects at primary school level, establishment of the department of Social Sciences as opposed to an independent department of RE, at school level, and the abolishment of the office of the Inspector for RE, at national level. The subject has since the last decade also seen an emphasis on pupil-centred methods of teaching, though there is still criticism by some leading scholars in the country that RE is more confessional than educational. Taking a clue from John Henze, Mujdrica (2004:103) points out that, “The problem is that most of the teachers are happy with the way Religious Education is at present; they are afraid to change from education for information to education for transformation.” The question though, still remains, ‘does Zambian RE promote the development of religious literacy, religious pluralism, and liberal attitudes and values?’
1.2 Statement of the Problem

Zambian RE has, since independence, developed from being confessional and denominational in the 1960s, through being ecumenical and interdenominational in the 1970s, to being educational and multi-faith from the 1980s. Despite these changes, Zambian RE scholars have argued that the subject should become ‘more transformative’ in nature (Mujdrica, 2004) and that it should adopt a critical understanding approach (Simuchimba, 2005). However, another crucial requirement of modern RE is the promotion of religious literacy and the values of pluralism and liberalism (Wright, 1996). A number of studies have been conducted on RE though scholars still do not agree on whether the subject is able to promote religious literacy, religious pluralism and liberalism. It is this knowledge gap that my contribution to this debate seeks to fill.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyse the content of Zambian Senior Secondary School RE, explore the teaching and learning of RE, and assess the subject in terms of its promotion of religious literacy, religious pluralism and liberalism.

1.4 Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

i. Explore the teaching methods and approaches used in RE in selected secondary schools in Ndola district.

ii. Ascertain whether religious literacy is attainable through the current Zambian senior secondary school RE syllabuses.
iii. Establish the values promoted by RE in the light of increasing pluralism and liberalism in the country.

1.5 Research Questions

The following questions were asked in line with the objectives:

i. What teaching methods, approaches and aids do teachers use in teaching RE?

ii. How can religious literacy be attained through the current Zambian senior secondary school RE syllabuses?

iii. What values are promoted by the RE syllabuses in light of increased pluralism and liberalism in the country?

1.6 Significance of the Study

This study is important as it contributes to the literature on the interface between religion and education. In addition, the study might contribute to a better understanding of how the subject can be tailored towards the attainment of religious literacy and the promotion of pluralistic and liberal values in the learners. The study might also be of help to RE Curriculum Specialists and syllabus designers as it will further the debate on RE as a curriculum subject. It might further be well placed to inform the MESVTEE’s policy on religion in education. Researchers and RE scholars, too, might find this study very helpful since it opens up ground for further research.
1.7 Delimitation

This study was confined to Ndola district. The names of the selected schools have been withheld for ethical reasons and the schools are hereafter referred to as School A, School B and School C.

1.8 Conceptual Framework

According to Chalmers (1982), a conceptual framework contributes to a research because it identifies research variables, and clarifies relationships among the variables. It is also valuable in that it sets the stage for presentation of the research questions that drive the study. In this study, the conceptual framework will guide the presentation of the findings after which it will inform their analysis and discussion.

This framework is based on RE in Zambia. After looking at the case – RE in Zambia, it focuses on the current status of RE before turning to what it ought to be and ultimately what I envisage as the final outcome. Following the illustration below, the case in question is RE in Zambia as a curriculum subject. The dissertation conceptualises that although said to be plural, RE is currently exclusivist and conservative in nature. In order to make RE responsive to current challenges and be relevant in modern society, the subject ought to change in the line of religious pluralism and liberalism. If all these variables are well cohered, RE should lead to religious literacy. A religious literate person is one that is able to intelligently articulate on matters of religion.
Below is a graphical representation of the conceptual framework:

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

1.9 Limitations

Having utilised the case study design, this study was restricted to selected secondary schools in Ndola district. This factor might limit the generalisation of the research findings. Another limitation is related to the unavailability of and access to adequate literature for review as little research has so far been done on RE, pluralism, liberalism and religious literacy as it is a relatively new approach to the subject.
1.10 Operational Definitions

As words may be used to mean different things depending on the situation or context, the following words whose working definitions are given below were used in the study.

i. **Indoctrination**: The process of instruction into a particular faith or set of beliefs aimed at discouraging independent thought and acceptance of other opinions.

ii. **Liberalism**: An attitude of tolerance to different religious and secular belief systems found in society.

iii. **Pluralism**: The existence of different religious and cultural interest groups in society.

iv. **Religious Education**: Traditionally, Religious Education has been taken as a school subject with both religious and educational aims. The religious aims of the subject include character formation following confessional approaches while the educational aims go beyond character formation to the holistic development of the learners through educationally acceptable approaches such as phenomenology. However, in modern approaches to the subject, the focus is on pluralism, religious literacy and citizenship education.

v. **Religious Literacy**: Literacy is traditionally the ability to read and write. However, modern usage goes beyond the traditional notion to encompass knowledge of or competence in a particular subject or area such as finance, computers and religion. Therefore, in this study, religious literacy means a
critical and reflective understanding of religious beliefs and values leading to an ability to discuss religion intelligently.

In conclusion, this chapter has provided and explained the background to the study, the statement of the problem, purpose, the research objectives and questions. It has also given the significance, delimitation, limitations and the operational definitions, thereby explaining the study. The next chapter reviews the literature related to the study.
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, literature related to religion and education was reviewed and it provided a background upon which the study was based. As explained by Kombo and Tromp (2006), literature review is an account of what has been published on a topic by other scholars and researchers. The literature was reviewed and discussed under the following headings: RE, Religious Literacy and Liberalism in Britain and the Commonwealth; RE, Religious Literacy and Liberalism in Africa; and RE in Zambia. This was done in order to situate this study more broadly and make it more meaningful. The British and Commonwealth studies are important for my study because Zambia is a former British colony influenced by the British educational system. The value of the African studies to this study is that they provided a good source of comparative material on how RE developed and is handled in the region. In the same vein, Zambian studies provided a precise background on which this study built.

2.1 **RE, Religious Literacy and Liberalism in Britain and the Commonwealth**

Scholars have documented the nature of RE as a curriculum subject in Britain and the Commonwealth. Their surveys have in most cases been historical in nature, tracing the historical developments of the subject from the time it was wholly under the control of the church to the time when it become more educational. They have also discussed the approaches and methods of instruction associated with the different periods. They have raised issues which include making RE more educational and pluralistic due to the growing pluralism and diversity in modern societies; the involvement of and the inclusion of religious resource persons when
developing RE curricula; and taking religious literacy and liberal values as constituents of modern RE.

This information on RE in Britain and the Commonwealth is very important for understanding Zambian RE because the Zambian educational system mirrors the British one and the changes in RE in Britain and the Commonwealth have had ripple effects on RE in Zambia.

Grimmitt (1987) undertook an exploratory study of the contributions RE can make to pupils’ learning. That is, RE being in the service of education rather than religion. This means that the subject should serve educational aims and not those of religion. As such, despite being called religious educators, RE teachers are essentially secular educators concerned with the educational value of studying religions with a prime commitment to achieving educational goals by conforming to general educational principles. He observed that the study of religions has a very important contribution to make to pupils’ personal, social and moral development. Having presented the religious education field of enquiry, he dealt with pedagogical considerations where he re-emphasised the need for subject matter to be chosen because of its potentiality to provide an opportunity for reflection on, re-evaluation and re-interpretation of the self.

Being philosophical and sociological, Grimmitt’s study forms a good theoretical background for understanding RE as a curriculum subject and will inform my study especially on the personal development of the learner, which is the ultimate concern of the religious literacy model which I will propose for Zambia.
Following his earlier work, Grimmitt published a number of studies in the year 2000, among them, ‘Contemporary Pedagogies of Religious Education: What are they?’ In this publication, Grimmitt went beyond the philosophical assumptions that underpinned his earlier work to focus on the practical aspects of teaching RE, arguing that pedagogical knowledge and skill provide the foundation upon which successful RE teaching depends. He identified and discussed eight types of pedagogical models that can be applied to multi-faith RE. Notably, all the pedagogies are interdependent with the more recent ones being responses to earlier ones. Of particular interest to this study was ‘The Literacy-centred, Critical Realist Model’ developed by Andrew Wright from whose work Grimmitt drew pedagogical principles. He contended that: a genuinely child-centred RE must take into account the child’s pre-understanding and must encourage children to explore and develop emergent religious viewpoints by actively challenging them to consider other options. He pointed out that when selecting content, the focus should be on appropriate contrasting of narratives that can enable the emergence of religious literacy.

To illustrate how religious literacy can be attained, Grimmitt (2000) suggests that through the encounter with other horizons, pupil’s perspectives become progressively refined and clarified, enabling a greater competence in their articulation of their own religious beliefs, greater awareness of the nature of their continuity and divergence from the beliefs of others. He concludes his account of the pedagogies to have come out of Britain in the last forty years by emphasising that the ability of RE to meet the changing needs of children and contribute to full
development depends on teachers exploring new possibilities for the subject, however challenging they may be.

Grimmitt’s study is important to this study as it details pedagogies such as the Phenomenological and Explicit model, which have influenced the practice of RE in Zambia since the 1980s. One of the pedagogies he discusses, the literacy-centred pedagogy, is of great value to my study in that its underpinning principle that a child’s pre-understanding is vital for learning is what I envisage for Zambian RE.

Reflecting on RE in secondary schools in Britain through his 1993 study, Wright observed that RE was in a state of flux. He contended that the 1988 Education Act marked one of the profoundest changes that education in general and RE in particular, had gone through in England and Wales. He discussed the legal framework that gave support to the confessional model of RE which was supported and nurtured by a daily act of Christian worship in schools. He went on to discuss the development of the phenomenological approach as an answer to the growing concerns by adherents of non-Christian faiths. Coming to how the subject might develop in future, Wright called for serious professionalism on the part of RE teachers. In his view, a professional teacher of RE should be more than an effective practitioner, taking on board the responsibility of being a reflective practitioner also.

The situation in Zambia is not different from what Wright describes above in that approaches to Zambian RE have also moved from being confessional to being phenomenological and educational. And like Britain before the advent of Christianity, Zambia followed traditional religious beliefs and is today experiencing an influx of immigrants from the sub region and beyond, making the country more
religiously plural. Wright’s study is therefore helpful especially when he talks about the professionalism of the teacher. However, the point of departure with my study is when he seems to suggest that a professional teacher needs to be religiously committed as well.

In his 2004 study entitled, *Rethinking Religious Education and Plurality*, Robert Jackson raised important issues with regard RE in the face of increasing plurality in British society. He stated that up until the late 1950s, RE in Britain was a form of Christian instruction with spiritual, moral and civic goals aimed at serving a predominantly Christian Britain. With the passage of time, however, Britain had become more secular, and religiously and culturally diverse like other western democracies. According to Jackson, RE in Britain had responded positively to religious diversity with the emergence of pedagogies which acknowledged plurality as the context for RE. He also noted that these responses were diverse with others seeking to insulate young people from plurality and religious diversity by advocating the teaching of Christianity as the religion of British national culture. Others intended to separate children on denominational lines or argued for the removal of RE from state funded schools. These responses could be considered a nostalgic attempt to return to Christian indoctrination as an educationally valid approach to RE.

Jackson forwards another response, developed by Andrew Wright, which recognises plurality and seeks to promote religious literacy aimed at producing young people who are able to handle religious language and truth claims with intelligence. In relation to RE, citizenship education and values education, there was a response that RE should be removed from the curriculum of the common school on grounds that society was deeply secular. He further considered calls that the teaching of different
religions was not relevant to the experience of most pupils as he handled issues dealing with the position of RE as a curriculum subject.

Jackson concluded the study by admitting that the changes in religious, moral and citizenship education can be seen against the backdrop of increasing secularisation and religious plurality. He suggested that the most appropriate pedagogical responses to plurality in the school provide a framework of democratic values which respect diversity within the law adding that the next step in RE’s response to plurality was to find agreement about the scope of the subject and the processes of producing syllabuses that give close attention to pedagogical issues.

This study by Jackson is important in that it highlights the role of RE in a pluralistic society like Zambia. It also shows the responses of the subject to questions of citizenship education and the inclusion of non-religious views which had plagued Zambian RE at various stages of its development. His defence for RE as a curriculum subject, the need for religious literacy and the emphasis on appropriate pedagogy, are what my study advocates for Zambian RE.

A similar study on the historical developments of RE in Britain is Hull’s 1984 work which traced RE from being exclusively Christian nurture to being a multi-faith subject. He pointed out that up to the 1970s when Britain implemented the agreed syllabuses for RE, Christian Religious Instruction was supported by the state. However, the problems of approach to the subject continued in Britain up to the 1980s when different schools opted for different approaches to the subject as the agreed syllabuses focused more on the methodology or the way the subject was
presented. He suggested, above anything else, that the selection of an approach to RE should be informed by the county’s laws.

In 1998, Hull followed up his earlier works with, *Utopian Whispers: Moral, Religious and Spiritual Values in Schools* in which he referred to publicly funded RE as one of the finest achievements of British education. He observed that the crisis in RE in all western countries seems to be related to the concept of pluralism and the role of education in pluralist democracies. As such, he valued consultation in RE by explaining that through the Agreed Syllabus Conference and the Standing Advisory Council on Religious Education, RE in Britain had a unique local community participatory model of curriculum design which contrasted sharply with the centrally dictated requirements typical of other subjects. He further noted that RE was both critical and spiritual in the sense that it aimed at discussing religious beliefs rationally and going beyond mere description to making intelligible contributions to the moral and spiritual development of all learners. Hull also suggested a method of teaching religion through the use of artefacts which have to be supplemented by field trips which allow the learners to interface with religion.

These studies are important for my study in that they shed more light on the problems of RE syllabus design which my study touches on. His suggestion that an approach to RE should be informed by the country’s laws more than anything else partly supports my recommendations for RE in Zambia.

In 2003, Fred Hughes presented a paper entitled ‘Religious Education in England’ in which he outlined the changes RE in that country had undergone. He traced the Christian roots in England, noting that there had been a longstanding relationship
between Christianity and education in Britain, which had profound effects on the way education was administered. Discussing RE from 1940 to 2003, he argued that several elements of the 1944 Education Act were a compromise. For example, it allowed for compulsory and non-denominational RI with the assumption that RI and worship that begun every school day would be Christian, thereby upholding the assumption that Britain was a Christian country which should have Christian religious and moral education. He also highlighted the secularisation of society, revolution in theology, research in RE, technological advancements, and immigration as changes in society that had affected RE. All these trends meant that RE was a changing subject which needed to adapt, with the confessional, implicit religion, phenomenological, and the experiential approaches to RE all competing for usage. He concluded his paper by advancing that all the approaches had their strengths and weakness, and challenged RE educators to see how they could use the approaches to the benefit of the students.

Hughes has been criticised for not presenting a specific approach as being appropriate to the teaching of religion in schools. However, his study remains important in that it will provide some background for my study which seeks to build on existing knowledge by recommending that Zambian RE should be made more religiously plural, liberal and focused on the promotion of religious literacy.

In 2010, Clive Erricker published a comprehensive study called, Religious Education: A conceptual and interdisciplinary approach for secondary level. The work was comprehensive in that it went beyond the historical perspective on RE emphasised by most scholars. Without dwelling much on the history, he used it just to contextualise RE before dealing with the various approaches and focusing at the
future for education and RE. In a bid to situate the present purpose of the subject in modern society, he reflected on a number of inter-related issues: the historical context and the present situation; migration and multiculturalism; God, religion and democracy; secularity; western education; faith schools; and spirituality. From the historical aspects, he focused on pedagogy and noted that approaches to RE can be analysed based on the purpose they seek to pursue. He then referred to research and showed how the findings of various research works informed pedagogy.

Giving case studies in religious literacy, Erricker took religious literacy to mean grasping the intimate connection between a word and its cultural habitat. Religious literacy operates at a number of levels which should be reflected in the idea of student progression with familiarity with the terms and vocabulary and relating them to religious material and practices being the most basic. More sophisticated and broader grasp of religious material, practices and behaviours follows with more focus on figurative expressions and concepts requiring interpretation. At a higher level, religious literacy is about gaining a more complex understanding of the interconnections and differences prevalent within religious material, practices and behaviour, and their figurative and sometimes political significance. This level is about the interpretation of worldviews.

In a way, Erricker managed to demonstrate how religious literacy can be enhanced by using a conceptual enquiry approach. Religious literacy which Erricker illustrates is central to my study in that it is the pedagogy which I propose for Zambia, because it does not focus on one particular faith.
In the British Commonwealth, Australia offers an interesting case on RE. In his 2011 article entitled, *Getting facts straight about Religious Education in schools*, Gary Bouma reflected on the nature of RE in Australia. He contended that the state of Victoria offered ‘Special Religious Instruction’ (SRI) while New South Wales called it ‘Special Religious Education’ (SRE). He acknowledged that there remained a debate regarding ‘General Religious Education’ (GRE), which provided education about diverse religions and SRI/SRE, which allowed for instruction in a particular religion to occur in state schools. Notably, SRI/SRE was very Protestant and designed initially to enable Christian clergy to teach Christian doctrine and ethics to state school students as Catholic mission schools had their own RI. What made SRI controversial in Victoria was the Department of Education’s policy which required parents to ‘opt-out’ of it if they did not want their children to be instructed into the Christian faith. Otherwise, their children were automatically enrolled in the Christian SRI unless the school offered a non-Christian SRI to which the parents would ‘opt-in.’ He concluded that because religions played important roles in the lives of people and in all societies, there was need for people to know about them all and that to force children into being instructed as though they were Christians was unsupportable in multicultural, multi-faith Australia.

Bouma’s criticism of the Australian system in his short article is in line with the advocacy of liberalism in my study. A plural and democratic country like Zambia should not force adherence to a particular faith and the “opt-in” system could only serve to breed religious radicalism and practical confusion in the school system.

Clearly, the evolution of RE in the British Commonwealth followed a similar pattern. Like their European forefathers and Australian counterparts, the founders of Canada
provided education under the auspices of Christian churches. Schools had a responsibility for the moral education of students and the moral education was supposed to be based on Christian teaching. The paper on ‘Education about Religion in Ontario Public Elementary Schools’ shows that today the study of religion in Canada has evolved to include the study of ideas and practices of a variety of religious traditions and that public schools seek to foster respect for and understanding of different cultures and religious expressions (OMoE, 1994).

Following the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and subsequent legislations, the Ministry of Education and Training produced a policy in 1991 which emphasized that the public schools do not have a mandate to instruct students in one faith to the exclusion of others, or to encourage students to believe in or profess a particular faith. Students need to acquire information about and develop respect for religions that are practised in Ontario and throughout the world. By providing the means for them to do so, schools can enhance students' understanding of themselves and others and of the world in which we live.

Having stated the knowledge, values and skills to be acquired from RE, the policy document suggested that schools should ensure that learning takes place in an environment where students from all backgrounds are treated with respect; learning should take place in an atmosphere of trust and understanding. It added that teachers need to be familiar with the material and confident of the teaching approaches and strategies to be used, with learning activities emphasizing inquiry to help students develop self-esteem and an appreciation of their own cultural heritage and that of others. Teachers should be aware of their own biases and realize that they must not impose their own beliefs when teaching about other religious traditions. They should
further attempt to provide a wide range of learning opportunities and balance between teacher-directed and student-centred activities.

The process of developing courses of study should include consultation with teachers, students, parents and guardians, and other members of the community. The policy document noted that this consultation and co-operation within the school system and community are important because the process of consultation facilitates communication, promotes mutual understanding and respect, and enables the participants to come to an agreement that considers various viewpoints. It can also help to build consensus about the content of a programme about religions by fostering understanding and appreciation of the program's educational role in reinforcing positive moral and societal values (OMoE, 1994).

The foregoing Canadian policy document is elaborate and raises issues that are pertinent to Zambian RE and therefore to my study as well. As such, it provides an important background upon which my study will build, particularly on the need for well qualified neutral teachers, and the need for consultation of all stake holders during curriculum development and review.

In 1992, Mohammed discussed the situation of RE in a multicultural society in a paper entitled, ‘Multiculturalism and Religious Education.’ From the outset, Mohammed noted that Canada was facing a problem, if not a crisis, with regard to the question of the relation of religion to education. Attributing the problem partly to the ambiguous definition of the term, ‘religious education,’ he elaborated on the interrelation between religious instruction and religious education by advancing that a person who has received instruction only in a particular faith could not necessarily
be considered as educated. Thus in a democratic society which values pluralism, an
educated person should have an understanding of some of the major religions which
have shaped and are shaping human culture and action.

In this reflection on RE in the context of multiculturalism, Mohammed further
explained the reasons for the teaching of non-Christian religions in schools. He
indicated that non-Christian religions should be taught in schools to help the young
to understand, appreciate, and respect religious differences as a preparation for life in
a multicultural society, more so that the world is becoming a global village. He
added that even from a theological perspective, Vatican II affirmed the importance of
all religions as instruments of salvation. He concluded his work by calling upon
educators to come to grips with the problems associated with multiculturalism if they
were to help the young to know their faith and those of others more profoundly and
accurately. He suggested an exploration of interfaith models with multicultural
experiences which recognised the importance of the perspectives of the adherents of
other religions. These were valuable because they could help to make Canadians less
ethnocentric and naively Western.

As earlier alluded to, this work by Mohammed mirrors the Zambian case in that
Canada is equally predominantly Christian. The emphasis on what should be taught
and why, the affirmations of Vatican II, and the Declaration on Religious Freedom
which required that ‘the search for truth should be free,’ will inform my study in that
it exhorts openness and respect for other people’s beliefs and values as central to
preparation for life in a multicultural society.
2.2 **RE, Religious Literacy and Liberalism in Africa**

Africa is a diverse continent which has been affected by various socio-political factors in its history. This diversity can be seen in the people and their languages, where the effects of the encounter with other continents are most apparent. However, one area that overrides all this diversity is religion, which permeates all faculties of an African’s life. A survey of literature on Africa is thus necessary as it will lay an important background to my study on Zambian RE. It will further reflect the way other countries in the sub region have handled the subject. Particular interest will be paid to Kenya because Zambian RE Syllabus 2044 is modelled on the East African Syllabus, ‘Christian Living Today.’ Nigeria warrants mention because it follows a different approach which creates good parallels to the Zambian case. The South African scenario, on the other hand, is worth studying due to the fact that having being plagued by apartheid and its state sponsored confessional RI, the country has since adopted a widely accepted form of religion education from which Zambia can draw valuable lessons.

The foundation of modern education in Kenya was laid by missionaries who used the school as a tool for evangelism. Today, RE in Kenya is not a mandatory subject in secondary school and pupils can choose among Christian Religious Education (CRE), Islamic Religious Education (IRE) and Hindu Religious Education (HRE). Looking at the practice of CRE and IRE, Kindberg (2010) observed that in 1964, the Kenyan government set up a commission whose task was to look upon and recommend ways of improving Muslim education which noticeably lagged behind its Christian counterpart, CRE. The commission found that Islamic teaching in the public schools was poorly organized compared to CRE. Noting that a change was
needed, MOE created IRE and introduced it in 1971, a move that could not work very well due to lack of teachers as a result of few IRE opportunities at tertiary level. The lack of certificated IRE teachers led schools having to choose between not offering IRE and using Christians or lay people as IRE teachers.

While I agree with most of Kindberg’s observations (that the CRE and IRE syllabuses call for different methodological approaches, that scarce time and massive content leave the teachers in a situation where they chose to lecture instead of using other teaching methods and that teachers believe that the majority of the students are taking RE just because it is seen as a ‘booster’, an easy subject giving them higher grades), my study does not support the emphasis on confessional RE ‘emphasising teaching of rather than teaching about religion’ in that doing so would negate the educational gains Zambian RE has already achieved in its quest for religious pluralism and liberalism.

In 2002, Onsongo did a study of teachers in CRE in Nairobi where he found that the syllabus expected that teachers use ‘life approach’ in their teaching of CRE. The life approach aims to make the content of CRE more living in the minds of the pupils, referring to their everyday life as Christians. From the study, Onsongo noted that the teachers seemed to lack in the skills of using the life approach and their teacher training did not prepare them adequately to use the life approach in teaching CRE.

A related study by Svensson (2006) stated that teachers in RE, be it in CRE or IRE, need to make decisions about what to teach within the subject and how it should be taught. Looking at the educational choices teachers in IRE made, Svensson argued that the final examinations (and the rating of schools due to the results) forced
teachers to cover the content of the syllabus, giving little room for flexibility or interesting detours.

Since Zambian RE was modelled on the East African CRE, the studies on Kenya are cardinal in that they will form a good background to my study. Notably, many of their findings are still valid for the Zambian RE scenario. In fact, my study identifies with Svensson’s (2006) conclusion that teachers teach for the examinations and pupils attend RE classes with the opinion that it is an easy ‘boost-subject’ to give them the much fancied higher grades.

Though he concentrated on Islamic education, the 2002 *Case Study on Education in Nigeria* by Lemu gives a good overview of the place of RE in Nigerian public schools. Nigeria, a multi-religious country, with unclear census figures in terms of religious affiliation, has different education patterns in the north and south. Islamic schooling was the formal educational system in Northern Nigeria while both Christian mission schools as well as government schools in the south were generally Christian-oriented. Drawn up by State and Federal Ministries of Education since the 1950’s, the syllabuses for Islamic and Christian Religious Knowledge were very popular. What followed was the 1984 revision of the subject syllabuses which gave the panelists a completely free hand to draw up new syllabuses for schools, together with detailed lesson formats. The revised syllabuses gave less time to the historical details of battles and more to the civilizing values of Islam, as well as its impact on West Africa.

Lemu concluded that the syllabuses could go further in promoting religious tolerance and that it would be useful to have a component on Christianity in the Islamic
Studies syllabus and a component of Islam in the Christian Religious Knowledge syllabus. He emphasized that religion was a very emotive issue and whatever change was to be made to make the teaching of religion in schools promote religious harmony, was to be done with sensitivity and in full consultation with all the stakeholders.

Although Lemu (2002) falls short of criticizing the confessional approach to RE in Nigeria, I contend that the notable setback to this revision was that the way of teaching Islam and Christianity in Nigeria was expected to be confessional. His work is nevertheless important in that it raises pertinent issues related to government involvement in RE and the value of consultation during syllabus design and revision. This current study will build on his conclusion by suggesting that Zambia’s move towards religious literacy would contribute greatly to religious and cultural harmony.

Hackett (1999) published a study entitled, ‘Conflict in the classroom: Educational Institutions as Sites of Religious Tolerance/ Intolerance,’ in which he examined the history of RE in Nigeria and contended that the confessional approach to RI in Nigerian schools has contributed to the further polarisation of the Nigerian society along religious lines. The Nigerian educational sector, he observed, is a microcosm of the wider religion-state relations influenced by the persistent fears of domination and manipulation by Christianity and Islam which could both be viewed as a majority and a minority depending on the historical or geographical context.

He recommended that the confessional RI be abandoned in favour of a non-confessional RE presented in an objective and non-prescriptive manner in that RE has to accommodate the religious needs of both Christians and Muslims, and do
justice to everyone’s traditional cultural heritage which, if covered in books, is treated as an appendage to Christian or Islamic studies. While it has undertaken a number of educational reforms, Nigeria still runs two single-tradition programmes for RE with parallel examinations in Christian studies and Islamic studies.

Hackett’s work is of great relevance to mine in that he goes beyond mere criticism of the religious problem in the Nigerian education sector by advancing that the parallel RE scenario has partly contributed to religious intolerance and conflict.

Like other Africans, most South Africans claim to be religious, following different religions including ATR, Buddhism, Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, and other religions. In his 2005 book, Religion and Schools, Na’eem Jeenah, argued that because religion played an important role in the lives of many South Africans, it was important to have a policy dealing with religion and education. He explained that the South African education system under apartheid was called ‘Christian National Education.’ In 1994, there was a debate on RE where some people wanted Christianity to be the only religion taught in schools while others wanted a complete removal of religion from schools, as is the case in France. Fortunately, they all recognised that the teaching of religions in schools could play an important role in learning and knowing about each others’ religions.

Following the injustice of the apartheid era, the South African government policy, ‘Religion and Education’ (2003) was necessary to avoid discrimination on the basis of religious belief. It attempted to respect all citizens within the school environment and to interpret the constitution in relation to religion and education. Jeenah called for professional, committed or non-committed RE educators who could teach about
certain aspects of all religions, echoing that assessment in RE would be the same as other subjects and areas of the curriculum.

Based on the 1996 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, the 1996 Schools Act, the 2003 National Policy on Religion and Education, and the 2005 Draft National Guidelines on School Uniforms, Jeenah argued that the Education Department’s policy on religion and education made it clear that the government would provide only one type of education with respect to religion: Religion Education, which must teach learners what religions are all about and, by doing so, increase understanding among citizens, build respect for diversity and value spirituality. He concluded that the role of Religion Education was to get learners to understand and appreciate the diversity of religions and beliefs in society.

Jeenah’s emphasis on professionalism on the part of the RE educators applies to Zambian RE which is multi-religious and therefore requires that the teachers uphold high levels of professional neutrality. This is clearly in line with what this research argues.

2.3 RE in Zambia

Having outlined the trends of RE in Britain, the Commonwealth, and the African-sub region, I now highlight RE in Zambian context, as this is the focus of my study. Generally, studies have shown that the introduction of formal education in Zambia can be credited to the missionaries who used the school as a tool of evangelisation and conversion. In their educational activities, the missionaries used Christianity with the Bible as the main text. The instructions in reading, writing and arithmetic
were minor additions to the curriculum which aimed at producing catechists who would go on to convert other Africans.

The first relevant work was Snelson’s 1974 book entitled *Educational Development in Northern Rhodesia 1883-1945*, in which he gave a historical perspective on the development of education in colonial Zambia. Traditional African society before the advent of Christianity was anchored on the community with its emphasis on the intrinsic value of human life. This was manifested in morality, whose teaching was central to all tribes. These moral teachings were drawn from religion which permeated all areas of African life. In pre-colonial Zambia, education was informal, except for a few occasions such as initiation ceremonies, and aimed at preparing the young for full participation in society. It was part of living and people did not have to go to school in order to be educated. 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. The young were instructed on social obligations and the inculcation of good manners, and religious teachings centred on the Supreme Being and the influence of the spirits, which frequently intervened in people’s lives.

According to Snelson (1974), the core subjects in the curriculum were 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. RI aimed at preparing young people for membership in the mission churches running the schools. This was achieved by indoctrinating learners into the beliefs, values and practices of that particular
mission. Snelson recognised missionary efforts but was quick to mention that these were no doubt guided by the philosophies of their mother churches. Bigger missionary groups took it that the school played more than the evangelisation role while the smaller ones, in the likes of Hannah Davidson’s Brethren in Christ, uncompromisingly declared that the purpose of her school was not to educate, but ‘to get the native really saved and on the Rock, Jesus Christ’ (ibid: 99).

Snelson’s historical account of missionary education in which RI was the most important subject on the curriculum is important to my study in that it lays a foundation upon which this study will add current perspectives such as the promotion of religious literacy and liberalism rather than character training as the main aim of the subject.

Mujdrica (1995) evaluated the Zambian RE syllabuses using a set of characteristics of modern RE. He contended that the syllabuses were not critical as they encouraged mere appreciation and respect for religion; thus, he concluded that they were mediocre. He recommended that the junior syllabus, which was more educational than confessional, be extended to the senior level so that secondary school RE would become more balanced and critical. My study supports his recommendation for a more balanced and critical RE and will, therefore, build on it by recommending genuine dialogue among religions, especially at curriculum design stage.

If there has been a curriculum subject that has been influenced by political ideologies in Zambia, RE is one. One such policy pronouncement that changed the face of Zambian RE was Zambian Humanism, which was fused in the RE syllabus following the 1977 Education Reforms. This is well explained in Cheyeka’s (2006) study
called, ‘The role of Zambian Humanism in the Development of Plural Religious Education in Zambia, 1972 to 1990.’ He started by explaining the meaning and nature of Zambian Humanism and noted it as a catalyst for a pluralist RE, which other scholars barely acknowledge. He then elaborated on pluralism by referring to Kaunda as a relativist who promoted religious equality and neutrality. What guided his understanding was his conviction that cultures and religions need to be accorded equal value in a democratic society. Cheyeka concluded that following Kaunda’s 1991 defeat, pluralism was dealt a fatal blow and RE in the country was at crossroads. This study is important in that it highlights an alternative thought on Zambian Humanism and the role it played in the promotion of pluralism. Cheyeka’s study will inform my study in the recommendations I will make towards the end of the dissertation, particularly with regards to pluralism.

Scholarly evidence abounds that even after Zambia’s independence, RE was still confessional. Simuchimba’s 2005 study entitled, ‘Religion and Education in Zambia 1890 – 2000 and Beyond,’ identified three stages through which Zambian RE developed and proposed future avenues which the subject could take. The denominational period adopted the confessional model to RE which was exclusivist in nature. RI was offered by catechists who merely indoctrinated the learners into the doctrines of a particular denomination using rote learning as the main method of instruction. Denominational RE continued way into post-colonial or independent Zambia. It was not until 1973 that Zambian RE moved into the ecumenical phase which went on up to 1984. Like the case was in the colonial times, during this stage, the teaching was skewed towards confessional RE. During the colonial era, RI was owned and administered by faith communities committed to the transmission of their
own particular religious worldviews. After independence, RI continued to be offered in schools with the government maintaining the ‘right of entry.’ Church leaders from the local churches taught the subject for one period in a week and since there was no common syllabus, the classes had to be divided on denominational lines, with each church using its own materials and methods of instruction. However, this proved to be educationally challenging as this denominationalism bred disharmony and confusion among learners.

Though historical in nature, Simuchimba’s work is comprehensive and goes beyond earlier studies by suggesting that a multi-faith country like Zambia requires a liberal and plural form of RE which should also promote religious literacy. It, therefore, informs my study which uses both pluralism and religious literacy to evaluate current senior secondary school RE.

In 2011, Carmody published an article entitled, ‘Multi-faith Religious Education in Zambia.’ He noted that as countries became more religiously diverse, there was need to review the RE syllabus to reflect the changes in society. In addition to an account of the religious setting of the country and a historical background to RE, he suggested a multi-faith approach to RE. For the elements that would make an educational multi-faith RE successful, Carmody proposed that the Ministry of Education needed to set up an all inclusive task force to look at the syllabuses and that the final approval of textbooks would need agreement than arbitrary Ministry of Education approval. He concluded by stressing the need to look ahead to a more inclusive RE syllabus at all levels. Carmody’s study is important in that it informs this current one on the need for an inclusive modern RE syllabus.
In his 2013 work, ‘Pedagogy for Inter-Religious Education,’ Carmody explored religious diversity and plurality that has increased with globalisation. He proposes an approach to inter-religious education for public schools which allow non-confessional RE in the curriculum. This approach, according to Carmody is anchored in Bernard Lonergan’s self-transcendence which falls under critical realism and attempts to solve the problem of subjectivity. The seriousness with which Lonergan’s self-transcendence treats a learner’s viewpoint leads to an understanding that the pedagogy needed for inter-religious education ought to be learner-centred in order to engage the learners actively and to stimulate genuine interest. Carmody asserts that in this way, a teacher is challenged to present traditions in terms of the learner’s present situation and not as static and doctrinally frozen concepts. Thus, a teacher is further challenged to enter the horizons of the learner which is increasingly being made difficult by among other things, increasing class size and performance-based criteria for success. Carmody argued that the concern of his proposed pedagogy was to enable the learner to reach a level of freedom whereby he can be critical of his worldview while appreciating the distinctive perspective of the other as different. This should leave the learner religiously literate, ready to step forward into an increasingly diverse multi-faith and multicultural community, and to choose his worldview responsibly and wisely.

Although Carmody does not mention Zambia directly, the scenario he presents is clearly Zambian. Carmody’s study is therefore useful in that it will inform my study in terms of his proposed pedagogy which falls under critical realism which underpins the religious literacy approach I am envisaging for Zambia.
In his study, Chita (2011) investigated the role played by missionaries in the development of the RE curriculum in Zambia. He argued that missionary dominance in the educational system was without doubt the reason there has always been a place for RE in the school curriculum. He also contended that the ecumenism among the church mother bodies, following independence, was not because of the intrinsic value of cooperation but a result of the changing nature of education and the repossession of mission schools by the government, which was an assault on their interests. Their fears were indeed justifiable in that RI which was once the main subject lost its’ dominance. Soon, it became clear that the shift to other secular subjects was inevitable and thus the missionaries justified the place of RE by contending that education will fall short of its’ purpose if it evaded the ultimate issues of life and failed to bring men closer to God. The desire to seize the opportunity to exert Christian influence in the schools was the same reason why RE is still the stake of churches and other religious bodies in Zambia today. He concludes that the biased missionary contribution to RE can still be seen in two parallel RE syllabuses at senior secondary school level and challenges educationalists to learn from the early missionary contributions in order to develop an appropriate RE curriculum for Zambia today.

The value of Chita’s work to my study lies in its highlighting of the effects of denominationalism on RE in Zambia and the call to develop a modern RE curriculum which answers the concerns of today’s Zambian society.
In winding up, this chapter has reviewed studies that are relevant to the topic of study by discussing RE, religious literacy and liberalism in Britain and other major Commonwealth countries as well as in Africa and Zambia. Notably, in Britain and the Commonwealth, the subject began essentially as a form of Christian nurture but later evolved in the face of increased plurality in modern societies into multi-religious education. The situation is not different in the African sub region where the subject has developed through the various stages following different approaches at different times. In Zambia, studies show that RE is English both linguistically and ideologically. These studies further indicate that RE has evolved to meet and reflect the political, educational, theological and social changes in society.

The chapter that follows discusses the methodological concerns of the study.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the researcher will describe the research design and methods that were used in the study. Apart from the research design and data collection methods and instruments, data analysis and ethical considerations are also discussed.

3.1 Research Design

This study used a case study design. A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin, 1989). The case study design was appropriate for this study because its overall purpose is to achieve understanding of how people make sense of their lives by allowing for the researcher to undertake an intensive and in-depth study. It further provides insights that assist the reader to visualise the experiences of people (Cohen et al., 2007; Merriam and Simpson, 1995). Since this study focused on people’s attitudes, opinions, behaviours, practices and perceptions, in a bid to understand issues of plurality, liberalism and religious literacy in Zambian RE, this design was the most suitable.

It is worth noting that many scholars have cited the inability to generalise research findings as the main weakness of the case study design. Conversely, findings of a study of one institution can be transferable to other institutions with similar situations (Bryman, 2004). Besides, generalisation is not ascribed to the frequencies of sample, but rather, to what has emerged as a grounded theory after analysis has been made (Yin, 1989). It is in this line that the researcher engaged the case study design in this research.
In order to satisfactorily address the issues raised by the research topic, the research strategy used in this study was the qualitative method. This qualitative approach employed a tripartite data collection mechanism involving in-depth semi-structured interviews, lesson observation and document analysis.

3.2 Population

A population is a universe of units from which a sample is selected or chosen (Bryman, 2004). In this study, the population comprised all RE teachers, pupils and stakeholders interested in RE. The target population included all teachers and pupils of RE in the selected schools in Ndola district and the RE Curriculum Specialist at CDC.

3.3 Sample size and Sampling Techniques

A sample is a group of subjects selected from a larger population (White, 2008). Since not all pupils and teachers of RE could be involved in the study, the sample comprised eleven pupils from School A which offers RE 2046 only, eleven pupils from School B which offers both RE 2044 and RE 2046, and eleven pupils from School C which offers RE 2044, four teachers of the observed classes, and the RE Curriculum Specialist from CDC. Thus, the total number of respondents was thirty-eight. This number was justified because in qualitative research, what really matters is wealth of the gathered information and not necessarily the number of participants.

Sampling is a process by which a researcher gathers people, artefacts or places for study and it involves both probability and non-probability sampling procedures. This study employed both purposive sampling and simple random sampling. Purposive sampling involves choosing participants considered to be knowledgeable and well
informed or because of their rich background knowledge on the topic under study (Kombo and Tromp, 2006; McMillan and Schumacher, 2006). Purposive sampling ensured that only rich information was gathered for the research as opposed to having a large number of participants. With this in mind, three schools in Ndola were purposively selected because of their disposition to RE. School A offers only RE 2046, School B offers both RE 2044 and RE 2046, and School C offers only RE 2044. In the said schools, simple random sampling was then used to select a class that was to be observed and the teacher responsible, interviewed. The pupils who participated in the focus group discussion at each school were then randomly selected from the observed class in order to provide an equal opportunity to all the pupils in that particular class. The RE Curriculum Specialist was purposively selected because he possessed the experience and knowledge needed to answer the research questions.

3.4 Data Collection Methods and Instruments
The semi structured interview guide was the main data collection instrument designed to allow the researcher to probe the interviewee further in an event that clarification of issues was needed. The open ended nature of the questions allowed for flexibility on the part of the researcher who altered the questions depending on the participants’ responses. The semi structured interview guide was used for teachers and the curriculum specialist. It should be noted that the interview guides were standardised among the teachers so as to increase the comparability of responses while reducing on the interviewer bias.

The focus group discussion guide was employed for the pupils. A tape recorder, notepads, and pens were also used to record the interviews for play back in cases
where the interviewer was unable to write down all the responses from the interviewee. These tools were very useful as they were used in making corrections and modifications when need arose (Bryman, 2004).

The researcher started with the designing of the research instruments which included the semi structured interview guides, focus group discussion guide, and document analysis checklist. The RE syllabuses were analysed followed by non participant observation of actual RE lessons in the selected schools. After observing the lessons, focus group discussions were held with the learners. Data from the teachers was collected through in-depth interviews using a semi structured interview guide. The study employed triangulation of methods which is recommended by many scholars in that it reduces on the flaws that are inherent in the use a single method (Patton, 1990).

3.5 Data Analysis and Variables

White (2008) advances the view 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. Since the study was qualitative, the data gathered from the interviews, observations and document analysis was categorised and arranged according to key concepts which corresponded with research questions, and was presented in a narrative manner. The process of data analysis was informed by the conceptual framework. It was done manually and the variables that were engaged included religious literacy, religious liberalism and religious pluralism. The analysis involved comparing the interviewee responses with observations and the information gathered from related
literature. Much of the data was analysed as soon as it was gathered so as to reduce
on misplacement owing to the large volumes of data that was gathered.

### 3.6 Ethical Considerations

Since the study was conducted mostly in schools, permission was sought from the
authorities and the purpose of the study made known to all the participants
beforehand. The respondents were informed well in advance of their right to
participate and to withdraw from the study at any time and further requested to sign
informed consent forms. By so doing, the participants’ right to privacy, dignity and
informed consent was adhered to and guaranteed.

In conclusion, 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 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The data is presented according to the themes drawn from both the objectives and the research questions. These are: (1) Teaching and learning methods, approaches and aids to teaching RE, (2) Attainment of religious literacy through the current Zambian RE syllabuses, and (3) Values promoted by RE syllabuses in relation to religious pluralism and liberalism in the country.

4.1 Teaching - learning methods, approaches and aids to teaching RE

A number of questions relating to the teaching and learning methods used by teachers were asked to the pupils and the teachers. These questions mirror the research objectives and questions. The researcher also observed actual classroom teaching taking place in the three schools involved in the study. The findings were as presented below:

4.1.1 Pupils

On the activities they engaged in during RE lessons, the pupils at School A said: “We only listen to the one reading the passage and then write notes.” One respondent hinted that dozing was also a common feature of the lessons. The pupils added that lessons followed the following pattern: introduction, scripture reading, teacher explanation and note taking.

With regard to the approach to the subject, the pupils indicated that they followed the pupils’ book topic by topic. They added that given a chance to teach, they would strictly follow the syllabus and avoid being biased towards Christianity. They added that although teachers mostly talked about Christianity, the final examination had
questions on other religions. The respondents stated that little information was given to them on other religions compared to Christianity.

Asked to describe an RE lesson, the pupils at School B were seemingly lost for words. With hesitation, one managed to say that lessons begun with an introduction where the teacher asked pupils what they knew about the topic of the day. This was followed by the reading of the Bible passages after which the teacher explained the main points. On the activities they engaged in during lessons, the learners responded that, usually, they listened to the teacher and wrote notes.

Like their colleagues at School A, the pupils said that they followed the Pupil’s book topic by topic. In relation to how they would approach the subject if they were the teachers, the pupils said that teachers needed to give more chance to their pupils to give out the information since they came from different religious groups. In this way, “pupils will learn by doing and teachers will learn from the pupils,” added one learner.

When asked to describe a lesson in RE, the pupils at School C said that lessons in RE were like any other; interesting but dependent on the topic under discussion. The pupils mentioned acting, discussions and sharing of personal experiences as the main activities they engaged in during RE lessons.

In terms of the topics covered in RE, the pupils observed that not all the themes would be covered and noted ‘Leisure, Justice, Happiness, Courtship and Marriage, and Man’s Evasion of God’ as the sub-themes selected for coverage in their course. In explaining why they choose these topics, one said: “Leisure is simpler and it can help us understand how to use leisure time.” In terms of how they would teach if
given a chance, the pupils said that they would try to be neutral and allow pupils who
belong to different religions to teach others what they believe in. “The teacher needs
to read more on other religions and call pastors to come and talk to the class,” a
learner added.

The data from the pupils show that in schools with large class sizes, there is
generally little engagement of pupils who are taken to be passive receptors of
information by the teachers. The findings also show that teachers hardly vary their
teaching methods. In the 2044 RE syllabus, the approach taken by teachers was
‘selective’ in that they choose certain sub-themes to be covered in the entire course
while in RE 2046, the approach was ‘linear’ in that the teachers followed the syllabus
topic after topic.

4.1.2 Teachers

In response to the question on teaching methods, approaches and aids used in
teaching RE, Teacher 1 cited the lecture method, teacher exposition, dictation, and
question and answer, as the main teaching methods he mostly used in the teaching of
RE. He defended the use of the lecture method and teacher exposition on grounds of
the lack of teaching and learning resources and over enrolment in schools. He also
said that he employed dictation as a way of giving notes because it was fast and he
had already given pupils the needed note taking skills.

Teacher 2 mentioned role play, group discussion, and question and answer, as the
teaching methods she mostly employed in the teaching of RE. In terms of approach
to teaching, she said that she followed the Teacher’s Book topic by topic, adding that
she would not want to leave out anything.
Group work, scripture reading and the discovery method were listed by Teacher 3 as the teaching methods she mostly used. She added that she occasionally used field visits as a teaching and learning method. In terms of the themes taught, the respondent said that she offered one sub theme from each major theme. Asked about what guided her choice of themes and topics taught, the respondent said, “I focus on the issues in the nation and the world. ‘Work,’ for example, will make pupils appreciate work while ‘Justice’ shows them the various forms of injustice in society and the world.”

Asked about the teaching and learning methods mostly used, Teacher 4 put forward role play, group work, and question and answer. She defended the use of these methods by saying, “...these methods are effective because the pupils are active and able to think on their own.” She further explained that she did not use the lecture method because her classes were small and could easily be handled using other methods. She listed ‘Leisure,’ ‘Justice,’ ‘Happiness,’ ‘Success,’ ‘Courtship and Marriage,’ and ‘Evasion’ as the sub themes she chose to teach. She explained that she chose the stated themes to help prepare her pupils for life in society. “I actually enjoy teaching them,” she added.

The foregoing data revealed that although the teachers said that they varied their teaching and learning methods, the methods employed in schools with large class sizes were mostly teacher-centred and they include, the lecture method, teacher exposition, dictation, and question and answer. However, teachers with smaller classes were able to use pupil-centred methods such as group work because their classes could easily be handled. The data further revealed that the approach to RE
2046 was ‘linear’ with a view to teaching all topics covered by the examination, while that of RE 2044 was selective and guided by the teacher’s interest.

4.1.3 Observations

In order to verify the information provided by both the pupils and the teachers, the researcher observed actual RE lessons in session. Teacher 1 started the lesson with an introduction in which he employed question and answer. The other methods which the teacher used in the lesson were teacher exposition and dictation. Clearly though, the main strategy used was dictation as the teacher kept dictating notes to the class. I did not see the effectiveness of this method and strategy because it did not engage the pupils except when the teacher was asking questions. Much of the time, the pupils were busy writing down notes or asking for clarity from friends even when the teacher was explaining certain concepts.

Teacher 2 used question and answer, teacher exposition and group work in the lesson. The teacher wrote the group work results on the board as presented by the pupils after which a discussion was conducted. During the class discussion, when certain concepts needed clarification, the pupils were called upon to defend their position.

Throughout her lesson, Teacher 3 interacted with the pupils. The methods employed by the teacher were question and answer followed by teacher exposition. The teacher ensured that the pupils participated by evenly distributing questions to the class. The pupils vocalised concepts and explained what they meant.

Teacher 4 started the lesson with a revision of the previous lesson using question and answer. In the lesson of the day, the teacher tied together role play, group work,
question and answer, and teacher exposition. When giving an exposition and during the discussion of the group results, the teacher referred the pupils to the role play which was earlier used. When asked to, the pupils produced clear explanations of concepts. The class also exhibited high level knowledge and interpretation of religious symbols and language.

The researcher’s observation of the RE lessons showed that except for one teacher who did not engage the pupils and heavily relied on dictation as the main teaching and learning strategy, the other teachers were quite eclectic in their teaching. Furthermore, apart from the traditional teaching aids, such as the chalkboard, all the teachers did not use teaching aids in their lessons.

The first objective of the study was to explore the teaching and learning of RE in selected secondary schools in Ndola district. The foregoing data show that in schools with large class sizes, there was generally little engagement of pupils and teachers mostly employed teacher-centred methods. However, teachers with smaller classes were able to use pupil-centred methods such as group work. Apart from the traditional teaching aids, such as the chalkboard, all the teachers did not use any teaching aids in their lessons.

### 4.2 Attainment of religious literacy through the current Zambian RE syllabuses

As explained in Chapter one, religious literacy in this study refers to a critical and reflective understanding of religious beliefs and values; that is, the ability to discuss religion intelligently. Being a major tenet of modern RE, questions on the attainment of religious literacy through the current Zambian senior secondary school RE
syllabuses were asked to pupils, teachers and the Curriculum Specialist. The researcher also observed actual lessons in class. The findings were as presented below:

4.2.1 Pupils

Of the topics covered, the pupils at School A indicated that they found ‘Temptation,’ ‘Judgement,’ ‘Forgiveness,’ ‘Suffering,’ and ‘Prayer’ very helpful in their day to day lives. They added: “These topics are more like what we learn at church...we learn how to pray, how to overcome temptations, why people suffer, and we understand forgiveness more.”

Asked whether they studied other religious traditions in RE, the pupils affirmed that apart from Christianity, they learned about Islam, Hinduism and Zambian Traditional Religion. They further pointed out that the knowledge acquired from the lessons on other religions was helpful in that it enhanced the understanding of people who follow different religions. “For example,” they added, “We know why Somali women cover their heads and we educate those who don’t know that they should not laugh at them.” The pupils at School B also affirmed to studying the four major religions in Zambia. However, they lamented the size of content on Islam, Hinduism and African Traditional Religion saying: “The information on other religions is very little but helpful because it helps us to understand how people of different beliefs react to different situations.”

On whether RE gives them enough knowledge to understand different religions, the group answered that the time allocated for other religious traditions was not enough. Much time was given to Christianity and the other religions were just looked at when
comparing them to Christianity. The pupils added: “All religions should be given the same time.”

### 4.2.2 Teachers

Asked the question, ‘How do the learners respond to the material you teach?’ Teacher 1 responded, “It depends on the presentation. Challenging questions come with arousal.” He went on to say that pupils were interested, actively participated and seemed to understand the lessons.

On whether the pupils were able to look at religious symbolism critically, he answered in the affirmative, adding: “Religious and social concerns are expressed in symbolism.” He further added that apart from those in Christianity, the pupils were exposed to different religious symbols. He explained that exposure to other religions served a purpose of enriching the pupils’ understanding of other religions. He recommended that since Hinduism and ATR seemed to be abstract, visits to temples would lead to better understanding and appreciation of religions and avoidance of prejudice against them. In terms of interpretation, the respondent said that the pupils were able to interpret the language of the various religions due to the many commonalities among them.

Asked whether the pupils are able to look at religious symbolism critically, Teacher 2 said, “They show high levels of criticism and the teacher needs to allow them to process the information.” She observed that pupils were a rich source of information and if allowed to give information, they could bring in a balance between what they learned and what they actually experienced in society.
As for exposure to other religions, the respondent was of the view that pupils needed to be exposed to other religions apart from Christianity because through such exposure, they would understand why people behaved the way they did and there would be less discrimination. She added that pupils knew that all religious people were right in their own way.

On the correct interpretation of the language of various religious traditions and how she helped her pupils to achieve this, the respondent said that pupils were able to interpret religious language correctly. She observed that pupil discussions revealed correct interpretations of concepts under discussion. She went on to say that in her lessons on ZTR, the material was mostly covered through discussions and gave an instance of pupils finding out the meaning of their own names, leading to the topic on ‘The Naming of Jesus’.

With regard to response to topics and taught material, Teacher 3 said that there was evidence of good response by the pupils. She was, however, mindful of the fact that value formation and development was a long term process which went beyond the learner’s school days.

Coming to criticism and interpretation of religious symbolism, the respondent said that there was very little or no criticism on the part of the pupils. She insisted, “Pupils just take what the teacher says.” She was of the view that in spite of the little criticism, the pupil’s exposure to various religious traditions was very enriching because they were able to understand and appreciate other religious traditions’ beliefs and practices.
On the question of criticism of religious symbolism, Teacher 4 responded that the pupils were able to question and appreciate religious symbols, beliefs and practices. She, however, stated that she was of the view that exposure to other religions was not really enriching. She went back on her word and clarified that in some areas, exposure was enriching because pupils would be able to know what other religions involved. She added: “For Zambian Traditional Religion, we can’t run away from that. They (pupils) must know it.”

In relation to interpretation of religious language and how she helped her pupils to achieve it, the respondent said that the pupils were able to interpret the language correctly. She added that she helped them by encouraging them to use sayings in local languages and relating them to the topic under discussion.

4.2.3 RE Curriculum Specialist

Commenting on the revision of the syllabuses, the RE Curriculum Specialist from CDC stated that the review of teaching and learning materials was a continuous process in which the teams tasked to revise the two syllabuses (RE 2044 and RE 2046) had been doing vigorous work and CDC was yet to pilot the draft syllabuses which the teams had produced.

He added: “Unnecessary and outdated material such as Humanism has been removed and the subject moved towards applying the Bloom’s Taxonomy of Educational Objectives.” He further said that current RE syllabuses had been under review for the past seven years and that the format of the new syllabuses would now include the ‘Topic,’ ‘Sub-topic,’ ‘Outcomes,’ ‘Content-knowledge,’ ‘Skills’ and ‘Values.’
He emphasised the need for the revision of the two Senior Secondary School syllabuses, citing topics like ‘Palestine before Christ’ in RE 2046 as unnecessary. He suggested that comparative religion and religious literacy should be encouraged in modern RE.

On RE’s contribution to the enhancement of the learner’s personal identity, the curriculum specialist said: “Current RE is too foreign and there is need to stress more on ATR for pupils to have an identity.” He added that Christianity was a culture just like other religions were cultures.

4.2.4 Observations

The researcher observed a lesson at School A where he noted that key concepts were not adequately handled in terms of explanation. For instance, while dealing with ‘Death in other Religions,’ the teacher did not elaborate on the concept of ‘Magic versus Witchcraft’ even though pupils had shown some reservation towards the given explanation.

In relation to knowledge and discourse on other religions, the pupils were not able to vocalise concepts fully. They also exhibited very little knowledge, especially on ATR and the teacher did not elaborate unclear concepts. This was also evident when it came to reasoning and interpretation of religious symbols and language as their answers were characterised by shallowness and low level interpretation. As for the criticism and analysis of religious material, no criticism was observed as the pupils’ responses were merely repetitions of the teacher’s explanations.

The RE 2046 pupils at School B were able to vocalise and explain concepts with ease and active participation was evident. During group work, when the group
representative presented an unclear idea for instance, her group and the rest of the
class were able to clarify the concept. As the lesson was overly social, knowledge on
other religions and the abilities of reasoning, interpretation, criticism and analysis of
religious symbolism and language were not clearly evident.

In the RE 2044 class at the same school, the pupils were able to explain the concepts
in great detail. The same was true for knowledge and discourse on other religions as
the pupils exhibited a good level of knowledge on Hindu happiness, with the teacher
showing good command of the content. The class was also able to interpret some
religious symbolism and language. This was evidenced for example, when the class
discussed the Muslim symbolism of white garments during the Hajj.

At School C, the pupils produced clear, well thought out and in-depth vocalisations
and explanations of concepts. The class also exhibited high level knowledge of
material under discussion and were able to reason and interpret religious symbols
and language. Good criticism and analysis of religious material was also evident
through the pupil’s ability to debate the concepts under discussion. This could
however be partly attributed to the fact that the lesson was a revision one.

The second objective of the study was on the attainment of religious literacy through
the current Zambian senior secondary school RE syllabuses. The foregoing data
indicate that pupils were exposed to Christianity and to some extent, Islam,
Hinduism and ZTR. This exposure enabled pupils to question, interpret, and
appreciate religious language and symbolism. However, the Curriculum Specialist’s
view was that the current syllabuses were too foreign and needed to be revised to
encourage meaningful religious literacy.
4.3 Liberal and pluralist values promoted by RE syllabuses

The pupils were asked about the main ideas they learned in RE. The researcher further sought views on the values promoted by the senior secondary school RE syllabuses in relation to pluralism and liberalism in the country from the teachers and the Curriculum Specialist. An analysis of the syllabuses was also done using a document analysis checklist and the findings are presented below according to the same respondent categories.

4.3.1 Pupils

Taking religion as the main source of the values promoted by RE, pupils at School A were asked whether they were open to the inclusion of different religious traditions in the RE syllabuses. They explained that Christianity should be taught because Zambia is a Christian nation. For Islam and Hinduism, they should be taught because they are world religions while Zambian Traditional Religion should be included because it covers the traditional beliefs, customs and practices of the Zambian people. “Knowing other religions can also help a person to know how to behave when with people from different religions,” a respondent said.

With regard to values, the respondents cited tolerance and respect for other people as being among the most important values learnt in RE. They added that by learning about different religious traditions, they were able to understand other people well. One pupil went on to say, “I apply what I learn in RE even in my relationship with friends.” He further pointed out that the use of the Bible at school had also enhanced his commitment to the Christian faith.
In giving their views on which religions should be taught in RE and why, the respondents at School B said: “All religions should be taught because RE should include all religions.” When asked to comment on the main ideas learnt from RE, the learners mentioned respect for other people, tolerance, discipline, obedience and commitment as some of the most important. They added that due to what they learnt in RE, they freely mixed with people who belonged to different religious denominations without judging them.

Asked about the religious traditions they though should be taught in RE, the pupils at School C answered that all the main religions found in Zambia should be taught. The respondents argued that it is important to know other people’s views about life and God. They added that through RE, they learnt about respect for other people’s beliefs. One pupil who earlier showed reservations on the usefulness of the knowledge from other religious traditions then said, “Islam should be taught because it is similar to Christianity but Zambian Traditional Religion and Hinduism should be removed from the syllabus because they are confusing and clash with Christianity.”

Respect for others, love, tolerance and the utilisation of time were reported as some of the important ideas learnt from RE. A pupil emphasised that she was able to use time wisely because of what she had learnt about Leisure in RE lessons.

Generally, the pupils were open to the inclusion of other religions in RE because they could learn something from them. Asked to specify what they learned from the religions, different pupils mentioned respect for other people, tolerance, discipline, obedience and commitment as some of the most important and useful ideas.
4.3.2 Teachers

On the values acquired from RE, Teacher 1 noted respect, self control, discipline, responsibility and awareness as values present in the subject. He added that the moral values taught in RE would help pupils to grow into individuals who were able to differentiate between good and bad, and lead morally upright lives. He further said that the values promoted by RE were in conformity with the promotion of coexistence among people of different religious and ethnic backgrounds as evidenced in the pupils’ acceptance of one another despite having different religious backgrounds. He then gave an example of the respect which his pupils show to other people’s religious practices and symbols such as the Catholic rosary or Muslim head dress.

Asked whether pupils appreciated people from different religious traditions, Teacher 2 stated that going by the comments they made to each other, most pupils did not show an appreciation of other people. “Background plays more on a person’s values...there is rampant discrimination due to the community they come from,” she went on to say.

On the values acquired from RE, the respondent stressed morality. She noted that RE helped the pupils to become responsible citizens. She further added that tolerance and the appreciation of other people were part of the core values promoted by RE. She noted that the values promoted by RE were in conformity with the promotion of coexistence because, “when you know what the other person believes in, you can agree to disagree and if you are to evangelise, you know how to do it without offending the other person,” she said.
Asked whether the appreciation of people from different religious and ethnic groups was evident in the class dynamics, Teacher 3 said: “The ‘pupils’ don’t appreciate one another. There are aspects of mockery on people of different traditions.” She went on to say that RE was not playing its role because of Christian bias in the syllabus.

Pertaining to the values acquired from RE, she said that RE focused on the moral aspect of religion and the promotion of living properly with others. As for the evidence of appreciation of other people as exhibited in the class dynamics, Teacher 4 said that her pupils related well with each other. “We are all created by one God, hence we are one,” she added. She mentioned respect, obedience, appreciation and sharing as the main values acquired from RE, all of which she said were in conformity to the promotion of coexistence among people of different religious and ethnic traditions.

4.3.3 RE Curriculum Specialist

Asked on which religious traditions should be covered in RE and why, the RE Curriculum Specialist said that CDC stood for plural RE. He added: “We have still maintained the four major religions found in the country although we are having pressure from followers of the Baha’i Faith and Oriental religions to include their faiths in the curriculum.” He went on to say that the world religions were taught because we live in a global village. It was also important for people to study ZTR in comparison with Christianity, notwithstanding the lack of written material on ZTR.

The respondent was of the view that the promotion of co-existence and tolerance among people of different religious affiliations should have limits. He explained, “In as much as we should encourage liberalism, we need to avoid being too good or too
liberal. It is because of liberalism that Christianity was wiped out of North Africa in past ages.”

However, he mentioned tolerance and co-existence among the major values promoted by RE. He added that there was need for peaceful co-existence among people, respect for other people’s religions, and learning about and appreciating other beliefs and values.

The Curriculum Specialist indicated that CDC supported pluralism in RE and he highlighted tolerance and co-existence as some of the main values promoted by RE. It was also evident that he had reservations for unrestricted religious liberalism.

4.3.4 Syllabuses
The two senior secondary school RE syllabuses (2044 and 2046) were analysed in terms of how they presented the inclusion of other religions and the values they promoted. The pluralist and liberal values identified included tolerance, respect, love, empathy, kindness, harmony, and unity. The analysis was conducted using a document analysis checklist and the findings were as presented below.

Inclusion of Other Religions
RE syllabuses 2044 and 2046 cover the four major religions found in Zambia. These religions are Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and African Traditional Religion. In RE syllabus 2044, it was found that only one topic was dedicated to Islam and Hinduism per sub-theme, respectively. African or Zambian Traditional Religion was given four topics. Christianity, on the other hand, averaged twelve topics coverage per theme. The remaining four topics covered other aspects of the Present situation.
Below, is a graphical representation of the findings:

Figure 2: Coverage of religious traditions in RE 2044

The content of RE syllabus 2046 revealed that the syllabus has four learning stages. It is based on biblical themes with four learning stages which include: recall of Bible content; statement of Spiritual and Moral Biblical values; relation of Biblical values to contemporary Zambian society, and comparison with values from non-Christian religious traditions (ECZ, 1984). Evidently, of the four learning stages, three were based on Christianity while the fourth compared Christianity to Islam, Hinduism or ATR/ZTR.
The chart below illustrates this further:

**Figure 3: Coverage of religious traditions in RE 2046**

**Values**

RE syllabuses 2044 and 2046 were both analysed in terms of pluralistic and liberal values. It was revealed that the two syllabuses did not have specific topics on religious pluralism and liberalism per se but it was possible to identify values that relate to religious pluralism and liberalism. These are: tolerance, respect, love, empathy, kindness, harmony, and unity.

The analysis revealed that RE syllabus 2044 had a total of 151 topics, of which only twelve explicitly covered tolerance as one of the values promoted by the subject. Other pluralistic and liberal values were covered in thirty six topics while the
remaining one hundred three topics did not reflect any values which were in any way related to pluralism and liberalism.

The findings are presented in the bar chart below:

Figure 4: Values promoted by RE 2044

It was also found that in Syllabus 2046, out of the one hundred thirty six sub-topics, only four directly covered tolerance as one of the values in RE. Other liberal and
pluralistic values were covered in one hundred thirty topics while the remaining topics did not have any values which were in any way related to pluralism and liberalism.

These findings are presented in the bar chart below:

Figure 6: Values promoted by RE 2046

The final objective of the study sought to establish the values promoted by RE in the light of increasing religious pluralism and liberalism in the country. The foregoing data show that the pupils, teachers and the Curriculum Specialist were open to the inclusion of other religions in RE and it was evident that despite the bias towards Christianity, the two senior secondary school RE syllabuses included material on Islam, Hinduism and Zambian Traditional Religion. Data further show that many of
the values promoted by the two syllabuses were in conformity to the promotion of religious pluralism and liberalism. They include tolerance, respect, sharing, and self control.

In winding up the presentation of the findings of the study, it is clear that Zambian RE continues to be poorly handled and that the syllabuses are deficient with regards the attainment of religious literacy. The study further revealed that RE promotes values which are related to the promotion of religious liberalism and pluralism. These include: tolerance, respect for others, love, and awareness. The next chapter discusses these findings.
CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

This chapter discusses the findings of the study. The main purpose of the study was to establish whether the current senior secondary school RE syllabuses promote religious literacy, liberalism and pluralism, as constituents of modern RE. The discussion will be done under headings drawn from the objectives, the research questions, and are informed by the conceptual framework. The headings reflect the key findings of the study and these are: Zambian RE continues to be poorly handled; The Zambian RE syllabuses are deficient in attaining religious literacy and Zambia RE syllabuses promote values related to religious liberalism and pluralism.

5.1 Zambian RE continues to be poorly handled

The first objective was to explore the teaching and learning of RE. The findings revealed a number of issues which will be discussed here. They include the poor handling of the subject, the teachers’ choice of teaching methods in relation to class size and the use of teaching aids.

Religious Education in Zambia continues to be poorly handled. This inference is drawn from the findings of the study which show that in schools with large class sizes, there was generally little engagement of pupils by teachers who the learners as passive receptors of information. Except for one class, which had an average of thirty and forty pupils, the visited classes had above fifty pupils each. In such cases, the classes were clearly too overcrowded to allow the teacher to have good access and contact with individual pupils. Even trying to divide the class into groups for the sake of group work or discussions was a real night mare. It is for this reason that one
teacher said she always conducted group discussions outside the classroom. However, this practice has its weaknesses in that the outside environment has its own distractions. As observed by the researcher, the teacher literally had no control of the class during the time the pupils where outside the classroom. During this time, pupils choose where to hold their discussions from and interacted with other learners in the school environment who were not members of their class. Although one might argue that this was one way of making the lesson learner centred, meaningful learning could not be said to have taken place. It is worth noting that the creation of a conducive and ideal learning environment has for a long time been cited by many scholars as a prerequisite for effective learning. Therefore, every learning institution should endeavour to create an atmosphere that is supportive of the teaching and learning process if any meaningful education is to take place in Zambian schools.

What seems to be driving the unending wheel ‘of the knowledgeable instructor and an inactive disciple’ in RE is perhaps the subject’s historical developments. In Britain and the Commonwealth, and to a greater extent – Zambia, the church has had an influence on the development of RE; a subject which is in constant flux (Wright, 1993). What makes the Zambian scenario a little different is that Britain had a legal framework that gave support to the confessional model of RE which was supported and nurtured by a daily act of Christian worship in schools (ibid). Zambia on the other hand has not had any specific policy on religion and education. Since the aim of denominational RE was to indoctrinate learners in a particular faith, the catechist-teacher and the teacher centred instructions were notably ideal for the confessional approach applied in the teaching of RE at that time. However, in a modern and
democratic society like Zambia, this approach is educationally unacceptable as RE is expected to be multi-faith.

Simuchimba (2005) observes that the educationally, unacceptable, denominational practice of RE being a vehicle of evangelism unfortunately continues to exist in Zambian schools. The response from one of the teachers who submitted that her theological background might have influenced her offering of syllabus 2046 rather than 2044 which is considered Catholic, confirms Simuchimba’s (2005) conclusion. The same sentiment was echoed by the RE Curriculum Specialist who apparently has an Evangelical background. Though this might have been a minority voice, it reflects the long standing view held by most Evangelical RE teachers who still feel that they are duty bound to preach the gospel to their pupils. Furthermore, this response suggests that denominational rivalries which plagued the subject in its earlier days still exert some influence on current RE.

Teaching methods play a crucial role in the process of imparting knowledge in the learners. These methodologies can either be learner-centred or teacher-centred. Under the teacher-centred approach, the teacher is the authority giving instructions and determining class activities while learners take a passive role. Apart from that, the teacher heavily relies on textbooks with class furniture arranged in rows so that the learners face the teacher (Cuban, 1983). From the various teaching methods said to be employed by the teachers in teaching RE, the lecture method and dictation featured prominently. Teachers talked of variation of teaching methods in their teaching although there was hardly any evidence of that in the lessons observed. It was only the teacher with the small class who was able to use a number of teaching methods in the lesson because she had enough space in the class for the pupils to be
well divided into manageable groups for group work, to monitor as well as to supervise the work that they were doing. In order to make the learning process learner-centred, there is supposed to be a shift in the balance of power, the role of the teacher, and the responsibility of the teacher. The learner should exercise a substantial degree or responsibility for what is taught and how it is learned (ibid).

The study shows that teachers attempted to defend the use of teacher centred methods on the basis of lack of teaching and learning materials and over enrolment in schools. Clearly though, lack of leaning materials cannot be used to justify this poor teaching practice. A teacher is always implored to be creative and to use methods that are stimulating, let alone applying stimulus variation so that he/ she avoids boredom in the learners. Methods such as field trips and guest speakers could surely be effectively used regardless of the number of pupils that are in a class. These methods allow for the learners to interact with the resource persons without needing much space. This is supported by Hull (1998) who suggested teaching supplemented by field trips which allow the learners to interface with religion. In other words, there should be a shift in the balance of power between the teachers and the pupils, the function of the content, the role and responsibility of the teacher, and the purpose and process of evaluation, would actually make the methods used more learner-centred.

The entire Zambian education system has fallen prey to teaching for the examinations as opposed to real life learning. RE as a curriculum subject has not been spared from this scourge. Carmody (2004) observed that in the 1960s, RE was badly organised and taught while in the 1970s, there was lack of common agreement and proper dialogue, and today, it is not taught for life skills but for examination. Apart from it being compulsory in Christian mission schools, respondents
acknowledged that they took RE because it was a simple subject and were assured of passing the examinations with good grades even with little effort. This confirms Kindberg’s (2010) conclusion that the teachers believe that the majority of the students are taking classes in RE just because it is seen as a ‘booster’, an easy subject, giving them higher grades. It is unfortunate though, that even teachers and material developers support the examination orientated approach to the teaching of the subject.

In the case of syllabus 2044, for instance, the approach taken by teachers and material developers is ‘selective.’ This means that they choose certain sub-themes to be covered in the entire three year course. Instead of covering all the fifteen sub-themes which were designed to be holistic, teachers opt to teach five sub-themes based on either perceived simplicity or preference informed by personal interest as evidenced in the teachers’ responses, “I focus on the issues in the nation and the world” and “I actually enjoy teaching them” (refer to chapter 4, page 37).

For syllabus 2046, teachers use an approach that I have termed ‘linear’ in that the teachers followed the syllabus topic by topic. Noteworthy, the content coverage was not meant to fully develop the pupils’ in-depth understanding but to ensure examination safety as the huge content makes it difficult for both the teachers and the learners to identify where the examination questions would be drawn from. These findings are related to Svensson’s (2006) observation that the final examinations (and the rating of schools due to the results) forced teachers to cover the content of the syllabus, giving little room for flexibility or interesting detours. School B was noted to have traditionally been offering syllabus 2046 only but started to offer RE 2044 the year before this study was undertaken, as a pilot programme. Teacher 2 indicated
that a comparative analysis of the examination results would dictate which syllabus would have to be maintained in the school. This school’s approach is a reflection of the general attitude of Zambian society which expects children to excel at all costs and have encouraged schools to award teachers who produce the highest number of distinctions at the expense of lifelong learning.

Creativity is encouraged on the part of teachers. They are expected to come up with innovative ways in which to teach religion as it is rather difficult to assess owing to most of its’ aims being long term. One way in which to achieve this is through the use of various teaching aids including artefacts. The clue to the use of the artefact lies in the hidden meaning present in the artefact and the specific and concrete nature of the actual object (Hull, 1998). With all the resources available to an RE teacher, the findings regretfully indicate that apart from the traditional chalkboard, the teachers did not use any teaching aids. The failure to use teaching aids has made the subject boring especially that much of the content is historical and abstract.

From the above discussion, one would be justified to argue that in Zambia, RE as a curriculum subject continues to be poorly handled.

5.2 The Zambian RE syllabuses are deficient in attaining religious literacy

With ongoing debate on which approaches are ideal for modern RE, scholars have pointed to religious literacy as being core to the subject. To add to this debate, the second objective of this study sought to ascertain whether religious literacy is attainable through the current Zambian RE syllabuses.

With respect to the attainment of religious literacy, Zambian RE can be said to be deficient. The subject has undergone a number of curriculum reviews from the onset
of Western education to date. From a humble background of exclusive Christian sources, the subject now has three other religious sources of material which are Islam, Hinduism and ZTR. Up to 1991, these sources even included the non-religious philosophy of Zambian Humanism. The reviews were a result of attempts to make the subject more inclusive and educationally acceptable.

Religious literacy, like other forms of literacy, is rooted in knowledge. In this respect, the learners should be exposed to a wealth of knowledge on different religions if they are to become religiously literate. A pupil who is religiously literate should be able to intelligently deliberate on matters of religion. Unlike the confessional approaches which seek to develop learners into good followers, this approach invites pupils to be open minded and critical so that they make informed decisions. Religious literacy operates at several levels with familiarity with the terms and vocabulary and relating them to religious material and practices being the most basic (Erricker, 2010). The findings show that from all the topics covered, the learners were able to identify those which they thought were helpful in their day to day (and future) lives. They were also able to isolate certain important ideas from Christianity and other three religions. However, the contrasting of narratives at this level is inappropriate and does not actively encourage or challenge the pupils to consider other options. Such a situation cannot enable the emergence of religious literacy. If it did, it could only be said to create an opportunity for religious literacy at the most basic level.

As earlier alluded to, the attainment of religious literacy is dependent on the amount of information on different religions that a learner is exposed to. Noteworthy, exposure to different religious material is essential for the attainment of religious
literacy. In the words of Wright (1996), “It is not experience that children need as a tool to understand religion but an immersion in the various public linguistic traditions that seek to account for the ultimate nature of reality.” The current Zambian senior secondary school RE syllabuses are deficient in this area. They only qualify to be multi-faith in so far as they have components on the four major religions practiced in Zambia. In practice, the information given on the other religious traditions (apart from Christianity) is so meagre that the pupils can barely articulate anything. Nearly all the respondents in the study acknowledged that material on other religious traditions was not enough and lamented the lack of depth in the syllabus content. It was observed that that the pupils were not well informed on other religious traditions and could not intelligently explain concepts especially of Zambian traditional beliefs and practices which are actually supposed to inform their identity.

While religious literacy underscores the fact that experience only is not enough, it was noted that current Zambian RE merely served to perpetuate the learners’ experiences of Christianity. In other words, the little information on other religious traditions is only looked at in comparison to Christianity with little or no much reflection at all. The syllabuses are tailored in such a way that interpretation of religious language and practices is largely focussed on the commonalities between Christianity and the other religions under discussion. As such, learners do not look at religious symbolism and language critically because they neither have the time nor the material to reflect on. In order to encourage critical analysis of religious material which would lead to religious literacy, learners need to be exposed to a wealth of material.
The little criticism of religious material exhibited by the learners shows that they just take what the teachers say without questioning. This can be attributed to the use mostly of the teacher-centred methodologies, thereby making the attainment of religious literacy through the current senior secondary school RE syllabuses extremely difficult. While the lecture method can be used in different approaches, it is rather inappropriate for the religious literacy approach to the subject in that neither does it take into account nor value the individual pupil’s experiences. A genuinely child-centred RE must take into account the child’s pre-understanding (Grimmitt, 2000). From the findings, it was evidence that instead of making a critical analysis of an idea, the responses the pupils gave to the teachers’ questions were mere repetitions of their teacher’s arguments. Similarly, where the learners showed some appreciation, such an appreciation could be said to have been ill informed and biased. Such a scenario is unacceptable.

The current senior secondary school RE syllabuses in Zambia are still firmly grounded in the neo-confessional models with a small attempt at the phenomenological approach (Simuchimba, 2005). With the right approach, the current RE syllabuses need to move towards the religious literacy approach which has many strengths, the main one being inclusiveness and the collapsing of the established distinction between ‘learning from’ and ‘learning about’ religion, thereby enabling religious understanding to become simultaneously academic and personal (Wright, 2003; Jackson, 2004). As they stand today, the two senior secondary school syllabuses can be said to contribute very little towards the attainment of religious literacy. In fact, their contribution does not go beyond the most basic level of religious literacy.
5.3 Zambian RE syllabuses promote religious pluralism and liberalism

Values education is probably one of the main reasons or argument in defence of RE as a curriculum subject. The Zambian RE syllabuses promote values related to religious pluralism and liberalism. Respect for others, love, awareness, and tolerance are among the main values promoted by RE which directly relate to the values of religious pluralism and liberalism.

From the pre-colonial days, RE was supported by various sectors of society because of its potential to inculcate desired values in the learners. It can be cited for instance that during the colonial era, RE was used to produce an African who was going to easily accept and respect European political authority. Due to the diversity among Zambians today, RE can be said to be better placed than any other subject to contribute to the broader MoE 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: 5). To date, RE has helped the pupils to understand why certain things are the way they are, thereby contributing to responsible citizenship.

The subject promotes several values in its quest to producing a well rounded individual. A well rounded or holistically developed person should be able to live in harmony with other people regardless of their religious, ethnic, and political backgrounds. With the reintroduction of multi-party politics in Zambia came a reaffirmation to safeguard civil liberties of worship and association. As a consequence, the country saw a proliferation of religious movements and groups as
people realised that they had the liberty of propagating their faith. In no other subject than RE was there a serious impact as a result of the ideological changes at political level. Calls emerged from different sectors of society to make the subject more Christian in line with the declaration of the country as a Christian nation; an educationally unacceptable call as the subject had already moved away from the denominational phase. For political rather than educational reasons, the only non-religious source of RE content, Zambian Humanism, was removed from all RE syllabuses. It can be argued that However, in spite of the pressure from the mainly evangelical Christian lobby for further Christianisation of RE, authorities maintained the subject’s plural outlook.

The findings show that most people in the country appreciate the fact that Zambians follow different religious traditions and are therefore open to the inclusion of the main religious traditions found in the country into the RE syllabus. Pupils argued that Christianity should be taught because the majority of the people in the country profess Christianity. Similarly, Islam and Hinduism should be taught since they are world religions and Zambia is recording an ever increasing number of people following these and other major religions. Over and above that, Zambian Traditional Religion should be included in the syllabuses because it covers the traditional customs, beliefs and practices which are cardinal for the preservation of personal and national identity. Having said all this, we must not overlook the voice of people who are of the contrary view. As advanced by one respondent, all the other religious traditions, with the exception of Islam, should not be taught because they differ so much from Christianity and are therefore confusing. The Curriculum Specialist was in support of this idea when he indicated that we must avoid unguarded liberalism as
it might affect the religious heritage of the country. In as much as we respect the
opinions of the people calling for the Christianisation of the RE syllabuses, the
preceding sentiments cannot go without comment.

Zambia is legally a multi-religious, liberal democracy in which Christians enjoy the
same rights as adherents of other religious traditions. In such a society, it is expected
that all citizens respect each other’s religious belief systems and live in harmony.
This respect and harmony can only come about if the citizens are educated on what
other members of their wider society value. The proposition that RE syllabuses
should only teach Christianity and Islam is in itself a reflection of religious illiteracy
which the syllabuses should actually aim at eliminating. Considering the argument
that Hinduism and ATR are confusing, one wonders whether lack of clarity of a
concept should warrant its removal from the curriculum or in fact give an impetus for
further study. Keeping in mind that there has been growing concern on the loss of
traditional values and identity among the younger generation who have naively
adopted Western lifestyles, the contribution that ATR can make to the development
of self identity cannot be over emphasised. The perspectives of the adherents of other
religions are significant because they can help to make learners less ethnocentric and
naively Western (Mohammed, 1992).

The earlier referred to indication by the Curriculum Specialist is yet another area of
concern. It is clear that the official position of MoE on RE is that of pluralism.
However, it is worrisome that a specialist, a key interpreter of government policy on
the subject, is of the opinion that a more plural and liberal RE would lead to the
demise of Christianity (refer to 4.3.3) or seem to suggest that the subject should be at
the service of Christianity. To use the subject to fight the battles of the Church under
the pretext that the country’s religious heritage is Christianity only, is professionally unacceptable as it would negate the educational gains made by the subject. The government’s consistency can be seen in the 1977 Educational Reforms which aimed at making education attuned to the needs and aspirations of the Zambian people. Furthermore, the 1996 policy document talks of spiritual and moral values that can be drawn from any religion.

Among the many values in RE, respect for others, love, awareness, and tolerance are directly related to the values of religious pluralism and liberalism. Evidently, the majority of pupils and teachers of RE are open to the inclusion of other religious traditions in the RE syllabuses. They are of the view that all the covered religious traditions are given equal consideration as opposed to the prevailing situation where the time allocated to learning other religious traditions is not enough; more time is given to Christianity and the other religions are just looked at when comparing them to Christianity. A good example of how this could be achieved is South Africa, where, following the 1994 debate on whether Christianity should be the only religion taught in schools, it was agreed that the teaching of different religions in schools could play an important role in learning and knowing about each others’ religions (Jeenah, 2005).

The appreciation of a religiously plural and liberal RE is evidence that the values promoted by RE are in conformity with the promotion of coexistence among people of different religious and ethnic backgrounds. Pupils accept one another despite having different religious and denominational backgrounds. Despite this, discrimination is still evident through mockery and ridicule of other people’s religious orientations. It should be noted that the mockery and ridicule referred to
here is more denominational rather than interreligious. This can be attributed to the denominational rivalry among the missionaries which is still at play in today’s Zambian Christian practice. However, beyond this mockery, there is a greater appreciation of the other and pupils still maintain friendships across religious lines.

It is important that the government through the MoE stands for a religiously liberal and plural RE even with the many voices for more Christianisation of the syllabuses that followed the Christian nation debate. The period following the official declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation and the reaffirmation of the freedom of worship was characterised by growth in the number of religious movements and groups. These in turn exerted pressure and have continued to press the curriculum developers to cover their religious traditions in the RE syllabuses. The Baha’i Faith, for example, feels that it is a growing religion which has to be represented in the RE syllabuses. The growing number of people coming from the Far East also seems to necessitate an inclusion of Oriental religions in the syllabus as an understanding of their beliefs and practices might greatly help solve any misunderstandings between the Zambian people and their Oriental counter parts.

Analysis of both RE syllabuses revealed that they are pluralist in nature in that they presented the four main religions found in Zambia namely; Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Zambian Traditional Religion. As encouraging as that sounds, the reality is far from pluralism in its utmost sense. For obvious reasons, Christianity is at the core of the syllabus with the other religions in the peripheral. Carmody (2011) supports a multi-faith RE syllabus for Zambia but contends that such a syllabus still needs to be tailored, to a greater extent, towards the promotion of Christian values taking into account the religious setup and background of the country. Looked at in
the context of the ‘Christian nation’ debate, the confessional tilt might seem to be acceptable. However, being a liberal democracy that guarantees all liberties, Zambia should aspire to accord all cultures and religions equal status and value and this should in future be reflected in the RE syllabuses.

Syllabus 2044 has five themes. Each theme is further divided into three sub-themes which are studied from the Present situation, African tradition, Church history and the Biblical perspectives. Christianity is covered in slightly more than half of the topics in the fifteen sub-themes particularly in the Bible and the Church history perspectives; across all the dimensions, Zambian Traditional Religion has more topics than either Islam or Hinduism. This scenario clearly indicates a huge bias towards Christianity which even in the examination gets a correspondingly high mark allocation. Pupils, and unfortunately teachers too, concentrate on Christianity and pay leap service to the other religions and what they have to offer. Considerably, Zambian Traditional Religion seems to have a better place than that of Islam and Hinduism although it is actually the one that is treated with disdain. ATR is looked at in the shadows of the other religions and discussed as an afterthought or an area to be covered just to meet the dictates of the syllabus with no effort to learn something from its material.

The situation is not different for syllabus 2046. The syllabus is approached through stages which are more than largely Christian oriented. The first three stages are exclusively Christian while the fourth compares Christian values to those of the other religions.
As earlier alluded to, RE is anchored on the inculcation of spiritual, moral, and religious values. As Jeenah (2005) puts it, the role of Religion Education is to get learners to understand and appreciate the diversity of religions and believers in society. In this light, the two syllabuses exhibit the values of pluralism and liberalism although these are not explicitly stated as such. However, their constituent or related values of tolerance, respect, love, kindness, harmony and unity come out quite clearly in the syllabuses.

In syllabus 2044, tolerance as a value is directly referred to by twelve topics while thirty six topics reflected other values related to both religious pluralism and liberalism. The remaining one hundred three topics merely had other values unrelated to the promotion of liberalism and pluralism. In syllabus 2046, only four sub-topics made direct reference to tolerance. One hundred thirty sub-topics reflected liberal and pluralist values while the remaining sub-topics had no relation to liberalism and pluralism. This means that although the syllabuses promote some values related to pluralism and liberalism, they are overly Christian and cannot fully allow for religious pluralism as well as liberalism. This might, to some extent, explain why there are still two syllabuses at senior secondary level as the concerned stake holders could not come up with an agreed syllabus due to their denominational allegiances which can unfortunately be seen even in the pupils.

Another factor which can be said to be responsible for the poor promotion of plural and liberal values in RE is the historical missionary rivalry which still influences the way RE is handled. Since their aim was to propagate a particular form of Christianity, they saw no need for the incorporation of plural or liberal values in RE. It should be borne in mind that most of these values are actually interlinked and
interrelated. For instance, taken as the starting point, tolerance can lead to religious liberalism which can in turn lead to and support pluralism. Harmony and peaceful coexistence among people of different religious backgrounds can only be achieved if people are able to tolerate and appreciate each other’s diversity in a religiously liberal and plural society which is one of the aims of modern RE.

The learners admit that even though other religious traditions are said to be included in the RE syllabuses, the time allocated for their coverage and the material looked at are not adequate. Much of the time was devoted to discussing Christianity. There is need to increase the amount of content on the other religions that are covered in RE. Material developers have at times argued that other religious traditions do not have as much information as Christianity but one wonders why they cannot invite or involve religious insiders as resource persons or authors.

In conclusion, the chapter has discussed the findings of the study. The discussion of the findings was informed by the conceptual framework while keeping in mind the research questions that drove the study. The proceeding chapter draws conclusions and makes recommendations based on the findings of the study.
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study aimed at ascertaining whether the values promoted by the two senior secondary school RE syllabuses were in conformity with the promotion of religious liberalism and pluralism, and whether the syllabuses can promote the attainment of religious literacy which is a constituent of modern RE. Having discussed the findings of the study, this chapter endeavours to draw conclusions and make recommendations for future consideration.

6.1 Conclusions

In line with the objectives of the study, the following conclusions were made:

i. With regard to the teaching and learning of RE in secondary schools, it can be concluded that RE in Zambia remains poorly handled. Partly, this is attributed to the size of the classes. In large classes, there is generally little engagement between teachers and pupils owing to teachers often using the lecture method, which due to its nature imposes religious knowledge on the pupils and puts them at risk of indoctrination. However, teachers defend their choice of the method under the guise of over enrolment in the schools. This method reduces pupils to passive recipients of information who depend on the teacher as the final authority thereby hindering the development of critical thinking skills which are cardinal in the attainment of religious literacy. Through this method, Christian teachings are presented without questioning while those of other traditions, especially ATR, are presented as outdated and without value to the modern society. Furthermore, the teaching of RE is examination oriented. This examination orientation and the desire to cover the huge
content of the syllabuses for the sake of capturing all areas perpetuate the teacher centred methods of teaching. This has further created a situation where pupils are expected to memorize specific Bible passages without even thinking about what they have learned, thereby reducing learning to mere memory work as opposed to critical analysis.

ii. Coming to the possibility of attaining religious literacy, it is clear that the current senior RE syllabuses 2044 and 2046 are clearly Christian oriented and cannot adequately promote religious literacy. Three quarters of the content is Christian and the treatment of other religious material is shallow as they are only referred to in comparison to Christian values or teachings. As such, the learners are not exposed to enough material to enable them become religiously literate. The earlier alluded to denominational rivalries are still apparent in the two syllabuses with syllabus 2044 being considered Catholic while syllabus 2046 is taken to be Evangelical. Therefore, teachers seem to be influenced by their religious affiliations in the selection of the syllabus to teach. Unlike the confessional approach which seeks to develop learners into good followers, religious literacy invites pupils to be open-minded and critical in their faith and decision making. Given their content and the way the current Zambian senior secondary school RE syllabuses are presented, they cannot guarantee religious literacy.

iii. On the values promoted by RE in the light of increasing pluralism and liberalism in the country, it can be concluded that the subject promotes a number of values in its quest to produce a well rounded individual who should be able to live in harmony with other people regardless of their
religious, ethnic, and political backgrounds. Among the many values promoted by RE are: tolerance, respect for others, love, and awareness, all of which are directly related to the promotion of religious liberalism and pluralism so that the majority of pupils are open to the inclusion of other religious traditions in the RE syllabuses. Realising that values can be drawn from various religious traditions, the majority of pupils are open to the inclusion of other religious traditions in the RE syllabuses as they envision a religiously plural and liberal RE where all the covered religious traditions are given equal consideration.

6.2 Recommendations

In view of the results of the study and the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are made:

i. MESVTEE should revise the RE syllabuses so that the subject is made more liberal, critical and educational with equal emphasis on the covered religious traditions so as to reflect the current multi-religious scenario in the country.

ii. Teachers of RE should maintain high levels of professionalism to avoid denominationalism and the urge to proselytise. This can be achieved through in-service training of teachers.

iii. RE teachers should go beyond teaching for examinations if the subject is to contribute to the promotion religious literacy.

For future research, the curricular of RE teacher education institutions could also be studied to establish the extent to which they promote religious pluralism, liberalism and religious literacy.
References


APPENDICES

Appendix i: Consent Form.

I am Gilbert Kamanga, a postgraduate student of Religious Studies at the University of Zambia, doing research on Zambian RE. I am requesting for your voluntary participation in this study. Please read the information below and ask questions about anything you do not understand, before deciding whether to participate or not.

1. There are no risks in taking part in this study. Actually, taking part in the study will make you a contributor to the possible improvement of RE as a school subject.

2. Please consult your parents, if you are less than 18 years of age, before you decide on whether to participate or not.

3. If you do not want to be in this study, you do not have to participate. Remember, participation in this study is voluntary and you have the right to discontinue if you decide otherwise.

4. All the responses will be highly appreciated, treated confidentially and used for academic purposes only.

5. If you accept to take part in this study, please sign your name on the space provided.

Participant’s signature:

Date:..........................
Appendix ii: Focus Group Discussion Guide for Pupils
School: ........................................... Date: ........................................... Time: ..............

I am a postgraduate student of Religious Studies at the University of Zambia doing research on Zambian RE. I am very glad that you have accepted to be part of this study. May I further assure you that all the responses will be appreciated and treated confidentially.

1. What can you say about RE?

2. Why do you take the subject?

3. Describe a typical RE lesson.

4. What kind of activities are you given during RE lessons?

5. Mention the topics mostly covered in your RE lessons.

6. Which of these do you find helpful? Explain how.

7. Do you learn about other religions?

8. Explain what you find the knowledge about these religions.

9. How do you find the knowledge about the other religions?

10. In your view, what religions should be taught in RE? Why?

11. If you were the teacher, how would you teach about other religions?

12. Do you think RE gives you enough knowledge to understand different religions?

13. What other important ideas do you learn from RE?
14. Does what you learn in RE help you to understand people who do not belong to your religious denomination?

15. Give examples of situations where you applied what you learn in RE.

16. Do you have anything you think you have left out and would like to add?

Now that we have come to the end of our discussion, may I request that you keep your doors open for me to come and seek clarity if need be, and may I assure you once more that all the responses you have given will be treated confidentially and used for academic purposes only.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.
Appendix iii: Interview Guide for RE teachers

School: .......................................................... Date: .................................................. Time: ..............

I am a postgraduate student of Religious Studies at the University of Zambia doing research on Zambian RE. I am very glad that you have accepted to be part of this study. May I further assure you that all the responses will be appreciated and treated confidentially.

1. How long have you taught RE?

2. At what level did you do RE?

3. What can you say about the relationship between college RE/ RS and school RE?

4. What is the effect on RE teaching?

5. Comment on 2044/ 2046 divide. What influences your selection of the syllabus you teach?

6. What teaching and learning methods do you mostly use in teaching RE?

7. In 2044/ 2046, which themes/ units do you cover?

8. What guides your choice of themes and topics to teach?

9. How do your pupils respond to the topics and the material you teach?

10. Do you think that your pupils are able to look at religious symbolism critically?

11. How enriching to the pupils is exposure to other religions?
12. Are the pupils are able to correctly interpret the language of the various religious traditions? How do you help them?

13. From the class dynamics, do the pupils appreciate people who belong to different religious traditions and ethnic groups? Why?

14. What values do you think your pupils acquire from RE?

15. Do the values promoted by RE conform to the promotion of coexistence among people of different religious traditions and ethnic groups?

16. If you are to improve on current RE, what would you add or subtract? Why?

17. Do you have anything you think you have left out and would like to add to what we have discussed?

Now that we have come to the end of our discussion, may I request that you keep your doors open for me to come and seek clarity if need be, and may I assure you once more that all the responses you have given will be treated confidentially and used for academic purposes only.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.
Appendix iv: Interview Guide for the RE Curriculum Specialist

Date: ................................................................. Time: ........................................

I am a postgraduate student of Religious Studies at the University of Zambia doing research on Zambian RE. I am very glad that you have accepted to be part of this study. May I further assure you that all the responses will be appreciated and treated confidentially.

1. For how long have you worked as a Subject Specialist?

2. Have you taught RE before? How long? Academic qualification?

3. Comment on the 2044/2046 divide. Any efforts towards harmonisation?

4. Comment on the revisions of the syllabuses/ material.

5. What can you say about Zambian RE?

6. Do you think the syllabuses are ideal for Zambia?
7. Which religious traditions should be covered in our RE? Why?

8. Should Zambian RE encourage more co-existence of different religious groups in society and tolerance to different belief systems than it does now? Why?

9. Which ideas do you think RE should promote?

10. How can RE contribute to the enhancement of the learner’s personal identity?

11. If you are to improve on current RE what would you change? Why?

12. Do you have anything you think you have left out and would like to add?

Now that we have come to the end of our discussion, may I request that you keep your doors open for me to come and seek clarity if need be, and may I assure you once more that all the responses you have given will be treated confidentially and used for academic purposes only.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.
Appendix v: Document Analysis Checklist

Document name: ................................................................. Date: .................................

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Appendix vi: Lesson Observation Checklist

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