

**The Nature and Role of Religious Studies at the
University of Zambia: 1985-2005**

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 (Religious Studies).**

December, 2006.

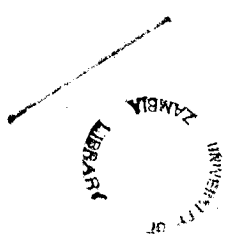
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Dedicated to the memory of my late father, *Emerson Masaiti*, who was my source of inspiration and who also sacrificed for my education.

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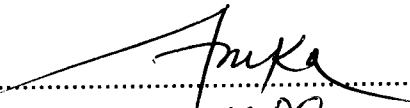
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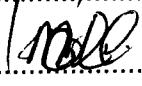
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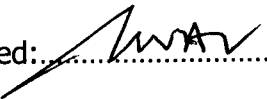
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APPROVAL

This dissertation of Gift Masaiti is approved as fulfilling part of the requirement for the award of the degree of Master in Education (Religious Studies) of the University of Zambia.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This project would not have been possible without the support of many people. Many thanks to my supervisor, Dr A. Cheyeka, who read my numerous revisions and helped to make some sense of the confusion and also for standing by my side in many situations. Also special thanks to Prof B. Carmody who offered guidance, support and special permission to use some of his materials. Thanks to Dr M. Simuchimba who offered valuable criticism and guidance. I am also grateful to Mrs J. Ziwa, Mr N. Haambokoma, Ms T. Milingo, Mr L. Chanda, Fr E. Flynn, Prof R. Siachiwena, Prof. M. Musambachime, Prof K. Kelly, Prof K. Mwauluka, Dr B. Siamwiza, Dr C. Namafe, Dr L.K. Krishna and Mr F. Hambulo for having given me valuable information for this project to come to fruition. Thanks to the students and graduates who gave me the much needed information. Thanks to the University of Zambia who were the key sponsor of this project. And finally thanks to my relations and numerous friends who endured this long process with me, always offering support and love.

ABSTRACT

The study examines the nature and role of Religious Studies at the University of Zambia (UNZA) from inception in 1985 to 2005. In doing so, the study first highlights some perspectives on the history of Religious Studies, method and content, and later developments.

Principally, the study was conducted at UNZA though graduates of Religious Studies programme from outside the university were also included in the study. Academic staff, graduates and students were targeted as principal informants of data collection. Special attention was given to the Religious Studies section because it occupies a central role in the teaching of Religious Studies at the University. All schools in the University were considered as a way of getting a wide range of views on the subject. Some educationalists who were instrumental in the creation of the Religious Studies section were consulted as a way of enriching and consolidating data and also giving the original outlook of Religious Studies at inception.

The principles of the phenomenological and interpretive approaches were key considerations in the methodological perspectives, in that every effort was made to get 'insiders' views. The qualitative approach was the main technique used supplemented by quantitative material. Principally the study was qualitative. Ethical and methodological issues including participants' right to privacy, dignity, self-determination and the researchers' right to know were considered in the research.

The findings revealed that Religious Studies at UNZA has remained an academic discipline. It includes historical, sociological, philosophical and educational dimensions. Religious Studies is also multi-faith in its orientation. It is not theology. Religious Studies at UNZA has been challenged to continue research and publications as it remains instrumental in providing a holistic University education. It has also been challenged to expand its role.

TABLE OF CONTENT

Dedication.....	i
Copyright declaration.....	ii
Author’s declaration	iii
Approval.....	iv
Acknowledgement.....	v
Abstract.....	vi
Table of content.....	vii

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Introduction and Background.....	1
Religious Studies at UNZA.....	5
Statement of the problem	6
Purpose of the Study	6
Objectives of the study	7
Research questions	7
Significance of the study	7
Theoretical Framework and Methodology.....	8
Delimitation of the study.....	9

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction	10
Religious Studies and Religious Education	10
Context of Religious Studies	11
Other Universities and Religious Studies	13
Religious Studies not Theology	18
Methods and Description in Religious Studies	21
Critics of Religious Studies Education	22
Proponents of Religious Studies Education	24
Role of Religious Studies in University Education.....	25
Conclusion.....	28

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Research Design.....	29
Demographic Data on Lecturers	32
Demographic Characteristics of Graduates and Students	32
Instrumentation	33
Validation of Instruments	34
Data Collection	34
Data Analysis	35

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction	36
Why was Religious Studies introduced late at UNZA?.....	36
Is Religious Studies essential to University Education?.....	41
Is there need to distinguish Religious Studies from Theology?.....	42
How is Religious Studies different or unique?.....	43
What methods are used by Religious Studies at UNZA?.....	46
What is the nature of Religious Studies at UNZA?.....	48
What is the role of Religious Studies at UNZA?.....	52
Are issues of multi-faith and indoctrination addressed in RS?.....	58
Are there areas of interaction between RS Section and MoE?.....	60
The future of Religious Studies at unza.....	60
How Students view Religious Studies at UNZA.....	62
Conclusion.....	69

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction	70
Summary	70
Conclusion	73
Recommendation	74
Bibliography	77
Appendices	83

Appendix A: Students' questionnaire	83
Appendix B: Graduates' Interview Guide.....	85
Appendix C: Lecturer's Interview Schedule	86

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

This chapter provides the background to this study; it states the problem under investigation, gives a brief background to the study, spells out the purpose, objectives, research questions, significance and the delimitation of the study. The theoretical framework and methodology of the study are also presented.

The place of Religious Studies or Religious Education in government institutions is an issue of concern world over. In some Western countries such as the U.S, because of the complex nature of the law, Religious Education is not offered in formal government or public institutions. Some universities in Africa, Europe and America have also excluded Religious Studies from the curriculum because they feel religion is not a domain of knowledge that meets publicly accepted rational tests. Hirst (1998:307) notes that anyone can investigate religion to an appropriate extent and may discover that religious beliefs do not come up to the required standard of accepted public rational tests; he explains that:

There are no tests at the moment where true or false can be distinguished in religious spheres. This implies that there is no domain of religious knowledge and truth and hence little justification of inclusion of Religious Studies or Religious Education in public education institutions (**Hirst 1998:307**).

Religious Studies is itself a modern quest. In the English-speaking world, it basically dates back to the 1960s, although before then there were such fields as 'the comparative study of religion', 'the history of religion', 'the sociology of religion' and so on. Theology existed, of course, as did Jewish Studies, and various kinds of orientalism (Connolly 1999:IX). Religious Studies was created out of the blend of historical studies, comparative expertise, and the social sciences, with a topping of Philosophy of Religion and the like. It rapidly became a major enterprise in academia (Ibid :IX). Religious Studies makes us understand

differing religions and cultures and the various approaches needed to interpret and understand them. These religions include Hinduism, Buddhism, Taoism, Christianity, Judaism and Islam, not to mention African Classical religion, Native American traditions and so fourth. Religious Studies also include sociology, anthropology, history, philosophy, art-history, musicology and ritual studies; it also considers a comparative aspect as advocated by Smart (1999:x).

Religious Studies is an academic discipline. The years following World War II brought far reaching changes to Anglo-American higher education. There was substantial increase in enrolment, a rapid expansion in the public sector of higher education, and a demand for new technical and professionally oriented programmes. Many of the traditional liberal arts colleges and religiously affiliated institutions, influenced by larger secularising trends and stimulated by competition with the burgeoning public institutions, broadened their purposes and programmes, while many of the public institutions, pursuing expanded missions, allocated resources for new or expanded liberal arts ventures. In this atmosphere of transition and opportunity, the academic study of religion has, in general, prospered but not without some fundamental changes in its nature and mission. The most significant of these changes can be traced along three lines, the transformation of the institutional context, the redefinition of the curriculum, and development of the professional community (Eliades, 1987:88).

By the early 1970s, Religious Studies programmes could be found in nearly every kind of institution offering undergraduate liberal arts study: private non-sectarian colleges, church-related colleges, public colleges and universities, community colleges and professional schools. The typical graduate student of Religious Studies today, in fact, trained in a multi-disciplinary environment where diverse methods of inquiry- philosophical, historical, literal-critical, sociological are used in the study of religious traditions, beliefs and behaviour (Eliades, 1987:91). Religious Studies is, perhaps, best understood as a community of disciplines gathered around the complex phenomena of religious belief and practice. Some of the activities in the community take place primarily within such disciplines as

Sociology of Religion and Philosophy of Religion. This is the path Religious Studies at UNZA has followed in its overall development.

However, most people in Zambia today do not know the nature and role of Religious Studies offered at UNZA. All that comes to people's minds is that it is Christian studies. Society thinks that trainees of Religious Studies become evangelists, priests, pastors and role models in society because of the history of Religious Education in which the missionaries were teachers of the subject. Some students from other schools and disciplines at UNZA also think Religious Studies is not essential to university education.

Religious Studies came late to UNZA. It was only out of the need to have senior secondary school teachers of Religious Education that the Zambian society and the University management felt it essential to have such studies at the institution (Carmody, 2003).

One of the objectives of government in establishing the University of Zambia was to have a pool of intellectuals who could formulate policies and advise government on issues, even of religious nature, as noted in the Ministry of Education policy document (Ministry of General Education, MGE, 1983:1). This implies that the Religious Studies section is supposed to be consulted on issues of curriculum and syllabus material offered in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions. In a democratic and multi-faith society like Zambia, all religions should be given some representation in the curriculum and teachers or educators should be trained accordingly. The Ministry of Education's mission is to provide education to all Zambians so that they can acquire, pursue knowledge, defend the democratic ideals and accept the values of other people based on their personal worthy and dignity, irrespective of gender, religion or other characteristics. This is noted in the 1983 Ministry of General Education policy document which states:

The main aim of Spiritual and Moral Education is to enable pupils to appreciate spiritual, moral and religious values and behaviour based on them. This appreciation is drawn from the four main religious traditions in Zambia, namely; Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Indigenous Zambian Beliefs (**MGE, 1983:3**)

Does the constitution of the Republic of Zambia in any way favour Religious Studies in Zambia? The constitutional clause in the Preamble of the Zambian Constitution (1996) does not seem to favour Religious Studies in university education as it is perceived to be discriminatory. The declaration of Zambia as a Christian nation is a discriminatory clause to other religions. However, the actual constitutional provision on religion, Article 19 subsections (1) to (v) guarantees all people living in Zambia the freedom of conscience and worship. Religious Studies offered at UNZA is inclusive. There is need therefore for a constitution which guarantees liberties of different Religious traditions without any conflict in its provisions. The type of education offered at the University of Zambia should be in concord with what the constitution provides. It is thus important to examine the university environment at the time Religious Studies was introduced at UNZA.

According to Kelly, (2003), the University initially had a secular outlook. Later on, Marxism and Scientific Socialism grew deep roots in the institution. Kelly and other intellectuals observed that certain key disciplines were missing in the University. There were no traces of Economics, Home Economics, Agriculture and Religious Studies in the 1960s and 70s at UNZA. Interestingly, Religious Education was the only subject by then which was compulsory at lower levels of education. There was need to give it attention even at higher levels, especially at the University. Generally, the Zambian society was seen as being heavily religious. There was this desire to have a programme at the highest institution in the land where issues of a religious nature would be studied. Noteworthy is the fact the Religious Studies offered in Zambia has a Christian bias mainly because the Zambian population is predominantly Christian.

In agreeing with Carmody (2006:298), it should be mentioned however that with the increasing diversity of people within Zambia coupled with the nation's commitment to democracy. It might be appropriate for those responsible for religious education programmes to look ahead to the creation of a more inclusive religious education syllabus at all levels.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT UNZA

The University of Zambia opened in 1966 and, while not outlawing religion, assumed a secular outlook. Chaplaincy was accepted without difficulty but the idea of having some form of religious centre on campus had a much slower acceptance (Carmody, 2004a: 78). In 1987, however, a Christian Centre was opened. Meanwhile, over the years, the need for Religious Education teachers at the senior secondary school level had emerged. As a result, in 1978, the University Board of Studies set up a committee to make proposals about what could be done to provide senior secondary level Religious Education teachers for the country. The outcome was that in 1980 this committee's report recommended the setting up of a Religious Studies Department whose role would be primarily to train senior level teachers of Religious Education. Nonetheless, the report emphasised that such a department would also both generate research in religion and contribute a distinctively religious dimension to university education. In this way, the report strongly recommended that the proposed Religious Studies department should be autonomous, interdenominational, interfaith, and academic (University Board of Studies, 1985).

Subsequently, in 1985, Fr. Edwin Flynn, O.F.M. Cap. was appointed to offer Religious Studies combined with Religious Education as a minor in the Bachelor of Arts in Education (BA Ed) degree programme in the Department of Language and Social Science Education (LSSE). Mindful of the directives which the University's advisory committee presented and which we have noted, Fr. Flynn designed a programme that was primarily academic and thus acceptable to people of any church or faith. The programme continued until 1992, during

which time a more extended and comprehensive programme was developed. The programme led to Religious Studies and Religious Education being offered as a minor and major in the BA. Ed degree programme. In 2004, the Masters programme (MEd) in Religious Studies was introduced at UNZA.

Thus far, we have provided some context for the discussion of the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There has been much debate especially in the developed world, about whether or not Religious Studies should be included as a discipline in university education. This debate extends to whether Religious Education should be offered as a subject in government primary and secondary school education system. Countries like Sweden, England and Wales, Norway, the Netherlands and Denmark have a non-confessional Religious Studies Education in state-maintained schools and universities while France and Russia, have either no Religious Education or have confessional Religious Education as is true in Germany, Finland, Austria, Italy and Ireland. The main concern of these countries who have not included Religious Education in their curricula is often related to the nature of Religious Education to be offered in public institutions (Denis 1999:1433, Hirst, 1998:306 and Philips, 1998).

Many of the issues or arguments in Religious Studies and Religious Education remain relevant to Zambia. This particular study will address the issue: What is the nature of Religious Studies and Religious Education at UNZA and why is it part of the University curriculum?

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study is thus intended to find out the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA from 1985 to 2005. Since no comprehensive study has been done on Religious Studies at UNZA, this particular study proposes to describe and analyse what has taken place so that the weaknesses and the strengths of the

programme can be identified with a view to assisting the Religious Studies section achieve the goals towards which it is striving.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are to:

- a) find out the nature of the Religious Studies programme at UNZA;
- b) identify specific contribution Religious Studies makes to university education;
- c) present the perspective of staff and students on both the nature and role of Religious Studies offered at UNZA;

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To address the topic of this study the following are research questions that this study seeks to address:

Major questions:

- a) What is the nature of Religious Studies at UNZA?
- b) What service does Religious Studies contribute to UNZA?

Supplementary questions:

- c) Is there need to distinguish Religious Studies and Theology?
- d) Why are specific courses offered in Religious Studies (e.g, Sociology of Religion)?
- e) Do Religious Studies promote Religious tolerance among people of different congregation and religions?
- f) What method does Religious Studies advocate in its approach?
- g) How should Religious Studies be different from other disciplines?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is important as it will contribute to the literature on the nature and role of Religious Studies in an African university. It is also hoped that it will contribute to international scholarship on the topic and that staff and students at UNZA will find the study useful for their academic and professional work. The

study will also contribute to further development of the Religious Studies Programme. Such evaluation of programmes in a university is also an important exercise because among other things, the ambiguity between Religious Studies, Religious Education and Theology will be clarified. Issues of Religious Studies teaching and evangelisation will also be addressed. It is further hoped that the study will show how Religious Studies contributes to national development, just like other disciplines in the University do.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

The theoretical issues of this study will be elaborated in the interest of clarity. These consist examining the difference between Religious Studies and Theology, critically examining specific contributions of Religious Studies to university education, methods of teaching Religious Studies, issues of indoctrination, research and religion in Zambia and then focus on the nature of Religious Studies at UNZA. This study will also highlight why Religious Studies was introduced late at UNZA.

The first part of the study provides a background to Religious Studies in Zambia. It also states clearly the problem under investigation. The second part critically examines reviewed literature on Religious Studies at UNZA. The principles of what is called the phenomenological and interpretative approach were key in our methodological perspectives of this study. Every attempt was made to get 'inside' of what different people think about the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA. Thus, we followed a descriptive approach in which qualitative methods were used and supplemented by quantitative ones. Generally, respondents were somewhat sensitive when they heard that the research was of a religious nature. Hence, ethical and methodological consideration was taken aboard in the research. Among other things, this included the participant's right to privacy, dignity, and the researcher's right to know.

Data were analysed according to a framework that included the following concepts or categories: nature of Religious Studies, the role of Religious Studies,

methods used in Religious Studies, specific contribution Religious Studies makes to university education, Theology and Religious Studies, Research and Religion in Zambia among others. Perspectives of staff, graduates and students on Religious Studies were sought. Since not all individual members of the University could be involved in the study, the study undertook semi-structured interviews with 20 lecturers and 15 graduates and conducted a survey of 200 students. The surveys and interviews were done between the months of February and November of 2006 respectively. Overall, it went on smoothly though there were problems of finance in interviewing graduates since travelling was involved and also finding suitable time for interviews. Nonetheless, the sample is representative enough to provide an accurate picture of the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

The study was principally conducted at UNZA, Great East Road campus. The University was chosen because it was the focal point of the study and also the only university in Zambia where Religious Studies is offered.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a review of the literature on the nature and role of Religious studies at UNZA. As well known, the purpose of reviewing literature is to document the information that exists with the aim of enhancing the study at hand and identifying gaps that need to be filled. In order to outline the nature and development of Religious Studies at UNZA, we need to provide some perspective on the method that has been adopted in the study of religion and to articulate aspects of the role which this discipline strives to play at UNZA. Among other issues under consideration in this chapter are: Religious Studies and Religious Education, methods in Religious Studies, distinction of Religious Studies from Theology, other universities and Religious Studies, critics and proponents of Religious Studies and Religious Education.

RELIGIOUS STUDIES AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The Religious Studies Section at UNZA has maintained its close long-standing and on-going relationship with Religious Education. The provision of Religious Education courses has closely followed the directions, which Religious Education has taken in the country. Thus, in order to better understand the development and background of the Religious Studies programme, it is necessary to briefly discuss the history of Religious Education in Zambia.

In the early days of formal education in Zambia, Religious Education in schools was denominational and, in more recent terminology, exclusive. There was no separation between the Church and the school; it was tailored to convert the learners to a particular denomination (Carmody, 2004a: 77; Hobson & Edwards, 1999:48-49). Eventually, this was followed by an approach that was more ecumenical, first at the primary level and later at the secondary level (Carmody,

2004a: 78-80). Although the adoption of an ecumenical approach indicated progress, it was not without problems. In 1978 a group of Christians opted to develop their own distinctive syllabus at the secondary level on the basis that they were being more Bible-centred as opposed to life-centred (*Ibid* : 81). Since that time, two syllabi have been operative at the senior school level namely 2044, which was the earlier ecumenical syllabus, and 2046 prepared by the breakaway group.

There have been attempts made to move beyond the situation where two syllabuses survive. The two syllabuses have a predominantly Christian focus. Despite some misgivings about such a direction of moving towards a more open interfaith syllabus during the 'Christian nation' period, the syllabi have survived (Simuchimba, 2004). Impetus to move further has been weak largely because about seventy per cent of the Zambian population claims to be Christian while Hindus and Muslims form less than one percent (Cheyeka, 2004:132). One would argue that not until there is this movement of merging the two syllabuses, the more educational Religious Education will not be attained. Carmody (2006) further argues that while Religious Education programmes include materials from minority traditions such as Islam and Hinduism and that a denominational programme is no longer desired, one that is basically Christian still seems right for the moment as strategies to move beyond this are looked into.

CONTEXT OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Carmody (2003) emphasises the fact that Religious Studies offered at the University should be autonomous, interdenominational, inter-religious, academic and non-evangelistic. To make Religious Studies truly essential and educational, a strong non-denominational line should be followed where students from different backgrounds study together.

Religious Studies as it developed encompassed religious education sections, complimented by courses that combine religions and other disciplines like philosophy, sociology, history and psychology in an overall effort to be critically

open to various religious traditions and to the changing role of religion in society. The university Religious Studies programme attempts to systematically and extensively include religions other than Christianity (Masaiti, 2003). It is also important to mention that Nkrumah (Kabwe), National Institute of Service Teachers' College (NISTCOL-Chalimbana) and George Benson (Kalomo), colleges of Education have affiliated their Religious Education programmes to the University of Zambia Religious Studies programme.

Both Religious Studies and Religious Education seem to be concerned with interaction between religious material and the experience of students. Neither Religious Education nor Religious Studies is just learning about religions as happens in many Religious Studies programmes world wide. Both help students to think, act and communicate intelligently about ultimate questions that religions ask. Both endeavour to primarily educate rather than indoctrinate in their approach to different religions; every attempt is made by those teaching to be impartial.

Kelly (2003) is of the view that Religious Studies should promote national development. National development among other things comes about because of certain values that Religious Studies foster. Values of integrity, honesty, tolerance, among others, may lead to reduced tension and corruption in society. Students are trained to communicate and transmit the right values and national development borders mostly on positive values, such as the values that people attach to work. Religious Studies can in this way be seen as a way of laying the foundation for national development. A country without virtues and values is doomed. It should be acknowledged that such values may be ethical and not necessarily religious. What Kelly is saying is that Religious Studies may significantly contribute to virtuous and ethical behaviour. Religious Studies should moreover make a difference to the general outlook of the University. Mudalitsa (2002:1) advocates for 'Religious Education with a Difference'. To him the subject should not just be dissemination of knowledge or banking of knowledge but should be seen to be addressing real life issues such as

HIV/AIDS, corruption and poverty. The argument is that morals and good values are found in most of the world religions and therefore can be the basis of advocacy. Mudalitsa strongly feels that the current Religious Education syllabi have not fully addressed critical issues that challenge society. He also wonders why things should be like this especially that formal education has been in existence for some years now.

Let us now examine Religious Studies in other universities and see how it contributes to the holistic nature of university education.

OTHER UNIVERSITIES AND RELIGIOUS STUDIES

How are Religious Studies departments structured in other universities especially in the UK and in countries within the same sub-region? Do they consider a holistic perspective that allows the people to ask questions? Do they just 'learn about' or 'learn from' religion? How well does UNZA compare with what other universities are doing in the field of Religious Studies? Leeds and Birmingham Universities have deliberately been chosen because their disciplines in Religious Studies are well developed and advanced and also because the British system of education has had influence on the Zambian school system. The University of Botswana have also deliberately been chosen to see how UNZA compares to a university in the sub-region in the field of Religious Studies. All the universities considered in this study have contributed to the holistic nature of university education in their respective countries and internationally.

The Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Leeds University can best be described as a community of scholars working to advance understanding of religion in ways that are logically, nationally and internationally significant (<http://www.leads.ac.vic.tris/May: 2006>). The mission of the department is:

to share a distinctive sense of an integrated vision, which creates a vibrant cross fertilisation and an interaction between specialists across the whole range of Theology and Religious Studies, which are elsewhere more usually held apart.

Teaching and research are taken with equal seriousness because Leeds has a strong belief that the best and the most rigorous research is done by those developing and communicating their ideas in an equally rigorous environment where they are directly responsible for others' learning. Leeds also strives to develop and communicate its work through external consultancy or other work with government or other public or private bodies, or with faith communities.

The Department of Theology and Religious Studies at Leeds creates and disseminates knowledge that pushes forward the boundaries of the discipline. Its chief orientation of work is towards increasing knowledge and understanding of the local and global significance of religion to public life in a secular, multi-faith society. Religion is studied in its diversity and approached in its specificity. Specific religious traditions and communities, thought and practice are studied as they are and have been located in different historical, social, cultural and political contexts. The Department also uses a range of intellectual disciplines and methods of inquiry and cross conventional disciplinary boundaries, working with and through the following: Theology, Philosophy, Sociology, Social Theory, Anthropology, Gender Studies, Development Studies, Ethics, Cultural Theory, Politics, Literary Criticism, Linguistic study and history (www.leeds.ac.uk ;june:2006)

In short, the Theology and Religious Studies discipline at Leeds can be summarised as a critical, intellectually serious discipline of inquiry, practised with empathy and oriented towards advancing the understanding of outsiders and the self understanding of insiders.

At the University of Birmingham, the Department of Theology and Religion can best be understood from the following mission statement <http://www.theology.bham.ac.uk>; April: 2006

The Department of Theology and Religion affirms that the academic discourse on lived faith has the central place in its teaching and research culture. The department pursues reflection on religious realities and the study of religious traditions as they develop and interact.

The focus of the department can best be understood as being developed under five distinct areas where Birmingham already has a considerable reputation and distinctiveness within the academic community: (i) Global religion past and present interaction with society and community, religion is looked at as a global phenomenon. (ii) Religious texts in history, culture and electronic media; (iii) partnership with faith communities world wide (iv) relations between religions and culture in the local, national and international; (v) Serving Birmingham and West Midlands (*ibid://www.theology.bham.ac.uk;July:2006*).

At the University of Botswana, the Department of Theology and Religious Studies (TRS) is one of the departments in the School of Humanities. It plays a vital role in the life of the university and offers a wide range of programmes. The department also offers BA Programme (combined and single) and a full-time Diploma in Pastoral Theology, which is suitable for those seeking ministerial training is also offered. In conjunction with the School of Graduate Studies, the department is in the process of offering a full-time MA in Theology and Religious Studies. The TRS Department has been striving to be relevant to the training needs of the Tswana people both academically and spiritually. The mission of the Department at the University of Botswana is:

As part of the faculty of Humanities the TRS Department recognises that, the main purpose of the University is to promote the pursuit of truth and advancement of the knowledge, to provide facilities for higher education and to serve all those who seek through its facilities to avail themselves of and contribute to teaching, research and public service. Its main mission is academic and that its primary objective is to contribute substantially, through its various programmes, courses, research activities and academic links towards the development of Botswana's

human resources. (<http://www.ub.bw/departments/theology-mission.fm>; *July:2006*)

As an academic institution, the University of Botswana through the TRS Department endeavours to further the teaching of Theology and Religious Studies in order to meet the training needs of the nation. The department's mission is geared primarily towards meeting the need for teachers of Religious Education as the government expands its secondary education sector. It sees itself as part of the universe of academic institutions that are committed to the search for religious and theological truth.

The department is also committed to making the results of its own research available to those in the world who want to use such results for their own development and advancement. This is done through publication of articles in local and international journals. At other times such findings are published in the form of monographs, thus providing in-depth study of the subjects in question.

Lastly, but more importantly, the Department also realises the urgent task and duty of undertaking the training of theologians for the purpose of localisation. In keeping with the University policy on localisation, the TRS Department has taken this task seriously by identifying potential academics, both men and women, to be trained as future members of staff in order to realise the nation's dream of developing its own well trained human resource. In carrying out its academic responsibilities, the TRS Department is aware of its geographical location in Southern Africa and the implications of doing theology there. In order to be relevant to the context in which the staff are working, the TRS Department operates from the perspective of contextualisation in the study of theology and religion.

The prevailing social, economic, political and religious circumstances in the region influence the priority questions in the work of the TRS Department. A

close look at the Religious Studies and Theological courses and programmes shows three dimensions in which their philosophy is reflected.

- (a) There is an ecumenical universal dimension in which they show their recognition of the validity of theological tradition as it has been handed down to them by generations of theologians from the inception of the church to the present.
- (b) There is also a regional dimension in which they recognise the significance, legitimacy and usefulness of new Third World contributions to Theology such as Liberation Theology, Black Theology, African Christian Theology and others.
- (c) Lastly, they have also included a local element where intensive research is involved. It is in this connection that they encourage members of staff and students to undertake in-depth research on religious and theological issues in Botswana.

Further the mission of the TRS Department is reflected in its aims and objectives. These are to:

- (i) assist in the training of secondary school teachers by providing training in Theology and Religious Studies subjects which normally form part of the secondary school curriculum.
- (ii) contribute to the training of people in public services and in the private sector so as to meet the urgent need to develop the country's human resources.
- (iii) enable students to acquire a better understanding of humanity as social in its totality, and as involving the body, soul and spirit; and to assist students to think critically and receptively.
- (iv) stimulate research in the area of Theology and Religious Studies that affects the day to day life of the individual and the nation as a whole.

(v) collaborate with other departments and faculties of the University by mounting inter-faculty training programmes such as the current PGDCE and the joint MEd. programmes for the furtherance of knowledge and truth.

(vi) collaborate with other University agencies such as the Centre for Continuing Education in the upgrading of knowledge and skills of teachers, pastors, ordinary citizens and other public servants who may wish to acquire theological training through part-time or tailor-made study programmes at its centres in Francistown, Selibi-Phikwe, Mahalapye and Lobatse (trs"mopipi.ub.bw, *April:2006*)

Our "visit" to Leeds, Birmingham, and Botswana Universities illustrates the fact that, in all these institutions Religious Studies is seen to contribute to a holistic dimension to university education. This is also what the Religious Studies programme at UNZA strives to do. Most of the roles of Religious Studies at the above universities are also performed at UNZA except for those relating to Theology. UNZA offers Religious Studies and not Theology. Most of the universities discussed above have within their curriculum both Religious Studies and Theology. The question that arises is: is there any need to distinguish Religious Studies from Theology at the University of Zambia?

RELIGIOUS STUDIES NOT THEOLOGY

UNZA offers Religious Studies and not Theology. The distinction between Religious Studies and Theology can be explained as follows: essentially, Religious Studies adopts an academic, open approach to the study of religion whereas Theology normally assumes a definite religious commitment. Religious Studies, for instance, regards scripture like history or any similar social science whereas Theology adopts a definite perspective on the history and interpretation of scripture. Put somewhat differently, Religious Studies takes as its field all religions. Its main thrust is the history of religions while Theology focuses on a specific religions or branches of a religion. Theology functions within the context of faith. Theologians examine and defend the beliefs and practices of their respective traditions (Schmidt, 1988:20).

Most universities in North America have moved historically from a Protestant establishment to almost a non-religion setting (Marsden, 1994), but which occasionally features Religious Studies. Unlike Theology, Religious Studies does not, as we noted, ordinarily adopt a religious stance. One might say that Religious Studies pursue the path of academic study of religions while Theology is concerned with critical examination of the beliefs and practices of respective traditions. Selection of a religious position is assumed in theology whereas in Religious Studies this is not necessarily so. Religious Studies might be interested in understanding why people behave in a certain way while theology may want people to behave in that way. As already alluded to theology is confessional while Religious Studies is educational.

It is important to mention that although commitment is not presumed in Religious Studies, adherence to a certain religious tradition would usually constitute the foundations of a person's theology as a Baptist, Hindu, or Presbyterian (Lonergan, 1972:267-8). Nonetheless, it appears true that in the measure a person is committed religiously, he/she can be expected to be predisposed in favour of religion, including Religious Studies (Crowe, 1985:126). There are no guarantees that those students exposed to alternative beliefs will follow their parents. Students who do Religious Studies may switch to alternative Religious traditions and beliefs.

The point being made is that Religious Studies at UNZA is not theology. In the US and UK theology was part of the curriculum but with the rise of secularisation it became Religious Studies in the US. In the UK, theology in state universities continued but in the 1960s the UK also began to add Religious Studies departments mainly to accommodate more secular and more pluralistic populations. This is how Zambia is today and somehow having Religious Studies that is not theological is highly appropriate.

As we discuss the nature and role of Religious studies at the University of Zambia, we have to acknowledge the close relationship between Religious Studies, Religious Education and Theology. This relationship is like that of big brother, little sister and clerical uncle. Commenting on this relationship Cush (1999:137) says:

While recognising the closer relationship that Religious Education has with Religious studies, it examines the contribution theology can make to non-confessional RE, and suggests that academic Religious studies and Theology should put to an end their historic quarrel. The use of the word 'Theology' to describe the activity engaged in by pupils when exploring their own beliefs and values is examined and rejected. It concludes that the three disciplines should view themselves as equal partners with distinct but complementary roles.

Religious Education of the non-confessional kind in state maintained schools in England and Wales has, at least in theory, in recent decades, been more closely related to Religious Studies than Theology. The phenomenological approach advocated by Ninian Smart in the 1970s and 1980s had until recently become established orthodoxy. This can be summarised as an attempt to put aside prejudice and preconceptions, and to empathise with the believer's point of view (Cush,1999:138). The England and Wales system of education especially in RE has had influence on the Zambia system. We should also be mindful that the growth of Religious Studies in Zambia has been done somewhat along the same line.

It is possible to argue that Religious Education in schools in Zambia is closely related to Religious Studies at UNZA. The Religious Studies department teaches students to adapt to materials being taught and students can learn different courses of their liking. For instance, the Religious Studies Department teaches the beliefs and practices of Islam, while the Religious Education tutor shows how to make a cardboard mosque.

However, the relationship of Religious Studies and Religious Education can be challenged on a number of fronts, namely, in terms of the nature of Religious Education, the understanding of religion and knowledge about religions, a relationship between theory and practice, difference over what counts as proper research and scholarship, academic snobbery over 'pure' and 'applied' disciplines, and issues relating to gender (Rodford 1999:138).

One of the critical concerns in Religious Studies and Religious Education is the issue of methods. What methods are appropriate in Religious Studies?

METHODS AND DESCRIPTION IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES

Many Universities adopt a phenomenological perspective in the study of religion where religions are studied from the point of view of the adherent. In this approach, every attempt is made to get on the 'inside' of what it is like to follow that particular religion (Carmody, 2006). In accord with the phenomenological approach the University of Zambia Religious Studies programme begins with identification of data of religious experience for others and ours. In doing this, use is made of Otto's *Idea of the Holy* and James' *The Varieties of Religious Experience*. Focus on religious experience includes delimitation, identification of the global, discernment of inner structure, comparison with related religious phenomena, as well as formation of types and laws (Wulff 1991, 524-529; Cox 1996:37).

Students' own experiences are recognised but they are encouraged to suspend their own judgements temporarily in order to understand the faith, beliefs and practices of people from different religious backgrounds (Jackson 2004: 28-29; Cox, 1996:26-45). The critical element and concern with truth are seen to be compatible with phenomenology as much effort is given to making Religious Studies educational, where it involves such values as critical awareness, openness to differing views, as well as perspectives on a broad range and depth of understanding (Hobson & Edwards, 1999:64). This approach aims to present religions fairly and sensitively and to follow the evidence where it leads in

deciding for oneself whether or not one religion is superior to another (Barnes, 2002:113-114). Religious Studies may affect personal beliefs and values of students but while such may be an important part of the educational process, it is not an explicit aim of the type of Religious Studies and Education that are presented (Carmody; unpublished)

Moreover, in this approach it would be acceptable that neither students nor lecturers need to have personal religious faith or commitment in order to be empathetic or to provide accurate descriptions of various religions. What Allen (2005:119) notes with regard to phenomenologists who welcome the type of religious commitment evident in such things of a basic wonder and intellectual curiosity seems true for the Religious Studies Education lecturer at UNZA.

Therefore, the brand of phenomenology adopted in the Religious studies programme at UNZA is not purely cognitive or scientific but one that is in line with Wiebe (2005:19) and strives to:

actively engage the student in thinking through the question of meaning of life, with the Religious studies instructor engaged as facilitator of the process of 'forming' the student, she or he takes the place of the religious educator and theologian

The methodological perspective of the Religious Studies and Religious Education programme at UNZA is thus highly respectful of accurate description of religious phenomena but it does not omit the critical, educational dimension.

The teaching of Religious Studies and Religious Education has not gone without critique. Some scholars have questioned as to whether Religious ideas should be entertained in formal government institutions. Some people have questioned the methods appropriate in the light of indoctrination.

CRITICS OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES EDUCATION

Positivist philosophers take an objection view that Religion is an area of knowledge that need to studied. Ayer A. J (1988) is a notable scholar in the

positivistic camp, generally positivists feel that Religion does not qualify to be taught in an academic institution because it does not meet the following criteria; a proper academic area or experience must be mathematical, must be logical and analytical and finally such an area must be scientific or synthetic. Using the above criteria, knowledge can be verified and proved. If a statement does not meet the above then it is metaphysical, it is rather true or false. It is then senseless and very difficult to study. The normal statement should be verified and falsified. The logical positivists have an issue with Religion and therefore feel Religion does not qualify as an area of knowledge. The empirical philosophers also feel that apart from the three criteria mentioned, something knowledgeable should be justified even through the five senses. This implies that we can not verify Religion through the sense of touch and others.

Philips (1998:439) points out that there is a battle for the minds especially of the young in Religious Education, enlightened progressive parents, authorities who want to get rid of religious indoctrination on the other hand, and conservative parents movements and authorities would like to defend basic values and show that religion permeates the whole of life. Of now the problem for Philips is that, there is no case at the moment for teaching religion in schools or university since the truth which religions proclaim have as yet not been established. Hirst (1998:306) agrees with Philips and says, religion is not a domain of knowledge but mere beliefs and, therefore, doesn't qualify to be taught in a public or state run institution. The knowledge taught in such institutions is that which come up to publicly accepted rational tests. Anyone can investigate them to the appropriate extent and agree with the result. Religious beliefs do not seem to come to this required standard. There is no test at the moment where true or false can be distinguished in religious spheres. There is therefore little justification for inclusion of Religious studies in the curriculum of public schools and universities.

Critics further point out that religious beliefs reflect private beliefs of individual believers. We cannot claim public domain of knowledge for them if they lack

rational justification or some public form of justification. Any criteria for justification used in religion operate within a class of beliefs which are at best hypothetical (Philips:1998 & Hirst: 1998).

Such are the arguments of critics who feel that because of its nature, Religious Studies Education are not essential to University education. Let us now examine what scholars who strongly feel Religion deserves a place in academic institutions like schools and Universities.

PROPONENTS OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES EDUCATION

Hirst and Phenix (1998) are classified as rationalist educational philosophers. They support and count religion as a form of knowledge that is legitimate. The proponents classify knowledge in the following forms; formal logical and mathematical, physical sciences, human sciences, moral judgement awareness, aesthetics, religion and philosophy. They also came up with knowledge called the realms of meaning and put religion under the synoptic realm. This is the mother of all realms. The teaching of Religious Studies is justified, as it is not only helpful to learners but also creates meaning to life. They go beyond other subjects.

Simuchimba (2003) argues that there are various criteria recognised by religious believers on what can be and what cannot be said about religion. It is not true that there are no tests in the area of religion that are valid. If the tests or criterion on the University Religious Studies Department or school curriculum is in agreement with beliefs or ideas in the subject being taught, then other subjects like literature and history should be excluded as well. Wittgenstein (1986:14) explains that religious beliefs are separate and different from other beliefs that are mere conjunctures. Religious beliefs are different from empirical knowledge which requires verification or an external check. Religious beliefs are not second class or second best statements, hypotheses conjunctures waiting for confirmation but rather a body of truth which have played an important part in the history of man and by which many people still regulate their lives.

Rather than questioning and dismissing religious studies in University education, it should be understood that there is something in religion to be elucidated:

The class of those learning or teaching Religious studies could well include someone Who believes that Religions are false but sees Something educational in them but the class could as well exclude someone who is a devout believer but lacks the ability to elucidate the nature and role of religion educationally or professionally (**Witgensten 1996:26**)

To make the teaching of religion relevant we must encourage the professionally qualified teachers to teach it and these teachers should see something of value in the discourse.

ROLE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

In endeavouring to be educational, Religious Studies faces not only a challenge of being critical in the area of religious discourse but also in what is not explicitly religious. However, as part of an education system that has been seen as overly academic, Religious Studies faces the challenge of being holistic so that it can help:

to promote the integral, harmonious development of the physical, intellectual, affective, moral and spiritual endowments of all students so that they can develop into persons for their fulfilment and for the common good of the society of which they are already members and in whose responsibilities they share as adults (**MOE, 1992:iv**)

In attempting to be holistic, Religious Studies should endeavour to help students raise such fundamental questions as; What is the purpose of my time on earth? Why be moral? Why do I suffer? (Carmody, 2004b:xviii-xx). However, when the education system in general largely fails to raise such questions about the integrity of one's intellectual, moral and affective life because of an over concern with cognitive outcomes, the religious task is even greater. There is need for a more holistic perspective that allows people to ask questions and Religious

Studies tries to give space for this more than other subjects like History, Science and others. One might want to know whether this is the case in other Religious Studies department in other places. They may do, but we are back at the issue of 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion. Many places in the US and UK to a lesser degree have opted for the 'learning about' religion and so they basically have sold their souls and do not make much contribution to the university curriculum. RS at UNZA is not learning about religion only but it is also learning to be critical and to assume a more critical outlook to religion.

To a larger extent, it would appear that the school system in Zambia as in other countries today has moved even more close to being places for training rather than for education (Carmody, 2004:xvi; Miedema & Biesta, 2003:81-96). Within such a context, there is a danger that we can settle for know-how and knowledge of facts at the expense of transmission of values. When this happens higher education tends to over-accommodate itself to the industrial system where colleges and universities become preparatory academies for the industry. An outcome of this is that we find students at higher education institutions that, in their search for philosophical answers to complex issues, learn that such answers cannot be found within any one discipline while broad underlying assumptions are ignored. Disciplines can neglect to point the centre to which all specializations are connected (Schumacher, 1973:93; O'Sullivan, 1999:187). This can further lead to the situation where even humanistic curricula and disciplines are structured to operate on the assumption that education does not entail transformation of the quality of a person's life and consequent commitment of one's life to the transformation of society through activity in and beyond one's profession. To what degree this mode of education prevails in the Zambian educational setting today remains unclear but, in a study RS402(2003), the plea was often made by respondents that Religious Studies should include spirituality. This would seem to indicate that people feel that spirituality defined somewhat along the lines of the deeper resources of the human spirit (O'Sullivan, 1999:259) needs more attention. This would appear to be highly

likely in a setting where perhaps the educational journey has been, a pilgrimage to estrangement (O'Sullivan, 1999:169; Carmody, 2004:ix).

Religious Studies at UNZA attempts to offer the kind of education that is not solely professional or academic in a restricted sense but which is holistic and open to the possibility of being transformative. In its attempt to provide a holistic direction, it would be critical of the instrumental technocratic emphasis that includes core aspects of life which has been part of the educational system in Zambia and elsewhere. Clearly, this has implications for how teachers and lecturers view their profession. Do lecturers see themselves primarily in terms of communicators of knowledge and skills or do they envisage a larger role for themselves entailing ethical, moral, social and religious matters (Carmody, 2006)?

It might be difficult to see how far this transformative education exist in UNZA scenario. When UNZA's Chancellor urges the university to contribute to the kind of vision which can establish the match between the technical and the professional capacities that are needed in the various sectors as well as the normative value domains that are necessary to realise effective and meaningful development (Mwanza, 2005:10-11). Such a vision, it is noted should focus not only on matters of productivity but also on how to establish democratic citizenship, peace, social justice, and protection of the environment for sustainable development (*Ibid*, 2005:5). This also reflects what was contained in the University Strategic Plan:

The rapid political, economic, and cultural change taking place in society requires that the university recognises and adheres to its ethical role in society. As a front of training, education, expertise and research, the university will seek the truth in all its activities at the service of what is just. At a time when there is a crisis of values as a consequence of the perverse effects of change, the university will have a guiding ethical role in society (**Relevance, Excellence and Accountability: 2005:18**)

Theoretically at least, it would appear that University of Zambia administrators are conscious of the need for balance between value neutral rationalism and holistic formation.

Carmordy(2006) says the relationship between religion and society in Zambia is more likely to reflect the changes that have taken place especially over the past century, resulting in religion becoming a matter of personal choice rather than something acquired through birth. Thus, in such setting which has shifted from being traditionally religious to becoming Christian or Muslim over a relatively brief period, there may be many intertwined strands in the role which religion plays in the political and social formation of contemporarily society (Ellis & Ter Haar, 1998:175-201). Religion's role in the recent movement towards the democratisation of Africa may intimate some of this complexity (Gifford, 1995). Discussion of religion in the Zambian society today is swiftly confronted with the changing role of religion in the face of on going dilemmas such as estrangement, HIV/AIDS, and InJustice (Carmody, 1999:90-92; Serpell,1993:117; Boesen,2000; MOE 1992; Simpson,2003).

CONCLUSION

This review of literature has outlined what has been written about Religious Studies in Zambia and has also identified key elements in the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA. In reviewing the literature, we have contextualized what is taking place at UNZA in terms of what is happening around the world. The thesis illustrates how the UNZA approach is in line with what is happening elsewhere and is innovative, educational, and appropriate to the context of Zambia in the twenty first century.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study is based on interviews of 20 lecturers, 15 graduates and a survey of 200 students at UNZA in order to find out the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA. The study is qualitative even though it was supplemented by quantitative material. The considered method suitable in soliciting information about the feelings of the subject on role and nature of Religious Studies was in depth interview. Sometimes, individual perceptions and insights are not easy to determine. According to Salfind (2003:208) qualitative research is not just an alternative to quantitative research, but it is a different approach that allows you ask and answer questions of different kinds. Interviews allowed the researcher to explore the subject at hand in depth and to ask follow up questions.

Mertens (1998) notes that qualitative research involves checking information that has been collected from different sources or using multiple methods such as interviews, observations and review of documents for consistency as well as checking of evidence across the sources of data. A descriptive survey design was also used. A survey research is a method of collecting data in which specifically defined groups of individuals are asked to answer a group of identical questions (Baker, 1999). This method was chosen because it allows collection of data from a large number of people than is generally possible when using experimental designs (Mertens, 1998). The reliability of the questions in the survey method can be quite high if questions are well developed (Baker, 1999).

Cohen et al (2000:30) define descriptive research as "a description and interpretation of existing situation". They observe that description research assumes that the phenomenon that is studied follows a common pattern. It

attempts to make sense of the current situation. Its purpose is to estimate the nature and degree of existing conditions.

Qualitative description approach was used in the collection and analysis of data. According to Gay and Airasian (2000:11) Qualitative descriptive studies are carried out to obtain information about the preferences, attitudes, practices, concerns, or interest of some group of people. This method was best suited for this study since the study was intended to find out from lecturers, graduates and students their views and perception about Religious Studies at UNZA.

Quantitative research assumes that the results of a study are more objective and not so open to bias since the research does not interfere with what is being investigated. This is because the study's concepts, hypothesis and variables are made prior to conducting the research. It describes the situation as it is, quantitative descriptive approach has been used since it allows collection of data through questionnaires that are self-administered by those chosen to provide data (Best & Kahn, 1998)

This research design also made use of surveys. The two approaches differ in their methods of data collection and the ways in which data are analysed and reported. The quantitative research is known as scientific, positivistic and hypothetical - deductive. This means the starting point is a hypothesis which is a tentative, testable statement that often connects two concepts. This hypothesis is then tested in various ways to see whether they hold good in different combinations of circumstances (Haambokoma, 2004:17).

In qualitative research, on the other hand, it is not so much the testing of hypotheses as arriving at them: the process of collecting and reflectively analysing the data triggers the leap inductive thought. With experience of interpreting a particular piece of work or listening to the nuances of tape-recorded interviews and detecting patterns of behaviour, the researcher articulates the hunch of sense of the bigger picture in the form of hypotheses

(Haambokoma 2004:17). It should be mentioned that both qualitative and quantitative methodologies were used. Each method was given a bias depending on the situation even though the qualitative was central in the research.

TARGET POPULATION

The population of the study included 200 students, 15 graduates and 20 lecturers at UNZA. Among the lecturers were also those who were influential and engineered the introduction of Religious Studies at the University. The above population was chosen because the respondents had been exposed to the Religious Studies programme at the University. If not, they had heard about Religious Studies at least. UNZA comprises nine schools namely: Education, Humanities and Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Engineering, Mining, Medicine, Agriculture, and Veterinary studies. All the schools were considered in the research so that a general perception could be obtained. There was however a bias to the School of Education which houses Religious Studies. The inclusion of the other schools was meant to establish their perception of Religious Studies.

Sampling Procedures

The researcher sampled lecturers and Students who were not only accessible but also informative. The respondents were selected based on the criteria of accessible and informative in the purposive method of sampling. The sample population should be within reach (Krathwol, 1998).

In order to make the findings more reliable, valid and generalised, the researcher arranged for interviews with Fr. Flynn, Prof. Kelly, Prof. Carmody, Prof. Mwaulukwa, Prof. Musambachime, and Prof. Siachiwena as the researcher found the five having been at UNZA for a long time and some of them were influential in the introduction and establishment of religious studies unit at the University. Some of them also helped to further outline the development of Religious Studies with specific focus on the nature and role of religious studies at UNZA.

Systematic sampling was used for data collection. A table to determine the sample size from different schools was used. A total sample of 200 students and 20 lecturers were considered. The appropriate number of both female and male students was randomly selected.

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA ON LECTURERS

This is to be able to examine the response of both male and female participants with regards to the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA. Out of the 20 lecturers interviewed, fourteen were male while six were female. So the study did not only concentrate on the School of Education but also extended to other Schools. At least a lecturer was considered from all Schools. Let's now examine the distribution of lecturer in the research. One was from School of Agriculture, one from Vet-Medicines, four from Humanities and Social Sciences, eleven were from Education, one from Law, one from Mines and one from Natural Sciences. As seen, the study clearly reveals that majority of those selected were from School of Education, which houses the RS Section.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF GRADUATES AND STUDENTS.

Most of the graduates who were interviewed graduated from the University of Zambia between 1994 and 2005. Five studied Religious Studies as a major while ten studied it as a minor. Interestingly, of the 15 interviewed nine are working for the Ministry of Education as teachers, five are working for different organisations and one was not in employment.

In an African University issues of gender equity and access are still cardinal. It is important to have an idea of the number of male students compared to that of their female counterparts in Religious Studies. Would the views of female students differ in anyway to that of their male counterpart? There were 200 respondents, 95 male and 105 female. It was important also to find out the quota (minor/major) of respondents in the study. This is in order to examine whether those doing a major or a minor in Religious Studies feel differently about the discipline. The quota also helps to discover whether students have

great interest in issues of religion. From the 200 respondents, 120 took a minor, 60 took a major and 20 were from different Schools and discipline.

The number of respondents according to years of study at UNZA was also taken into consideration. It was envisaged that the more the numbers of years spent at UNZA the better the experience by the respondents. It would imply that second, third and fourth years have better understanding of Religious Studies from different perspectives and sphere. Out of the 200 respondents 20 were first years, 45 were second years, 110 were third years and 25 were fourth years.

INSTRUMENTATION

The following research instruments were used to collect data for the study.

(a) Interview Schedule

Interview schedules were designed for lecturers and graduates at UNZA. The interview schedules were designed in a way that allowed the researcher probe the interviewee further. The interview schedule was used as the main tool of data collection. The guide was open-ended and comprised a series of questions soliciting for information on the nature and role of Religious Studies at University Education. The interview was standardised to increase the comparability of responses and reduce interviewer effect and bias. This facilitated the organisation and analysis of data (Best & Kahn, 1998:298)

(b) Questionnaire

The questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from the respondents. The questionnaires comprised both closed and open- ended questions to minimise bias. The questionnaire was chosen because it was less time consuming as compared to using other instruments such as observation. Questionnaires also provide the respondent with a degree of autonomy (Mertens, 1998).

This questionnaire solicited information from students on their personal data concerning their experiences, the school they belong to, the year of study and

their sex. The information was used to determine whether any of the above variables have any bearing on respondents' perception of the nature and role of Religious Studies for University Education. It also comprised both open ended and close-ended questions.

Validation of the Instrument

According to Odimle (2004:22) validity of data collection instruments refers to the accuracy of the instruments in relation to the questions of research. The questionnaires and interview schedules were circulated among some lecturers to assess them for validity and reliability. A small sample of students and lecturers in the School of Education were used to pilot test the instruments. The purpose of pilot testing is to ensure that instrument as a whole functions well. It also helps in making some corrections and modifications if need be (Best and Kahn, 1998). Borg and Gall (1998:77) also observes that " pilot study often provides ideas and clues not foreseen earlier on. Such ideas and clues increase the chances of obtaining clear-cut findings in the main study"

The researcher made the questions as objective as possibly can. Reliability and credibility depended on comparing targets of research. The researcher conducted interviews personally and administered questionnaires in order to collect first hand data. Constant interaction with the supervisor, interviewees and respondents enhanced validity and reliability.

Data Collection

The data was collected mainly by interviews supplemented by questionnaires. The researcher sought permission from the Deans of different schools to have access to the students and staff that had been selected for the study. Pre-visits were done to enable the researcher establish rapport with the subjects and to explain to them how the questionnaire would be administered and the interviews conducted.

Data Analysis

Since the study was primarily qualitative, data collected was coded and categorised according to the major variables. Data from Lecturers and graduates was first presented under different themes in chapter four and then summarised. The data was coded and put under the following themes; Why was Religious Studies introduced late to UNZA? Is Religious Studies essential to University education? Is there need to distinguish Religious Studies from Theology? Does Religious Studies indoctrinate? Is Religious Studies multifaith at UNZA? What methods does Religious Studies advocate in its approach? What is the nature of Religious Studies at UNZA? What is the role of Religious Studies at UNZA? and What Lecturer vision for Religious Studies? Quantitative data from the students was analysed by means of descriptive statistics using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Data was then put in frequencies and percentages.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE FINDINGS

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the results of the study. The chapter also discusses the findings of the research. Section one presents views of lecturers and graduates on the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA. While Section two presents data and views of students about Religious Studies at UNZA. Most of these views were obtained from in-depth interviews conducted during the research.

SECTION ONE

The results, discussion and data analysis have been presented using research instruments discussed in Chapter Three.

Why was Religious Studies introduced late at UNZA?

Fr. Flynn is closely associated with the introduction of Religious Studies at UNZA. Asked why there was this delay in the introduction of Religious Studies at UNZA, he had this to say: "The big problem was that the churches asked the university to introduce and offer some form of spiritual course in the university. The university administration was not interested in introducing any form of confessional and spiritual studies in the university" (Flynn, 2006). By the 1970s, however, the Government was confronted with a problem of having most of the lecturers in teacher's colleges being expatriates. The university was thus alerted on the need of training more qualified local personnel. They wanted to introduce a Diploma in Teacher Education where teachers were expected to specialise in specific subject area so that they could replace the expatriates. In 1976, according to Fr. Flynn, the question of Religious Studies and Religious Education resurfaced. How was the university going to Carter for people in Religious Education? Prof. Kelly approached Prof. Shacks who was in charge of Teacher Education then. Prof. Shacks was interested in introducing Religious Studies at

UNZA provided someone was ready to introduce the discipline. Government wanted graduate teachers of Religious Education, Fr. Flynn who was an inspector in charge of colleges in Western Province was approached as a possible candidate. The chief Inspector of Schools put the name forward for consideration.

Prof. Kelly was purposefully selected because of his massive experience as the Dean of the school of Education and later as the Vice Chancellor of the university. Asked to state the aim of Education and the reasons why Religious Studies was introduced late at the University of Zambia especially in the 1970s when he joined the university, he said "the aim of education those days was to promote cultural, intellectual, spiritual and moral development of young people" (Kelly,2006). Education was expected to bring out not only personal development but also national development. Asked why Religions Studies made a slow entry in the university, he said that he was not part of the university at inception but joined the university in 1975. He however said, right from the outset the university was established as a secular institution and therefore did not promote religious values. UNZA had a secular manifesto and senior management followed this same line of thought. The second Vice Chancellor of the university, however, allowed religious expressions within the campus and made rooms available for different congregations and groupings. Religion was however not put in the formal programme of the university. In short religion was not part of the formal programmes (Kelly, 2006).

Prof. Kelly further reported that in the late 1960s and early 1970s there was this radical movement by students influenced by Scientific Socialism and Marxism. The School of Humanities and Social Sciences was more radical. He suspected this could have also delayed the introduction of Religious Studies. Professor Kelly said that the Education Act of 1966 was unique in that one of the subjects mentioned was Religious Education. He further pointed out that the University of Zambia was reluctant to have a Christian Centre within its grounds, possibly because of Marxism and Scientific Socialism but by 1980, there was a local desire

by staff and stakeholders to have Religious Studies and Christian Centre on campus. It also seems the national philosophy of the day also contributed to the delay in the introduction of Religious Studies at the University. The national philosophy then was along the lines of Scientific Socialism but the churches resisted this strongly especially the Catholic league. Because of this strong opposition Dr. Kaunda through UNIP withdrew the Scientific Socialism from the Curriculum

In offering an opinion on why Religious Studies came late as a discipline to the University, Dr. Namafe recalled that initially Religious Studies was underrated just like other fields in the social sciences. At inception Government and the UNZA administration of the day felt other disciplines were more prestigious (Namafe, 2006). Disciplines like Religious Studies were belittled. Prof. Musambachime had this to say; "There was this strong desire or push to have a Religious Studies Unit at UNZA by Dr. Garvey and later ON Fr. Flynn. The UNZA administration then was reluctant because they were very suspicious of the priests who were pushing the agenda" (Musambachime, 2006). They thought the discipline would be an extension of Catholicism. A number of people were apprehensive thinking that Catholicism will be advocated in the University. Under the leadership of Dr. Chishimba, the Board of Studies approved Religious Studies with a bit of re-organisation. At the moment, the fears and negative perceptions have all disappeared and Religious Studies has now found a place in the University Curriculum as noted by Prof. Musambachime.

Prof. Mwauluka was in the University Administration when Religious Studies was introduced at the University of Zambia. He had this to say: "After independence in 1964, UNZA opened in 1966 and the Government wanted to address the most critical areas. The urgent needs were in health, education and liberal education such as Humanities and Social Sciences. Some schools such as Mines, Veterinary and engineering came as late as Religious Studies" (Mwaulukwa, interview 2006). Another reason, for the delay was that at that time when UNZA opened, the number of Secondary Schools was very small and a few of the Schools which

were there were Mission Schools and so there was no deficiency in the Curriculum. As the University population grew, it was felt that other disciplines earlier not considered should be introduced.

Prof. Mwauluka pointed out that Dr Kaunda wanted an ideology to unite all Zambians and was aware of possible consequences of regionalism, tribalism and racism. This led to the resurfacing of socialism and later humanism. Kaunda himself pronounced that he was very religious and from time to time he met church groupings. Professor Mwauluka further said there was a coincidence in the introduction of Religious Studies and the building of the Chapel. Unlike Prof. Kelly, Prof. Mwauluka said Marxism and Scientific Socialism was not a factor in anyway in the delay of Religious Studies. It was just common among over-zealous lecturers and students. Marxism mainly concerned expatriate staff. The introduction of Religious Studies programme was out of the desire by the School of Education to have Religious Studies, hence they submitted the proposals to the senate.

Asked why Religious Studies came late to UNZA, Mr. Mwansa who is a lecturer in Linguistics somewhat agrees with Professor Kelly that the country had gone socialist and so there was little interest by the then UNZA administration. Later, with church involvement, the government started tolerating Religious ideas. Dr. Siamwiza said Religious Studies was introduced late at UNZA because it was mainly confined to mission Schools.

Prof. Siachiwena who has been in the University for 30 years said that the role of the University in national development was to train Personnel for different Sectors of the economy. "At Inception, Religious Studies was not seen as a priority. Preference was given to other disciplines such as History, Mathematics and English among others".

From the interviews, the researcher discovered that most of the lecturers were not too sure why Religious Studies made a slow entry in UNZA Curriculum.

About eight expressed ignorance as to why Religious Studies was introduced late at UNZA. Of the twenty lecturers interviewed, four strongly felt that after independence the country went socialist. There was a heavy influence of Marxism and Scientific Socialism making the environment not conducive for the introduction of studies of a Religious Nature at UNZA. Other lecturers felt that Religious Studies was introduced late to the University because government left most of the Religious Education to the church. However, the government later felt the need for qualified manpower. At independence the civil service was left vacant. The government and UNZA concentrated on secular disciplines such as training social scientists, lawyers, and teachers of key disciplines to fill vacant positions. As far as the university was concerned, Religious Studies was not an issue. Others felt that initially the University and government felt graduates would have no employment opportunities. The problem was the market.

In the light of the above findings I see that Religious Studies came late to the University of Zambia mainly because it was not seen to be as urgently needed as engineering or medicine, which were more obviously linked to national development. Almost certainly, it was also linked to the ideological scene, Scientific Socialism and Marxism in Zambia at that time neither of which had much appreciation of Religious Studies. It was also related to the fact that people associated Religious Education and Religious Studies with denominational teaching which many felt was not appropriate in such an academic setting. However, since the question is historical, it seems worthwhile to ask: how are Religious Studies and Religious Education of significance in UNZA today?

Is Religious Studies essential to University Education?

Prof. Siachiwena noted that Religious Studies were extremely essential to the University.

First all, we have to realise that University Education is changing and should therefore carefully cater for both School leavers and non-School leavers. Religious Studies fits in well with some objectives of the national policy document, *Educating our Future*. We need to produce graduates who have a strong sense of morality, good behaviour and who

have a better sense of civic responsibility. This is one area in which Religious Studies can help (**Siachiwena, 2006**).

Prof. Siachiwena further said Religious Studies was essential as it gives that rare opportunity for teachers and students to reflect on their own life experiences. Asked as to whether Religious Studies was essential to university education, Dr Krishna had this to say; "Religious Studies is very essential to university education because we have to know the different realities and perceptions of life". She further said Religious Studies at the university is better positioned to give a scholarly approach to the study of religion. For instance, as a scholar, she has sometimes been invited by staff in the Religious Studies section to present topics on Hinduism to students. Usually students are keen and interested to learn.

Mr. Mwansa said, with the advent of liberal education, we need also to talk about spiritual matters especially that secularisation seems to be growing roots in most societies. In secularisation there is little time to think about other people. It is important to have Religious Studies so that people are reminded about spirituality. Material wealth alone can not provide happiness. According to Dr. Namafe Religious Studies should have space in University Education because there is no university worthy of the name without considering Religious dimensions. Most of the issues, problems, conflicts and wars that are happening around the world have a religious dimension. Religious Education is an integral component of knowledge and therefore should be taught throughout the School system and Tertiary levels.

Prof. Musambachime noted that Religious Studies and Religious Education are essential because for Zambia's case, we need to understand what is non-Christian. Even for Christianity, we might need an academic study of it. We need to understand other peoples' dimensions of life. There is also need to understand the mushrooming independent churches. We need to explore the Jehovah's Witnesses and generally, all new trends in the field of religion. It is a

very important discipline in university life and curriculum. Dr. Siamwiza said Religious Studies is essential to the University of Zambia and any negative views about it came about because People don't understand what it is all about. The content itself is fit for the University because Religious Studies has relevance for law, history, psychology, sociology, philosophy and so many other disciplines.

From what has been said, we have discovered that Religious Studies is essential to university education. Religious Studies is academic, personal and relates to other disciplines. As Religious Studies grows, there is need to distinguish it from theology. What does UNZA offer?

Is there need to distinguish Religious Studies from Theology?

Since Religious Studies is often confused with Theology, there may be need to clarify the relationship between these disciplines. Fr. Flynn argues that there was need to separate the two at all times. The University of Zambia's platform was Religious Studies and not Theology. Theology is a particular discipline focusing on God while Religious Studies is an academic study of Religion not focusing on God but involves studying different religions from different aspects. Theology has a tendency of indoctrination while Religious Studies is open and critical. The focus at inception and even now should be on the lines of Religious Studies. When studying Religious Studies, you do not start with God, rather one might examine what the word meant 3000 years ago. Fr. Flynn says, he was not interested in Theology and Bible Study but wanted to be academic and not theological.

Prof. Carmody recalled that during the past years, independent efforts were made to introduce a theology department at the University of Zambia but with little reference to the Religious Studies programme that had already been developed. However, this initiative did not succeed. It would appear, however, that the Religious Studies Section is still sometimes confused to being in some way theological. This is because on a number of occasions, the Religious Studies section has been requested by various theological schools or Bible colleges to

evaluate or approve their largely theological programmes with a view to affiliating them. However, the Religious Studies section has always maintained that it is not competent to take such responsibility, which it considers to belong to theological accrediting agencies or Universities.

Prof. Siachiwena strongly feels theology should not be given any room because it is meant for the clergy. People whose objective is to convert others are the ones who should be studying theology. Religious Studies is meant to educate and highlight different issues of educational and religious nature. He however said, there should be a way of harmonising some course objectives and content so that different societal needs are met and taken care of. Professor Siachiwena states that Theology cannot afford to be neutral while Religious Studies can. Lastly, he said the University should maintain Religious Studies but there is need to expand on its role so that it can perform a variety of functions other than just teaching.

Fr. Flynn recalled that efforts were made to move Religious Studies to the philosophy department. The philosophy department however, was not keen to expand towards the direction of Religious Studies. The discipline remained in the School of Education under the department of Languages and Social Sciences.

So far, from the discussion above, it seems that it is important to distinguish Religious Studies from Theology and also to find out if there is something unique and different about Religious Studies.

How is Religious Studies different or Unique?

Mr Mwansa, a lecturer in the School of Education, who has a keen interest in religious issues and developments said Religious Studies as an academic discipline is not unique. The uniqueness only comes in its content and objectives. The objectives of Religious Studies might be diverse in that it involves other disciplines such as philosophy, sociology and psychology to mention a few. The agenda may also be different in that students interact with religious materials.

Their attitudes might be different to those of other students. Mr. Mwansa also felt that Religious Studies at UNZA is multi-faith in its orientation since he has seen different lecturers offer different courses starting with Bantu Religions, Christianity and Islam among others. On indoctrination, he felt, depending on the approach, students can easily be indoctrinated but so far there were no clear-cut cases of indoctrination because of the rationale of courses at UNZA, and because those who teach Religious Studies are professionally trained.

Dr. Namafe observed that Religious Studies and Religious Education is to some extent a discipline that at its best, those who teach should live what they preach. There is an aspect of morality that possibly cannot be found in other disciplines. It is also unique as it teaches individuals to recognise the supernatural force that operates in life. In some countries, those who teach religion feel that they are above others. Asked as to whether Religious Studies is unique in any way, Prof. Musambachime said the uniqueness might be in the moral and ethical issues, which might be absent in other disciplines. Generally, it is similar to other disciplines since it follows the general university guidelines. After all, Religious Studies and Religious Education has been there even in our traditional societies but may have appeared in different jackets, such as ceremonies, riddles, proverbs, and general way of life. It is also unique as it gives an opportunity of exploring new religious perspectives and dimensions which are not yet explored.

When asked whether Religious Studies was unique in any way, Fr. Flynn pointed out that: "Religious Studies was not different from other university disciplines but he acknowledged that all disciplines are unique in their own respect. It gives room for both staff and students to reflect on what is being studied. Religious Studies to a large extent is associated with morality and practice" (Flynn 2006). Just like any other university discipline, at the end of the course, there should be change in the learners. The expectation is that at the end of a course, the students should be affected positively in different domains of knowledge.

The unique aspect of Religious Studies is that it develops through processes. It begins as a process of individual thinking. It answers certain questions other disciplines can not answer especially spiritual aspects of life, as noted by Dr. Siamwiza. There are also certain aspects of Religious Studies that are not unique. For instance, there are a lot of history topics that overlap with Religious Studies. In fact, some time back there were suggestions that the Department of History should absorb Religious Studies. But because the history staff thought Religious Studies was Bible knowledge they were reluctant to merge. Dr. Siamwiza said Religious Studies as he knows it, covers a lot of interesting areas and that the Syllabus or Curriculum is broad. Though he says the newly introduced groups of religious movements need to be given space as well. Prof. Siachiwena said Religious Studies is unique and different as it touches on our spiritual life. It is also unique because it is related to our own culture. A lot of parallels can be drawn between the two. Religious Studies is also unique as different issues and topics can be compared in different religions.

Most of the lecturers interviewed agreed that Religious Studies is unique because it deals with very fundamental beliefs and values of people. Dr. Simuchimba said, "these beliefs are deep seated and they cut across humanity" (Simuchimba 2006). He was however careful and noted that to a large extent Religious Studies is just like any other discipline in social sciences. Mr. Haambokoma and Mrs Ziwa said Religious Studies was unique and special because it gives a full package in the field of education as it touches on all dimensions of life. It does not only focus on religion per se but also deals with sociology, psychology and philosophy among other disciplines. Its nature is multidisciplinary. Mr. Hambulo said Religious Studies is different and unique because it deals with an arena that has remained fascinating for centuries in that some issues discussed are mysterious. A number of lecturers strongly felt that Religious Studies was not different in anyway but followed the procedure and criteria of all other university courses.

Some lecturers especially in Natural Sciences, Engineering and Agriculture feel those who do Religious Studies become better Christians and adherents. They feel there is no distinction between Religious Education and Religious Studies since both are tailored to enhance morality. Interestingly three were not too sure about how Religious Studies was unique or different. They needed to do a bit of research first.

The graduates interviewed revealed that there was something unique in Religious Studies as it focuses on special issues of life and death. Some felt Religious Studies were just like any other discipline and there was nothing unique about the discipline. Others noted that Religious Studies is different from other disciplines since it dwells on fundamental beliefs of different people and sometimes students get attracted to certain religions as they study and explore. All those interviewed disputed the fact that Religious Studies can be indoctrinational. Graduates also added that courses offered in Religious Studies have a sociological, psychological and generally a social dimension which help students explore different spheres of knowledge.

Based on the findings, it appears that Religious Studies at UNZA is unique because it deals with more fundamental life issues like the mystery of life and aspects of morality. On the other hand, it follows the normal academic procedures as well.

What methods are used by Religious Studies at UNZA?

In any discussion of Religious Studies, the issue of methods used is of importance. We shall therefore discuss it at this point. The question above was not only subjected to those involved in teaching Religious Studies but to all lecturers involved in the study. Should methods in other disciplines differ in any way to those used in Religious Studies?

All lecturers interviewed in the Religious Studies section indicated that their main approach in teaching Religious Studies was phenomenological. Religious Studies

promotes an enquiring, critical and sympathetic approach to the study of religion, especially in its individual and corporate expression in the contemporary world. There is a lot of interaction and participation of lecturers and students. In some cases the lecture method is key but carefully used to take aboard different views of students. Prof. Musambachime observed that only methods that are most effective to communicate to students should be encouraged. Methods that allow students to analyse and evaluate are appropriate. Students are also expected to bring out ideas. Methods that encourage cohesion and rote learning should be discouraged but a scholarly approach should be encouraged.

Dr Krishna pointed out that the methods employed should be those that will give an opportunity for personal reflection. The dimension of commitment was also there but not as a way of persuading students to have absolute religious Stances but to allow them to be critical, evaluative and appreciate other peoples religious stances. Prof. Siachiwena is of the view that Religious Studies should be taught as a discipline to anyone who wants to understand religion without necessarily converting them. Those teaching it should also be sensitive to different or divergent views from different religions. Teachers trained should be given an open approach. Dr. Siamwiza felt that the method appropriate for teaching Religious Studies should be educational. This approach should strive to impart knowledge rather than to convert.

Graduates were asked about the method Religious Studies advocated. Most recalled that lecturers in Religious Studies used the lecture method and in a few cases fused in the question and answer method. The students were encouraged to initiate discussions during tutorials. Most confusing concepts were usually clarified during tutorials.

The researcher wanted to know if Religious Studies lecturers experience conflict in preparing students for the teaching of syllabuses 2044 and 2046 at secondary school level. The question of conflict in preparing students for 2044 and 2046 was directed to only Religious Studies lecturers. Religious Education is an

optional subject in the senior section of secondary school in Zambia. There are two syllabuses available for the student, thus 2044 and 2046. Varied responses were given but generally the majority of the lecturers feel there is a conflict. The conflict is mainly in the perception that the 2044 syllabus is viewed as being for the Catholics while 2046 is viewed to be for Protestants. The possible suggestions were that the two groups needed to sit down and identify common themes and, may be, come up with a new syllabus where the two groups will feel comfortable. To a large extent this might be difficult as there is some adamancy in the players. Another conflict that was revealed by lecturers was that In-service students like holding on to the syllabus they were first introduced to while in college. Another conflict that was mentioned was in the area of methodology and content, which the two syllabuses use, there was need to revisit them.

A minority of the lecturers felt there was no conflict as far as they were concerned because lecturers are neutral. It is easy to make use of 2044 and 2046 without any conflict here at the University of Zambia. Dr. Simuchimba said "We present the two in the best academic way possible without showing any bias or inclination. As such at UNZA the conflict does not exist, but in the Secondary Schools the conflict is there and that is the reason why the Ministry of Education through the Curriculum Development Centre suggested that the two syllabuses should be merged.

In Religious Studies at UNZA, a form of the phenomenological method is used whereby students are encouraged to reflect on their own religious experience in the light of other religions and studies.

What is the nature of Religious Studies at UNZA?

When asked, Fr. Flynn recalled that when he started the programme at UNZA, he was very much aware of the latest development of Religious Education in Britain. The British system went through different phases, from the courses on how to teach the Bible to 'Educational' approach. Teaching the Bible became very boring

and so a new approach meant that Religious Education should be an educational subject. Fr. Flynn said the original plan was to have a discipline which was educational and multi-faith in its orientation. All religions were to be explored including Bantu (Indigenous) Religions. The ecumenical approach was out of date. The university approach needed to look at religions and learn something from Christianity, Islam, Bantu Religions and Hinduism. At inception only these four religions were taught.

Fr. Flynn said at the inception of Religious Studies, every department in the University was supposed to produce its own objectives and syllabus. The then Vice Chancellor was so impressed with the objectives of Religious Studies that he asked all disciplines in the University to prepare their objectives in the same way Religious Studies Unit had done. Religious Studies section had prepared their objectives following principles of educational approach. This meant that UNZA recognised that Religious Studies was fully educational.

Asked on the nature of Religious Studies at UNZA, Fr. Flynn said the courses introduced at UNZA were based on academic approach to teaching of religion. His first task was to create syllabuses for teacher training colleges. At that time, examinations for the teacher colleges were set by the University of Zambia. Mr. Baker who served in the Permanent Secretary's Office contributed a great deal in making Religious Studies and Religious Education more educational since most churches wanted some form of Theology and not Religious Studies. Mr Baker gave a lot of suggestions and support in development of the first Religious Studies programme at the University of Zambia.

Carmody (2006) says in concord with its main objective of supporting the Religious Education programmes in the schools, the Religious Studies programme at the University of Zambia has always attempted to be strongly ecumenical and interfaith in its approach. While it has tended to have a highly Christian focus, there have been progressive movement to include and expand materials from faiths like Islam and Hinduism. Undoubtedly Christianity gets more space on the

curriculum than other traditions, but there is no attempt to teach Christianity as exclusively true just like Britain as noted by Prof. Carmody. Moreover, one of the pivotal marks of the university's approach has been the central role, which the study of African Religion assumed in a context where in the past pupils and teachers have tended to downgrade knowledge from traditional teachings. Such study also adopted a much-neglected historical dimension (Flynn, 2004:22-33). UNZA Religious Studies programme has focused heavily on the psychological and social dynamics of conversion in terms of moving from some form of traditional religion to some brand of Christianity or Islam, which has been so central to Zambia and much of Africa over the past century.

Asked about his views on the nature of Religious Studies at UNZA, Professor Kelly said Religious Studies is not just about academics but it is associated with morality and practice. He said Religious Studies is an academic discipline while Religious Education is communicated in schools. Prof. Mwafuluka said that Religious Studies offered at UNZA should blend with Religious Education in schools and should also be seen to be relevant to Zambians. He advocates Religious Studies that has been inculturated while maintaining high academic standards. Dr Krishna said she liked Religious Studies at UNZA because it is multi-faith in its orientation. All major world religions are given space. She however made an appeal that we must present these religions in the most truthful and scholastic manner without any bias. She gave an example on Hinduism that has only one ultimate God and not many gods as portrayed in some sections. We do not need to look down or demean other religions.

Prof. Siachiwena said Religious Studies need to review the curriculum so that common trends that have resurfaced can be accommodated. We need to develop critical minds that can analyse issues religiously. University Religious Studies should not only train teachers but should be open to the wider society so that those who want to understand religious issues can learn and study while maintaining the academic approach. They do not necessarily need to be

teachers. For instance, Pastors, Priests, staff of theological Colleges can come and study Religious Studies.

When consulted on the rationale for different courses in Religious Studies, UNZA lecturers revealed that all courses in the University had different rationales. The courses in Religious Studies are supposed to introduce candidates to the challenging and varied nature of religion and to the ways in which this is reflected on religious and non-religious responses to the moral issues. They also said that the rationale was also to enable candidates to recognise and appreciate the contribution of religion in different spheres of life while upholding high academic standards. Courses also enable students to be open-minded. Most of the courses in Religious Studies were designed for teachers who are going to teach Religious Education in Schools. Hence, they broaden their understanding in the field of religion and methodology.

Lecturers were asked why enrolment had grown in Religious Studies since its introduction at the University of Zambia. Fr. Flynn said he had only five students at inception. These numbers have since grown such that as at 2006 Religious Studies had close to one thousand students inclusive of distance students. Most lecturers felt that the high enrolment of students in Religious Studies was as a result of the perception by students that Religious Studies was an easy subject option and also that students have realised that Religious Studies is not theological but academic. This is evidenced in the research where half of those interviewed gave the above responses.

Other lecturers especially from schools other than Education felt that generally, the student population had exponentially grown in the university and it meant that all courses had also grown accordingly in terms of enrolment. Some felt that the Directorate of Distance Education had limited course options thereby putting pressure on courses in Religious Studies and hence experiencing high enrolment. Lecturers also revealed that students who had a Christian background and also because of the declaration of Zambia as a Christian Nation felt it proper that they

should enrol in Religious Studies. One of the Interviewees said he was not too sure why the enrolment in Religious Studies were high.

It seems all the people interviewed agree that the nature of Religious Studies at UNZA is multi-faith, academic and interdisciplinary. They also agree that Religious Studies should have space in the University.

What is the role of Religious Studies at UNZA?

So far we have discussed the origin and nature of religious studies at UNZA as well as aspects of its methodology and uniqueness, we now focus on the role which Religious Studies in the University of Zambia's academic programme plays.

Prof. Carmody noted that in line with the broad objectives, Religious Studies is concerned with the promotion of skills and knowledge linked closely to the preparation of Religious Education teachers, about fifteen hundred of whom have graduated since inception. However, this has never been seen to be enough especially by the staff of the Religious Studies programme. Even in its initial mandate, the Religious Studies section also had a mission to provide the university with a scholarly approach to religion. In line with this, Religious Studies at UNZA has struggled to be open to the realities of various forms of religion. Yet it has also been concerned with the preparation of men and women for life. This challenge is more demanding in that education in Zambia, like education elsewhere, has tended to abandon the holistic dimension in its attempt to meet the needs of the technostucture. Thus the pedagogical task at UNZA should include concern for society in terms of contributing to the vision for national development (Mwanza, 2005:10-11).

Prof. Carmody further reflected that in order to be effective in this wider domain, Religious Studies staff and students have always been alert to the need to be in dialogue with schools from other disciplines so that the social dimension of university studies is not isolated from intellectual, moral, and social issues. In its educational concern to educate holistically and in a manner that is open to the

possibility of being transformative, Religious Studies and Education acknowledge, among other things, the importance of individual freedom as well as religion's role in the creation of the kind of society that supports such values as those of human rights and justice.

Prof. Kelly wants to see Religious Studies that is of high academic standard and should be able to promote research. The research should be grounded in addressing the real issues in Zambian society while spearheading the training of qualified and competent teachers who will disseminate moral and educational views for national development. He added that the department should encourage a lot of research especially in the field of HIV/AIDS and Religious perspectives because HIV/AIDS was one of the biggest challenges Zambian society faces. It would be more interesting if strategies and interventions are made using the frontiers of religion, as religion has a positive moral impact. UNZA is better placed to advocate this since it has a bearing on larger society, through research, publication and discussions. It also occupies a central place in Zambian society. He further said that Religious Studies should continue to be academic and position itself to promote scholarship and should be grounded in the realities of the people and should include aspects of traditional African Religion.

Prof. Kelly further said that Religious Studies at UNZA should continue to accommodate and have adequate space for other world religions. As a way of enhancing its growth the staff should begin to think of embarking on introducing PhD programmes so that academic research is encouraged.

Mr. Mwansa suggested that "we need to design our courses in such a way that students should be helped by Religious Studies to contribute to national development and we also need to examine clearly what religion does to people's lives. We further need to examine as to whether religion will survive in this advent of secularisation".



Dr. Namafe said that although the Unit has some courses on Bantu Religions, more should be done to accommodate a lot of indigenous beliefs so that Religious Studies at UNZA is more relevant to local education. There should be a deliberate policy by the sections to therefore promote research in this regard. He wished the section would offer more on the indigenous Religions in Zambia. In general, he was impressed with the Religious Studies section and was in full support of the section being transformed into the Department. The role of Religious Studies should remain with the mission of the university. The role should be that of training, research, consultancy and meeting the objectives and rationale of different courses in the discipline. The mission should be well defined and then the role will be acclaimed. Members of staff should not hold their roles dogmatically.

Prof. Siachiwena further urged the section to market itself. For instance, does the society at large know about the Religious Studies section at UNZA? Have we fully defined our role? There is need to take a lead for instance to explain problematic religious issues, for instance on the Shiites and Sunnis? Is the war between Israel and Palestine a religious one? We need to write and publish, we need to take part in discussion programmes on radio and television. The staff should not only teach but should take other roles as well. Religious Studies staff should also invite experts to explain issues and topics that are of paramount interest to students. Also the students we teach should become ambassadors so that they can market Religious Studies to the wider Society. Also need to do market research (survey), then harmonise it with our own objectives and content. Dr. Siamwiza also suggested that Religious Studies should be broadened to include recent developments, current issues and contemporary issues. Religious Studies has played a major role in shaping religion. The role of producing teachers for high schools should be maintained. The role of nurturing personalities should also be maintained though it might not be intended. Religious Studies students should be encouraged to study History and Philosophy as the three disciplines are similar. Most students who do History also do Religious Studies because of similarities of issues discussed.

Asked whether UNZA encouraged research, Prof. Mwauluka said that in the early years there was a deliberate policy to encourage research. There was a research committee which consisted of staff from different schools. There were also other research programmes under the Staff Development Office. But along the way the system broke down especially in the accounts and budgeting department and the vote for research eventually disappeared. He further said there was little or limited research in the field of religion but now time has come to start asking provoking questions in the area of religion. He further says, "since the environment has now changed, we should begin to see systematic research in religion". In those days, there were few Muslims, Hindus, no Bahais among others but now all these religions are impacting on the lives of the people of Zambia and Zambian culture.

Dr. Namafe said research is very fundamental. Research enables people to develop themselves and their respective countries. He particularly said research was needed in indigenous religious affiliation. There is need to develop and interpret religious approaches that may have been pushed aside. There is also need for innovative research. Mr. Mwansa said he has not come across much, but if the research is there, then it has not been published. We need more publications on methodology of teaching Religious Studies and Religious Education especially in the multi-faith approach. This aspect is very important because a spiritual dimension is needed in the life of a student. Students need to have an open and critical mind.

Prof. Musambachime lamented that Zambia is still a virgin area in terms of research. To start with, we have very few Zambians who have done Doctoral Studies in the area of Religious Studies and also those who hold Masters degrees. There are a lot of areas that need exploration. We need more research on different missions that were established in Zambia. We need to look at different religious aspects of these missionaries especially on the Copperbelt province. Works of the Watchtower and their expansion need to be investigated.

We need to investigate issues related to the clergy. Did they join as a vocation or they just wanted jobs? Is it true that the clergy live a double life style?

Fr. Flynn felt that research is a very neglected area in Zambia and there is need to do more. We need to explore more especially on different belief systems for different tribes in Zambia. Genuine research especially on the Bantu, for instance, where did the Bantu Botatwe come from? Why is marriage central to the Bembas and Tongas. These could be fertile areas of research. Dr. Siamwiza said there is limited research and publication in Zambia. In the field of religion he has only seen works from the Catholic Scholars. Very little is written on other Church organisations. There is need to investigate the role of the Church in independence, upholding human rights, gender aspects of religion. In short, there is a lot missing. Prof. Siachiwena also agrees by saying ; "generally there is a poor research culture in Zambia. Most schools and disciplines lack research and academic leadership". There is need to re-organise and develop research in the University. We need to invest a reasonable amount of effort in research for it is the basis of any strong academic institution like UNZA. He cited for example, the Directorate of Distance Education where they are re-organising and doing ground research on problematic areas. There is also need to review the content of most courses from time to time. There is also this need to develop quality assurance by having well planned and organised courses by developing a team spirit in teaching.

Dr. Krishna said we lack books on religion and need more publications especially here in Zambia. There are a number of publications in India in the field of religion. As a way of contributing to religion at UNZA, the History department is about to introduce a course on Colonialism and Religion in Africa. If this course is well implemented, it will bring some changes.

Generally, most lecturers said there was limited research in terms of religion in Zambia. The Catholic Church has tried to do some research even though some studies were mainly on Catholicism in the country. Some lecturers, however, said

some Catholic Scholars have done very objective studies in the domain of Education and Religion in Zambia. The study also revealed that Dr. Cheyeka had done some research in areas of 'Politics and Religion in Zambia', Dr Simuchimba on 'Religion and Education in Zambia', Mrs Ziwa on 'Abortion and Religion in Zambia', among others. *Religion and Education in Zambia* is one book which provided research for Zambian researchers. The lecturers were however quick to mention that this area has great potential in terms of research. One of the lecturers said, "There are few and limited research that had been done in the field of Religion in Zambia. Professor B. Carmody, J. Komakoma, Fr P. Henriot, Fr. Henze have all laid the foundation and so we need people to rise to the occasion and explore this area. As seen above, most of the published literature available in religion in the Zambian context is written by foreign scholars but the locals have not done much. Since the university has now started providing funds for research Dr. Simuchimba and Cheyeka encouraged members to write proposals of a religious nature so that they can access the funds and contribute to research in religion.

Most of the graduates felt that the UNZA environment does not encourage research. Those who did a majors in Religious Studies said that they did research in RS 401/2. They encouraged the section to encourage students to do research as early as first year. Most of the graduates feel Religious Studies has a good course option as it can enable a student work in different sectors of the economy and industry. One of the students working for Barclays Bank said, "I got a job here because of the good grades I obtained in Religious Studies courses and moreover I am more sympathetic and considerate when dealing with customers". She further said that the Religious Studies courses were very organised, systematic and hierarchical.

It is clear from the discussion above that Religious Studies does indeed provide precise services. Apart from training high school teachers of Religious Education, it has also helped in developing a moral dimension for young people. Religious Studies has also helped to promote good citizenship. It has helped in developing

good habits as a way of lessening confusion in the society and country at large. Religious Studies also provides a platform for people to be open to the idea of having different religions, which should co-exist. Religious Studies has however, been challenged to do more in research and publication.

Are Issues of multi-faith and indoctrination addressed in Religious Studies?

The researcher also wanted to know how issues of indoctrination were dealt with at inception. Prof. Kelly indicated that indoctrination was not an issue because the courses were designed by professionals and were meant for an academic discipline, which is open, critical and inclusive.

Lecturers were asked what they felt about indoctrination and Religious Studies at the University of Zambia. Most lecturers said the section should always guard against indoctrination. Care should be given especially that Zambia has been declared a Christian Nation. This declaration is somehow an enemy to Religious Studies at UNZA. UNZA should however make strides in accommodating different Religions so that the discipline remains academic. Prof. Musambachime strongly felt Religious Studies at UNZA does not indoctrinate basically because of the broadness of issues covered. Indoctrination does not come in anyway at University level. Religious Studies is very important, it is being integrated in our thought processes and also helps us to reconcile our own understanding of God within our cosmology.

UNZA lecturers were asked as to whether issues of multi-faith were adequately addressed in Religious Studies. Lecturers revealed that they were aware that the Religious Studies at UNZA does not only teach one Religion but all major World Religions are given consideration. It is also inclusive to all students with different religious orientation and beliefs. Others revealed that students with different Religious affiliation and traditions studied together without any conflict whatsoever. In the academic study of religion, issues of openness, and neutrality are critical. Some lecturers said that UNZA Religious Studies does not

indoctrinate because lecturers try by all means to describe religions and not convert students. Moreover, different dimensions are given considerations as well as openness to differing views. Religion is studied from the point of view of adherents. UNZA Religious Studies programme has nearly focused on psychological and social dynamics dimensions. Lecturers also reflected that RS is an academic discipline and therefore is open, critical and inclusive.

However, two of the lecturers felt that Religious Studies indoctrinates, as it can not afford to be neutral. They feel it is just another way of evangelising. They, however said studies that promote some form of morality and spirituality should be encouraged. It was also interesting to learn that about two of the twenty lecturers revealed that they were not too sure as to whether issues of multi-faith nature of the Zambian society were given consideration. The response in general suggests that University Religious studies is seen to address issues of multi-faith even though more could perhaps be done in the area of integrating other World Religions other than Christianity.

Are there areas of interaction between the Religious Studies Section and Ministry of Education?

There is limited interaction between the RS section and the Ministry of Education. Consultation is also limited. The only clear linkage is that the Religious Studies section just like other disciplines in the School of Education trains Secondary School teachers for Religious Education for the Ministry. The section also organises consultative group meetings with associate colleges where different issues concerning the developments and new trends in Religious Education are discussed. However, some individuals, have been widely consulted and have participated in different issues concerning Religious Education in Schools. They have worked with the Curriculum Development Centre and also offered advice to ZARET. The section and the Ministry should explore areas of common concern where they can work together. Suggestions were that the Ministry should not invite individuals to represent the section instead should write through the School or the Section so that the deliberations are inclusive. There were also

suggestions that the Ministry should employ a qualified specialist in the field of religion, as this will enhance the growth in the area of Religion and Education in Zambia.

The future of Religious Studies at UNZA

Fr. Flynn was asked about his vision of Religious Studies. He basically had two visions, firstly he wanted Religious Studies, which is sensitive to the idea that it is not a faith based department but should be neutral, open in trying to understand other religions and secondly that Bantu or Indigenous religion is given full due respect. It should not be looked down upon but develop a very strong emphasis of dealing with African Religions.

Prof. Kelly wondered why up to now Religious Studies was not a department just like philosophy. Naturally, he says the department is supposed to be under the School of Humanities because Religious Studies is a social science but modalities could be worked out so that it remains in the School of Education. Most of the lecturers especially from the Religious Studies section expressed the need for expanding and becoming a department so that the vision can be more clearer in terms of planning and being autonomous. One of the lecturers said we need to go beyond just training manpower but should initiate short courses that are community based as a way of responding to modern trends in Education.

Ms Milingo said Religious Studies needs to balance its content, as Christianity is given more space, otherwise the very foundations of Religious Studies as an academic discipline will be defeated since we want a discipline that is really educational and representative. Carmody (2006:298) urges policy makers to take into account the democratic nature of the Zambian society and so there is need for a more inclusive programme and syllabus. "Religious Studies members need to seriously start thinking of introducing a course on specific religions like Hinduism, Islam among others just like at other International Universities". The scholars in Religious Studies should strive to advance understanding of religion in

the ways that are logically, nationally and internationally significant in the field of scholarship.

Some of the interviewees said as part of its vision the Religious Studies section should start thinking of expanding in terms of introducing more courses while managing and controlling the enrolment. Also there is need to expand on the number of staff in the department so as to easily handle the increasing numbers of students. They further suggested that there should be an expanded number of courses running at the same time unlike putting some courses on hold when they can be on offer every semester.

Some lecturers suggested that some aspects of Hinduism and Zoroastrianism are supposed to be reviewed and made more relevant to Religious Studies. Another vision envisaged by lecturers is that members of staff were supposed to upgrade themselves by enrolling for PhD and to produce a lot of publications of high academic standing. Students who graduate at undergraduate level should be encouraged to advance by applying for Masters programmes. Another suggestion was that the Religious Studies section should further expand in terms of facilities i.e. more books in the section library, computers, furniture and other accessories.

Other lecturers suggested that the Religious Studies section should introduce a course on morality and spirituality, which will be compulsory to all students in first year. Most graduates suggested that lecturers in RS and the School of Education should do more to encourage students to do majors in RS or take RS courses as they build a person to be rational and all round.

The graduates also made passionate appeals to the School of Education and University in general, to make a proper and guided orientation to students in first year so that the confusion is lessened. Students need to know the direction and which Religious Studies courses to do and the general information on course combinations.

There were very strong recommendations that Religious Studies should remain an academic, phenomenological, philosophical and educational discipline so that its overall development will be in terms of promoting the advancement in understanding religion in Zambia especially in research and scholarship.

SECTION TWO

How Students View Religious Studies at UNZA

The student questionnaire was therefore designed to find out their opinion on the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA.

Table1: Is Religious Studies a good programme option?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
YES	176	88.0	88.0	88.0
NO	24	12.0	12.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

Out of 200 respondents 176 (88%) said Religious Studies (RS) was a good course option and 24 (12%) said RS was not a good course option as revealed in the Table above. The results indicate that most respondents are for the view that Religious Studies is very important for University Education.

Any University course should allow students to explore and be critical. A course should be inclusive and give opportunity for students to express their views. Students should be able to exercise their academic liberty. It must meet the educational rationale without any compromise on excellency.

Table 2: Why did you take Religious Studies in First Year?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
It is easier	28	14.0	14.0	14.0
I followed RE in High school	72	36.0	36.0	50.0
I like Religion	100	50.0	50.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

The researcher was interested in finding out the actual reasons why students opt for Religious Studies in first year. As student's they have different reasons why they opt for different courses especially as they enter university.

Table 2 reveals that 28 (14%) entered for Religious Studies in first year because it is seen to be easy, 72 (36%) entered for Religious Studies in first year because they had done Religious Education (RE) in High School and 100 (50%) entered for Religious Studies because they like Religion. The results suggest that most of those who take Religious Studies courses in first year do so out of their love for religion and because they did RE at high school. As a matter of fact, most of them come with a religious inclination and conviction.

Table 3: Are Religious Studies Courses as Academic as other Courses?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
YES	191	96.0	96.0	96.0
NO	09	4.0	4.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

191 (96%) indicated that Religious Studies courses are as academic as other courses while 09 (4%) said that Religious Studies courses are not as academic as other courses.

Table 4: Are Religious Studies Lecturers as good as other Lecturers?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
YES	183	92.0	92.0	92.0
NO	17	8.0	8.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

The results in Table 4 show that 183 (92%) agree that Religious Studies lecturers were as good as other lecturers, 17 (8%) said that Religious Studies lecturers are not as good as others. In fact the study also revealed that Religious Studies lecturers were more considerate and fair in dealing with students.

Table 5: Are Religious Studies Lecturers more Available than other Lecturers?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
YES	149	75.0	75.0	75.0
NO	45	22.5	22.5	97.5
NO RESPONSE	06	2.5	2.5	100.5
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

The results in Table 5 reveal that 149 (75%) felt Religious Studies lecturers were more available to students than other lecturers 45 (22.5%) feel Religious Studies lecturers are not as available as other lecturers and 6 (2.5%) did not respond.

Table 6: Are Religious Studies Library facilities better than other Courses?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
YES	157	79.0	79.0	79.0
NO	30	15.0	15.0	94.0
NO RESPONSE	13	6.0	6.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

The results above (Table 6) reveal that 157 (79%) agreed that RS offers very good library facilities, 30 (15%) feel RS library facilities are not better than other courses and 13 (6%) did not respond

Table7: Are Religious Studies courses more relevant to life than others?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
YES	154	77.0	77.0	77.0
NO	46	23.0	23.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

The results in Table 7 above show that 154 (77%) felt that Religious Studies courses are more relevant to life than others, 46 (23%) feel RS courses are just like other courses.

Table 8: Which RS Courses did you like most?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
RS 101/102	14	7.0	7.0	7.0
RS 201/202	74	37.0	37.0	44.0
RS 311/312	42	21.0	21.0	65.0
RS 335	30	15.0	15.0	80.0
OTHERS	40	20.0	20.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

RS 101/2 are basically courses which focus on introduction to different world religions, RS 201/2 focus on Bantu religions (indigenous), RS 311/2 deals with the impact of world religions on Africa and RS 335 deals with introduction to Scriptures of world religions. These courses highlighted are compulsory to both majors and minors.

Reasons why students liked other courses more than others were varied. Some liked the content of particular courses, others liked the way course lecturers handled the students and courses, others found some courses to be more relevant to life than others, others said some recommended course materials were not easy to comprehend with, among other reasons. The results in table 8 above indicate that out of the 200 respondents, 14 (7%) like RS 101/2, 74 (37%) like RS 201/2, 42 (21%) like RS 311/2, 30 (15%) like RS 335 and 40 (20%) liked other courses

Table 9: Which Religious Studies Courses did you least like?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
RS 101/102	98	49.0	49.0	49.0
RS 201/202	12	6.0	6.0	55.0
RS 311/312	31	16.0	16.0	71.0
RS 335	35	17.0	17.0	88.0
OTHERS	24	12.0	12.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

The results in the table above seem to suggest that out of the 200 respondents 98(49%) do not like RS 101/2, 12 (6%) do not like RS 201/2, 31 (16%) do not like RS 311/2, 35 (17%) do not like RS 335 and that 24 (12%) do not like other courses.

Table 10: Are Religious Studies essential to University Education?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Per cent	Cumulative Per cent
YES	200	100.0	100.0	100.0
NO	0	0.0	0.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100	100.0	

In view of the objectives of the study it was important to find out the feelings of students on whether Religious Studies should have space in the University Curriculum. Table 10 reveals that all the respondents said Religious Studies was essential to University Education and should have space.

Table 11: Does Religious Studies contribute to students becoming more tolerant to other People’s Religious stances?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
YES	175	88.0	88.0	88.0
NO	25	12.0	12.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

The question of Religious Studies having certain effects on students was explored. For instance, if students are exposed to other religions, will their opinions somewhat be different? Are they going to be more receptive and tolerant? Table 11 shows that of the 200 respondents 175 (88%) feel that Religious Studies contributed to students becoming more tolerant to other people’s religious stances. 25 (12%) feel that Religious Studies did not in anyway contribute to students becoming more tolerant to other people’s religious stances.

Table 12: Does Religious Studies promote indoctrination?

	Frequency	Percentage	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
YES	8	4.0	4.0	4.0
NO	192	96.0	96.0	100.0
TOTAL	200	100.0	100.0	

The issue of indoctrination is very cardinal especially when dealing with the territory that involves religion. Table 12 reveals that 8 (4%) said Religious Studies promoted indoctrination while 192 (96%) strongly feel that Religious Studies does not indoctrinate in any way. These results suggest that Religious

Studies is a proper academic discipline, which should not be questioned or doubted. It meets all educational criteria.

CONCLUSION

The findings from the lecturers, graduates and students in general revealed that Religious Studies at UNZA is, and has always endeavoured, to be primarily academic instead of being confessional in approach. It is multi-faith, interdisciplinary, and serves to provide Religious Education teachers to Zambia. As a university discipline, it strives to ensure that UNZA's education is holistic and a true preparation for life in the Zambian society today. Religious Studies has also been challenged to expand its role and also to do more in the area of research and publication.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study as well as the conclusions drawn from the research findings. Recommendations are also made, based on the findings obtained.

Summary

The study was principally conducted at the University of Zambia, Great East Road Campus. The study involved twenty lecturers, two hundred students and fifteen graduates. The graduates were drawn from Kafue, Lusaka and Kabwe. The objective of the study was to find out the nature and role of Religious Studies offered at the University of Zambia. Data was primarily collected through interviews. Surveys (questionnaires) were also used in collecting data from the students.

Most lecturers are looking forward to a time when the Religious Studies section will be transformed into a department. This will enable it to expand in a number of areas concerning courses, staff, equipment and resources. There is limited research on Religion in Zambia though it is an area of great potential as revealed in this study.

Lecturers, graduates and students held the view that University of Zambia Religious Studies does not indoctrinate. Most lecturers do not know why Religious Studies was introduced late at the University of Zambia. A few felt this was because of heavy influence of Marxism and Scientific Socialism. It is also felt that UNZA had a secular outlook and put emphasis on addressing critical areas at its inception. Others said there was a lot of suspicion because of the Catholic priests who were spearheading the initiative. This issue was discussed

in a historical context and so different people gave varied responses. It is not easy to say exactly why Religious Studies was introduced late to UNZA.

High enrolment at UNZA in Religious Studies is as a result of perceptions of students that Religious Studies is an easy option as revealed by lecturers. Students also think that it is proper for a Christian to do Religious Studies. Students have also realised that Religious Studies is not theology but academic and generally the enrolment levels at UNZA has grown in almost all disciplines. Lecturers, Graduates and Student find Religious Studies to be unique because it is not just academic, but it is also about understanding beliefs and associated with morality and practice. It appears that apart from the reasons given for the current trends in enrolment, high enrolment is also associated with the general university policy on enrolment. The enrolment in almost all courses has generally gone up.

The major method of teaching advocated in Religious Studies is the phenomenology approach, where religion is described from the point of view of the adherent. Interaction, participatory and lecture methods are employed as well. Lecturers generally felt the issues of multi-faith are addressed in Religious Studies by being inclusive, academic and open to different views where students of different religious affiliation study together.

The majority of the students who enter for Religious Studies courses enrol for a minor and not for a major. Female students are slightly more than male students in most of the Religious Studies courses. Generally, most of the students feel Religious Studies is just like any other university discipline and meets the academic and educational standards. Most students take Religious Studies as a course option because generally they like religion and did Religious Education in high School.

Students view Religious Studies lecturers, courses and facilities as being more available, relevant and accessible than other courses. Religious Studies has

better library services and facilities than most courses at the University of Zambia. Most Religious Studies students at the University of Zambia said they liked RS 201/2 and least liked RS 101/2. All students in the survey indicated that RS was essential to university education and most of them said Religious Studies contributes to students becoming more tolerant to other people's Religious stances.

Most Religious Studies lecturers felt there is a conflict in preparing students for 2044 and 2046 because of the perception that 2044 is for the Catholics while 2046 is for the Protestants. The suggested solution is that the two syllabuses be merged taking aboard all concerns. This is not an easy task as UNZA advocates for a Religious Education that is multi-faith in approach in high schools. Teachers insist on the more religiously focused syllabus of either the life or Bible centred approaches (Carmody, 2006:294).

There are few areas of consultations between the Ministry of Education and the Religious Studies section. Communication should improve especially in with the curriculum development Curriculum Development Centre (CDC), Zambia Association for Religious Education Teachers (ZARET) and in common research as revealed by Religious Studies lecturers. This association deliberate on various concerns of teachers in Religious Education. Among the burning issues is the integration of Religious Education in Social Studies at lower and middle basic level.

Different courses in Religious Studies have a sociological, psychological and generally a social dimension as a way of exposing students to different spheres of knowledge. Though the nature and role of Religious Studies should be that of having high academic standards with correct methods and rationale, UNZA needs to do more in grounded research. The research should address problems of the Zambian society. The Religious Studies section however, trains qualified human resource especially for Zambian high schools.

Conclusion

This study was on the nature and role of Religious Studies at the University of Zambia. In examining the nature we considered the content, method, rationale and perceptions of scholars who were influential in creation of the Religious Studies section. The study also considered the perceptions of lecturers, graduates and current students. The study also examined the role of Religious Studies. Being a university discipline, its major role is to train teachers of Religious Education for secondary schools. The study made a number of suggestions on how the role of Religious Studies at UNZA and the nation can expand. Religious Studies, to a large extent, is not just about understanding beliefs and academics but it is associated with morality and practice (moral dimension is also considered).

The findings of this study suggest that Religious Studies at UNZA has remained an academic discipline (programme) but also has a somewhat unique personalist dimension while its orientation includes historical, sociological, phenomenological, philosophical and educational perspectives. Religious Studies at UNZA is and has always endeavoured to be primarily academic instead of confessional in approach. It is multi-faith, interdisciplinary, and serves to provide Religious Education teachers to Zambia. As a university discipline, it strives to ensure that UNZA's education is holistic and a true preparation for life in Zambian society today.

Overall, the findings concerning the nature and role of Religious Studies show that the quality of Religious Studies at UNZA is good but should do more to compare well with what is offered at the Universities of Botswana, Leeds and Birmingham. The findings suggest that if the section is transformed into a department, Religious Studies at UNZA will be better placed to expand on its role. It might introduce more courses in different religions and also introduce theology as part of the long-term objective so that local needs and expectations are addressed. This might not be that easy but if it is professionally done it will be accomplished with ease.

Generally, there is also a feeling among the lecturers that Religious Studies should have teaching method courses at each year (first to fourth year) of study so that there should be a good balance between content and method. At the moment Religious Studies has more content courses than methods. Since the major role of Religious Studies is to train teachers, there is need to put emphasis also on the methodology otherwise the section may be training half-baked graduates.

Religious Studies at UNZA has a lot of challenges including refining the vision and mission statement. The vision and mission should be clearly stated so that the direction of its growth is clear. The section was challenged to state its mission and vision at the departmental retreat. There is therefore need to develop the two in line with the overall University Mission and vision.

RECOMMENDATIONS

On the basis of the study's findings, the following recommendations can be made.

1. The section should step up the initiative of transforming itself into a department so that it can meet different aspirations of students and staff. Becoming a department would provide autonomy to the section to develop its own distinctive religious contribution to the university and the country among others.
2. There is need for the section to facilitate the presentation and accommodation of regional seminars on religious topics.
3. Both lecturers and students should seriously examine the importance of religion in shaping society, cultures and people on local and global levels, and to reflect on what it might mean to live in a multi-religious society through publications and taking part in media discussions.

4. There should be deliberate efforts by the section to market itself so that employers know that graduates of Religious Studies have the necessary skills and abilities to flourish in a whole range of different careers. Graduates of Religious Studies are as good as others who graduate in other disciplines and hence can assume responsibilities with full confidence.
5. The section should come up with a clear vision which should be in line with the overall University mission. This is important because the direction of its growth will be clear and defined.
6. Religious Studies lecturers should advance themselves academically so that they can meet the ever-growing demands and challenges in the field of religion.
7. The lecturers should not only teach one or two courses, as some students get demoralised. Some students are negative about certain courses because of the lecturers offering them.
8. Specific courses for specific religions should be introduced to meet the religious diversity which has now characterised the Zambian Society.
9. The Religious Studies section should not just concentrate on training teachers but should also engage in communal work and introduce short courses that will be taken by interested members of the community or nation.
10. The Religious Studies section does need to come up with a programme that will put emphasis on research for both students and lecturers and publish its own materials as a way of enhancing the status and also contribution to the university and the country.

11. For the future, the Religious Studies section should consider introducing Cultural and Theological Studies so that the local needs of the clergy are also met. Many Theological colleges are now even seeking external affiliation after being told that UNZA does not offer Theology but Religious Studies.
12. The Religious Studies section should find common areas of co-operation with the Ministry of Education (MOE) in terms of curriculum and research or any other area to enhance and harmonise issues related to Religious Education teaching.
13. The section should spearhead efforts of coming up with one syllabus for 2044 and 2046 in Religious Education. The consultative group meeting through ZARET can be used as a base for the initiative. Members of this group should also arrange meetings with CDC where they can lobby.
14. The Religious Studies unit should also expand on the consultative group meetings to include all Education Colleges, which offer some form of Religious Education so that issues of a religious nature are given proper direction and support. The inspector from the Ministry of Education should also be invited for meetings.
15. The section should learn more especially from other universities on how they organise their content and the role they play in their respective countries by encouraging exchange visits.

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APPENDIX A

THIS IS A SURVEY MEANT TO FIND OUT THE NATURE AND ROLE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR STUDENTS.

NAME: ----- **SEX:**-----
SCHOOL:----- **YR OF STUDY:**-----

RS: MAJOR / MINOR-----

Please, tick near the answer you consider to be correct. In case your opinion is sought, write in the spaces provided.

1. Religious Studies is a good course option at the University? YES / NO
2. I took RS in first year because (a) It is seen to be easy
(b) I did RE in high school
(c) I like Religion
3. Are RS courses as academic as other courses? YES / NO
4. Are RS Lecturers as good as other Lecturers? YES / NO
5. Are RS Lecturers more available than other lecturers? YES / NO
6. Are RS library facilities better than other courses? YES / NO
7. Are RS courses more relevant to life than others? YES /NO
8. What RS courses did you like most? ----- Why?

9. What RS courses did you least like? ----- Why?-----

10. Do you think RS is essential to University Education? YES / NO

If yes, how? -----

If no, why not? -----

11. Do Religious Studies contribute to Students becoming more tolerant to other people's religious stances? YES / NO

If yes, how? -----

12. Does RS promote Indoctrination? YES / NO

If yes, how?-----

If no, why not? -----

13. What would you say about the nature and role of RS at UNZA -----

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APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GRADUATES OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT UNZA

THIS SURVEY IS MEANT TO FIND OUT THE NATURE AND ROLE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA

1. Where do you work?
2. Was Religious Studies your Minor or Major at UNZA?
3. Why did you study Religious Studies?
4. Do you apply Religious Studies in your current Job/Occupation?
5. Does Religious Studies promote Religious tolerance among people of different churches? Any illustrations?
6. What method did Religious Studies advocate for in its approach?
7. Was Religious Studies different in anyway from other studies/disciplines?
8. Does Religious Studies at UNZA indoctrinate?
9. Why do you think specific courses are offered in Religious Studies? e.g Sociology of Religion, Psychology of Religion, African Religion Initiatives. Are they useful or relevant?
10. Any other comments or recommendations on the Religious Studies Programme at UNZA as you knew it?
11. Why are you not teaching RE?
12. What year were you at UNZA?
13. Does UNZA set up encourage research?
14. Did you do any research in RS?
15. What would you say about the nature and role of Religious Studies at UNZA?

APPENDIX C

THIS IS SURVEY MEANT TO FIND OUT THE NATURE AND ROLE OF RELIGIOUS STUDIES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ZAMBIA.

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RELIGIOUS STUDIES LECTURERS AND OTHERS AT UNZA

Number of years at UNZA _____

1. Why were Religious Studies introduced late at the University of Zambia?
Explain.
2. Why has the enrolment of Religious Studies Students gone up?
3. How are Religious studies important to University Education?
4. What precise service does Religious Studies provide to University Education? How is Religious Studies different?
5. How does the Religious Studies Unit work in collaboration with the Ministry of Education? What issues of concern does the unit raise?
6. What methods do you encourage in Religious Studies at UNZA? Why?
7. What is the rationale for various courses in Religious Studies at UNZA?
8. Are issues of multi – faith nature of Zambian Society addressed in Religious Studies? How?
9. How do graduates of Religious Studies contribute to National development?
10. Do you experience conflict in preparing Students to teach 2044 and 2046 because of their Religious focus?
11. What is your solution to the above conflict?
12. Does Religious Studies promote indoctrination?
13. What method is advocated for, in Religious Studies offered at University?
14. Are there issues you would have liked to change in Religious Studies if you had a way?

15. What vision do you have for the future in Religious Studies?
16. Does UNZA set up encourage research?
17. What research have you done?
18. Is there research in the development of Religion in Zambia?
19. Would you please comment on the nature and role of Religious at UNZA?
20. Any issue you would like to comment on concerning Religious Studies?